This is a post-peer-review, pre-copy edited version of an extract/chapter published in "Contemporary Intersectional Criminology in the UK: Examining the Boundaries of Intersectionality and Crime", 978-1529215946. Details of the definitive published version and how to purchase it are available online at: https://bristoluniversitypress.co.uk/contemporary-intersectional-criminology-in-the-uk

Healing from identity-based violence: an intersectional discussion.

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Introduction

Violence is a social phenomenon that occurs in all known human societies and manifests in a variety of complex ways. Due to the multifaceted and multi-layered contexts in which violence operates, it is extremely difficult to define and quantify. Violent acts can be broadly categorised in several ways (Ray, 2018): collective violence (such as social, political, and economic violence), self-directed violence (suicide, self-injury, and self-abuse), interpersonal violence (familial, intimate partner, and community violence), and structural violence (systems in which society organises its sociality, such as race, class, gender, and sexual norms that establish conflict between groups through marginalisation and oppression). The World Health Organisation (Krug et al 2002) recognises that violence can manifest across the typologies as physical, sexual, and psychological violence, or violence that involves deprivation or neglect. Whilst these typologies are imperfect, lack precision, and may not be universally accepted, what seems to be shared in all types of violence is its role, through an exploitation and abuse of power, in causing pain and suffering. Unfortunately, it is so entwined within the social world that it appears to be part of the human condition. This chapter will focus exclusively on violence that is aggravated by and directed towards identity in its many forms by utilising intersectional analytical frameworks to understand the harms that manifest across multiple and interlocking power systems. By exploring identity-based violence intersectionally, the lived experiences of victims are able to be understood more fully and the potential to heal is much greater.

There is a plethora of empirical criminological evidence to suggest that violence aggravated by personal characteristics and identities, such as hate crimes, violence against women, violent extremism, and genocides – of which the term identity-based violence is used as an umbrella term (Desrosiers, 2015) – can leave indelible physical, emotional, spiritual, and psychological harms on

those who are victimised. Victimologists have found that identity-based violence brutalises and degrades the very essence of a person, becoming an injury to the spirit (Spalek, 2006). Such spirit injuries are ‘the product of the psychological, spiritual, and cultural effects of multiple types of racism, sexism and discrimination…it can lead to the slow death of a person’s spirit’ (Chakraborti & Zempi, 2013, pp 69), becoming an immensely traumatic experience. Further, Iganski and Lagou (2015) argue that crimes aggravated by identity often ‘hurt’ more, psychologically, emotionally, and spiritually, than crimes not aggravated by identity, due to the personal modalities in which this violence occurs. Thus, there is compelling evidence to suggest that those who are victimised through identity-based violence experience greater post-victimisation stress than other victims.

Whilst the specific harms caused by identity-based violence are well documented, there has been little acknowledgement within criminological inquiry on how those who are victimised may heal or recover from their experiences – individually, collectively, and spiritually – marking a significant gap in our epistemological understanding over how criminologists and victimologists can assist a victim’s healing process, post-victimisation. According to Bryant-David (2019, pp 400) ‘trauma recovery care must attend to the multiple layers of identity within each person, considering race, ethnicity, culture, gender, age, migration status, disability, sexual orientation, and religion and/or spirituality.’ This is particularly important as marginalised groups experience identity-based violence due to their identities being subject to wider societal oppression. Drawing on criminological data, black feminist thought, intersectional analysis, and liberation theory, this conceptual chapter uses a victimological lens and focuses on the potential for healing from the trauma brought on by identity-based violence. I outline different forms of violence enacted upon identity, by exploring the individual, collective, and structural violence that marginalised groups experience. I then move to explore the intersectional dynamics that must be accounted for in order for healing to take place.

