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Stream A: Care, Social Reproduction & Everyday Life

Care and Social Reproduction: More than an Unhappy Marriage

Kyriaki Lampropoulou

Abstract

The feminist theory of care inaugurated in Europe in early 1980s, mainly in GB and Norway, mostly in the framework of gender incorporation in social policy theory and in response to Thatcher policy of the time in Britain with the influential work of Graham, Ungerson, Land, to name but a few, and the pioneer work of Waerness in Norway, [while some political philosophers of the ethic of care, mainly in USA, were working on the issue, not to be analyzed in current presentation]. It developed, with no reference at all in preceding theory of social reproduction but rather influenced from Oakley's work on housework, from a dualist framework: work-care, paid-unpaid, formal- informal, public-private, activity-relationship in the British framework of analysis and integrated both formal-informal, paid and unpaid, and more importantly both as a set of tasks and as a relationship in the Scandinavian, mainly Norwegian, context. Target and focus in both perspectives was gender, that is to say women. In the first paradigm aiming to the exit from caregiving to join labour market, envisioned by a equality of men and women point of view, the second to celebrate care and the role of women in it, perceived both as paid and unpaid, in formal and informal sector, focusing on the conditions of payment, the working conditions and the particular relationship in which care takes place (e.g. equal, unequal, subversive), rather than in the mere interest on gender division of work and care.

Since the 2000s, the study of care, which counts more than forty years of extensive debate among feminists, has been gradually freed from its almost exclusive attachment to gender, shifting the focus of scholarly interest to other social differences and how these are intertwined with caregiving. Along with the shift of interest from the care provider and gender to the care itself, the emergence of its socio-political frame of reference is also gradually gaining weight. This contemporary trend is characterized by an interdisciplinary approach to the subject, accompanied by the shift of theoretical and research interest from the local to the global, with an emphasis on care chains and the role of migrant women in caregiving, as well as the re-establishment of the concept of social reproduction as an interpretive tool.

On the other hand, especially due to the recent pandemic that has brought the issue of care back to a central place on political agendas, social reproduction theory forces marxists feminists to reconsider features of theory and politics which had previously regarded as peripheral in marxist feminist thought. One of these areas, a prominent one, is care. Although care policy has been included to Marxist critiques of the state and social policy, the new prominence of care and responses such as the Care Collective's 'Care Manifesto' calls marxists to scholarly engage with the (re)conceptualization of care.

The marxist feminist thought and more particularly social reproduction feminism (SRF), which predated the feminist scholarship of care, is rooted in the history of socialist feminist activism. The SRF framework emerged amid New Left movements of the 1960s and 1970s, as both an intervention and a set of demands. Intellectually, SRF intervened into Marxist theorizing that ignored and naturalized the reproductive processes that are essential to the daily and generational maintenance of the capitalist workforce, yet erased in accounts of capitalism centred on the workplace. Politically, this scholarship and the movements surrounding it shone a light on the undervalued and often unpaid work of sustaining life under capitalism—work that is disproportionately performed by women and people of colour. While early SRF theorizing focused primarily on women's domestic labour, the framework later expanded to tackle wide-ranging issues such as neoliberalism, globalization, and migration.

In recent years, social reproduction has once again become the subject of debate among an increasing number of feminist scholars. Recent writing has considered the part played by the commodification of care in the household and the effect of changes in welfare state policies. So too have studies analyzed the globalization of social reproduction and the role played by migrant women in the uneven deployment of economic and social resources in providing care for different categories of individuals and types of families and for ensuring social reproduction, including their own, in different sites and transnationally.

The aim of this paper is to briefly present the theoretical debates on care vis a vis social reproduction, clarifying differences and commonalities and to articulate future developments for theory and political practice.

Parenting as care and care as parenting – a theoretical exploration

Margunn Bjørnholt, Amalie Østensen, Ellen Syrstad, Margrete Aadnanes

Abstract

Margunn Bjørnholt, Amalie Østensen, Ellen Syrstad, Margrete Aadnanes

This paper aims at bringing together theories/understandings of parenting and theories of care, as two partly overlapping but also distinct phenomena, and separate theoretical fields. In this paper we will explore and disentangle the overlaps as well as differences in theories and theorizing of parenting and care with the aim of exploring the possibilities, potential benefits – and limitations – of employing theories of care to parenting and vice versa.

In everyday speech, but also in social work and child welfare literature and practice, parenting and care are often used interchangeably as synonyms. Good parenting is implicitly understood as good care and vice versa, while bad parenting is seen as the lack of or insufficient care – neglect – (in Norwegian the term is “omsorgssvikt” which means “care deficiency”) (Syrstad& Aadnanes, 2025).

Parenting involves care, but parenting also involves more than care. Similarly, while care is part of parenting, it is also performed in a variety of relations and contexts, both formal and informal, including as paid work in caring professions, which encompass health, education and welfare services (Tronto, 1993).

Parenting is personal and private, and is mostly seen as the opposite to professional care. Care may be both personal and professional, and even professional care needs to be personal in some sense. Both care and parenting take place in relations imbued with power asymmetries and that may change over time.

Although parenting is based in the private sphere, it is embedded in and spans a diversity of institutional contexts and involves engagement with a variety of social institutions. From a young age, the vast majority of children in Norway are cared for during the week-days in early child care institutions. In child welfare services, parental and institutional arrangements may form “communities of care” (Negård et al., 2025), that could also have been seen as co-parenting. Institutional care may also be conceptualized as parenting as in the literature on corporate parenting (Dixon et al., 2015).

Both care and mothering have been conceptualized in feminist theorizing as work that is based on a particular mindset or form of rationality and thinking, which is reflected on the concepts rationality of caring (Wærness, 1984), rationality of responsibility (Sørensen, 1982) and maternal thinking (Ruddick, 1989).

While there is a wide literature on care and theories of care, which define, explain and theorize care (Tronto, 1993) and which is increasingly put to work in a growing care literature, there is a dearth of a corresponding theoretical literature on parenting, or at least, it is scarcer and more fragmented.

Nevertheless, the thriving field of feminist maternal studies and theorizing contradicts the claim of a dearth of literature or a “gap” with regard to theorizing parenting (Ruddick, 1989; Rich, 1996; Hallstein et al, 2020; O'Reilly, 2021). However, this literature and theories are rarely brought into empirical studies of parenting and care within social work, child welfare or sociology of the family.

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The Unwritten Contribution: Legal Invisibility of Care in Montenegro

Miljana Rakočević

Abstract

This paper will examine the concept of value (or lack of thereof) of care, in Montenegrin Family and Inheritance law, explaining that two legal frameworks, although both committed to equality does not recognize care as neither a form of labor, nor morally and legally relevant concepts. Drawing from a theory of feminist care ethics as described in work of Tronto (1993, 2013), as well as Gilligan (1982), article explains that this gap reflects deeply flawed conceptual architecture where law will recognize and valorize economic productivity but leave out valorization of care.

Montenegrin Family and Inheritance law both present a paradox. In theory, these legal frameworks appear to be gender neutral and egalitarian. They, among other things define that spouses occupy first line of intestate succession along with children, that property is divided equally in case of divorce, that there are obligations of economic help and maintenance as a sign of solidarity. Nevertheless, below the surface there is a deep structural asymmetry. Montenegro has a deep problem with good legal framework but bad application which is mostly rooted in traditional narrative that is characteristic for patriarchal countries. The Family Law (2007, amended 2016 and 2020) defines mutual assistance as foundation of marriage but gives no legal importance to care as a form of labor and contributing to marital relationships. The Law of Inheritance (2008) defines excluding from estate everything that became because of productive economic labor of cohabiting heirs but also gives no way to recognize care labor as analogous provision.

In Montenegro's patriarchal cultural inheritance, care is seen as feminine duty, rather than recognized as socially and economically valued (Raičević, 2022). According to Monstat (2023), Montenegro's Gender Equality Index stands at 59.3, compared to the EU-27 average of 68.6. This does not only reflect deep labor market inequalities but also imply accumulated material effect of care going uncompensated across generations. Women are seen as primary care givers for children, aging parents and sick family members, and expected to renounce their right of inheritance in favor of male family members, in most cases brothers. By the same pattern, in divorce, a spouse who has provided years of care divides marital property equally with a partner whose economic capital was built, in part, on the foundation of that unacknowledged care. In practice it translates into inequality in contributing that is under a conceal of equality in distribution.

Tronto is arguing that care is essentially being displaced from political and legal life (2013), and this provides the theoretical ground on which this paper analyses conceptual gap in heart of Montenegrin legal system. Absence of care as a valued legal category calls for fundamental reevaluation of what is legally relevant contribution. Care's legal invisibility leads to inequality precisely where resources are divided – divorce and death.

Placing this concept of care in family and inheritance law, is not a matter of *de lege ferenda* reform, but developing a different concept of legally relevant contributions.

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Stream B: Caring Organisations, Leadership & Institutions

Banking while Caring: Understanding Islamic Feminist Care Ethics at Work

Cinzia Priola & Shafaq A. Chaudry

Abstract

This paper explores the relationship between gender, career, and religion-informed cultural practices from an ethics-of-care perspective. Based on an ethnographic study conducted in a Pakistani public bank, the paper analyses and theorises the lived experiences of professional Muslim women as they manage the tensions between their career aspirations and the care expectations of religion-informed cultural practices. A few scholars have researched care ethics from an Islamic perspective (e.g. DeCuir, 2019; Munawar, 2022b), however, empirical studies that have examined care ethics in relation to religion within a work and employment context remain scarce. This study investigates the processes that shape the meanings and experiences of being a working woman, a carer for a wider family and a respectable Muslim woman. The study is theoretically grounded in an ethics of care lens (DeCuir, 2019; Hamington, van Nistelrooij, & Sander-Staudt, 2022; Tronto, 2013, 2020) and is informed by Islamic feminism (Adam, 2016; Badran, 2009; Barlas, 2002; Chaudhry & Priola, 2025). It examines the significance and influence of Islamic ethics of care, in particular, care associated with the reproductive labour involved in motherhood and domesticity, in relation to how women engage with their work and careers. Theoretically, the study contributes to forms of Islamic feminist praxis that integrate critical gender consciousness with religious authority structures and aim to develop substantive transformation in how women engage with work, careers, and reproductive work in the home.

The research is based on an ethnographic case study conducted at a state-owned Pakistani bank. The fieldwork included participant observation, during which the first author spent 8 weeks volunteering at a bank as an intern to collect research data, and 21 semi-structured interviews with staff. Field notes, interview transcripts, and organisational documents were analysed following a feminist critical discourse analysis approach (Lazar, 2005).

The data analysis shows how caring responsibilities are negotiated through the intersecting discourses of family expectations and individual aspirations, and demonstrates the tensions women bankers experience in seeking to align their career aspirations with Islamic obligations of care. For these women, commitment to motherhood and domesticity is not only a personal ethical value but also an essential aspect of their religiosity, and is perceived as simultaneously constraining and enabling their career trajectories. The study demonstrates that Muslim women's career aspirations are not merely strategic individual choices but are constituted through moral, relational, and care-based negotiations within the framework of religion-informed care ethics, which require an ongoing balancing act. This strategic moral balancing is influenced by the individual's willingness, gendered organisational practices, and the institution of the family. The study contends that Muslim women are not passive recipients of the patriarchal interpretation of Islamic ethics of care but rather emerge as 'morally responsible' agents (Mahmood, 2016) who actively negotiate and reinterpret the religion-informed ethics of care through an Islamic feminist praxis (Althalathini, Al-Dajani, & Apostolopoulos, 2022; Tlaiss & McAdam, 2023).

Islamic feminism, which serves as a strategic tool for moral balancing, functions as a process of 'ijtihad'- "defined as the combination of reasoning, analysis, interpretation, and innovation to develop modern interpretations of Islamic principles" (Althalathini et al., 2022). We interpret Islamic-informed ethics of care as a paradox. While caring and relational obligations aspects of care ethics restrain women's career aspirations, interdependence on the caring network (including employed domestic help and extended family system) facilitates engagement with career opportunities. Theoretically, this study advances the feminist ethics of care framework by illuminating that care is not only a socio-relational practice but also a religion-informed moral practice. This enables us to gain a more insightful, novel, and nuanced understanding of care ethics.

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Defining the constituents of a kindness architecture in higher education through a collaboration between the UK and Ukraine

Christina Schwabenland, Alexander Kofinas, Olena Iarmosh, Roman Nesterenko, Maryna Vasylieva and Winifred Soribe

Abstract

This paper presents data from a partnership between the UK and Ukraine, funded by the British Council's Gender Equality Partnerships Fund, aimed at improving access to leadership and management positions for women working in higher education. Although there were several phases to the project the main form of intervention was a series of six, day-long workshops (in Kharkiv, Kyiv and Lviv) with women who had attained senior positions (both academic and administrative) using the LEGO® Serious Play® (LSP) technology.

In LSP workshops participants are led by a trained LSP facilitator through a series of activities, each probing increasingly deeper into the subject matter through LEGO model building and participants' interpretations of their own LEGO models. The 3D LEGO models effectively serve as the stimulus for self-exploration and group discussion, enabling knowledge sharing, problem solving, and decision making. The LSP methodology thus deepens the reflection process of participants and supports dialogue amongst them while removing some of the tensions the participants may feel about the particular topic as the models construct meaning metaphorically. (Schwabenland 2016; Schwabenland and Kofinas 2024). The activities are designed to begin with the creation of a model that represents an idealised state of being which is then enlarged as various challenges and circumstances are added to it. The representation of the ideal creates the possibilities for responses to the challenges identified.

Our analysis of the models participants built and the discussions these provoked, revealed insights into the ways in which these highly 'successful' women conceptualised their roles within the institutions where they worked and how these were embedded within their wider lives, characterised by family ties, caring responsibilities and life-threatening political conflict. Many of the discussions suggest elements of what Allen (2022) refers to as 'building a kindness architecture in organisations' (p.69). Care emerges from the models and the discussions they provoked, in a number of ways which we will present and illustrate through quotes and photos of the models and through the metaphors chosen by the model builders. One example; many included plants and flowers.

Which of these elements shows that this is a woman's career? The plants. I don't think a man would have put the plants there [...] A plant is growth, development [...] here I already have a garden with trees. And I'm on this grain of sand.

An ethics of care also emerges in the emphasis on connections with colleagues and family, the importance of balance and harmony and on the quality of interactions- contrasting 'well-wishers' with 'smiling, kind sharks'.

Our analysis will focus on identifying these and other components of an architecture of kindness as conceptualised through these models alongside emerging contradictions and tensions between very differing understandings of the impact of gender discrimination on their career trajectories. (492 words)

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Women's Empowerment in Higher Education in Montenegro and Southeast Asia

Dragica Žugić

Abstract

This paper explores women's empowerment in higher education through the lens of caring feminisms, offering a comparative perspective between Montenegro and Southeast Asia, with reference to Malaysia and Indonesia. It combines qualitative insights, including personal academic experiences, with a broader analysis of structural gender inequalities and socially embedded norms shaping women's academic participation.

The study engages with global gender indicators developed by the United Nations Development Programme, including the Gender Inequality Index (GII), the Gender-Related Development Index (GDI), and the Gender Empowerment Measure (GEM), to contextualise women's access to and positioning within higher education. These measures are complemented by the Gender Social Norms Index (GSNI), which captures persistent societal biases regarding women's roles across political, educational, economic, and physical dimensions. Recent findings indicate that a significant proportion of both men and women worldwide continue to hold biases that constrain women's opportunities, pointing to the deep-rooted cultural and normative barriers that shape educational and professional trajectories.

By linking these macro-level indicators with micro-level academic experiences, the paper examines how practices of care, such as mentorship, peer support, and inclusive institutional cultures, can both respond to and challenge entrenched inequalities. Special attention is paid to how caring practices are enacted across different cultural contexts and how they may serve as mechanisms of resistance to structural and normative constraints.

The paper argues that feminist approaches grounded in care offer a critical alternative to neoliberal and hierarchical models of higher education by foregrounding interdependence, relationality, and collective wellbeing. Through a cross-regional perspective, it contributes to ongoing discussions on how caring feminisms can operate across borders to transform academic spaces and support more equitable futures for women.

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Stream C: Care as Resistance and Resistance to Care

Caring Through Violence: Women's Testimonies, Literature, and Resistance in Algeria

Esra Bengizi

Abstract

This paper examines how practices of care are articulated, embodied, and politicized through women's literary and testimonial narratives in Algeria, particularly in relation to histories of colonialism and the violence of the Black Decade. Drawing on feminist, postcolonial and decolonial theory, as well as the ethics of care, it explores how care emerges not as a passive or apolitical response to suffering, but as a critical site of resistance, survival, and agency within contexts of extreme political violence. Building on Virginia Held's theorization of care as a comprehensive moral and political framework, one that understands individuals as fundamentally relational rather than autonomous, this paper repositions care as central to analyzing large-scale social and political relations, including war, terrorism, and structural violence (Held 2010).

