



Kent Academic Repository

Lewis, Patricia, Ozkazanc-Pan, Banu and Pullen, Alison (2018) *Gender, Work and Organization developments in 2018*. *Gender, Work & Organization*, 25 (5). pp. 437-442. ISSN 0968-6673.

Downloaded from

<https://kar.kent.ac.uk/69544/> The University of Kent's Academic Repository KAR

The version of record is available from

<https://doi.org/10.1111/gwao.12301>

This document version

Author's Accepted Manuscript

DOI for this version

Licence for this version

UNSPECIFIED

Additional information

Editorial

Versions of research works

Versions of Record

If this version is the version of record, it is the same as the published version available on the publisher's web site. Cite as the published version.

Author Accepted Manuscripts

If this document is identified as the Author Accepted Manuscript it is the version after peer review but before type setting, copy editing or publisher branding. Cite as Surname, Initial. (Year) 'Title of article'. To be published in *Title of Journal*, Volume and issue numbers [peer-reviewed accepted version]. Available at: DOI or URL (Accessed: date).

Enquiries

If you have questions about this document contact ResearchSupport@kent.ac.uk. Please include the URL of the record in KAR. If you believe that your, or a third party's rights have been compromised through this document please see our [Take Down policy](https://www.kent.ac.uk/guides/kar-the-kent-academic-repository#policies) (available from <https://www.kent.ac.uk/guides/kar-the-kent-academic-repository#policies>).

Editorial – GWO September 2018
Gender, Work and Organization Developments in 2018

Patricia Lewis, Banu Ozkazanc-Pan and Alison Pullen

New Beginnings

As incoming editors of *Gender, Work and Organization*, one of the first decisions we made was to write editorials in response to significant world events and developments in the journal and the activities of the gender, work and organization research community. This editorial is prompted by the latter two and we begin by introducing you to the third new editor of the journal - Banu Ozkazanc-Pan - who will be taking over from Ida Sabelis and joining the *Gender, Work and Organization* editorial team of Alison Pullen and Patricia Lewis in January 2019. Banu received her PhD in Organization Studies from the University of Massachusetts at Amherst and credits her intellectual mothers, Marta Calás and Linda Smircich, for her interest and training in critical approaches, most notably in feminist, postcolonial and transnational traditions. While the foundation of *Gender, Work & Organization* is rooted in European intellectual traditions and historical moments, Banu's goals are to diversify who speaks for/about experiences of gender, work and organization and how experiences of sexism, racism, and other –isms take shape in contemporary workplaces. Including more scholars and scholarship from the Global South will be one of Banu's main projects. As a female Muslim scholar who became a mother while attempting to gain tenure with feminist work in a U.S. business school, Banu has experienced multiple forms of inequality but uses them to inform her activism and praxis for gender system change. These experiences and other ongoing gendered inequalities guide her research and writing practices. Prior to *Gender, Work & Organization*, Banu served as associate editor at *New England Journal of Entrepreneurship*, *Qualitative Research in Organization and Management*, and *Business Ethics: A European Review*. Her most recent book, *Transnational Migration and the*

New Subjects of Work: Transmigrants, Hybrids and Cosmopolitans, will be published next year by Bristol University Press. She is also co-editing the *Routledge Companion to GWO* with Elisabeth Kelan, Alison Pullen, Helena Liu and Patricia Lewis. She is also past Co-Chair of the Critical Management Studies Division and incoming PDW Co-Chair for the Diversity & Inclusion Theme Committee of the Academy of Management. In these various spaces and outlets, Banu aims to provide material and epistemic safe spaces to engage in ongoing feminist conversations—an aim that she hopes to infuse into the journal starting next year.

Gender, Work and Organisation Sydney Conference 2018

In 2018, the *Gender, Work and Organization* conference was for the first time held outside of the UK. In June this year, the Faculty of Business and Economics at Macquarie University, Sydney, Australia was proud to host the 10th biennial *Gender, Work and Organization* conference. The conference came at a time in history when discrimination towards women, sexual minorities and marginalised racial groups is being reported in the media on a daily basis. Macquarie University's Vice-Chancellor Professor Bruce Dowton opened the conference with the statement: 'Those of us leading complex institutions know that we have to address social inequality and this requires significant investment including research investment into gender and diversity more broadly'. Professor Alison Pullen, Co-Chair and lead Organizer of the conference, responded, acknowledging that she was delighted to be working at Macquarie, an institution that has a bold vision to lead the way for other universities and organisations, and society more generally, to create greater equality between women and men at work. In 2017 Macquarie University launched its Workplace Gender Equity Strategy which set out a path for real and sustainable change. This initiative encompassed a new approach firmly focussed on 'fixing the system' - that is, working to change the underlying systemic and cultural factors that create impediments to women fully

participating, contributing and developing at our University. Research is guiding this work in identifying and addressing these underlying factors.