Identity-based violence

Identity-based violence has a long history within the evolution of human societies. Many wars and conflicts throughout history have been fought on the basis of differing identities trying to cement themselves over others. Countless nations have seen their Indigenous populations pillaged, with their ancestral roots, identities, and cultures ruthlessly suppressed and destroyed to pave the way for competing identities and cultures. In modern history, many native populations were forcibly Christianised and colonised by European powers (Gone et al, 2019; Russell, 2020), resulting in their identities, politics, and cultural and religious beliefs becoming marginalised to this day. In addition, generations of religious groups have fought wars with one another to stake claims over the 'true' version of religious identity. Identity-based violence has therefore long been associated with violence enacted by members of a certain group to those outside of a specific racial, religious, and national group. Violence against groups who are deemed the antithesis to the 'norm' group, is a mechanism of power to dehumanise and reinforce who 'belongs' ('in-group' members) and who does not belong ('out-group' members) (Jenkins, 2014; Perry, 2001). Indeed, as seen by the Jewish Holocaust, extreme violence was committed against many groups – Jewish, gay, and disabled – who were considered to deviate away from the constructed normal or desired identity as espoused by Nazi ideology.

In the post-Cold-War era, international efforts and activism have focused on reducing identity-based violence, in order to maintain harmony and co-existence between differing groups with the aim of promoting equity amongst those that are socially and economically marginalised. Discussions on how violence is committed against specific groups has grown to include a number of marginalised identities, such as, sexuality, disability, age, gender and so forth. Despite efforts to promote harmony and inclusion, Hardy & Chakraborti, (2020) argue that violence against identity in the form of hate crimes is one of the biggest global challenges in modern times, affecting the lives of many millions.

In England and Wales, individuals are protected through a variety of legislation from both the *enactment* and *incitement* of violence being directed towards their identities. Criminal acts aggravated

by identity are consequently categorised as hate crimes. The Crown Prosecution Service (2012, pp 8) defines hate crimes as targeted crimes 'motivated by a hostility or prejudice based on race or perceived race; religion or perceived religion; sexual orientation or perceived sexual orientation; disability or perceived disability[...]or a person who is transgender or perceived to be transgender.' The debate over the phraseology of categorising such violence as 'hate crimes' has been extensive within criminological discourse, with some scholars preferring the term bias crimes (Perry, 2003) and advocating for additional groups beyond the five strands to be included (Chakraborti & Garland, 2012). These debates promote a hate crime framework based on difference and vulnerability over siloed approaches to identity. Perry (2009), for instance, argues that intersectional approaches to hate violence refrain us from making singular assumptions about one identity over another and enable us to understand a victim's experience and risk of violence across multiple identities and contexts. It is not in the scope of this chapter to rehash these debates; thus, the concept identity-based violence is used as an inclusive term to denote the structural and social violence that is enacted upon identity as well as targeted acts of violence that are criminalised.

Statistics for England and Wales show a year-on-year increase in overall hate crimes, with 103,379 instances recorded in 2019 (Home Office, 2019) and 105,090 recorded in 2020 (Home Office, 2020). These increases often account for better reporting mechanisms rather than a genuine increase in perpetration. However, trigger events such as the Brexit EU referendum result can spark a proliferation of hate towards minority groups (Awan & Zempi, 2017). Recorded instances of hate crimes, whilst helpful in determining the nature of many incidents, present an unclear picture over their true prevalence, as the lasting impact of violence against one's identity often extends far beyond the original act. For example, Bryant-Davis & Ocampo (2005) demonstrate that racist incidents are experienced as traumatic events that can lead to post-traumatic stress. Thus, there is a recognition that violence against structurally oppressed identities is not contained within a single act but is a manifestation and reinforcement of structurally embedded marginalisation of minoritised groups, which contribute to the overall trauma experienced by victims. Importantly, this trauma of identity-

based violence can be inherited by future generations, through a process of intergenerational transmission of trauma. For instance, first, second, and third generation descendants of Holocaust survivors are known to exhibit personal trauma, fear, and pain over collective memories of the genocidal violence perpetrated towards Jewish populations (Lev-Wiesel, 2007). Therefore, identity-based violence is shown to be situated within historical, cultural, and social power structures that maintain the legacies of oppression directed towards specific social groups.