Focusing on a corpus of Algerian women's writing and political testimonies, including Hafsa Zinaï-Koudil's *Sans Voix* and Maïssa Bey's *Puisque Mon Cœur Est Mort*, this paper analyzes how narratives of violence are intertwined with practices of care that sustain individuals and communities. These texts reveal how women negotiate their positions as both subjects of violence and agents of political action, challenging stereotypical representations of victimhood. Care, in this context, becomes a form of embodied knowledge and relational practice that resists erasure, fragmentation, and silence. Engaging with scholarship that reconceptualizes care as foundational to building a "caring world" in the face of crime, terrorism, and political instability, the paper further draws on Carol Gould's argument that terrorism itself can be understood as a profound failure of care, thereby reframing violence as not only a political rupture but also an ethical one (Gould 2004).

Through close textual analysis of narratives produced in conditions of rupture, trauma and censorship, the paper foregrounds the practices of care and women's solidarity that emerge within, rather than outside of violence. It shows how acts of witnessing, storytelling, and remembrance function as forms of care that sustain individuals and communities, while remaining inseparable from the violent contexts in which they are produced. In these texts, care is grounded in survival, resistance, and collective memory. Also, it traces how care is enacted through specific relational practices, including expressions of women's solidarity and the construction of collective identities. At the same time, the paper highlights how women navigate, reproduce and at times enact violence.

Situating these insights within transnational feminist debates, the paper interrogates how caring feminisms circulate across borders while remaining attentive to asymmetries of power, history, and knowledge production. It resists universalizing narratives of care, instead advocating for a situated, decolonial understanding grounded in Algeria's specific geopolitical context. Lastly, this paper demonstrates that care in these contexts functions as a relational and political practice that both sustains life and operates within, rather than apart from, structures of violence.

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Organising intimate-adaptive care amidst violence

Sanaa Alazab & Owain Smolović Jones

Abstract

Organisation studies is increasingly adopting a political view of care, with care approached expansively as a means of asserting responsive and interdependent forms of organising within an increasingly careless world (Antoni et al, 2020; Fotaki, 2023; Reeves & Bristow, 2024; Smolović Jones et al, 2026). In such studies care is positioned in relation to its shadow, that of a growing carelessness. Carelessness is not merely 'absence of care' but is something 'organized' through the 'production of insensitivity to, and marginalization of, others' needs' (Wenzel, 2025: 676). Close to, though not identical with, carelessness is violence – a phenomenon that organisation studies has yet to address in relation to care, particularly in contexts where violence shapes the conditions of everyday life. Such an absence is significant in a world subjected to ever intensifying military violence (International Institute for Strategic Studies, 2024) and an 'epidemic' of femicide (United Nations, 2024).

Violence is approached here as the exercise of intentional harm to another. As Hannah Arendt (1970: 45) noted, violence has an 'instrumental character', meaning that it is adopted in the service of power of some kind. In this paper, we position violence as a 'multi-faceted and multi-sited force – interpersonal and institutional, social, economic and political, physical, sexual, emotional' (Pain & Staeheli, 2014: 344). Such is the ubiquitousness of violence in certain spaces, and its instrumental, organised nature, organisation studies research of care needs to grapple with its growing shadow.

This study contributes to organisation studies research on care through a fine-grained account from the streets of Gaza, Palestine. We do so through theorising 'intimate-adaptive care'. Such care is practiced in the compressed spaces of Gaza, geographically delineated by military occupation and siege, which continuously attacks and shrinks spaces for care. Indeed, these are spaces of totalising violence, that which cannot be escaped. Our empirical site is the intimate setting of a small, improvised school in Gaza, where education and care are delivered in the face of immanent violence, insecurity and loss. The study comprises one long-form interview with the head of the school (also the first author) and her ethnographic journal documenting 16 months of her work. In the paper, we theorise key practices of intimate-adaptive care. These practices incorporate those that are enacted within the compressed spaces of a temporary and damaged, semi-open-air building, but also stretch across space to the tents and places of shelter of those displaced in the genocide (OHCHR 2025).

Conceptually, we approach the study by drawing on materialist accounts of care from organisation studies (e.g. Smolović Jones et al, 2026; Wickström et al, 2025), which allows us to view care as emerging through the entanglement of bodies and the material in creative and dynamic constellations. From this basis, we position both violence and care geographically. Doing so allows us to problematise the traditional separations between private and public forms of violence, instead drawing on the work of Rachel Pain (2015: 65) to explore the 'intimacies' of war – whereby violence is read as a 'single complex', working on the bodies of the vulnerable. From this perspective, violence is co-constructed through 'power structures in society, especially those of patriarchy, class, racism and heterosexism' (ibid) and 'pervasive, intimate' (ibid: 64) acts of aggression on the bodies of individuals (ibid). For Pain (2014 & 2015; Pain & Staeheli, 2014), violence depends upon practice within multiple, intersecting and co-dependent scales, with localised norms seeping into the national and global, and vice versa. Hence care organised in intimate settings, as well as offering comfort and practical support for proximate others, also has the capacity for wider political change.

Care is positioned as inescapably responsive to experiences of violence. Hence we view care geographically as both intimate and adaptive, with adaptiveness driven by an intimate and relational understanding of the needs of another and the social whole (Segal, 2023; Tronto, 1993 & 2013) under conditions of mass violence and siege. Care is taken to be that which 'repairs' the world (Fisher & Tronto, 1990: 40). Such repair work is directed to 'things that break off, the broken things' (Ahmed, 2017: 266), as to lose the broken within space is to lose something of the interdependent whole. From here, the paper turns to the micro-scale of the classroom in Gaza, drawing on the work of Sara Ahmed and her positioning of care as that which holds open possibilities for contingency, for the world to be made otherwise (Ahmed, 2010 & 2017). Ahmed offers a way of interpreting how bodies may be orientated (2006) to care, to creating and holding open a tangible space that can generate possibilities for life to persist and new worlds to be built.

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Anti-gender Politics in Cyprus: Actors and Resistances

Nayia Kamenou

Abstract

Literature on far-right and anti-gender politics has registered their rise across the globe (Ayoub and Stoeckl, 2024; Kuhar and Pajnik, 2024). It has argued that they find fertile ground in contentious contexts where democracy is under strain, and in nationalist contexts where polarization over gender and LGBTIQ+ issues is high (Graff and Korolczuk, 2022; Meret and Scrinzi, 2024). Moreover, the relevant literature has demonstrated that far-right and anti-gender actors and mobilize to disparage intersectional feminist and LGBTIQ+ movements, and to curb or revoke LGBTIQ+ and women's rights (Kuhar and Paternotte, 2017; Norocel and Paternotte, 2023). Additionally, feminist literature on the topic has shown that far-right and anti-gender actors do not always simply reject feminism but may strategically use it to advance their political agendas (Arfini et al., 2019; Farris, 2017; Kamenou, 2023). Nonetheless, despite similarities, far-right and anti-gender politics, and the ways in which its agents use feminism's gains and some of its ideological repertoire—including the concept of 'care'—in the service of exclusionary campaigns differ from country to country, as do acts of resistance against these politics, which have not been sufficiently explored to date (Ayoub and Stoeckl, 2024; Holvikivi et al., 2024; Sauer and Siim, 2019). A nuanced understanding of feminism's co-optations in far-right and anti-gender politics and of resistances against these politics is essential to fully grasp both the challenges this politics creates for feminism and pluralist democracy, and the potential of 'care' as concept and practice to enable modes of collective political existence that are premised on solidarity, equality, and justice (Butler, 2020; Chatzidakis et al., 2020). However, achieving this understanding necessitates expanding the geographical focus of the extant literature and focusing on the contentious margins (Connell, 2007). This paper attempts to contribute towards this understanding by examining anti-gender politics and resistances in Cyprus: A Southern European EU member state and a transnationalizing sociopolitical context where traditional perceptions of gender and sexuality still prevail, which remains divided along ethnic lines and is marked by colonialism, conflict, occupation, and nationalism (Kamenou, 2025). The guiding questions that are explored in the paper are: 1) How are elements of feminism—including the notion of 'care'—understood and employed by anti-gender actors and groups, and by actors and groups that resist anti-gender politics? 2) How do these understandings and employments relate to, and potentially affect, conceptualizations of feminism, equality, justice, and collective wellbeing? The paper engages with analyses of feminism's appropriations in anti-gender and far-right politics and draws on the theoretical and methodological insights of feminist intersectional scholarship. The analysis is based on articles, opinion pieces, and statements by key anti-gender politics actors and groups and resistance actors and groups published in major electronic newspaper portals and social media, at and around the time of events that stirred controversy over gender and LGBTIQ+ equality issues. The analysis of the media material identifies three ways in which elements of feminism are understood and employed these key actors: 1) the exclusive intersectionality approach; 2) the inclusive intersectionality approach; and 3) the neoliberal intersectionality approach. The paper argues that these approaches to feminism may contribute to the anti-gender politics' appeal among people with diverse views on gender and LGBTIQ+ equality, feminism, and politics, as they may respond to an array of interests and demands that can be made from many different positions. It also argues that the neoliberal intersectionality approach that is propelled by some groups and actors claiming to be resisting anti-gender politics may contribute to the widening of inequalities and to further marginalization of marginalized groups. Therefore, beyond contributing to discussions about appropriations of feminism in anti-gender politics, the paper demonstrates the importance of studying its employment in acts of resistance also for gaining a well-rounded understanding of this issue.

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Stream D: Care in Alternative Futures

Making space for women: exploring ESA women astronauts' gender identities through a feminist new materialist framework

Ale Fenu

Abstract

The space race has historically been conceived as an exercise in masculinity, grounded in colonial ideologies of conquering the unknown 'Other' and reinforcing anthropocentric systems that perpetuate its exploitation and control. In the last decade, the space race is living a 'second renaissance', and human expansion into and settlement of the solar system has become one of its main purposes. Advanced neoliberal capitalism (Braidotti, 2022) and a never-ending desire for expansionism found a new route in outer space, fuelled by the growing private entrepreneurial entry into the space race and their "colonial and imperialistic fantasies of total conquest (Braidotti, 2022: 231).

The current convergence of climate change, neoliberal policies, and the ongoing depletion of Earth's limited resources, fuelled by the desire for expansionism, strengthens the idea that space exploration is necessary for the progress of (Global North) humankind. While space exploration is portrayed by public and private space agencies as beneficial for humankind, human spaceflight remains a predominantly men's affair, and space-related organisations such as the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) and the European Space Agency (ESA) are still implicitly, culturally, and structurally organised around the ideal of a masculine default (Linstead, 1997; Acker, 2011). Accordingly, women entering this field often face an organisational culture shaped by hypermasculine norms and values that (re)produce gender inequalities.

This research, part of a doctoral project focused on the performative constitution of ESA women astronauts gendered working subjectivities, offers an example of the creative, alternative, and ethical implications that feminist perspectives offer to understand the intimate interrelationship of human and nonhuman entities within organising processes. Specifically, this research unfolds the implications of adopting a feminist new materialist onto-ethico-epistemological stance that challenges traditional boundaries and dichotomies while focusing on the differential patterns of mattering that constitute the woman astronaut's inclusion/exclusion (Barad, 2007). Accordingly, this research will offer a glimpse of the potentialities held by feminist new materialism to question the colonialist and anthropocentric logic of exploitation and subjectivation that still dominates our way of living and conceiving the Other (other genders, more-than-human others, other materialities).

While mapping the socio-material conditions enabling women's marginalisation/exclusion within the space industry, the feminist new materialist framework informing this study allows to trouble binary notions of identity and difference, opening instead to the possibility of seeing "how different differences get made, what gets excluded, and how these exclusions matter" (Barad, 2007: 30) in a geometry of exclusionary practices that "[have] been instrumental to the workings of power" (Barad, 2014: 170).

Furthermore, this project will discuss questions of responsibility and accountability rooted in a feminist new materialist onto-ethico-epistemological approach to research, and the necessity of embracing, as researchers, an "ethics of worlding" (Barad, 2007: 392) respons[i/a]ble for the human/nonhuman others with whom or which we are entangled with, and informed by difference, responsibility, and care.

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Posthumanism, care ethics, and sex work: Conceptualizing 'technological emancipation debt' with OnlyFans

Vera Haataja, Sara Dahlman and Florence Villesèche

Abstract

Sex work may be the world's oldest profession, but how this work is performed continues to evolve alongside broader societal transformations. Digital sex work refers to the "internet mediated exchange of sexual commodities or services" (Jones 2015: 560), encompassing platforms such as OnlyFans (Easterbrook-Smith 2023) and representing a multi-billion market. Care work is integral to sex work (Bernstein 2007), with sex workers often providing emotional support and companionship. In digital sex work, this emotional labor (Hochschild, 1979) is doubled: workers must perform the affective intimacy inherent to sex work and the emotional labor demanded by algorithmic governance and platform affordances (He & Agor, 2025), reinforcing gendered and racialized dynamics. With the rise of AI-powered chatbots, workers are furthermore pressured to perform "rehumanization labor" to prove their authenticity as real people (Cheshin et al., 2025).

Two Technological Shifts, One Technological Emancipation Debt

In this paper, we unpack and contrast two successive technological shifts in digital sex work: digitalization and platformization, and the rise of AI. We examine these via the illustrative example of OnlyFans. We argue that, while each shift offers genuine opportunities to reduce some of the burdens of sex work, neither delivers the liberation it promises. Instead, sex workers accumulate what we conceptualize as a "technological emancipation debt": each promise of greater autonomy generates new dependencies, competitions, and extractions, leaving sex workers perpetually owed an emancipation that remains deferred. We develop this concept drawing on posthumanism (Haraway, 2008; Herbrechter, 2013) to acknowledge the entangled nature of human-technology relations, and on feminist ethics of care (Gilligan, 1982; Tronto, 1993) to articulate what is lost when affective-relational labor is functionalized.

Platformization offers documented benefits, including increased safety, greater control over content and scheduling, and new avenues for income generation (Pezzutto, 2019; Vickers & Brooks-Gordon, 2023). Yet workers exchanged one form of precarity for another, becoming dependent on platforms that extract value from affective and corporeal labor while leaving stigma and structural inequality intact (Leybold & Nadegger, 2023) - the first layer of technological emancipation debt.

The rise of AI marks a qualitatively different shift that compounds emancipation debt. AI promises to replace substantial portions of emotional work, offering OnlyFans creators relief from messaging and personalized interactions (Ayradilli & Ustunel, 2026). Yet emancipation remains deferred as platforms continue to extract value while workers face competition from AI-only creators or are compelled to become hybrid human-AI operators under heightened precarity. The technological emancipation debt also has an ethical dimension. Care ethics emphasizes that care is inherently relational, involving attentiveness, responsibility, and responsiveness, that cannot be reduced to functional outputs without losing something essential (Held, 2006). Moreover, this debt is unevenly distributed, falling most heavily on feminized and racialized forms of care work (Federici, 2012; Gilligan, 1982). Framed as emancipation, technological innovation masks persistent exploitation and deepens existing social inequalities (Lynch et al., 2021).

Conclusion and Implications

We contribute to philosophical organization studies by developing the concept of technological emancipation debt to theorize how technological shifts repeatedly restructure affective-relational labor in sex work without delivering the liberation they promise. Sex workers on OnlyFans exemplify creditors of this debt, having invested in successive promises of technological freedom while emancipation remains deferred. This raises normative questions about how such debt might be repaid, through forms of organizing that recognize relational care, equitably distribute the benefits of AI, and resist reducing intimacy to algorithmic function (Wickström et al., 2025). Beyond sex work, the framework invites extension to other forms of stigmatized affective labor, including 'dirty work' (Hughes 1958; Ashforth & Kreiner, 2014) and care roles such as coaching, therapy, and elder care, where relational labor is central yet persistently undervalued.

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Session 2 – 2 September 2026, 15:05–16:35

Stream A: Care, Social Reproduction & Everyday Life

Between Bread and Care: Egyptian Women, Financial Provisioning, and the Politics of Feminist Self-realization

Pakinam Hassan

Abstract

In Egypt, as in much of the Global South, the experiences of women who serve as primary financial providers remain largely invisible within mainstream development discourse and feminist organizational scholarship. Yet increasing numbers of Egyptian women are sustaining households economically while simultaneously carrying the full burden of domestic care and navigating social expectations that continue to prioritize family responsibilities over personal ambition. This paper explores the intersection of financial breadwinning, care labor, and social reproduction in Egypt through a feminist political economy perspective, contributing to ongoing discussions on caring feminisms across borders.

The study draws on theories of care ethics and feminist political economy. Following the Care Collective's argument that care should be understood as a collective and political concern rather than a private responsibility, and Joan Tronto's conceptualization of care as a practice that shapes political life, the paper argues that many Egyptian women perform care under conditions of compulsion. They sustain both households and economies while lacking the social and institutional support necessary for their own well-being. This dynamic is further illuminated through Deniz Kandiyoti's concept of the patriarchal bargain, whereby women's compliance with gendered expectations is exchanged for conditional social acceptance and security. Women who prioritize career advancement, education, or personal aspirations often face intensified social scrutiny and pressure. Egypt therefore offers a compelling case through which to examine the broader contradictions of neoliberal patriarchy, which increasingly relies on women's productive labor while continuing to undervalue care work and reinforce traditional gender hierarchies.