Those of us researching gender at work, and who have experienced discrimination in universities know the very struggles we have in making our research recognised. This is especially so for people whose more general disciplinary location remains male dominated and whose dominant institutions see gender research as marginal to strategic initiatives. Whilst doing our research, we also have to do the identity work required to get this work funded, published, read and recognised. Despite these challenges, as academics we recognise our social privilege, and that many of us work in safe environments. Outside our ivory towers too many women are at risk from gender injustices ranging from domestic violence and lack of access to employment. We met on Gadigal land at the Hyatt Regency at Darling Harbour where the Gender, Work and Organization Sydney conference team welcomed scholars from twenty seven countries. Across many streams the full ranges of issues, and practices concerning gender at work were debated, and for the first time in the conference's twenty-four year history we were honoured to have a stream on Indigenous Knowledge. Ida Sabelis, outgoing editor of the *Gender, Work and Organization* journal, travelled from Amsterdam, Holland. The current editors were also there: Alison Pullen from Sydney, Patricia Lewis came from Kent in the UK and our incoming editor Banu Ozkazanc-Pan came from the US. Hosting the conference in Australia was important as many scholars from the Global South attended for the very first time.

Our first keynote presentation provoked and will continue to do so for some time. Professor Maggie Walter is Palawa, descending from the Pairrebenne people of North Eastern Tasmania and a member of the larger Briggs Johnson Tasmanian Aboriginal family. Maggie holds the dual roles of Professor of Sociology and Pro Vice-Chancellor, Aboriginal Research and Leadership at the University of Tasmania. Maggie's recent book is *Indigenous*

Children Growing Up Strong (2017 co-edited with K.L. Martin and G. Bodkin-Andrews, Palgrave MacMillan). Maggie's presentation was entitled 'Aboriginal Women, Race Relations and Theoretical Absence'. In it she explored Aboriginal women's place in Australian society and how they were over-represented in incarceration, homicide, poverty and unemployment statistics, and under-represented in educational and labour market outcomes data. As she explained, the vulnerability that this reflects is a result of more than just gender plus race. Maggie argued that these predictive social forces are bordered by, and defined through, settler colonialism and the incumbent power structures of Australian race relations. Maggie asked challenging questions such as: How does Australian scholarship engage with this space? Why do Australian academics continue to so carefully skirt the race relations that are the foundations of their identity and the shaper of their everyday realities? This presentation engaged with these questions using the concepts of epistemologies of ignorance, White fragility and the race bind paradox as its theoretical base.

Raewyn Connell, Professor Emerita, University of Sydney, and Life Member of the National Tertiary Education Union was our second keynote. Her books have been translated into many languages worldwide and she issued a challenge to the Gender, Work and Organization community with her paper 'On a World Scale: New Maps of Struggle for Gender Justice'. Starting with Gender, Work and Organization's initial purposes, Raewyn considered how the terrain of gender studies has changed in past decades. She argued that the high tide of poststructuralist thought in the global North has passed; that the scale of feminist thought and research in the majority world is increasingly recognized; and that more attention now goes to the diversity of gender forms and the ways they mutate. Ideas about organization and labour may again play a leading role, Raewyn surmised. But the terrain of organization, work and power has itself been changing now that we are in a second generation of neoliberalism, commodifying social processes worldwide. The offshore arenas of

transnational corporations and global markets overwhelm local economies and give a central role to cyborg managerial masculinities. Authoritarian and racist politics are leading a remasculinization of the public Sphere. Old political strategies for gender equity are outflanked by these changes. Therefore Raewyn suggested that we need to re-examine the role that intellectuals and intellectual work play in system change. As researchers we work in a highly unequal, global economy of knowledge and our own trade needs to be democratised and its links with social action re-thought. Only in that way can the promise of *Gender, Work and Organization* be realized in the new conditions.