Whilst identity-based violence is often committed to advance a particular social agenda, such as spreading racist sentiment, homophobic rhetoric, or sexist attitudes, it is also a mechanism to uphold the very hegemonic power structures within society that allow it to occur. After being shot in the face by a man in Sweden, during a xenophobic and racist anti-refugee demonstration, refugee and academic Shahram Khosravi visited his perpetrator in prison. The shooter of this crime told Shahram not to take it personally, as the attack was not about him as an individual, but about anti-refugee sentiment generally. Reflecting on this encounter and on the violence enacted towards his identity(ies), he writes:

> I did not take the bullet personally for the same simple reason that I had been shot for the same reason the young black man had been killed in that Mississippi town in the 1960's. It was the same reason that sent millions of Jews to the death chambers, that triggered the Tutsi massacre in Rwanda in 1994, the killing of thousands of Bosnians in 1995 in the Srebrenica region, or the hundreds of Palestinian minors in Gaza in January 2009. My history is only a fragment of a longer history of racism and hatred. I am one detail in the continuum of racial othering, of dehumanizing those who are of another colour, belief or culture. So how could I take it personally? (Khosravi, 2010, pp 83-4)

Shahram exemplifies in his reflection that violence perpetrated towards his (perceived) identity was rooted in the historical, global, structural, and systemic oppression of those identities. In other words, it was not him specifically who the perpetrator hated, but the identity group(s) that he belonged to or

represented. Perry (2001, pp 125) argues that violence in this form 'is about the assertion of the offender's own identity and belongingness over and above others; in short it is about power.' Thus, acts of oppression and 'hate' that are homophobic reinforce systems of heteronormativity and position heterosexuality as the normative expression of sexuality. The same is true for acts of nationalism, racism, disablism, sexism, and transphobia and other manifestations of oppression. These oppressive structures can cause individuals to experience internalised shame, self-hate, self-debasement, and soul death, in what Neisen (1993) refers to as cultural victimisation. Consequently, individuals who are victimised through targeted acts of violence towards their identity navigate this within the context of the structures of oppression that have enabled it to occur.

Although descriptions of identity-based violence evoke strong images of extreme physical violence – such as the Jewish Holocaust, the enforced enslavement of African's and people of African ancestry, and the many genocides of Indigenous populations such as the Queensland Massacre in what is now Australia – there are a multiplicity of ways in which it manifests. Enacting violence on the aggravation of one's identity is part of a wide spectrum of behaviours designed to 'other' and marginalise (Jensen, 2011), and can range from extreme forms of terrorism, murder, rape, and genocide to everyday 'indignities' of hate that carry subtle messages of invalidation. In other words, whilst there are extreme acts of violence, there are also everyday perpetrations of, what Sue et al (2007) call microaggressions, which act as small invalidations towards people occupying marginalised identities and reinforce systems of othering.

Microaggressions, according to Sue et al (2007), are small acts that carry hidden messages intended to demean those who experience them. These acts are often perpetrated unconsciously and stem from our unconscious biases about groups who hold certain identities. For example, in relation to racial microaggressions: 'A white man or woman clutches her purse or his wallet as a black or Latino man approaches or passes them. (Hidden message: You and your group are criminals)' or, in relation to sexual orientation microaggressions: 'Two gay men holding hands in public and are told not to flaunt

their sexuality. (Hidden message: Homosexual displays of affection are abnormal or offensive. Keep it to private and to yourselves.)' (Sue, 2010, pp 5). These acts of othering are often a recurring and constant feature of one's everyday life (Hall, 2013; Hardy & Chakraborti, 2020). Women, for instance, are documented as frequently experience daily microaggressions and sexual harassment such as catcalling, unnecessary touching, and wolf-whistling (Kearl, 2010; Osmond, 2013) that go unreported. The consistent vigilance and fear of violence manifests in the form of self-policing and self-coping behaviours – for example, risk aversion strategies – which are often employed as 'technologies of the soul' to avoid such harassment (Stanko, 1990; 1997). Thus, acts of violence, predicated by identity, shape the daily navigational patterns of individuals who experience them and contribute to high levels of stress and vigilance. These are not extreme acts of *physical* violence. However, as the beginning quote from Shahram Khosravi exemplifies, these are part of a rich tapestry of *social* violence and discrimination that can contribute to the brutalisation of the self and spirit (Spalek, 2006).