A mixed-methods approach was employed to capture both the breadth and depth of these experiences. An online survey gathered quantitative data from women across diverse socioeconomic and geographic contexts, examining the pressures associated with financial provision, caregiving, and personal aspirations. Narrative interviews complemented these findings by providing detailed accounts of women's everyday negotiations of work, family responsibilities, and social expectations.

The findings reveal the hidden costs of care on women's self-realization. Across different social and economic groups, participants described patterns of silent negotiation, including moderating professional ambitions, managing community judgment, and absorbing significant emotional labor as the price of financial agency. The study demonstrates that female breadwinners are not exceptional cases but an overlooked social reality whose experiences provide valuable insights into contemporary gender relations.

By centering Egypt as a site for theorizing the global politics of care rather than as a peripheral case, the paper contributes to feminist scholarship on care in the Global South. It responds to calls for caring feminisms that build solidarities across borders by highlighting how women's experiences, despite differing cultural contexts, are shaped by shared inequalities in the distribution of care and constraints on their full participation in public and professional life.

Keywords: Social reproduction; gender equality; feminist political economy; intersectionality; neoliberal patriarchy; Global South feminisms, Egypt

Gendered Liminality and the Labour of Care in Women's Career Making

Kate O'Keefe, Aisling Tuite & Zeta Dooly

Abstract

The abolition of the marriage bar in Ireland in 1973 left the women who subsequently navigated Irish banking organisations found themselves occupying a prolonged and ambiguous in-between. They were structurally admitted yet not fully incorporated, formally equal but informally marginalised. This paper develops the concept of gendered liminality to theorise this persistent condition of structural betweenness as a distinctly gendered organisational phenomenon. It examines how care operated as both a mechanism of women's marginalisation and a practice of feminist resistance within these liminal conditions.

The study draws on two intersecting theoretical traditions. Joan Acker's (1990; 2006) theory of gendered organisations provides the structural lens. It foregrounds the inequality regimes, ideal worker norms and gendered substructures through which banking organisations reproduced masculine dominance following the bar's removal. Liminality theory, rooted in the anthropological work of van Gennep (1909;1960) and Turner (1967;1969) and extended into political and organisational analysis by Thomassen (2009; 2014) and Szokolczai (2009), supplies the temporal and experiential dimension which Acker's framework leaves underexplored. By bridging these traditions, gendered liminality captures how women were held in a state of indefinite threshold-crossing, perpetually between exclusion and incorporation (O'Keefe, forthcoming).

The study utilises Biographical Narrative Interpretive Method (BNIM) (Wengraf, 2001) and Reflexive Thematic Analysis (Braun and Clarke, 2006, 2019) across twenty-one narrative accounts. It surfaces how participants experienced, navigated and resisted their liminal positioning. Findings reveal that care was not incidental to these experiences but constitutive of them. Women's caring labour was simultaneously demanded by gendered organisational structures, mobilised as justification for their continued marginalisation through the ideal worker norm (Acker, 1990), and practised among women themselves as informal solidarity within inhospitable organisational conditions. These informal care practices echo what the Care Collective (2020) terms 'caring with' and what Bowes-Catton et al. (2020) describe as acts of resistance enacted through care.

The paper argues that gendered liminality operates as a reproductive mechanism of organisational gender inequality, perpetually deferring women's full incorporation while extracting their caring labour. In foregrounding the temporal, affective and relational dimensions of women's organisational experience, the study contributes to feminist organisation studies by demonstrating that structural and experiential analyses are not competing but complementary approaches to understanding how gender inequality persists. It also responds to calls for interdisciplinary feminist scholarship (Tyler et al., 2024) by drawing anthropological and sociological theory into dialogue with organisation studies.

The conceptual and practical implications are twofold. First, gendered liminality offers a transferable analytical framework for examining how organisations sustain inequality through indefinite threshold conditions rather than outright exclusion, with application beyond banking and beyond the Irish context. Second, the study's findings suggest that care practices within liminal conditions, though often invisible and undervalued, constitute meaningful acts of feminist resistance (Segal, 2023). These offer insights for building more compassionate, durable and solidaristic modes of organising.

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Across the Blue Line: Radical Care, Institutional Boundaries, and the Hidden Lives of Frontline Police Fathers

Deborah Hamer-Acquaah

Abstract

Drawing on Lynne Segal's *Lean on Me: A Politics of Radical Care* (2023), this paper examines how fathers who are also frontline police officers, experience, negotiate, and reconfigure care across the boundary between the institution and their lives beyond it. Segal's concept of 'radical care' foregrounds interdependence, collective responsibility, and the centrality of relational life, offering a critical framework for interrogating organisations structured around hierarchy and neoliberal individualism. Within such contexts, care is marginalised and often positioned as incompatible with professional identity. This paper conceptualises policing as a site of 'care displacement', where despite institutional structures that suppress care, it can be reconstituted internally and externally through informal relational networks.

The paper also engages Joan Tronto's (1993) ethic of care, which situates care as a political practice grounded in recognition of mutual vulnerability and interdependence. Within policing, vulnerability is ostensibly disavowed; the normative ideal of the officer being one of emotional control, resilience, and self-sufficiency (Buhrig, 2024; Grupe, 2023). Across the dataset, participants consistently reported a culture where support-seeking is stigmatised.

Empirically, the analysis draws on qualitative, interpretive interview data with frontline police officer-fathers, informed by a relational, care-centred feminist approach. Three key findings emerged. First, participants articulated a profound absence of institutional care, characterised by lack of mental health support, normalising of trauma exposure, and austerity-driven resource constraints. This aligns with evidence of elevated rates of trauma-related conditions, including PTSD/C-PTSD associated with occupational stressors (Burchell et al., 2023; Steel et al., 2021).

Second, participants described the displacement of care into the private sphere; partners and families absorb much of the emotional burden of policing work. This redistribution of care reflects broader structural shifts in which responsibility for wellbeing is individualised, coped with autonomously and removed from institutional accountability.

Third, the data reveal the emergence of informal, collectively-organised 'communities of care' within and beyond the institution. These include peer-based support practices and the forming of friendships in clubs and events outside of the organisation, where officers are able to express vulnerability without stigma. Participants identified police suicide as a critical turning point in the formation of such communities. Evidence indicates that over 100 police officers in England and Wales committed suicide between 2022 and 2025 and 200 attempted it (Police Federation of England and Wales, 2026). Experiences of losing colleagues disrupted the norm of invulnerability, generated heightened awareness of shared fragility and prompted a decision to actively support one another more closely. In this way, mutual vulnerability becomes not only recognised but mobilised as the basis for solidarity, reflecting Tronto's emphasis on mutual dependence as foundational to care (Tronto, 1993).

These findings demonstrate that care is not absent within policing but displaced and reconstituted beyond formal organisational boundaries, which aligns closely with Segal's concept of radical care (Segal, 2023). This paper highlights the human consequences of uncaring organisations and argues for a reorientation towards care as a collective and political necessity.

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Stream B: Caring Organisations, Leadership & Institutions

Democratising Expertise? Caseworker Resistance and the Limits of Algorithmic Care in Public Employment Services

Aisling Tuite

Abstract

Drawing on a large multinational project to develop a disruptive digital platform for European Public Employment Service (PES) casework, this paper examines how care is reconfigured at the border of human discretion and algorithmic control. It explores how caseworkers navigate the insertion of AI-driven decision-support systems into traditionally relational, human-to-human care practices. Conceptualising PES interactions as an assemblage in the Deleuzian sense (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987), the paper understands care work as a relational and distributed accomplishment delivered historically as a “species activity” (Fisher & Tronto, 1990), but increasingly constituted through human and non-human actors.

PES are often designated as providing a care service, however there are few in-depth studies that focus on care theories as a point of departure. Since the mid-1990s, PES have progressively adopted algorithmic tools for profiling, categorising and managing unemployed populations (O’Connell et al., 2009; Considine et al., 2022; Alexopoulou, 2025). These developments reflect broader shifts toward data-driven governance, AI and automated decision-making (Pieterse, 2025). While technology in care settings is not new, Vallor (2011) highlights the risks posed by “carebots” to the cultivation of moral goods central to caregiving practices, prompting renewed scrutiny of how care is enacted when mediated by intelligent systems.

Responding to these concerns, this paper moves beyond instrumental views of technology as a neutral tool (Orlikowski, 2009; Beyes et al., 2022) to consider algorithmic systems as actors within care assemblages. Drawing on actor-network theory (ANT) and science and technology studies (STS) (Callon, 1986; Law, 2004; Latour, 2005), the analysis foregrounds how agency is distributed across human and technological elements. Empirically, the paper is based on the Horizon 2020 HECAT project, which developed an ethical decision-support platform- My Labour Market (MLM)-piloted with the Slovenian PES. The platform aimed to “democratise expertise” and knowledge (Mol, 2008) by providing transparent and accessible labour market data to both caseworkers and unemployed clients.

The study combines document analysis tracing the evolution of PES technologies with focus group data from Slovenia, Denmark, Ireland and France which examined user responses to MLM. Findings reveal a pronounced tension between the platform’s design intentions and its enactment in practice. Caseworkers frequently resist the system’s integration, mobilising paternalistic assumptions about unemployed individuals’ digital literacy and capacity to interpret labour market data. This resistance manifests in subtle acts of gatekeeping, limiting client access and engagement with the platform. In contrast, unemployed participants expressed openness to the technology, valuing its transparency and potential to support more collaborative decision-making.

The paper argues that forms of resistance demonstrated by caseworkers constitutes micro-level power that reasserts hierarchical relations within the care assemblage. By constraining the agency of algorithmic systems, caseworkers not only preserve their expert status but also inadvertently limit the emergence of more participatory and responsive care practices. In doing so, they inhibit the potential of AI-driven tools to contribute to more equitable, “cyborg” forms of state care.

Ultimately, the paper contributes to debates on caring feminisms by highlighting how struggles over knowledge, expertise, and trust shape the sociotechnical reconfiguration of care, raising important questions about the future of relationality in increasingly algorithmically mediated public services.

Affective Objects in Organizational DEI Transformations: On Difference, Relations and Disorientation

Særos Mist Hrannarsdóttir

Abstract

Through a case of an organizational diversity, equity and inclusion transformation in a large Danish construction firm, my research studies how objects invoke affective encounters within the organization and how such encounters can disorient taken-for-granted organizational relations and realities. Using a phenomenologically informed approach, I wish to better understand and conceptualize affective objects and their transformative potentials, as interventions and enablers of possibilities for experiencing- and relating to the shared organization with a difference.

What I mean by objects does not only regard material things. They can be, but more broadly speaking, the objects that subjects become involved with in organizational spaces could just as much be imagined; “an object can be anything that a feeling is directed toward” (Ahmed, 2014b: 214). By tracing affective appearances back to the encounters that seemingly set them off, I identify four objects; cars, stories, numbers and lines, that disorient organizational subjects, by bringing differences into close contact and opening possibilities for the reorganization of relations of difference.

How objects appear or arrive into our reach, but also our possibilities of reaching out to them, relates to the ways we are affected by them and the emotions we might attach to them (Ahmed, 2006: 8). Importantly, objects do not elicit responses through inherent qualities; rather, they operate within a broader network of associations and affective histories that bind individuals to these objects, illuminating a complex entanglement of identity and culture (Zahavi, 2019). To encounter an object is thus not merely seeing what is present intuitively or materially, because there is always more to our experience of an object (Zahavi, 2019).

Scholarship on objects more broadly has asserted that the power of objects should not be underestimated, and that objects as an affective part of organizational lived experience calls for further exploration (Zahavi, 2019). It is evident how there is a blossoming field for studying the affectivity and effects of objects in organized life (Kenny et al., 2011), much of which build on previous theorizations of stickiness and emotionality of objects, as so vividly and beautifully introduced by Sara Ahmed (2014, 2006). Sara Ahmeds notion of ‘Happy Objects’ and ‘Objects of Emotion’ has gained much traction in organizational scholarship and beyond, as analytical entities. This for instance has been used to analyze implementation processes (Mankki, 2023), teachers’ relationship to students (Miller & Gkonou, 2023), and how books influence subject experiences of masculinity (Asplund, 2021). Other theorizations of objects have asserted the vibrant (Bennet, 2010) and evocative (Turtle, 2011) qualities of objects. I wish to build onward on these lines of thinking about the organizing features of objects, particularly in relation to their capacity to be affective. However, rather than looking at how certain emotions stick, charge, and saturate certain objects, I instead explore how affective objects might manifest as organizational interventions; interventional objects that are effective at disorienting the status quo exactly because they are affective. The transformative potential lies here in the disturbance of routine practices of relating to difference enabled in the encounters with the objects. Indeed, it is in the moment of disorientation that status quo is destabilized and an opening towards new directions becomes possible: “disorientation is a way of describing the feelings that gather when we lose our sense of who it is that we are. Such losses can be converted into the joy of a future that has been opened up” (Ahmed, 2006: 20).

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“Too Critical” for Business School? Becoming a Feminist Academic through Care and Conditional Belonging in a Turkish State University

Oya Zincir

Abstract

This paper develops a critical feminist autoethnographic account of becoming a feminist academic within a Turkish state university business school shaped by managerialism, performance pressures, and masculinised organisational norms (Aydın-Turan & Memiş Sağır, 2019; Şener, 2025). Responding to the conference invitation to explore what it means to be, live, and work as a feminist across borders, it argues that feminism is often lived less as a fixed identity than as an uneven and contested process of becoming (Munar, 2017; Abdellatif et al., 2025). In semi-peripheral institutional settings such as Turkish public universities, feminist orientations may emerge not through stable political identification, but through repeated encounters with discomfort, care obligations, and exclusion (Askins & Blazek, 2017; Ağılı & Turguter, 2020).

Conceptually, the paper draws on situated knowledge and standpoint epistemologies (Haraway, 1988) alongside feminist care ethics (Tronto, 2010; 2013) framing care as “an inexorable part of the human condition” (Farris, 2025: 1). It understands becoming feminist as a relational and embodied reorientation in how authority, labour, success, and responsibility are interpreted within academic life (Flynn, 2018; Brannelly & Barnes, 2022). This perspective is especially relevant to business schools, where norms of neutrality, professionalism, competition, and productivity frequently marginalise critical and feminist commitments (Alvesson & Spicer, 2016; Alakavuklar et al., 2017; Prothero, 2024).

Methodologically, the study adopts a critical feminist autoethnographic approach informed by analytical autoethnography (Ellis & Bochner, 2000; Crawley, 2012). The analysis draws on multi-year reflective journaling, memory work, and written accounts of routine institutional encounters involving teaching, meetings, collegial relations, and performance demands. Rather than treating experience as a transparent truth, lived experience is approached as a situated source of knowledge through which organisational power, emotional labour, and epistemic struggle can be analysed (Warren, 2017; Mitchell, 2023; Rajan, 2023).

Preliminary findings reveal three tensions. First, encounters with feminist and critical scholarship unsettle inherited assumptions about meritocracy, neutrality, and academic freedom, producing epistemic discomfort (Alvesson & Spicer, 2016; Alakavuklar, 2017). Second, care work—including supporting students, mentoring colleagues, managing emotions, and sustaining oneself—is central to academic survival yet routinely devalued within performative productivity regimes (Hollywood et al., 2020; Rajan, 2023; Biçici, 2025). Third, belonging becomes fragile and conditional, as acceptance is more readily granted when critique is softened or depoliticised within hierarchical and patriarchal cultures (Tuncer, 2019; Edwards et al., 2022; Silva et al., 2024).

The Turkish public university context intensifies these dynamics through the intersection of patriarchal norms, resource scarcity, and peripheral positioning within global academic hierarchies (Üsdiken & Wasti, 2009; Oba & Gençer, 2016). Under such conditions, care becomes not only an ethical practice but also a survival strategy and mode of resistance.

The paper contributes to feminist scholarship on academic labour, identity, and care by showing that academic feminism in semi-peripheral institutional settings may take shape through ambivalence, strain, and incomplete becoming rather than confident identification. It also contributes to critical management studies by demonstrating how managerialist structures and wider systemic constraints delimit the boundaries of legitimate critique.

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Stream C: Care as Resistance and Resistance to Care

Epistemic Care as Resistance: Feminist Activism, Local Politics and Collective Memory

Deniz Özbek Özyurt

Abstract

The tension between care for oneself and care for others has often been framed as a normative dilemma. This article proposes that approaching this tension through the lens of epistemic justice literature (Fricker, 2007; Medina, 2013) offers a more productive perspective. Rather than treating self-care and care for others as competing orientations, I argue that epistemic virtues—such as curiosity, openness, and humility—are inherently relational practices that simultaneously sustain both. In this sense, epistemic care operates as a bridge: it enables individuals to cultivate their capacities as knowers while contributing to the recognition, visibility, and interpretive agency of others.