Silvia Gherardi gave our final keynote presentation in which she reflected on the question of ‘do we need ‘gender’ any longer? Professor Gherardi is Senior Professor of Sociology of Work and Organization at the Department of Sociology and Social Research at the University of Trento, Italy where she founded the Research Unit on Communication, Organizational Learning, and Aesthetics. She is also a member of the Centre for Interdisciplinary Gender Studies in the University of Trento. She is widely known for her work in feminist studies, epistemology of practice, practice-based studies, and post-qualitative methodologies in organization studies. Silvia embodied posthumanist research to displace the subject in exploring ‘gender’. Silvia then moved, having accepted a posthumanist research practice, to show how the very idea of method is disrupted in postqualitative methodologies. As Gherardi spoke: ‘postqualitative inquiry has opened a conversation with Deleuzian philosophy and formulated a ‘concept as/instead of method’ line of thought, I wonder whether new images of thought might give the concept of gender ‘the forces it needs to return to life’ or the forces to abandon it and explore further the becoming of the problem of sexual difference’ (Gherardi,, forthcoming). Silvia then explored new images of thought in relation to sexual difference: vegetal from rhizomatic thinking, musical registers to escape the narrative of the human condition, fleshy drawing on writings on labiaplasty and nonliving by exploring

the desert, the animist and the virus as different imaginaries. Silvia thus ends her piece by asking whether genderish challenges dogmatic thought.

Ruth Simpson, Professor of Management at Brunel Business School, UK, ran a hugely successful writing workshop for early career academics. In 2017 Ruth was awarded an Emeritus Fellowship from the Leverhulme Trust for a project entitled: *Placing the Experiences of Working Class Men* and she is recipient of the 2017 Richard Whipp Lifetime Achievement award from the British Academy of Management. Ruth was a long-standing Associate Editor of the *Gender, Work and Organization* journal and drew on her own extensive writings and knowledge of the journal in this well attended, applauded session.

The conference was not possible without the support of its delegates, the sponsorship for PhD students from Massey University, NZ, Sydney University, The University of Technology Sydney and Macquarie University, Australia. Wiley the journal's publisher provided generous support for scholarships and funded the 'Travelling with Joan' panel organised by Eileen Otis and chaired by Judith Pringle. The Equality Department of Macquarie University sponsored places for non-waged members of our community to attend. The Faculty of Business and Economics and Dean Steve Brammer funded major events. The conference remembered its history and development, while looking forward to identify future trajectories. Everyone appreciated the space we stood on in the present as well, not least because of the large quantities of great Sydney food! Many events, streams and activities took place but it is the ways in which scholarship emerges in a supportive and feminist environment that we will remember. We are delighted that our keynote lectures will appear in forthcoming issues of the journal. But, in writing up the conference, we only need to look at the world around us to know that this is not the right time for complacency as we continue to fight for gender justice and as this conference demonstrated this involves decolonising the knowledge foundations on which much of our scholarship stands. As we go

to print, Maggie Walter sent Alison a report on Aboriginal women and work that was published as part of the 2018 National Aborigines and Islanders Day Observance Committee (NAIDOC) week which has the theme 'Because of her, we can!'. Published by the Australian Bureau of Statistics. (see <http://abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Latestproducts/4739.0Main%20Features12018?opendocument&tabname=Summary&prodno=4739.0&issue=2018&num=&view=>) the report showed how more and more aboriginal women are using higher education to give themselves opportunities whilst simultaneously embracing their own cultural heritage. At a time when the news often seems so bad, this was a ray of light that shows how positive change is happening in the world.

Going forward, the conference invigorated our objective to re-politicise *Gender, Work and Organization* and we look forward to continuing our global journey, a journey we each start from where we are. The conference highlights are many, but we are reminded of the importance of opportunity and agency in what we do, and the privilege of being able to do that in a safe place. We cannot underestimate how many scholars risk their lives actively fighting for change. Overall, the conference embodied the transitions occurring at the *Gender, Work and Organization* journal, and on that note, we eagerly await the Kent conference in 2020 with the theme of 'Transitions'.

In this Issue

This issue opens with four papers which offer new insights and applications of intersectionality in contexts and locations dispersed globally. As noted by Calás et al. (2010), inequalities and theories about inequalities travel globally, often becoming something different in the local contexts in which they manifest and become theorized. These papers provide contributions to how we theorize intersecting dimensions of inequality in experiences

of work and in organizations, achieving this by providing locally-grounded observations on the phenomenon. In doing so, they expand our understanding of intersectionality to consider its epistemic, theoretical and methodological dimensions.