This tapestry of social violence means that one does not have to be a direct victim to experience the harms associated with this violence. Arguably, when one person is targeted because of their identity, those who share in that identity also share the potential to be victimised. Iganski (2001) demonstrates this using a 'waves of harm' model, arguing that identity-based violence has an extended impact on other group members when one person is targeted. As shown by Figure 3.1, acts of violence towards identity have a ripple effect, which carry messages to all those who share in the victimised identity beyond the initial victim, that they are also the target. This moves through to neighbourhoods, communities, and eventually becomes a mechanism to reinforce society's core structures of marginality. Examples of this can be seen in identity-aggravated terror attacks, such as the 2016 Pulse shooting in Orlando, where international lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, and queer communities were indirectly impacted by the homophobic attack on LGBTQ Floridians (Schweppe & Walters, 2016).

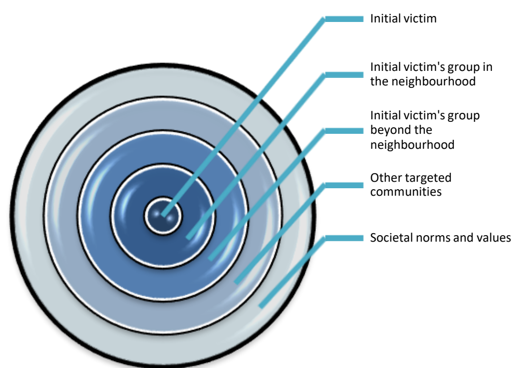

Figure 1: Waves of Harm Generated by Hate Crimes (adapt. from Iganski 2001, pp 629).

Intersectionality and identity-based violence

As identity-based violence upholds and reinforces systems of power and marginality, the manifestation, and the emotional and social harms of this, are experienced intersectionally. Intersectionality is a useful analytical framework that perceives multiple systems of power as interlocking, in which a social experience, brought about by one identity or characteristic, intersects with others (Carastathis, 2014). Women of colour,[1] for example, experience discrimination on the basis of both their gendered and racialised identities (Crenshaw, 1991), thus experiencing oppression at the intersection of these converging systems as a form of gendered racism where they are (as one example) reduced to daily stereotypes about their race *and* gender; e.g. Black women specifically can be stereotyped as being an angry, aggressive, or 'sassy' Black woman (Lewis et al, 2013) whereas White women do not experience these same stereotypes. Examining violence and victimisation through a siloed lens minimises the differential experiences that individuals navigate and risks essentialising specific social groups as homogenous i.e. rendering all disabled/black and brown/queer/working class people as having the same exact experience of violence and trauma. Without examining identity-based violence intersectionally, individual standpointisms are overlooked and scrutinised outside of their social, cultural, and relational contexts. We see that across

[1] The term women of colour/person of colour is used to discuss racism against all people who are not White. Black, Brown, Mixed Race, Asian, Jewish, Traveller etc. experience different forms, types, and systems of racism. When identifying particular forms of racism, such as anti-Black stereotypes, Black is used for more specificity.

intersections of sexuality, gender, and race, gay men of colour feel higher levels of shame in relation to their gender by feeling that they are weaker men for identifying as gay whilst also feeling that they negatively represent their racial communities (Meyer, 2012). At the same time, gay men of colour judge their experiences as less severe than their middle-class white counterparts (Meyer, 2010). Without acknowledging and exploring these intersections, gay men in the above example – or any community – are rendered a monolithic social group, which risks overlooking (a) the specific and interconnected harms that manifest due to identity-based violence and (b) the specific healing pathways that are available to overcome identity-based trauma. Individuals who inhabit and navigate these intersections of violence experience these injuries to the psyche across multiple layers of their personhood. This is compounded when those who belong to 'marginalised communities are more likely to experience interpersonal trauma, to develop severe PTSD, and to face barriers to safety, justice, and mental health services' (Bryant-Davis, 2019, pp 401). Therefore, it is essential, when responding to identity-based violence to consider intersectional factors so that unintended further harm is prevented when developing mechanisms that respond to violence. For instance, higher levels of police surveillance that aim to combat anti-LGBT hate crime can negatively affect black gay, bisexual, and trans men due to the racialised ways in which policing manifests (Meyer, 2010) and by reproducing systemic racism towards black communities. Accordingly, in order for healing and justice to take place, the specific intersectional contexts in which this issue manifests must be prioritised to understand the full experience of pain caused by identity-based violence.