Care has increasingly been theorised not only as a moral orientation but also as an epistemic virtue that shapes how individuals relate to knowledge, others, and shared worlds. Within virtue epistemology, epistemic care can be understood as a disposition to recognise, value, and promote epistemic goods—such as knowledge, understanding, and interpretive agency—in ways that are inherently relational rather than confined to the self. What is cared about structures and what is taken to matter epistemically, making care foundational to epistemic value itself (Zagzebski, 2004; Battaly, 2026). When epistemic virtues are enacted and sustained across social relations, the conditions for epistemic justice are strengthened. When conceptualised in relational terms, emphasising interdependence and attentiveness to neglected voices, care functions as an epistemic practice that challenges marginalisation and brings excluded experiences into view.

Building on this framework, the paper examines how feminist care operates as an epistemic practice within local politics through the case of the Bodrum Women's Solidarity Association (BKD) in Bodrum, Turkey. BKD is a feminist grassroots organisation that has not only intervened in local politics but has also radically reshaped it, acting as a key actor in the production and institutionalisation of feminist policy at the local level. In this context, feminist care becomes a mode of epistemic intervention: it enables the recognition of previously unseen groups while fostering the articulation of silenced needs. The efforts of BKD to establish a women's shelter exemplify the creation of material infrastructures of care grounded in lived experience, while the initiative to name a street after feminist scholar Şirin Tekeli represents a symbolic intervention into the town's memory culture. Taken together, these practices illustrate how care operates simultaneously across institutional and mnemonic domains.

By bringing together the literatures on epistemic injustice and feminist care ethics, the paper argues that grassroots feminist activism, grounded in practices of care, functions as a mode of epistemic resistance that simultaneously reshapes local politics and rearticulates collective memory. Through these practices, marginalised experiences gain visibility, new interpretive frameworks emerge, and more inclusive epistemic environments are fostered. In this sense, feminist care not only addresses immediate social needs but also contributes to the broader project of epistemic justice by reshaping how societies recognise, remember, and respond to inequality.

Dr. Deniz Özbek Özyurt

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Workplace Sexual Harassment in the UK: Insights for trade union action from independent reports since the #MeToo

Stefano Gaspari & Hazel Conley

Abstract

Since #MeToo went viral in October 2017, the extent of workplace sexual harassment (WSH) has become increasingly documented and debated amongst academics, practitioners and policymakers (Lancet 2022). In the UK, the latest policy interventions (Worker Protection Act 2023; Employment Rights Act 2025) revise the legislation to introduce new duties on employers to prevent WSH. Nevertheless, it seems fair to expect hurdles in their implementation since WSH has proven to be a difficult concept to legislate against because cultures of misogyny are deep-rooted and insidious (WEC 2018; Adams et al. 2021; Jackson et al. 2023). Employers and trade unions need clear guidance and evidence-based strategies to create safe workplaces, encourage reporting and implement effective preventive measures (McDonald 2012; McDonald et al. 2015; Campbell and Chinnery 2018).

Our research directly addresses this need by examining independent reports on WSH published in the last seven years and focused on various sectors across the UK. We identified 29 reports and focus on 15, including 3 about trade union organisations (one of which the contributors have been directly involved in) (Conley and Gaspari 2023). In so doing, we address two research questions. First, how does WSH occur in the UK and what employers (fail to) do to tackle it? Second, how can trade unions utilise and support the implementation of recommendations that independent reports produce in the fight against WSH?

Our analysis suggests that some common themes emerge from these reports: the incidence, prevalence and types of WSH; its causes, costs to employers, employees and the economy; the problems of victim under-reporting. There is also a growing awareness of the intersectional dimensions of WSH (Kirtan et al. 2024). Themes that are instead less commonly explored include: where and how victims of WSH can confidentially report their experiences (Afiouni et al. 2025); employee perceptions of how employers respond to WSH (Goldscheid 2021); factors promoting bystander intervention and, in particular, male allyship (Burrell et al. 2018); training to prevent WSH; the use of whistleblowing lines; the role of policymakers, HR, and trade unions in the prevention of WSH.

While reviewing the independent reports on WSH, we examine the following features: the triggers (e.g., public pressure, stakeholders as trade unions or women's networks); the authors' background (e.g., academics, barristers, consultants); the investigation informing the report (e.g., data collection methods, as surveys, interviews, focus groups, and/or anonymous entries); the outcome in terms of format (e.g., publication, toolkit) and impact (e.g., follow-up initiatives, engagement with stakeholders). By identifying good practices and common limitations in conducting independent reports, we plan to engage with trade unions in their pursuit to become stronger agents of change in the prevention of WSH (Michau et al. 2015).

Overall, independent reports on WSH are a key source of data in the fight against gender-based harassment and violence, and the findings and recommendations at the core of our presentation will be relevant to academics, researchers, trade unionists, and activists alike.

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Stream D: Care in Alternative Futures

Embodying Times: An Arendtian–Butlerian Perspective on Care Work

Luigi Maria Sicca & Daniela Pianezzi

Abstract

Research on care work has long focused on emotional labour (Ashforth and Humphrey, 1993; Bolton, 2005), burnout and coping (Korczynski, 2003; Maslach and Leiter, 1997), and professional identity (Grey, 1994; Sveningsson and Alvesson, 2003). What has received less attention is how professional identities are shaped through time, through schedules, routines, and organizational tools that push toward linear, predictable lives (Adam, 1990; Caza et al., 2018). This matters in care work, where time doesn't just organize tasks but deeply affects workers' personal and family lives. So, the question becomes: what makes care "human," beyond repetition? And when is care actually sustainable for those who provide it?

To explore this, we studied 50 care workers in an Italian hospital. We draw on Arendt's distinction between labour, work, and action (1998 [1958]) and Butler's idea of performativity (1990; 2004), as developed in organizational research (Riach et al., 2014; 2016). Together, these perspectives help us understand how time shapes both what care workers do and who they can be.

In simple terms, labour refers to repetitive, necessary tasks; work is about building stable systems and structures; and action is the space where people interact and make something new. In care settings, labour shows up in routine activities like hygiene and monitoring. Work takes the form of protocols, schedules, and administrative systems. Action appears in everyday interactions: when workers negotiate shifts, make decisions, or support one another across professional and personal boundaries.

Butler's perspective adds another layer: identities are not fixed but shaped by what is socially recognized as "normal." Chrononormativity sets expectations about how time should be used and these expectations make some ways of living seem legitimate and others difficult or even invisible (Riach et al., 2014; 2016). In hospitals, this plays out through shifts, on-call duties, and scheduling systems, often reinforcing gendered expectations about availability and caregiving.

Our data, consisting of interviews, field notes, documents, and drawings collected in 2025, capture how fragmented and non-linear these experiences really are (Patton, 2002; O'Reilly, 2009). Care workers describe constant pressure to be available, often beyond their contracts. Rest is interrupted, schedules shift unpredictably, and coordinating family life becomes a challenge. Organizational tools like protocols and time-banking systems create a sense of order, but often at a personal cost. As one participant put it, "One preference a month: your life closes there."

Even within these constraints, care workers find ways to act. They set safety limits, negotiate workloads, make and keep promises, and support colleagues. These small, everyday practices create a shared space where care is constantly redefined. They also feed back into the organization, leading to small changes.

Our findings show that care work is deeply shaped by time. Labour, work, and action are tightly connected through organizational time structures. Practices like keeping promises or forgiving mistakes help sustain care in difficult conditions. Rethinking care work, then, means rethinking time, not just as a schedule, but as something that shapes whose lives are livable.

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Theorising and activating grounded hope in feminist organisation studies

Lydia Martin & Janet Sayers

Abstract

Dr Lydia Martin, University of Bristol (with Prof. Janet G. Sayers, Massey University)

This paper contributes to emerging feminist scholarship on ‘grounded hope’ by theorising hope not as an aspirational orientation toward a better future, but as an immanent, relational practice enacted through care, responsivity, and ongoing engagement with difficult conditions (Geerts, 2022). Drawing on feminist posthumanist and new materialist thought (Braidotti, 2013; Dolphijn & van der Tuin, 2012), we conceptualise grounded hope as aligned with Haraway’s (2016) call to ‘stay with the trouble’: an orientation to the present that refuses transcendence, unfounded optimism, and redemption narratives, and instead insists on attentiveness to and responsibility for the material–discursive entanglements through which worlds are continuously made and unmade.

Against humanist accounts that locate hope as a personal resource of sovereign, intentional subjects, we propose an understanding of hope as an emergent capacity of assemblages, and so an always inherently partial, embodied, and embedded activity (Braidotti, 2013, 2019; Geerts, 2022). Read through a feminist posthumanist lens, grounded hope becomes a relational practice rather than an inner feeling or managerial imperative: something enacted in and with trouble. This sensibility resonates with wider lines of thought that treat possibility as emerging through situated beginnings and ongoing relations rather than through plans that promise closure (e.g., Tsing, 2015). It is also important to acknowledge that Indigenous, queer, and other critical traditions extend and contest these conversations in ways that sharpen the political stakes of hope, care, and obligation (Spiller et al., 2019; TallBear, 2017).

The second contribution of the paper is methodological and praxis-oriented. We demonstrate how transpositions (Braidotti, 2006; Martin, et al., 2025) can be used as a framework for activating grounded hope as an immanent, relational practice within organisation studies spaces, including research and educational contexts. Developed in Braidotti’s (2006, 2011) feminist new materialist and posthumanist philosophy, transpositions is a term borrowed from music and biology studies to indicate practices of boundary-crossing that foreground dependence, situatedness, and creativity with the more-than-human world. In musical terms, transposition refers to the process of playing an existing piece in a completely different key: the pattern remains, but its tone, context, and/or resonances shift. Transpositions thus signal “variations and shifts of scale in a discontinuous but harmonious pattern” (Braidotti, 2011, p. 226). The purpose of transpositions in the context of the social sciences is to reconfigure dominant managerial categories and human-centric standpoints by moving across perspectives, worldviews, and locations in ways that generate new connections and possibilities for thought and action without erasing difference or taking flight into abstract futurism (Martin, et al., 2025). In keeping with our theorisation of grounded hope, possibility can only be unfolded “within the constraints of this troubled world and its historically embedded realities” (Zaliwska & Boler, 2019, p. 72).

Overall, the paper offers organisation studies scholars a feminist posthumanist framework for theorising and activating grounded hope as care-full and responsive praxis: hope that is neither naïve nor detached, but carefully cultivated and enacted by ‘staying with the trouble.’

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Researching Care and Surveillance: Feminist Ethics in Practice

Zuzana Sekeráková Búriková

Abstract

Drawing on research on care and digital technologies in romantic relationships, this paper reflects on the epistemological, ethical, and methodological dynamics of the research process. It shows how our feminist epistemological and ethical commitments shaped both the research design and the presentation of data. Our research (Sekeráková Búriková, 2025) mapped how romantic partners use digital technologies as tools of care for one another and their families, while also examining how practices of surveillance, control, and digitally mediated abuse intersect with care.

The project was grounded in the principle that research on sensitive topics, power inequalities, and vulnerabilities must incorporate care at all stages: from research questions and methodology to data collection, dissemination, and researcher training (Brannelly and Barnes, 2022; Mackenzie et al., 2013). Feminist care ethics (Hamington, 2024; Tronto, 1993) and trauma-sensitive research ethics (Isobel, 2021; Treisman, 2021) provide us with a framework for “thinking with care” (Puig de la Bellacasa, 2017) when researching dynamics of care and control in intimate relationships.

This paper demonstrates how feminist care ethics informed our research in four key ways:

Thinking about care:

Conceptualising care as a non-ideal practice, acknowledging that systems can fail and people can make mistakes (Hamington, 2024; Vasara and Sihto, 2026), and recognising the vulnerabilities involved in care practices (Browne et al., 2021;), we examined a spectrum of digital practices—from expressions of love, trust, and care to practices of control and harm—with particular attention to the liminal spaces where care meets control.

Caring about research participants: The research methods were designed in accordance with trauma-sensitive approach to research (Isobel, 2021; Treisman, 2021). To minimise harm, we did not undertake interviews with abuse survivors. Instead we combined ethnographic interviews with people in romantic relationships, a representative survey on digital practices, and expert interviews with professionals supporting victims/survivors of technologically mediated violence. Data on abuse was collected via support professionals rather than directly from survivors (Nyklová, et al., 2023). All participants received information on mental health services and support for abuse survivors, and the research team received training in trauma-sensitive methods.

Caring about ourselves: Recognising researchers’ own vulnerabilities and care needs (AbiNader et al. 2023; Koskinen, 2025), research team members attended a workshop on secondary trauma and stress management, and we hold regular meetings to reflect on the research process and provide mutual support.

Caring for research impact on communities: We carefully consider how our research affects broader communities, ensuring publications do not provide perpetrators with “guides,” and we create and share materials on digitally mediated abuse to support services assisting survivors.

The paper implies that ethical commitments do not merely regulate research conduct but actively shape knowledge production itself, influencing the entire research process—from conceptualisation and methods to dissemination—and contributing to reducing harm for participants, researchers, and broader communities.

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Session 3 – 3 September 2026, 11:35–13:05

Stream A: Care, Social Reproduction & Everyday Life

The Norwegian Nurses' Union struggle for equal pay for work of equal value: an alternative economic history

Eli Melby

Abstract

Even within institutions that have formal rules and regulations formulated to actively promote gender equality, we find interrelated practices and meanings that produce and maintain inequalities over time (Acker 1989, 1990, 2006; England 1992; Kessler-Harris 1990). Many countries with persistent gender wage gaps have deployed a strategic institutional measure to raise the wage floor of feminized work sectors and reduce the gap – namely, collective bargaining. In Norway, a country that has been considered a gender equality nirvana (Lister 2009), a considerable gender wage gap remains, especially if one compares wages across sectors (Wagner & Teigen 2022). In this paper, I aim to explore the qualitative dimensions of the gendered dynamics of wage setting in collective bargaining by examining its historical practices. I do this by viewing the Norwegian central wage bargaining model as an economic history paradigm, which provides gender-neutral legitimacy for the perpetuity of gender-based wage disparities (Koskinen Sandberg 2017; Ekström 2012). I propose to counter this paradigm by analysing the alternative history represented by the Norwegian Nurses' Union (NNU). I use in-depth interviews from key historical actors within the NNU as well as archival data for the period 1967-2022, to construct an alternative history of feminized work, interests and economic activity that have previously been marginalized.

Concretely, I apply the notions of concession and compensation to show how the Norwegian state has restricted NNU's means of bargaining, instead offering symbolic compensation by sidelining gender equality policy to the family sphere where political reform is deemed more accessible than in the economy and labour market (Borchorst & Siim 2008; Wagner & Teigen 2022). This way, state actors avoided the concessions necessary for redistribution and revaluation, where the NNU could step beyond the wage norm set by the pattern wage bargaining model in Norway. I describe concessions and compensations during four critical periods of conflict in Norwegian central wage bargaining, namely in 1972, 1995, 2008, and 2022. The alternative history of the NNU's efforts shed light on how the Norwegian corporatist regime has met their demands and resisted their call for change to the historical hierarchy of technical and care work, i.e., of social production and reproduction (England 2010; Kinnunen 2024; Koskinen Sandberg & Saari 2019; Saari, Kantola & Koskinen Sandberg 2021).

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Care at a distance: theorising care relationships within and outside residential ‘care’ for children and young people with complex needs

Lindsay O'Dell, Sarah Crafter, Amanda Holt, Nicola Yeates and Ned Redmore

Abstract

For children and young people who live in residential settings, care is distributed between parents/carers living at a physical distance from their children and practitioners who perform the everyday acts of care in residential settings. Exploring the experiences of care relationships at a ‘distance’ enables ideas about care, closeness (articulated as emotional and geographical proximity) and the commercialization of care to be interrogated theoretically. The normative developmental assumption is that children grow from dependence to independence through family care relationships. Children and young people who live away from family care transgress developmental assumptions of appropriate care.

Research has demonstrated the vital and complex care roles of practitioners in-situ and parents/carers at a distance (Kaasinen et al, 2025, Kor et al, 2021). However, the voices of children and young people themselves is largely absent from the literature (Harris et al, 2025), particularly children and young people with the most complex needs are frequently absent even in ‘inclusive’ research (Grace, 2024).

In this paper we explore the three pillars that provide the theoretical and methodological framework for our work.

A child-centric feminist ethics of care foregrounds children’s voices (Cockburn, 2005), viewing care as relational and multi-faceted, embedded in (and shaped by) wider institutional and public policy landscapes.

Feminist, critical developmental psychology (Burman, 2016) theorises ‘non-normative’ development as an ongoing process, and that, whilst trauma may be common, residential care experiences can be positive and long-term positive outcomes are possible.

Socio-cultural theory to consider how geographical separation of a child from their parent/carer is experienced and care relationships performed through ‘affective and material practices’ (Veale & Andres, 2020) at a distance (such as sending messages, photos, phone calls and visits).

These pillars theorise experiences of care as relational, developmental over time, and spatially mediated.

