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Enforced Mobility and Criminalisation of Women Accessing Abortion

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OUTLINE

- ❑ Women's bodies as foreign bodies
- ❑ Legislating on women's bodies
- ❑ Abortion care
- ❑ Enforced mobilities and diasporic subjectivities
- ❑ Research as Praxis



The foreigner is within us
(Kristeva, 1991)

THEREFORE

If I am a foreigner there are
no foreigners (Kristeva, 1991)



Migrants as a uniform,
genderless and
threatening body

Their differences are
melted into a subject
named a Body without
Organs (BwO) (Deleuze
and Guattari, 1987)

Migrants as the
multitude (Hardt and
Negri (2000)

The multitude as a
global biopolitical subject
of absolute democracy,
or rather

“the living alternative that
grows within Empire”
(Hardt and Negri,
2004:xiii).

Women's Bodies



N.Ireland, Isle of Man, Poland, & Italy – the Law

- **N.Ireland** – did not adopt the Abortion Act in 1967 – so abortion is mostly illegal under Offences Against Persons Act 1861.
- **Isle of Man** – did not adopt 1967 Act. Legislation to change very restrictive laws is processing through House of Keys & Legislative Council at this time.
- **Poland** - Some of the most restrictive laws in Europe implemented by an Ordinance in 1990.
- **Italy** – Legalised in 1978 but due to majority of Drs being anti-abortion and allowed to refuse as ‘conscientious objectors’ abortion is very hard to access.

Enforced mobilities – diasporic subjectivities

- **N.I** – approx. 2000 women a year travel to England for terminations. Numbers reduced since abortion pills now available on line.
- **Isle of Man.** – approx. 100 women a year travel to England.
- **Poland** - An estimated 80,000 Polish women a year go to Germany, Czech Republic, UK or Ukraine or seek illegal abortions at home.
- **Italy** – Due to Drs refusing to carry out abortions women have to go from town-to-town searching for someone who will carry out one. Unknown numbers also travel to UK, Spain and Netherlands.

Sameness/Difference – Distance/Proximity

- Enforced Travel/Mobilities
- Shame/Stigma
- Debt
- Risking Health/Unsafe actions
- Criminalisation



- Disproportionately affects woman with insufficient access to resources, support networks and the means to travel.

Scholarship - Research as Praxis

- *What discursive, narrative and theoretical resources criminologists might draw on in addressing contexts and meanings pertaining to the criminalisation of abortion ?*
- As scholars we need to embrace and support activism - it plays a powerful role in influencing policy debates and social change

Any Questions ?

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