Intersectional healing

As this chapter has so far demonstrated, the harms and traumas caused by identity-based violence exist within individual, collective, social, historical, and intersectional contexts. Although many acts of identity-based violence are criminalised, many do not meet a criminal threshold within the legislative framework of England and Wales. The true extent of systematic othering and the harm caused by non-criminal identity-based violence is therefore difficult to ascertain. Specifically, the generational, collective, and individual harms and pains which go unrecognised due to the subtle ways in which they

manifest. In order to combat the higher levels of post-victimisation trauma that victims of identity-based violence experience, criminologists must be attuned to the intersectional needs and contexts – historical, political, social, cultural, and spiritual – that individuals experience violence within. Indeed, Zehr (2008) argues that trauma is rooted in this social and economic injustice and, as such, peacebuilding cannot take place without examining the individual and social dimensions of trauma and pain.

Identity-based trauma affects both individuals and communities on an emotional, physical, psychological, and spiritual level, so much so that cognitive patterns of the brain are shaped and altered. Experiences of racism, for example, can manifest as daily mini-trauma's and require exhaustive emotional and psychic energy to be expended that can result in psychological detriments, which mirror those of sexual and intimate partner violence (see Bryant-Davis & Ocampo, 2005). Similarly, when remarking on the harm of daily normativities, Yep, (2017, pp 118) articulates that 'in addition to deeply affecting an individual and group cognitively (for example, how sexual minority people think of themselves), behaviourally (for example, how sexual minority people act to avoid psychological and physical danger), and structurally (for example, how sexual minority people negotiate a social system that tacitly and overtly discriminates against them), normativities also leave indelible emotional and psychic wounds' for LGBTQ people. Criminologists and victimologists therefore have a very delicate and sensitive task if their overall aim is to reduce the harm and suffering caused by structural marginalisation and violence.

In line with French et al (2020), who advocate for a radical healing that is aimed at achieving social justice – by being grounded in a) collectivism, (b) critical consciousness, (c) radical hope, (d) strength and resistance, and (e) cultural authenticity and self-knowledge – the healing that is discussed in this chapter is based on a social model of recovery, whereby individual agency and collectivism provide the means to healing rather than medical interventions. The medicalisation of healing involves pathologising the individual and their pain as a 'sickness' with the overall aim of reducing 'symptoms'

(Whitley & Drake, 2010), whereas social models view suffering as a response to social injustices with a view to providing agency in changing oppressive social structures. In this view, ongoing self-love, self-liberation, and a transcendence beyond hegemonic social norms is, for Yep (2017), the key to moving in the direction of transformative healing and collective freedom.

It must be emphasised that no amount of therapeutic work, counselling, or community action can undo past injustices or rewrite the pains of an individual's history. Indeed, we cannot change the past, only the future. The literature on healing emphasises self-acceptance of the past with the goal to retain agency that shapes the future. Haglili's (2020) work on social activism proposes that altruistic action aimed to help others who experience similar forms of social trauma enhances the likelihood for post-traumatic growth. Her view is that recovery can only take place in the context of relationships, such as within loving friendships, community, and support networks who can bear witness to the pain caused by violence; specifically, bearing witness to one's own pain, bearing witness as a community, and forming links of activism as a witness to one's oppression. Making sense of identity-based trauma, by establishing collective meaning and thus active resistance, contributes to a sense of coherence, empowerment, and ultimately completeness when one is systemically and interactionally victimised. This cannot occur without first fostering a sense of agency amongst those who are victimised so that meanings of self-love and growth can be made from trauma.

Criminological enterprise has had a strong tradition for bearing witness to the individual and community impact of crime and theorising how the social mechanics and ordering of society influence victimisation and violence. In the pursuit of an intersectional criminology, we must bear witness to the historical, cultural, and social structures which carry the impacts of victimisation, in order to promote healing within the communities that we research and aim to support. A key component of the criminological imagination is the ability to imagine better worlds and better futures (Seal & O'Neill, 2019), where individuals have achieved economic and social justice. The task for criminology is to re-imagine ways of liberating individuals from the violence and marginality that they experience due to

their identity. However, individualising trauma can be counter-productive, as, according to French et al (2020), healing involves identifying the source of trauma and engaging in collective resistance against that source through community-oriented psychological liberation.