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Care imaginaries from the South: The Motherload as a decolonial feminist framework for care, agency, and structural change

Ameeta Jaga

Abstract

Women's unpaid care work is foundational to all labour, yet its persistent devaluation reproduces it as precarious work worldwide, with detrimental consequences for women's employment, wellbeing, families, and society (Mezzadri, 2025). Dominant frameworks often fail to adequately capture the lived realities of those caring on the margins (Jaga et al., 2024). In South Africa, low-income black mothers shoulder this burden amid deeply rooted structural inequities: colonial and apartheid legacies, patriarchal norms, racialised poverty, and infrastructural weakness that compound care responsibilities and marginalisation. Emerging from these lived experiences, The Motherload is a conceptual, empirical, and epistemic framework for understanding the mostly invisible and complex labour of care. We define it as the simultaneous and cumulative mental, emotional, physical, and embodied experience of inequitably distributed caregiving responsibilities shaped by material, infrastructural, and structural constraints.

Our research project (2023–2026) addresses the disconnect between care policies and lived experience through a collaborative, interdisciplinary, and multistakeholder approach grounded in decolonial feminist and participatory traditions. Eleven low-income black mothers used photovoice (Cornell & Kessi, 2016) to document their everyday experiences of care, producing visual and narrative evidence of multidimensional care labour and rendering visible what is typically unseen and undervalued. The approach centres mothers as co-researchers, challenging extractive paradigms and generating situated knowledge. Over the first three years, the mothers engaged in 12 workshops and two photovoice exhibitions. Eleven low-income black fathers joined in year two, participating in seven workshops and one exhibition, contributing men's perspectives on care and their role in recognising and reducing the motherload. Throughout, the research team maintained iterative feedback loops with stakeholders, enabling real-time influence on analysis, advocacy, and intervention design. The multistakeholder team comprising transdisciplinary scholars (organisation studies, anthropology, social policy), government officials, NGOs, and grassroots organisations learned with and from participants as the project evolved. This facilitated a rare integration of community knowledge and policy development, foregrounding care as a collective responsibility and advancing a model of responsive, bottom-up governance.

The findings reveal how care burdens are intensified by intersecting structural inequalities, including precarious employment, inadequate services, absent fathers, and social judgment, while also highlighting mothers' agency, resilience, and aspirations for dignified work and shared care responsibilities. Persistent gendered expectations, colonial legacies in housing and education policy, and paid work's failure to recognise care labour further shape barriers to low-income mothers' economic security. Through photovoice exhibitions, mothers communicated calls to action to stakeholders, advocating for gender-responsive public infrastructure (e.g., sanitation and transport) and inclusive economic opportunities. These exhibitions and iterative feedback loops produced tangible policy shifts, including integration of mothers' insights into care economy strategies and greater interdepartmental coordination around maternal support. The project's emphasis on co-creation and situated knowledge kept the research process dynamic, accountable, and community-aligned, enabling engagement across divides of power, class, and expertise. In this way, mothers' knowledge became tools of resistance, testimony, and vision—challenging dominant narratives and creating new care imaginaries.

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Stream B: Caring Organisations, Leadership & Institutions

Response-able leadership against sexism

Nanna Bregnballe & Mie Plotnikoff

Abstract

Gender inequality and sexism remain a grand societal challenge – also in the Nordic countries, despite their gender-equal policies and welfare model assuring equal access to education, care, and the labour market (Lessner et al., 2024; Plotnikof et al., 2025). Research identifies three dimensions of sexism: structural, cultural, and individual (Buchanan et al., 2014; Einersen et al., 2021). Efforts on the structural and individual dimension focus on formal procedures and case-handling but fail to address the cultural dimension where sexism is subtly situated in various relationships and reproduced in everyday life (Ahmed, 2015, 2021).

Understanding and addressing culturally embedded sexism calls for situated, relational approaches to leadership. An emerging research stream explores such leadership as emerging and responding responsible in daily relationships and situations (Cunliffe & Eriksen, 2011; Einersen et al., 2021). This stresses the difficult leadership labor of challenging culturally embedded sexist norms and powers, while being implied in those relationships yourself (Ahmed, 2021; Butler, 1993). However, recent discussions also question how more-than-human agencies co-produce sexism in daily work culture, such as material arrangement, work task distribution, gendered stereotypes, and bodily expressions, making these a leadership challenge too. Inspired by feminist new materialism (Bozalek & Zembylas, 2023; Cozza et al., 2024; Haraway, 2016), we thus suggest expanding the concept of relational leadership by proposing 'response-able leadership'. This concept stimulates an analytical sensitivity to the ways in which both human and non-human relations shape everyday sexism, and how anti-sexist leadership can become response-able to them via ethical responsibility and caring responsiveness.

The paper is structured as follows: we start by reviewing relational leadership literature primarily focusing on human interactions, hence overlooking more-than-human actors. We then develop the notion of response-able leadership. Next, we unpack an empirical example from an empirical illustration from Danish academia and discuss the potential of response-able leadership in theory and practice.

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“Making a difference through music”: Building an inclusive music organization through ‘norm creativity’ as an organizational practice of care

Ingrid M. Tolstad

Abstract

JM Norway, is the Norwegian section of Jeunesses Musicales International (JMI) – the world's largest international network for music and youth. It was established in Belgium in 1945, with an aim to unite the world's youth through music in the wake of the Second World War. Today, JM Norway is working to ensure that Norwegian children and youth have access to a global music scene, diverse cultural experiences, and positions of influence. They organize summer camps, workshops, international exchange and leadership programs aimed especially towards minoritized genders and ethnic groups. In addition, the organization itself is highly committed to diversity and inclusion in its organizational structure and practice. They operate with what they refer to as a “norm creative” approach, inspired by norm critical theory that “can be understood as both an activist and academic school of thought and a set of pedagogical ideas and practices” (Axelsson 2023:102) aimed at “mak[ing] visible inequalities and to bring about change” (Reimers 2020:175). Based on interviews with the leader of the organization and one of their trainees, this paper explores the ways in which ‘norm creativity’ is embedded in the organizing and managing of JM Norway, and how this can be understood as an organizational structure and practice of care (Segal 2023).

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“We have the authenticity”: How a ‘caring feminist’ discourse ventriloquially reproduces gendered inequalities

David Hollis, Nela Smolović Jones, Owain Smolović Jones and Alex Wright

Abstract

This study explores how an “authentic femininity” discourse centering care, connection and communality is surreptitiously used in an organization’s leadership work to (ironically) maintain the gendered and class-based inequalities it purportedly opposes. While authenticity discourses have been shown to regulate workers’ identity (e.g., Fleming and Sturdy, 2009, 2011) and to subjectivize the post-feminist self (cf., Zaeemdar, 2025), we show how performing, corporealizing and (even) digesting an authentic solidarity discourse materially disadvantages working class women (Segal, 2023; Tronto, 2013; Smolović Jones, Smolović Jones and Clarke, 2026).

To conceptually frame our argument, we place social reproduction theory (SRT; Federici, 2012; Ferguson, 2020) in dialogue with the communication as constitutive of organization metaphor of ventriloquism (Cooren, 2010; Hollis, Wright and Kuhn, 2026). Doing so helps us to analyze how the authentic injunction for women to help one another to become their “best self” not only softens the edges of historically entrenched inequalities around women’s care-based responsibilities but makes them ventriloquially “speak” in seemingly progressive ways. From our ethnographic position within a global cosmetics firm (pseudonymized as Ella May; EM), our ventriloquial analysis identifies three performances that economically and socially cost workers yet benefit executives.

The first performance involves makeup artists “teaching” clients to “be yourself, only prettier and more confident”. Enacting this ‘caring’ trope relies on artists performing free-of-charge makeup lessons that often leave them commission-free (as the firm incentivizes clients to purchase lesson products online), but ‘reassured’ that the intrinsic worth of teaching other women to be their ‘best self’ is more valuable than money (Fraser, 2017). Next, artists must brand their faces with EM’s “fresh, clean, modern” mantra. While epitomizing these ‘aspirational’ adjectives provides free advertising for the firm, the products required to effectuate the philosophy are not given freely to artists and are often too costly for them to buy. Owing and adding to working-class women’s struggle for higher wages (Bhattacharya, 2017), artists’ recourse is to either accelerate their rate of (and/or time spent) laboring, or risk fashioning the mantra via other brands’ products. Finally, artists must follow EM’s ‘approved diet’ at work, with only ‘superfoods’ (e.g. almonds, kale, quinoa) supplied at meetings to help women perform at their ‘peak’ (e.g. be energetic, alert, focused). That such offerings do not sustain artists’ labor powers is of little concern to executives, whose interest rests on how posting images of such foods on social media earns them social prestige among senior peers at the expense of the firm’s wider workforce (Ferguson, 2020).

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Stream C: Care as Resistance and Resistance to Care

Silence, Voice and Organisational Norms in Workplace Gender-Based Violence: A Systematic and Critical Review

Reia Lee-Pfenninger

Abstract

Workplace gender-based violence (W-GBV) remains a persistent challenge for diversity, equity and inclusion efforts across organisations globally. Victims and survivors frequently encounter disbelief, reputational risk, continued impunity of perpetrators and pressure to remain silent (Duffy et al., 2023; Hershcovis et al., 2021; Nash & Nielsen, 2020). Although research on W-GBV has expanded substantially following the #MeToo movement, with a strong focus on prevalence, reporting behaviours and legal frameworks, comparatively limited attention has been given to the organisational and cultural mechanisms that shape how W-GBV is recognised, interpreted and suppressed (Bader et al., 2018; Liang, 2024).

From a diversity and inclusion perspective, this gap is significant because the ability to recognise, label and voice W-GBV is unevenly distributed (Nielsen et al., 2024). Workers situated at intersecting margins of race, gender, sexuality, class, migration status and employment security often face greater barriers to speaking up and receiving organisational support. Understanding how organisational norms influence the recognition and legitimisation of W-GBV across social positions is therefore critical for both theory and organisational practice. Hence, this review addresses the following research question: What role do organisational norms play in the silencing and voicing of workplace gender-based violence for individuals situated at different intersections of social categories?

Guided by intersectionality as both an analytical framework and a praxis-oriented approach (Collins & Bilge, 2020; Crenshaw, 1989, 1991), we conceptualise organisational norms as shared expectations shaping what counts as W-GBV, who are seen as credible victims and which forms of harm or disclosure are treated as legitimate. These norms include assumptions about professionalism, victimhood, emotional expression, humour, loyalty and organisational reputation. To investigate these dynamics, we conducted a systematic and critical literature review combining a PRISMA-informed selection procedure (Page et al., 2021) with a problematising review method (Alvesson & Sandberg, 2020). Web of Science was our primary database, complemented by citation searches in Google Scholar. The initial search yielded 1,746 articles, which were screened through multiple stages including ASReview (an open-source machine learning tool)-assisted title and abstract screening and focused full-text review. The final dataset consisted of 95 peer-reviewed studies examining W-GBV in organisational contexts. From these, we identified a purposive subset of 33 studies that explicitly engage with intersectionality and organisational norms.

Our key findings are that organisational norms shape silence and voice in W-GBV through three interrelated mechanisms. First, norms concerning professionalism and respectability shape who is seen as a credible victim. These norms often privilege workers who fit dominant organisational ideals while marginalising those whose identities fall outside them. Second, silence becomes institutionalised through managerial inaction, legal settlements and collective complicity that prioritise organisational reputation over addressing the harms victims experience. Third, compliance-focused reporting systems constrain voice among marginalised workers and lead them to rely on informal disclosure through peer networks, collective storytelling and online platforms.

By synthesising W-GBV research through an intersectional lens, this review contributes to challenging hierarchical modes of organising by shifting attention from individual reporting accountability to the organisational norms and power relations that shape whose experiences are recognised and whose remain marginalised. In doing so, we emphasise how organisations can transform their roles to address W-GBV more compassionately and effectively and fulfil their duty of care to victims.

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Mobilizing Relationality and Care in Multi-Domain Research on Gender-Based Violence and Social Media

Marilyn Poon, Oana Brindusa Albu and Milena Leybold

Abstract

Our work addresses the challenge of conducting interdisciplinary research on technology-facilitated gender-based violence (TFGBV). We approach TFGBV as a multi-domain phenomenon that require interdisciplinary relationality. Online misogyny unfolds simultaneously as a cultural process shaped by gender norms and power relations, an infrastructural process shaped by algorithms and platform affordances, and a governance process shaped by institutional responses and competing political priorities. Addressing these dynamics therefore requires sustained dialogue across disciplinary boundaries and stronger collaboration among scholars working from different epistemological and ontological assumptions.

Researchers are increasingly expected to produce policy-relevant insights while also contributing to theoretical debates within their own disciplines. Such work requires engagement not only across academic domains, but also with practitioners, policymakers, and civil society actors. We argue that meaningful collaboration across these domains depends not only on methodological coordination, but also on relational forms of practice grounded in feminist ethics of care.

Organization Studies scholars have increasingly advanced relational perspectives through engagements with post-humanist and new materialist thinkers (Barad, 2003; Gherardi, 2017), as well as contributions from communication studies (Kuhn et al., 2017) and information systems scholarship (Orlikowski & Scott, 2008; Introna et al., 2016; Hultin, 2019). While this interdisciplinarity has opened important conversations, much remains underdeveloped in relation to digital sovereignty and ethics (Prem, 2024). We view TFGBV as a particularly urgent context for advancing these conversations relationally and through feminist scholarship developed in response to misogyny and patriarchal norms (Harris & Ashcraft, 2023), along with recognizing intersecting forms of marginalization shape differentiated experiences of online violence (Regehr & Ringrose, 2025).

Research is not value-free (Frazer, 2023; Putnam, 2002). In studying misogyny and long-standing gender norms, researchers' own affective and embodied positions matter. Emotions and affects should not be suppressed, but recognized as constitutive of practice (Reckwitz, 2017). We therefore propose care as both an analytic orientation and a collaborative practice for interdisciplinary feminist research. Care ethics invites researchers to attend to the relations and tensions through which online harm unfolds, while also shaping how scholars work together across differences. We conceptualize care as an affective capacity that sustains relational engagement and opens dialogical spaces for "differencing" (Barad, 2014; Friedrich & Lüthy, 2025; Harris & Ashcraft, 2023). Here, differencing is understood not as division, but as a relational and generative process emerging between people working together and within individuals themselves (Barad, 2014).

We aim to make space for practicing feminist care across borders by inviting conference attendees to reflect on TFGBV and to share idea on ways to activate citizens science that embed care ethics. To frame our conversation, we aim to show data from our ongoing comparative study on social media platform in/visibility, where we look at how online #Tradwife narratives romanticize traditional gender roles and reinforce discourses that normalize the objectification and harm of women, and also, how women are using social media platforms to share experiences and unite as feminists (e.g., 4B). Such contrasting dynamics highlight the affective dimensions through which digital cultures reproduce gendered violence and create spaces for care.

Declaration on Generative AI

During the preparation of this work, the authors used ChatGPT to assist with language refinement, including grammar, clarity, and phrasing of the text. The authors reviewed and edited all outputs and take full responsibility for the final content.

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Theorising demonic responsible leadership: A spatial study of journalists in Gaza

Owain Smolović Jones, Issam Adwan, Nela Smolović Jones and Jo Brewis

Abstract

Notions of responsible leadership are gaining traction as a means of better understanding how organisations may address the pressing issues of our time, such as the climate crisis (Kempster & Carroll, 2016; Kempster & Jackson, 2021; Maak & Ples, 2006; Tirmizi, 2018; Voegtlin et al, 2012; Waldman et al, 2020). Such views help to decentre notions of leadership to incorporate the needs of stakeholders as active participants within a leadership process (Voegtlin, 2016). Yet the literature has yet to reckon with the materiality of responsible leadership – how situating the human body within a broader set of material relations may enable or restrict certain forms of responsible leadership from manifesting, or from being tangibly noted at all. The wider literature on materiality within organisation studies has provided much needed substance, helping to identify the organisational subject as emergent within an entanglement of materialities, out of which a shared sense of responsibility emerges (Aguiar & Cunliffe, 2025; Dale & Latham, 2015; Gherardi & Laasch, 2022; Gherardi & Rodeschini, 2016; Hofman, 2025; Smolović Jones et al, 2026; Wickström et al, 2025).

Yet this literature has not grappled with the most pressing material responsibility of all – the responsibility to sustain life within spaces hostile to it. This study addresses responsibility to life within leadership by focusing empirically on a context of extreme violence, the Gaza Strip in Palestine. We analyse 30 interviews with Palestinian journalists from and in Gaza. Bearing in mind this conceptual and empirical context, we offer the following research question: ‘How is responsible leadership constituted within geographies of violence and oppression?’

In addressing this question we theorise demonic responsible leadership as constituted materially through and beyond particular geographies, drawing out emergent material relationships of domination and liberation in the process. Responsibility is approached as something that is practiced, responsive and accountable, a ‘relational attitude towards all beings [and] an ability to sense, share, and respond to others.’ (Gherardi & Laasch, 2022: 273). A spatial view offers a means of connecting ‘intimate and embodied experiences’ with the ‘wider material landscape, relations and parameters that (re)shape the possible’ (Smolović Jones et al, 2025: 828).