Early work on psychological liberation emphasised it as a dialectic and relational process in which individuals change internally whilst their relationships and interactions with others concurrently change (Luque-Ribelles et al, 2009). Further developments have emphasised the relationship between critical consciousness[i], spirituality[ii], and social action[iii] in achieving liberation and healing. As already highlighted, identity-based violence carries trauma across collectives and generations that is specific to the violence enacted on certain identity groups. Native American tribes carry ancestral trauma of colonisation whilst still experiencing contemporary persecution and racism (Gone et al, 2019). Descendants of Holocaust survivors carry with them the trauma of the genocide against their ancestors whilst still navigating modern anti-Semitism (Lev-Wiesel, 2007). Healing from inherited and contemporary trauma requires a great deal of emotional and psychological effort to work through this pain as many individuals are still navigating the contemporaneous legacies of historical and structural violence. By understanding the collective histories of trauma that have been passed through generations of oppressive actions against minoritised identity-groups, collective critical consciousness can be raised to allow marginalised groups to reconcile their histories (French et al, 2020). This critical consciousness must be intersectional if criminology is to fully encompass the spectrum of emotional pain caused by identity-based violence.

Within the criminological imagination, liberation cannot be achieved without accounting for the multiple layers of oppressions that marginalised groups experience intersectionally. In this instance, black liberation must involve the liberation of queer individuals and vice versa. The same is true for disabled communities and religious communities, and so on. As articulated by Audre Lorde:

> Within the lesbian community I am Black, and within the Black community I am a lesbian. Any attack against Black people is a lesbian and gay issue, because I and thousands of other Black

> women are part of the lesbian community. Any attack against lesbians and gays is a Black issue, because thousands of lesbians and gay men are Black. There is no hierarchy of oppression. (Lorde, 1983: n.p)

One example in achieving intersectional black liberation and healing is the deconstruction of Eurocentric assumptions and standards which prioritise whiteness as beautiful, good, pure, and blackness as dirty, ugly, or exotic (Robinson-Moore, 2008). Whilst black individuals are constrained by Eurocentric beauty and body standards that deems black bodies as either exotic or deviant, these still operate within a gender-based, patriarchal, heteronormative, ableist matrix (Loja et al, 2013). Thus, queer, disabled, black lives experience Eurocentric assumptions differentially. Healing therefore must involve raising collective critical consciousness to an awareness of the interlocking web of oppressive forces (Carastathis, 2014), which impact individuals across race, gender, class, education, age, and sexual lines. In other words, learning that one's trauma is rooted in ableist, heteronormative, classed, patriarchal, and racialised structures rather than the individual or collective 'self', and actively working towards radical self-love of the identities that are victimised, allows for liberationist-focused psychological healing.

Whilst raising critical consciousness is shown to promote psychological healing, Carmen et al, (2015) argue that there is a risk of reproducing individualistic and cognitive processes to healing. To prevent this, the ontological and intersectional dimensions of marginality need to be made visible for socio-political development to occur. In other words, 'the complicated, messy work of making sense of one's existence and identity in the face of widespread, systemic, institutional racial, ethnic, linguistic, epistemic, and spiritual 'Othering' that can constrain subjectivity and agency' (Carmen et al, 2015, pp 828). Thus, they advocate that ontological healing – healing the pains and traumas that have occurred through existing as a marginalised individual within oppressive social realities that limit one's existence as an agentic being – is key to transforming how individuals positively navigate their social landscape. Importantly, this is not to minimise the agency that has been denied to marginalised groups, nor

ignore the trauma caused by the violence directed towards identity. Rather, it is to alleviate the spirit injuries (Spalek, 2006) caused by identity-based violence by reconnecting the individual with their community, foster a sense of agency that has been historically denied, and provide space for individuals to develop autonomous ways of expressing their identity. Lewis et al (2015), for instance, have found that politically driven identity-based spaces act as environments of civic engagement, personhood, and freedom. Specifically, feminist women-only spaces allow women the safety to be cognitively, intellectually, and emotionally expressive, whereby they are able to engage in their womanhood freely and explore different and deeper meanings of what it is to be a woman within society.