We contribute to knowledge of responsible leadership and the materiality of responsibility in organisation studies by offering a view of responsibility and responsible leadership as demonic - radically disruptive of self and space. Crucial in helping us do so is the geographic and embodied theory of Katherine McKittrick (2006), who provides a means of interpreting how oppressed bodies may create radical uncertainty within the narrated meanings of space, constituting what she refers to as ‘demonic grounds’. Demonic is meant in McKittrick’s work as that which radically challenges notions of selfhood within spaces of domination and violence, a relation we interpret as disturbing, connecting and compelling to responsibility. From this basis, we narrate a process of demonic responsible leadership with our research participants, consisting of three practices. First, responsibility on explores how past experiences of violence bear upon the subject, generating responsibility. Second, responsibility with concerns the construction of collective responsibility within shared space. Third, responsibility across leads people from faraway spaces into the sphere of responsibility. This study thereby enhances possibilities for future theorisation of responsible leadership from a spatial perspective and within contexts marked by violence, allowing for enriched understanding of how subjects navigate and produce geographies to grow relationships rooted in responsibility.

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Stream D: Care in Alternative Futures

Public art as caring feminist practice? The tale of Dogman and Rabbitwoman in the space of (dis)appearance

Caroline Clarke, Leanne Cutcher & Melissa Tyler

Abstract

Public art is created specifically for placement in public spaces, such as parks, streets, or in/around civic buildings. Unlike traditional gallery or museum pieces, it is freely accessible to everyone and is often designed to combine form and function, eschewing traditional (often highly gendered) ways of positioning a passive viewer. Their relative openness, accessibility and invitation to actively engage means that public artworks have the potential to play an important role in materializing feminist values within public spaces. In this paper, we explore whether public artwork can be understood as a materialized, tactile form of feminist practice, one that might even be construed as a form of care. Specifically, we ask: Does public art have the capacity to enact care – with, for and about others?

To explore this question, we examine the work of two contemporary artists, Gillie and Marc, whose works have been positioned in public spaces in 27 countries across the world. Reflecting on the insights that their work provides into the question of whether public art can act as a form of caring feminist practice, we turn to Lynne Segal's (2017, 2023) writing on radical happiness and care (see also The Care Collective, 2020), Joan Tronto's (1993, 2015) work on caring democracy, and Hannah Arendt's (1998) thinking on the political importance of the public sphere. In particular, we combine insights from these three thinkers to examine whether public art has the potential to materialize care within what Arendt (1998: 199-212) called the space of appearance. Are such works, we ask, examples of feminism's occupation of the public realm, embodying the importance of appearing to, with and for one another as the basis of a feminist politics of care and/as solidarity in the way that feminists such as Segal, Tronto and others have advocated?

In our discussion of their work, we focus on Gillie and Marc's most famous recurring characters, Rabbitwoman and Dogman, both of which are designed to subvert hierarchical, binary distinctions between humans and animals, as well as gender norms and expectations, with (as the artists have explained it), the aim of opening up a better understanding of the implications of borderized, androcentric ways of living for non-human animals and the wider world. In particular, their works point to the plight of animals harmed to the point of extinction or near extinction by environmental destruction and a prioritization of capital accumulation over recognition and preservation of our mutually interdependent ecology. By bringing together two animal-human hybrids that in a human-centric worldview tend to exist in opposition (a dog and a rabbit), Gillie and Marc's aim is to foreground the importance of care, and of finding unity in difference as an investment in the future of social justice in a highly tactile way.

As public artworks, Gillie and Marc's sculptures are designed to provide focal points in a mass-mediated social landscape, with many inviting 'selfie' opportunities to be shared on social media, thereby extending their reach way beyond the locales in which they are sited. They also invite more active engagement, via signage and QR codes that provide detailed information about the sculptures. In this sense, they arguably contribute to a wider critique of what Erika Cudworth (2005) called 'anthroparchy' – a hierarchical social order the privileges mankind and normalizes the domination, exploitation and abuse of non-human animals and the natural world.

Through our discussion of Dogman and Rabbitwoman, we examine the role that public art might play in the wider feminist project, materializing a politics that frames the public sphere as a space in which we can appear not only to or with, but for one another, and in which a feminist politics of care and/as solidarity might flourish (Smolović Jones et al, 2021). In particular, we reflect on the extent to which public art gives tangible form to the urgent need to reimagine the (more than) human condition as one of mutual interdependence, beyond borders between human and non-human animals.

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Lasting legacies and feminist futures: intellectual ‘homes’ as feminist communities of care

Rose Capdevila, Katherine Hubbard and Lois Donnelly

Abstract

This paper reports on a multi-method project conducted across a number of years on the history of feminist organising in UK psychology. The project brought together four activities: an online survey (n=56), research interviews (n=11), oral histories (n=13) and the collection of materials deposited in a national archive. In thinking about the histories of feminism and psychology, we drew on Sarah Ahmed's (2017) principles of living a feminist life, and in particular the importance of holding on to histories that remain unresolved. In Ahmed's work, she emphasises the importance of a feminist community and shared experience. However, as Rosalind Gill (2009) has pointed out, despite a wealth of work on reflexivity, the actual everyday gendered experiences of academics have largely gone without critical attention. It is this feminist life, the everyday lived experiences of feminist psychologists, that we sought to capture through this project.

The project centred around the Psychology of Women and Equalities Section (POWES) of the British Psychological Society (BPS) which was founded in 1987. In using its 30th anniversary as a critical orientation, we aimed to account for POWES' enduring legacy and its feminist future. In doing so we first conducted a survey of members using story completion tasks to give members the opportunity to account for their own experiences of POWES (see Capdevila, Hubbard, & Donnelly, 2019). This revealed the desire for a more radical feminist future for the group. We then conducted interviews with invested individuals who were either currently involved in feminist organising or had been in the past. These interviews uncovered themes around the boundaries of activist and academic work and the need for recognition around the emotional labours involved in such work. We found that while feminist care was exceptionally appreciated, the work behind it often became invisible. Moreover, we noted how traditional conceptions of scientific rigour continue to haunt feminist academic spaces (see Donnelly, Hubbard & Capdevila, 2022).

Finally, our project accumulated most recently in more public-facing initiatives with the goal to future proof the knowledge generated by the project. We conducted oral histories with 11 prominent feminist psychologists in the UK and collated an archive of materials related to POWES. These then formed the basis of the online exhibit on the Psychology's Feminist Voices website which preserves such history for future feminist generations. We also deposited the physical materials with the BPS archive. The archive collected demonstrated the extensive materials and ephemera collected, kept, and maintained by feminist psychologists over the years. This act of care: to preserve and protect, to share, and to celebrate was a central thread throughout the entire project.

Ultimately, our project's findings highlighted the role of POWES as a feminist community as well as the conceptual importance of notions of home, work, and fun. Overall, our findings indicate that the place of feminist academic communities remains vital to sustain critical thought and action: having an intellectual 'home' is pivotal to the survival of feminist psychology as well as feminists in psychology.

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Online exhibit:

Psychology's Feminist Voices

UK Feminist Psychology: Lasting Legacies and Feminist Futures

<https://feministvoices.com/exhibits/draft-1-lasting-legacies-and-feminist-futures-uk-feminist-psychology>

Care and the researcher: Understanding emotionally demanding research

Stacey Scriver & Lorraine Hayman

Abstract

Researchers face financial, organisational, and personal challenges, often with limited institutional support. Among the most overlooked are the emotional demands of research. Those undertaking emotionally demanding research (EDR), particularly with traumatised or vulnerable populations, can experience secondary trauma, disengagement, burnout, and career disruption (Perron and Hiltz, 2005; Whitt-Wosley and Sprang, 2018; Williamson et.al., 2020). Qualitative researchers appear especially vulnerable (Whitt-Wosely and Sprang, 2018). Yet, compared with other “listening” professions, relatively little research focuses on researchers themselves, despite notable exceptions (Bergvall et.al. 2025; Adonis, 2019). Existing work demonstrates the significant impacts of EDR and vicarious trauma on researchers’ lives and work (Fiolet et.al. 2026; Smith et.al. 2023; Dickson-Swift et.al. 2009), but less is understood about why research becomes more emotionally demanding at particular times and for particular researchers.

Drawing on mixed-methods research with academic and non-academic researchers engaged in self-defined EDR undertaken between 2024 and 2026, including 30 in-depth interviews and a survey, this paper argues that continuums of trauma shape researchers’ experiences. ‘Caring’ within researching organisations, requires understanding researchers as situated within a broader environment that influences their vulnerability and risk of trauma. Using a feminist sociological lens, we examine how intersecting personal, institutional, socio-cultural, community, and geopolitical contexts intersect in ways that may mitigate or intensify emotional demands. We conceptualise these influences within an ecological and relational framework, showing how emotional strain emerges not only from research topics but from wider overlapping and interacting conditions. Adopting a temporal lens, we identify appropriate institutional supports and outline a protective, care-based framework that enables researchers to undertake challenging work without compromising wellbeing. Supporting researchers engaged in EDR, we argue, is not only a matter of institutional sustainability, but an opportunity to embed care more meaningfully within research environments.

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Session 4 – 3 September 2026, 16:15–17:45

Stream A: Care, Social Reproduction & Everyday Life

Yellow vest activists' assembled meanings of social reproduction and the ideologies that underpin them

Eli Melby & Margunn Bjørnholt

Abstract

This paper investigates how social reproduction is portrayed among participants within the French Yellow Vest Movement (YVM), and how these constructions are a part of larger political-ideological frames that the participants and the movement perpetuate. While the YVM has been read primarily through lenses of populism, class struggle and socio-economic grievances, I argue that the movement also offers a contested terrain for understanding the politics of social reproduction under late austerity.

The analysis is based on fieldwork in 2021 and 2022 within three local grassroots groups and in-depth interviews with participants, with particular attention to women in feminized, often precarious sectors such as nursing, elder care, social work and low-wage service work.

Drawing on Nancy Fraser's (2016, 2023) notion of a "care-crisis" and other theorizations of social reproduction and the invisibilisation, exploitation and depletion of care in capitalism (Rai 2019; Lynch 2022; Müller 2019), the paper studies how YVM can be seen as an expression of the care crisis and how everyday struggles related to care, welfare and the feminized caring sector are pivotal yet marginalized in YVM.

Building on previous work on the sidelining of feminized issues in collective claims-making and agenda-setting within the movement (Melby, forthcoming), I here examine how participants give meaning to everyday struggles and how these relate to issues of social reproduction. The paper shows that social reproduction appears in the interviews through interrelated scripts. First, women's narratives link exhaustion, burnout and financial strain directly to the organization of care and welfare in contemporary France, tying cuts in the public sector to broader patterns of downgrading and precarity. Second, even as women generalize their private troubles, these grievances often remain in the realm of the "private" as women leave the movement to care for family or search for employment, and these exits are not collectively framed as political losses or as effects of austerity, but as individual life constraints.

These constructs coexist with views of structural inequalities in the labour market and welfare state, but often without naming gender, thus reproducing a masculinized image of legitimate economic struggle. As a result, social reproduction is present while also marginalized in how participants experience crisis, and in how the movement represents itself. By tracing these ideological framings, the paper shows how social reproduction is simultaneously politicized and depoliticized in the YVM and builds on current research that expands the concept (Saritas 2025; Farris 2025).

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Enacting care: Digital mothering practices of affect and performance

Rose Capdevila, Lisa Lazard and Gemma Ballard

Abstract

The phenomenon of digital mothering has emerged in, and been shaped by, contemporary neoliberal parenting discourses which place responsibility for children's developmental success largely on mothers who remain the primary caregiver in most cultural contexts (Johnson, 2014). Societal imperatives around children's developmental achievements are inextricably intertwined with parental, particularly mothers' contributions, to a form of childcare that requires a disproportionate amount of labour (emotional, practical and financial) to not only guarantee that children thrive but also to enhance their performance in relation to their peers. These societal expectations underpin ideal standards against which parents, but particularly mothers, are measured – an ideology known as intensive mothering (Hays, 1996; McSorley et al., 2022). With the expansion of the online environment, the term 'sharenting' emerged in popular discourse to describe the now established and routine parental practice of sharing, particularly oversharing, of news and comments about one's children and family on social media (Sharenting, 2016; Lazard et al., 2019). Sharenting is largely a pejorative term, rooted in negative characterisations of parental posting as repetitive, incessant and banal. Alongside these criticisms, sharenting has become heavily associated with parental digital narcissism, humblebragging and pretension (e.g. Steinberg, 2017). Within these contexts, concerns have been raised about children's digital rights, privacy, and the potential for cyber harms (Third et al., 2025). While sharenting has often been presented as a largely gender-neutral practice both in popular and academic arenas, gendered patterns have been observed with mothers' reportedly engaging in the practice with greater frequency than fathers (Ofcom, 2025). At the same time, it is mothers who are largely, if not explicitly, the subject to sharenting social censure (Steinberg, 2017). Drawing on both psychological and intersectional feminist perspectives, this paper will examine sharenting in the context of the rise in maternal engagements with digital technologies and spaces dedicated to family and child raising – a phenomenon that we describe as digital mothering (Capdevila et al., 2021; Lazard et al. 2019). In this context, social media posts which mark and celebrate children's development and progress can be seen as setting and shaping the expectations around children's achievement goals against normative standards (Lazard, 2022). The paper explores how families, particularly mothers, negotiate competing demands around mothering, caregiving and social media practices to meet expectations of what it means to be a 'good' mother, a 'good' woman and a 'good' family. We draw on the analysis of data from mothers' and families' talk about posting in different social milieus to articulate sharenting as a complex social, affective and familial practice that is shaped by discourses of feminised care relevant to contemporary parenting and family life. We explore the ways in which this practice requires ongoing negotiation across offline and digital spaces, as mothers navigate expectations of caregiving for one's children and family, of intensive mothering and of digital engagements.

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Rethinking the City through Care: The Social and Spatial Patterns of Social Reproduction in İzmir

Burcu Ayan

Abstract

Care labour is central to the continuity of everyday life (The Care Collective, 2020). This labour is largely carried out by women and is often rendered invisible and undervalued within households (Federici, 2018). Domestic care work intersects with professional care services provided by public institutions, private companies, and community-based networks (Razavi, 2007). Care should be understood as a public issue, and care services should be organized as a public responsibility and social right. In neoliberal contexts, however, care services are largely organized according to market principles, shaping access to care through inequalities related to income, class, disability, age, gender, and migrant status (Sakızlıoğlu & Lordoğlu, 2025; Tronto, 2013).

Rethinking the city through the lens of care and social reproduction makes visible both inequalities in urban spaces and the possibilities for building solidarities and reproductive commons (Federici, 2018; Peake, 2020). In Turkey, and particularly in İzmir, inequalities surrounding care relations have become increasingly visible. Although central and local governments have introduced important initiatives, especially in daytime and short-term public care services, the scale, inclusiveness, and spatial distribution of these services still reveal significant gaps (Ay, 2024). These gaps become more visible under worsening economic conditions, shrinking public services, and weak policy efforts to reduce the burden of care. As a result, care continues to be carried largely by households, and especially by women, while the need for a more accessible and spatially just care infrastructure continues to deepen.

This paper focuses on an ongoing research project (January-December 2026) examining who carries the burden of care in İzmir and under what conditions. The research aims to make visible the areas of transformation necessary for a just public care infrastructure in the city. The study approaches care as a multi-layered phenomenon extending from institutional services to household practices, from neighbourhood-based solidarities to the accessibility conditions of urban space. The data produced throughout the research process will be brought together through a digital “İzmir Care Map” developed using open-source software, making it possible to trace the social and spatial patterns of care across the city.

The research is based on a mixed-methods field study conducted in socio-economically and spatially differentiated neighbourhoods of İzmir. The survey focuses on women’s everyday care responsibilities, time use, access to care services, support networks, and needs. The qualitative component consists of semi-structured interviews with care workers, local actors engaged in care-related services, and individuals positioned differently within reciprocal care relations. Preliminary findings suggest that care burdens are shaped not only by household structure or economic resources, but also by social norms, access to public services, safe urban environments, transportation possibilities, solidarity relations, and the quality of local infrastructures. This paper discusses the methodological framework and preliminary findings of the ongoing research, arguing that care should be understood not as an individual responsibility to be resolved within households, but as a political issue closely connected to gendered urbanization, public infrastructures, and processes of social reproduction.

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Stream B: Caring Organisations, Leadership & Institutions

Belonging Otherwise: Posthuman Metaphors, Landscape, and Nationhood in Montenegro

Kristina Gvozdenović

Abstract

Discourse-analytic studies have shown that national belonging is frequently narrated through metaphors such as the nation-as-family or nation-as-body (Musolff, 2006, 2010). These framings often reinforce exclusionary logics by tying collective identity to lineage, reproduction, and bounded notions of belonging. Posthuman theorists such as Haraway (1985/1991) and Braidotti (2013), however, reconceptualize subjectivity as hybrid, relational, and entangled with technological, material, and ecological worlds.

Building on these perspectives, this research uses the term 'posthuman metaphors' to describe metaphorical imaginaries that move beyond human-centered understandings of identity and belonging. It further examines how nations may be imagined through such posthuman metaphors, shaped by relations with technologies, environments, and non-human beings, and how these metaphors reshape boundaries of inclusion and exclusion.

This research builds on earlier fieldwork in Montenegro that combined political discourse analysis with semi-structured interviews with members of the public, examining how they responded to and reinterpreted dominant political metaphors of nationhood (Gvozdenović, 2023). Previous findings showed that political discourse frequently framed the nation through metaphors of order, continuity, purity, and collective embodiment, often relying on gendered imaginaries tied to hierarchy and reproduction. In contrast, some interview participants challenged or deconstructed these dominant framings through alternative metaphorical imaginings of the nation. To "escape" political binaries, participants at times described the nation through metaphors of stony landscapes, endurance, resistance, and queer, hybrid, or cyborg-like bodies that destabilize fixed understandings of collective identity. These alternative imaginaries challenge the nation as a singular, bounded, and gendered body and instead imagine belonging through hybridity, material environments, and ecological entanglement.

The current study therefore examines how posthuman metaphors emerging through collective engagement with landscapes may challenge or reproduce dominant nationalist understandings of belonging and exclusion. To explore these dynamics, a participatory workshop scheduled for July 2026 in Montenegro will immerse participants in specific landscapes through guided walking, individual reflection, collaborative metaphor-mapping, and moderated discussion. The workshop examines how metaphors of nationhood emerge through embodied interaction with environments and with other participants.

Responses will be analyzed using an adapted version of Musolff's (2006) complementation model, focusing on structural forms (human-centered, hybrid, posthuman), affective dimensions of inclusion and exclusion, and moments where posthuman imaginaries disrupt or reinforce nationalist binaries.

As the workshop is scheduled for July 2026, the conference presentation will discuss both the participatory methodology and preliminary findings from the analysis of participant responses.

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Building Caring Infrastructures: Feminist Organising and Institutional Change in the Danish Music Industry

Kristine Ringsager & Katrine Wallevik

Abstract

How are experiences of sexism, exclusion, and precarity transformed into collective capacities for action within cultural industries? And what forms of organising emerge when care becomes a central principle for navigating and reshaping unequal conditions?

This collaboratively written and presented paper explores The Music Movement of 2019 (Musikbevægelsen af 2019), a Danish feminist grassroots organisation and online community formed in 2019 in response to persistent experiences of inequality in the Danish music industry. The Music Movements online community comprises 3,300 people, all women, trans- or non-binary identifying, who work in or have links to all layers of the Danish music industry. Drawing on ethnographic research from the project Gendering Music Matter (GEMMA) we examine how collective practices of care in the Music Movement generate solidarity, knowledge, and agency within a field structured by informal hierarchies, exclusionary networks, and gendered norms of recognition and belonging.

In the Danish music industry, such structures operate not only through formal organisation but through infrastructural arrangements that actively shape access, legitimacy, and visibility (Easterling 2014). These arrangements are often experienced as disorientation, shame, and precarity, as women and gender-minoritised professionals navigate unwritten norms of professionalism and belonging. As affect circulates through these systems (Berlant 2016), it produces uneven orientations of place and misplacement, shaping who comes to appear as “in place” and “out of place” within the industry (Ahmed 2006).

Through listening, mentoring, advocacy, resource-sharing, and mutual support, the Music Movement have managed to create spaces where these experiences are articulated and reworked collectively. Experiences of isolation or individual failure are translated collectively into understandings of structural inequality, enabling shared reflection and a collective feminist capacity (Hemmings 2012). In that sense, the Music Movement appears as a caring infrastructure: a set of relational practices through which trust, attention, and responsibility are sustained over time. Care here is not an individual disposition but a mode of organising that makes collective action possible (Gilligan 2014; Tronto 2013).

Building on this, we analyse the Music Movement as feminist infrastructuring that instead of operating outside existing institutions, works through them, reshaping relations of accountability and expanding the spaces in which questions of equity and inclusion can be addressed. Overall, the paper argues that feminist communities such as the Music Movement of 2019 function as caring infrastructures that do not merely support those navigating unequal conditions but actively reconfigure the terms on which those conditions are perceived, articulated, and acted upon. In doing so, care emerges not as a supplementary ethics of support, but as an infrastructural force that reorganises the very conditions of participation, recognition, and belonging within for instance the Danish music industry.

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Stream C: Care as Resistance and Resistance to Care

Advancing an Ethics of Care in United Nations Peace Operations: Gender, Caring Responsibilities and the Reimagining of the “Ideal Peacekeeper”

Eleanor Gordon

Abstract

The Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda has established women's meaningful participation as a cornerstone of international peace and security. Yet despite decades of normative and institutional commitments, women remain underrepresented in United Nations peace operations, particularly among uniformed personnel (UNDPO 2026). Existing scholarship has identified numerous barriers to participation, including institutional discrimination, militarised organisational cultures, and gendered assumptions about security work (Gordon and Lee-Koo 2025; Henry 2017; Karim and Beardsley 2017; Pruitt 2016). However, one critical factor has received comparatively little attention: the gendered organisation of care and the role of caring responsibilities in shaping participation in peacekeeping.

Drawing on a global mixed-methods study involving 553 participants across 63 countries—including peacekeepers, other uniformed personnel, UN staff and civil society actors—this paper examines how caring responsibilities influence recruitment, retention, promotion and deployment within security sector institutions and UN peace operations. The analysis is situated at the intersection of feminist International Relations scholarship (Cohn 1987; Enloe 2000, 2014; Tickner 1992, 2001) and feminist scholarship on care ethics (Tronto 1993, 2013; Ruddick 1989; Robinson 2011), bringing together insights on gendered norms, meaning-making and relationality to explore how peacekeeping institutions construct reproduce assumptions about who is suited to serve.

The paper argues that peacekeeping continues to be organised around the figure of the “ideal peacekeeper”: a subject imagined as mobile, continuously available, autonomous and unencumbered by caring obligations (Acker 1990; Whitworth 2004). This ideal is deeply gendered. Women, particularly mothers, are frequently assumed to be less deployable, less committed, or less suitable for leadership and operational roles. Simultaneously, time, men's caring responsibilities are often rendered invisible. These dynamics are sustained through formal structures as well as everyday organisational practices, maternal bias, workplace cultures of sacrifice, and narratives that frame women's exclusion as a matter of individual “choice” rather than institutional design.

Beyond documenting these barriers, the paper advances an ethics of care as both an analytical and normative framework for rethinking peacekeeping. It conceptualises peacekeepers as relational and embodied actors whose lives are embedded within networks of dependency, responsibility and care. From this perspective, care is not external to security but constitutive of it. The paper demonstrates how organisational inattentiveness to care affects not only women's participation but also personnel wellbeing, safeguarding, retention, workplace culture and mission effectiveness. Conversely, practices associated with caregiving—including attentiveness, responsiveness, empathy and relational awareness—emerge as valuable yet under-recognised capacities within peace operations.

The paper contributes to feminist scholarship on care in three ways. Empirically, it brings new evidence on the relationship between care and participation in global security institutions. Conceptually, it bridges feminist security studies and care ethics to develop a relational understanding of peacekeeping. Normatively, it argues that embedding an ethics of care within peace operations represents more than an inclusion initiative: it constitutes a broader political project of reimagining security itself. In doing so, the paper invites scholars and practitioners to move beyond masculinised ideals of autonomy and sacrifice toward understandings of peace and security grounded in interdependence, responsibility and social repair.

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Gendered Political Violence and the Disruption of Care: Territorial Dynamics in the Experience of Brazilian Women Deputies

Ladyane Souza

Abstract

This paper examines gendered political violence (GPV) through the experiences of Brazilian federal deputies, arguing that existing typologies do not fully capture forms of violence that are simultaneously gendered, racialised and territorially grounded. Building on previous research on GPV in Brazil (Souza & Biroli, 2023), I show that violence operates not only through attacks on individuals, but through the disruption of the relational and care practices that sustain women's political participation.

The analysis draws on in-depth semi-structured interviews with progressive Brazilian federal deputies (2019–2022), many of whom were part of the Feminist and Anti-Racist Parliamentary Front. The findings indicate that while participants experience well-documented forms of violence -psychological, symbolic, sexual and economic- these categories are insufficient to account for how violence is lived and interpreted in practice. In particular, the interviews reveal a recurrent dimension that I conceptualise as territorial violence: threats, constraints and attacks linked to the deputies' presence in, and connection to, specific communities, constituencies and political struggles. Engaging with Latin American feminist discussions of body-territory (Gago, 2020; Segato, 2005), the paper grounds this concept empirically by showing how deputies understand their political roles as embedded in collective trajectories and responsibilities. Their bodies are not perceived as individual actors detached from context, but as extensions of territories, communities and histories. Violence, therefore, operates by restricting mobility, limiting access to territories, and weakening collective political projects-often through threats associated with militias, land conflicts and localised power structures.

From the perspective of caring feminisms, these findings highlight how GPV targets and disrupts networks of care that extend across institutional and non-institutional spaces. The deputies describe their political work as inseparable from forms of care rooted in favelas, rural areas, Indigenous territories and social movements. Violence against them thus affects not only their individual participation, but also the communities and relational infrastructures they sustain. This underscores the need to understand political violence as a process that fractures care relations and undermines collective forms of life. The paper makes three contributions. First, it advances territorial violence as an empirically grounded extension of existing GPV typologies. Second, it demonstrates that violence against women in politics is inseparable from disputes over territory, representation and access to the state. Third, it contributes to caring feminisms by showing how harm operates through the disruption of relational and care practices across interconnected spaces. Practically, the paper argues that existing legal and policy frameworks addressing GPV must be revised to account for relational and territorial dimensions of harm. Without this shift, forms of violence that affect women connected to marginalised communities remain insufficiently recognised and inadequately addressed.

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Engaging trade union men's caring practices as a contribution to gender equity and gendered violence prevention work; foundational thinking

Chris Krogh

Abstract

Dear Mark

This postcard is a teaser – a precursor to the longer and more developed letter I hope to send later this year from the Caring Feminisms Across Borders conference in Montenegro.

Since our time together in MASA (Men Against Sexual Assault) I have known you as a man who grapples with the complexity of actively caring. I remember you living from an awareness of interdependence, striving for non-domination in your relationships, being an activist for equality in our systems, all the while being acutely aware of the privilege that patriarchy hands out freely to straight, white, non-disabled men like us.

Time and distance have reduced our conversations. I don't know, therefore, if you have come across the body of theory on 'caring practices'. Instigated by Fisher and Tronto (1990), extended by Tronto in 2013 and revisited in 2023, this is a gendered analysis of the place of care in contemporary social arrangements, especially in the context of politics and policy.

Some authors have drawn on caring practices theory to consider the place of care in men's lives and in masculinities more broadly (Elliott, 2016; Pease, 2018; Hamington, 2024, for example). These authors highlight the conflict between domination and caring, each noting that actively caring puts men outside the box of hegemonic masculinities. At the same time, just doing some care work, whether as a father (Hamington, 2024) or as a social worker (Pease, 2018) does not automatically mean flipping the gendered domination script. It is when we (men) live in recognition of our (inter)dependence, being non-dominating, responsive and emotionally present (Elliot, 2016) that caring practices are more real.

These writings feed my contemplation of men's lives, gender equality and gendered violence prevention. At the same time, most don't reflect the full five elements of Tronto's (2013) articulation, which is what's most relevant for my reaching out now. You see, when we were conducting interviews with men from the industrial union movement in New South Wales (Australia), asking about their commitments to gender equity, there was a story about caring practices that I have only recently come to see. Within these masculinist settings (Pease and Camilliri, 2001), something else might be going on.

This observation followed my reading a chapter by Doucet (2025) about responsive, caregiving fatherhood. That led me to look again at our research interviews, this time using Tronto's (2013) five elements of caring practices as an analytic frame. Through this lens, I was able to see in the interviews, stories of 'caring about', 'caring for', 'care-giving' and 'caring with' in the context of men's industrial union work. The element of 'care-receiving' was less easy to see. It's these observations about caring practices that I want to tell you about when I write more fully later. Like Doucet (2025), I will focus on one man's story. The broader research will serve as backdrop. Ultimately, I am wondering how cultivating caring practices might contribute to gendered violence prevention.

Much love

Chris

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Session 5 – 4 September 2026, 09:00–10:30

Stream A: Care, Social Reproduction & Everyday Life

heARTWORK: A creative method for researching menopause and work with care

Theresa Parker

Abstract

heARTWORK explores how care centred feminist praxis and creative methods can reshape qualitative research encounters, by drawing on methods from an ongoing PhD study examining the menopausal experiences of precarious workers in the UK fashion industry. Positioned within feminist, interdisciplinary and arts-based research traditions, the study responds to the intersecting marginalisations produced by gendered ageing for cis women and trans men and insecure labour in an industry characterised by inequality, productivity, speed and disposability. Menopause remains largely absent from workplace discourse, particularly for precarious workers, rendering their experiences both structurally invisible and personally isolating.

This research employed in-depth open interviews combined with artistic, participatory and sensory methods, inviting participants to engage with research in ways that extended beyond conventional verbal data collection. Creative approaches functioned as modes of knowledge production, enabling participants to reflect on, articulate and share embodied, emotional and relational experiences that are often difficult to capture through speech alone. These methods supported agency and self-representation, allowing participants to choose how they wished to express themselves, and enabling more democratic forms of engagement within the research process.

Central to heARTWORK is an ethic of care embedded throughout the research design, data collection and relationships formed during the study. Care was practised as attentiveness, reciprocity and responsiveness rather than as an abstract moral principle. By foregrounding practices of shared vulnerability, reflexivity and transparency, the research sought to disrupt hierarchical researcher–participant relations and challenge the extractive tendencies of Western-centric positivist knowledge production. Emotional labour, affective exchange and relational accountability were recognised as integral to feminist research rather than methodological weaknesses to be minimised. This approach fostered environments of trust and support, creating safer spaces for participants to discuss stigmatised and intimate experiences related to menopausal symptoms, health, work insecurity, relationships and identity. Importantly, care was also extended toward the researcher, acknowledging the ethical and emotional demands of conducting embodied feminist research and resisting narratives of academic objectivity that obscure positionality and relational impact. Rather than aiming for neutrality, heARTWORK embraces a feminist stance that values relational accountability, emotional presence and responsiveness.

This presentation shares practical reflections on challenges encountered with the research design and data collection, navigating institutional expectations, managing affective intensity, and balancing care with academic rigour. It also argues that combining creative methods with radical care can offer a practical and transferable approach for researchers, practitioners and educators working in marginalised contexts. By foregrounding process, relationship and embodiment, heARTWORK contributes to inclusive, democratic ways of doing research that ensure marginalised experiences are not only documented, but engaged with ethically, compassionately, collaboratively and sensorially.

Cognitive and emotional labour in a “mixed” society: a feminist sociologist’s perspective

Valeria Barada

Abstract

Household (care) labour encompasses aspects of visible, usually physical work, but also invisible activities that occur in fragmented and simultaneous time intervals. These invisible activities include cognitive (mental) and emotional labour that occupy and are managed by “responsible” individuals in the (nuclear) family. This vague definition is intentional, because it emphasises the sociological problematic of measurement: how can something that is non-observable and is internally mediated activity be validly measured? Although this topic has been present in sociology for decades (Oakley, 1974; Hochschild, 1989), the issue of defining and empirically delineating the phenomenon still remains.

This issue is even more layered when researching post-socialist societies, namely Croatia where gender relations are characterized by traits of “mixed society” with premodern, modern and postmodern values coexisting simultaneously (Tomić-Koludrović, Petrić, 2007). Specifically, gender relations are defined by tensions of individual-collective nexus both on personal, supra-personal and structural levels (Dobrotić, Zrinščak, 2025; Kunac 2023). For example, a father can be highly educated and economically well off, with modernized gender values, but lives in multigenerational joint decision-making patrilocal household. In order to encompass all these issues, a measure of cognitive and emotional management has been developed, that has situated this type of work within the household rather than the individual.

KEUK (Croatian: kognitivno-emocionalno upravljanje kućanstvom) includes two dimensions: resource and time management and relationship and emotion management. Additionally, it includes 3 domains where this work is done: within the household (possibly multilocal and multigenerational), towards kin and the wider community, and finally towards public and state institutions. This conceptualisation explores the possibility that management flows in different directions. Finally, it also involves two levels of activity intensity (daily or occasionally).

Findings show that KEUK remains a strongly gendered phenomenon, with women assuming a significantly greater share of all responsibilities. They are more likely to anticipate needs, coordinate schedules, and sustain emotional relationships. In contrast, men tend to underestimate women’s contributions while overestimating their own. At the same time, younger generations appear less likely to link KEUK activities to rigid gender roles, whereas beyond approximately age 30, attitudes toward the gendered nature of these activities become more firmly established. Educational attainment also plays a role: higher education correlates with more egalitarian approaches to KEUK, while lower levels of education are associated with stronger adherence to traditional gender norms in cognitive and emotional household management. Overall, these findings suggest that the seemingly intangible and continuous nature of KEUK obscures deeply gendered and complex dynamics within family relationships in Croatia.