Importantly, healing in this context is distinct to notions of coping. Many individuals normalise the identity-based violence that they experience in order to navigate through society and cope with the daily oppressions faced across class, gendered, racial, religious, and sexual lines (Chakraborti & Garland, 2015). 'Coping' frameworks emphasise a passivity and reduce agentic steps towards individual and collective justice. Healing on the other hand is a process by which one moves beyond *surviving* in an oppressive society to *thriving*, by centring resistance at the heart of their recovery process to find individual peace and justice (Watts, 2004).

Such ontological healing is a continuous process of growth that reconciles experiences of identity-based violence with the social environment, structures, and histories that shape individual and collective positionalities and subjectivities. These are non-linear processes that must engage with social, collective, communal, generational, and embodied experiences of pain caused by identity-based violence, so that one can process these experiential paradigms and engage in radical healing. For criminology, such healing is an inherently political act, in that it actively seeks to resist oppression and violence brought about by poverty, racism, sexism, homophobia, and class oppression. Therefore, it moves from a deficit model of victimisation in which one self-blames or remains in a victim mindset by fostering a sense of agency that empowers collectives (Carmen et al, 2015) to challenge oppressive

conditions and reach an identity-centric practice of love and self-worth (Nash, 2011); where blackness is celebrated, queerness is embraced, disability is normalised and rejoiced, and gender is emboldened.

Finally, individualising healing from identity-based violence places the onus on socially oppressed groups and victims to achieve healing. The onus of responsibility for community and socio-political development work, access to healthcare and therapy, reducing poverty, prioritising economic justice, and removing social barriers also belongs to groups with social privilege in society through critical allyship to marginalised groups (Curtin, Kende, & Kende, 2016; Nixon, 2019). Criminology must therefore remain actively opposed to social injustice and promote radical self-love amongst marginalised communities. By engaging in criminological research and inquiry, the onus is also on criminologists to bear witness to the intersectional trauma that individuals and communities experience, align ourselves with the social justice aims of specific marginalised groups, and to raise our critical consciousness to achieve psychological liberation across intersectional realities.

Conclusion

'Freedom and love may be the most revolutionary ideas available to us, and yet as intellectuals, we have failed miserably to grapple with their political and analytical importance' (Kelley, 2003, pp 11-12).

This chapter has highlighted the specific emotional, psychological, and spiritual trauma that have been inflicted, across generations, on many individuals on the premise of their identity. Utilising concepts from black feminist thought, theories of intersectionality, and paradigms of psychological liberation, it has advocated for criminology to acknowledge the intersectional trauma of identity-based violence and to promote radical healing within its theoretical scope. Criminological enterprise has a responsibility to raise the critical consciousness of marginalised groups, facilitate community connection, foster active resistance to the structural oppression that individuals navigate, and promote active agency to resist and heal from the impact of identity-based violence. Navigating a society and culture in which systems of power exist to marginalise, exclude, and sow seeds of hatred

towards many identity groups within society causes members of these communities to internalise this marginality, resulting in hatred, debasement, fear and brutalisation of the self. Liberation must therefore come in the form of collective self-love. This love should be actively political and intersectional in order to avoid reproducing heteronormative, patriarchal, ableist, white-centric 'love'. Radical healing takes the form of affirmatively and unconditionally loving blackness, queerness, disability, womanhood across all of these intersecting lines. By bearing witness to and working against systemic trauma inflicted by identity-based violence, the criminological 'imagination' can become a reality through the intersectional and ontological healing of pain and injustice.

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[i] Critical consciousness allows for a socio-political version of thinking that enables individuals to situate and contextualise their experiences as existing within broader social structures.

[ii] Spirituality in this context involves healing the internal state of a person by overcoming internalised oppression – for example, internalised misogyny, homophobia, racism and so on – and achieving a state where oppressive structures no longer inhibit personal freedom.
[iii] Social action is the individual and collective action one undertakes to fight against social injustices (see Watts, Diemer, & Voight, 2011).