This paper draws on two data sets: 1) survey on minor children’s parents in Croatia (N = 3600), collected via ESF project Impact of public policies on the quality of family and working life and the demographics of Croatia - Spaces of Change (2020 - 2023) and 2) survey on general population on KEUK (N = 500), collected via project Thematic systematic support of the National Foundation for Civil Society Development in the area of "Reconciling private and professional life" (2024 - 2027).

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(Un)learning across borders: Engaging with Indigenous feminist writing to reimagine relationality

Leanne Cutcher, Melissa Tyler & Sheena Vachhani

Abstract

Amid ongoing climate and humanitarian crises, recognizing and organising on the basis of our shared but situated relationality is perhaps more important than ever. Feminist thinking on relational ethics and Indigenous ways of knowing, being and doing are invaluable in helping us to better understand how we might approach this but are rarely brought into dialogue in feminist writing on politics and ethics. In this paper, we draw together insights from Indigenous feminist writing to foreground the significance of relationality to a feminist politics of care, and to contribute to reimagining how we might work, organise and live together in ways that are more sustainable, equitable and ethically responsible.

We briefly discuss the context of crisis that provides the starting point for our paper to emphasize not what we can learn from or appropriate from Indigenous ways of knowing, but rather to encourage critical, reflexive and respectful engagement in ways that help us to unlearn and reimagine the ontological and epistemological assumptions that have privileged Western, androcentric thinking as the default philosophical reference point, even within feminist thinking and practice.

In response to calls to de-colonize and to learn from Indigenous ways of knowing and organising (Starblanket, 2025), we suggest that we need to turn the questions that are normally asked around, and ask not what can we learn from Indigenous ways of knowing and organizing (risking further extractivism), but instead consider: How might we engage with Indigenous ways of knowing and organizing in ways that are respectful, reflexive and ethically responsible in order to unlearn what we (think) we know?

Our paper sets out to privilege Indigenous feminist writing on relationality in order to highlight how we might potentially reimagine established ways of knowing and organizing that prioritize instrumental rationality, hyper-individuality and accumulative output by foregrounding relational ways of knowing, being and doing based on 'beyond human' inter-connection, mutuality, moderation and replenishment (Wall Kimmerer, 2013, 2024).

To achieve this, we engage with Indigenous feminist thinking as a generous gift and consider – carefully and dialogically – how we might reciprocate and honour this work and the opportunity to (un)learn what it shares with us. Selecting from this rich body of work, we focus on the work of four Indigenous feminist writers - Lee Maracele, Robin Wall Kimmerer, Terri Janke and Whiti Hereaka, exploring what we can (un)learn from their work in ways that might help us to reimagine feminist politics as what Rauna Kuokkanen (2025) calls a 'relational freedom'.

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Stream B: Caring Organisations, Leadership & Institutions

Care, Political Legitimacy and Women's Leadership: Comparing Jordan and Sweden

Djordja Kovačević

Abstract

The situation of women being more included in politics is something the world is taking pride in. Most of the research about feminism and the political participation of women is focused on Western and European contexts, while non-Western contexts are not explored to their fullest potential. In a world where parliaments still function as gender-based workplaces, and women often face different expectations and lenses (Erikson & Josefsson, 2022), it is important to examine issues beyond it. In Jordan, cultural and social norms still determine women's political participation (Nahar & Abu Humaidan, 2013).

This paper introduces cross-comparison with a European context, with the case of Sweden, where these stereotypes are less visible. The focus is on feminist care ethics to show how caregiving expectations shape perceptions of women's political legitimacy through different cultural and historical contexts. Women have been evaluated by their relationship to care, and more importantly, family responsibilities. These stereotypes have created a constant paradox in how women are perceived in politics: if they have children, they are perceived as less committed to political leadership due to caregiving obligations, while women without children may be viewed as lacking the qualities associated with care and family life. Drawing on care ethics (Engster & Hamington), this paper argues that care today functions not only as a private responsibility but also as a lens through which women's ability for political leadership is assessed.

To address this problem, it adopts a comparative qualitative case study. The analysis draws on academic literature, media narratives, and relevant legal and policy frameworks to examine how care-related expectations are reproduced. Jordan and Sweden are selected as contrasting cases due to their different institutional approaches to gender equality and the varying influence of cultural and religious norms on women's political participation.

Expectations are that the findings will demonstrate that those stereotypes exist everywhere, but the difference is in their manifestation. In Jordan, these stereotypes are likely to be connected to traditional gender roles, religion, and expectations that the only role of women is to be responsible for family and childcare. Norms like this may influence how women are perceived as political leaders and limit their political participation.

In Sweden, it is expected that those stereotypes will be less visible thanks to stronger gender equality policies and institutional support. Rather, they are present in more subtle forms, shaping expectations of how women leaders should balance their private and public roles. The comparison aims to show that the issue is not simply in the existence of caregiving responsibilities, but in the fact that women's relationship to care still affects political legitimacy.

This paper contributes to the literature on women in politics by connecting feminist care ethics with research on women's political participation. It also expands existing scholarship beyond dominant Western cases through the inclusion of Jordan as a relatively underexplored context. More broadly, the paper suggests that the increase in the number of elected women in politics is not enough if care-related stereotypes continue to shape perceptions of leadership.

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Kriza (savremenog) obrazovnog sistema iz perspektive neoliberalne racionalnosti / The Crisis of the (Contemporary) Education System from the Perspective of Neoliberal Rationality

Sara Jovanović

Abstract

Rad naziva "Kriza (savremenog) obrazovnog sistema iz perspektive neoliberalne racionalnosti" (teorijski) istražuje transformativni potencijal etike brige u kontekstu savremenog obrazovanja, sa posebnim fokusom na njenu sposobnost da preispita dominantne neoliberalne modele organizovanja.

Rad problematizuje jednu od najčešće pominjanih, ali rijetko suštinski razmatranih tvrdnji savremenosti – da je obrazovni sistem u krizi. Polazeći od premise da ova kriza nije tehničke, već duboko ideološke prirode, fokus se stavlja na uticaj neoliberalne racionalnosti koja je, tokom posljednjih decenija, temeljno preoblikovala svrhu i praksu obrazovanja, te, sistematski, potisnula humanističku i relacijsku dimenziju pedagoškog procesa. Umjesto prostora razvoja ličnosti, kritičkog mišljenja i društvene odgovornosti, škola se konstituiše kao mehanizam proizvodnje "ljudskog kapitala", podređen logici tržišta, efikasnosti i mjerljivih ishoda.

Koristeći teorijski okvir koji spaja kritiku neoliberalizma (Harvey, Giroux, Brown) sa etikom brige (Noddings, Tronto), rad preispituje koliko je briga uopšte moguća u sistemu koji privileguje logiku tržišta nad logikom odnosa. Pažnja je posvećena i kontekstu Crne Gore, gdje sprovedena istraživanja CEDEM-a (2024) i Centra za građansko obrazovanje (2025) ukazuju na kontinuirani pad kvaliteta obrazovanja – zastarjele kurikulume, korupciju, nemogućnost pripreme učenika za tržište rada i sistem ocjenjivanja usmjeren na brzu reprodukciju memorisanog znanja umjesto na razvoj kognitivnih, emocionalnih i socijalnih vještina. Rad ukazuje kako neoliberalna racionalnost dovodi do dehumanizacije pedagoških odnosa, depolitizacije obrazovanja i uvođenja „bankovnog modela“ (Freire), u kojem učenici postaju pasivni primaoci znanja, a škola pružalac usluga. Nasuprot tome, etika brige ističe međuzavisnost, odgovornost i ranjivost kao temelje pedagoškog djelovanja. U tom kontekstu razmatra se i koncept spore pedagogije kao mogućeg otpora „brzoj pedagogiji“ performativnosti i efikasnosti.

Poseban doprinos rada ogleda se u povezivanju etike brige sa pitanjem održivosti feminističke prakse. Briga se, u datom kontekstu, ne razumije isključivo kao individualna ili interpersonalna vrijednost, već kao politički i etički princip koji može poslužiti kao osnova za izgradnju pravednije zajednice i transformaciju pedagoških praksi, čime se otvara prostor za modele organizovanja koji prevazilaze logiku tržišta.

Zaključuje se da kriza nije privremena ni lokalna, već strukturalna i logična posljedica dominantne ideologije. Dokle god obrazovanje ostaje podređeno tržištu, neće moći ispuniti svoju temeljnu svrhu – izgradnja i njegovanje slobodnih, odgovornih i brižnih građana. Povratak etici brige i logici odnosa nije romantična opcija, već nužan uslov za ozdravljenje obrazovnog sistema, te društva u cjelini.

Ključne riječi: neoliberalizam, etika brige, (kriza) obrazovnog sistema, tržište.

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Gender, Care, and Political Power: Structural Barriers to Women's Representation in Montenegro

Nikoleta Đukanović

Abstract

This paper examines the persistent gap between formal gender equality reforms and the substantive political representation of women in Montenegro, through the lens of feminist institutionalism and care theory. While gender quotas and legal mechanisms have contributed to an increase in women's descriptive representation, they have failed to transform the underlying power structures that shape political participation and access to decision-making positions.

The analysis draws on a qualitative research design combining institutional and legal analysis with 20 in-depth semi-structured interviews conducted with women engaged in political parties, as well as original survey data on public attitudes toward women in politics. This approach enables a comprehensive examination of both formal mechanisms and lived experiences of political exclusion.

The findings demonstrate that women's political representation in Montenegro remains structurally constrained by a combination of weak institutional enforcement, informal intra-party practices, and deeply embedded patriarchal norms. Gender quotas are often implemented only formally, with women placed in less electable positions on candidate lists or excluded from decision-making processes within parties. Furthermore, the gendered division of labour, particularly the disproportionate burden of unpaid care work, which remains politically unrecognised and structurally excluded from institutional agendas, continues to limit women's political engagement and reinforces their marginalisation.

Building on these findings, the paper argues that existing approaches to political representation are insufficient, as they neglect the central role of care as both a social practice and a political issue. By integrating insights from feminist care theory, the paper proposes a shift from a purely quantitative understanding of representation towards a framework that accounts for structural inequalities in both the public and private spheres.

The paper contributes to ongoing debates on caring feminism by demonstrating how the marginalisation of care within political institutions reproduces gender inequality, and by highlighting the need for more transformative approaches to democratic inclusion.

Stream C: Care as Resistance and Resistance to Care

Meanings of feminism from an Afro-Atlantic standpoint: a comparative approach on Brazil and England

Bárbara Araújo Machado

Abstract

This paper discusses how Black women from different diasporic contexts have related to feminism, from a critical and constructive perspective. It proposes a comparison between how Brazilian Black feminists and Black feminists from the Caribbean who lived and organized politically in England approached the feminist movement and the concept of feminism itself. It focuses on the 1980s, a prolific period for Black feminist critique and activism in both of those contexts, and analyses mainly texts from two seminal books, one from each context: *Heart of the Race: Black Women's Lives in Britain* (Bryan et al. 2018), and *Por um feminismo afro-latino americano* (Gonzalez 2020).

Although using a comparative approach, this paper ultimately intends to develop a synthesis that can contribute to an Afro-Atlantic Feminist framework. Such conceptual framework is inspired by Lélia Gonzalez's call for an "Afro-Latin-American feminism" (Gonzalez 2020), which extends beyond national limits to come together with other groups of women victimized by colonization in Latin America in a solidarity-based struggle for social justice. I propose that this idea can be expanded to an Afro-Atlantic Feminism, considering the Atlantic as a site and a symbol for both the slave trade and the resistance of the Black diaspora (Gilroy 2002).

Historically, Black women from different backgrounds have established a critical relation to feminism, having experienced different forms of racism within it. It has led some of them to distance themselves from feminism and even to create other notions and names for Black women's politics and organizing (Collins 1996). Some of them, on the other hand, have approached feminism critically, denouncing racist practices, while simultaneously attempting to develop a better and stronger antiracist feminism that could encompass solidarity, aiming for emancipation in a broad sense. Analysing how Black feminists from the Black diaspora have approached this matter is fundamental in a moment where feminism still faces significant challenges, with the advancement of the far right and its racist, transphobic xenophobic ideas and practices. Reclaiming Black feminist thought through a transnational emancipatory synthesis might be a step in the direction of an effectively collaborative, caring feminism.

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Between silence and voice: Embodiment, heritage, and care as practices of resistance

Marija Radunović

Abstract

Ovaj rad nastaje iz ličnog promišljanja ženskog iskustva i načina na koji se ono prenosi kroz generacije. Polazim od ideje da mnoge žene nose u sebi ne samo sopstvena iskustva, već i naslijeđene obrasce ćutanja, trpljenja i odricanja.

Inspiraciju pronalazim u figuri Jelene Četković, koju vidim kao simbol snage, borbe i odgovornosti prema drugima. Taj istorijski sloj povezujem sa savremenim radom kroz legendu "Skoči devojka", kroz koji istražujem trenutak promjene-trenutak kada žena odlučuje da više ne ponavlja ono što joj je ostavljeno u nasljeđe.

Rad realizujem kroz video- performans i konceptualni modni komad. Kroz pokret i odnos prema tijelu prikazujem prelaz iz stegnutosti u slobodu. Materijali i forma prate tu promjenu, ali važniji mi je osjećaj koji nose nego savršena forma.

Tekst koji prati performans obraća se ženi direktno. U njemu se prepoznaje da briga o sebi nije sebičnost, već nužan korak ka prekidu onoga što se godinama ponavlja.

Ovaj rad za mene nije samo umjetnički izraz, već i lični proces razumijevanja i oslobađanja. Vjerujem da kroz takav pristup umjetnost može postati prostor promjene, slobode i novog početka.

From Google Translate:

This work arises from a personal reflection on the female experience and the way it is transmitted through generations. I start from the idea that many women carry within themselves not only their own experiences, but also inherited patterns of silence, suffering and renunciation.

I find inspiration in the figure of Jelena Četković, whom I see as a symbol of strength, struggle and responsibility towards others. I connect this historical layer with contemporary work through the legend "Jump Girl", through which I explore the moment of change - the moment when a woman decides to no longer repeat what has been left to her as a legacy.

I realize the work through a video performance and a conceptual fashion piece. Through movement and the relationship to the body, I show the transition from tightness to freedom. The materials and form accompany this change, but the feeling they convey is more important to me than the perfect form.

The text that accompanies the performance addresses women directly. It recognizes that taking care of yourself is not selfishness, but a necessary step towards breaking what has been repeated for years.

For me, this work is not only an artistic expression, but also a personal process of understanding and liberation. I believe that through such an approach, art can become a space of change, freedom and a new beginning.

Horizontal mutual support networks among Russian-speaking trans people (2000s–2010s)

Yana Kirey Sitnikova

Abstract

Trans care has historically been underexplored by feminist care theorists, whose primary emphasis used to be domestic work by heterosexual cis women (Malatino, 2020). The development of trans studies has attracted increased attention to this field by scholars such as Barcelos (2022), Jackson Levin et al. (2020), and Marvin (2019), who emphasized care networks beyond the boundaries of traditional family and household. My study elaborates on this subject by exploring mutual care practices among Russian-speaking trans people in the 2000s–2010s by a mixed-methods approach, which includes textual analysis of web forums, interviews, and autoethnography. Trans web forums of the early 2000s shared similarities with e-mail lists established in the 1990s, but offered easier navigation across a broader range of topics, including gender-affirming medical and non-medical procedures, legal gender recognition, sexual/romantic relationships, news/politics, etc. Setting up and moderating forums, as well as sharing information about doctors and hormone therapy schemes were early practices of care. Whereas most users came to receive information or simply chat, some trans people became experts in specific topics, such as hormone therapy or legal issues. Their reputation derived not from formal credentials (although some had related education/professional background) but the number of trans people whom they successfully helped. Their motivations varied: some considered it their moral duty to give back support that they had received in the earlier stages of transitions, one described his inspiration as savior syndrome, whereas a trans woman with expertise in hormone therapy had a scientific interest to observe the results of her prescriptions. Web forums were not a virtual reality completely isolated from the physical space. Users from nearby localities organized regular offline meetings, and those living in large cities offered temporary housing to trans people coming for psychiatric assessment or surgeries from other parts of the country. At the same time, forums were spaces of infighting and mutual insulting. Online platforms were separated based on gender identity: there were forums for FtMs (female-to-male), MtFs (male-to-female), transvestites, and shemales (these terms were used for self-description in those days), with mutual animosity between and hierarchies within these groups. On the one hand, transsexual women with a good “pass” mocked others whose appearance did not fit into cisnormative standards; on the other hand, transvestites considered themselves to be “normal men expressing their feminine part” and prohibited discussions of gender-affirming medicine. Sometimes forums split because of personal and ideological conflicts between administrators, to the frustration of ordinary users. Whereas the solidarity part of the forum life fits in the pre-existing theories of trans care, the aforementioned infighting, which coexisted with care (sometimes on behalf of the same individuals), has not been previously theorized. Trans rage is described as “rage toward cisgenderism”, which can lead to both constructive and destructive consequences (Skelton, 2025). However, what was happening on Russian-speaking trans forums cannot be described within this framework as the perpetrators were supportive of binary gender roles and venting anger on their more disadvantaged colleagues instead of the cisnormative system. These findings necessitate further conceptualization.

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