In the Irish context, O'Hagan expands upon intersectionality to examine the status and experiences of 'working mothers' through the frames of identity, institutional, and social practices. Her work underscores the relevance of gender, maternity and class as simultaneous processes for understanding how gendered inequalities take shape in organizations. Love, Booyesen and Essed provide a nuanced and complex tri-theory framework for examining African-American women's experiences, practices and ideas about social justice work. They expand upon intersectionality by focusing on race, gender and generation as a way to understand the deliberate and different ways social justice work takes shape. Further, their research allows consideration of the motivational aspect of engaging in social justice work as they deploy social identity theory and standpoint theory alongside intersectionality. Heiskanen et al. adopt intersectionality as a framework and methodological tool to examine the gender equality perceptions in the Finnish Defence Force. Guided by feminist action research, their work highlights how different social categories, such as civilian versus military status, offer new insights about experiences of gender equality in a military work context. For them, intersectionality provides opportunity to engage in social change agendas that are meaningful and sustainable as they speak to issues hitherto unvoiced in the organization. Tariq and Syed utilize qualitative approaches to demonstrate that in the U.K. context, the experiences of second generation Pakistani Muslim women needs to take into account the intersections of gender, ethnicity and religion. Their research highlights how intersectionality, as a guiding framework, can attend to multiple dimensions of identity to highlight experiences of discrimination and outcomes of inequality. In all, these works expand the repertoire of research relying on intersectionality and provide new directions for

scholars and scholarship engaged in addressing and studying multiple dimensions of inequality in work and organizations.

The next three papers draw on postfeminist and neoliberalist theoretical frameworks to explore the contradictory co-existence of persistent gender inequalities alongside the valorisation of female labour force participation in organizational and entrepreneurial contexts. “Womonomics” which promotes the empowerment of women through equal access to the labour market idealizes women working. Investment in women and girls to facilitate access to formal work settings is lauded as the way to end global poverty, recuperate the global economy after the 2008 financial crisis, develop ethical business through feminine leadership and as the means to harness the untapped resource of women’s entrepreneurial capabilities with positive results for families and economies (Eisenstein, 2009; Schieder, 2014; Lewis, 2018). Yet, despite the contemporary value attached to women’s educational and economic achievements, this occurs within a context where inequality is not only persistent but is also rendered invisible through postfeminist and neoliberal discourses.

The obfuscation of relentless inequality within organizational contexts is an issue taken up by Ronen in her exploration of the work experiences of male and female designers in the USA. Focusing on product design, a form of work which is characterised by the co-existence of masculine agentic and feminine communicative components, Ronen brings together postfeminist theorizing and sociological research on the gender typing of work to show how inequality is rendered ‘unspeakable’ through the dual processes of gender essentialization and feminine devaluation. With a continued focus on the concealment and persistence of gendered inequality, Swedish entrepreneurship policy for women is the focus of the next paper by Berglund et al. Through a novel methodological approach which draws on Nancy Fraser’s specification of the cultural and socioeconomic aspects of gender oppression and her argument that redistribution has been displaced in favour of recognition,

they identify two distinct discourses and three discursive displacements which have contributed to a problematic transformation of women's entrepreneurship policies in Sweden. By means of their innovative discursive analysis, Berglund et al demonstrate the replacement of an entrepreneurship policy which advocated collective action to benefit *all* women, with a policy underpinned by postfeminist and neoliberal principles which shifts the emphasis towards the entrepreneurial activities of *individual* women. As the authors argue, this shift renders invisible the structural causes of gender inequality, depicts collective action as obsolete and sustains the ongoing subordination of female business owners in the Swedish context. Also investigating the impact of postfeminist and neoliberal discourses on women's entrepreneurial experiences, Jones and Clifton explore why women business owners do not 'see' being ignored by men when engaging in business as an example of sexism-in-action. Through a fine-grained narrative analysis of the identity work of women entrepreneurs, they outline how their respondents did not consider gender as an explanation for their work experience, instead they adhered to a position that sexism no longer exists, and that gender equality has been achieved. The consequence of this stance is that by being unable to perceive the sexism which underpins the work behaviour of the men they engage with, they cannot challenge their subordination which has been rendered invisible and unspeakable by the norms of postfeminism and neoliberalism. These three papers extend the use of postfeminism and neoliberalism as conceptual tools for exploring ongoing inequalities. Theoretically and methodologically we are provided with new ways to make use of these frameworks when studying the tenacity of gendered oppression in the contemporary world.

The final paper in this issue, written by Barragan et al, explores the entrepreneurial experiences of women in the United Arab Emirates, a context which is characterised as patriarchal-Islamic in terms of its gender norms. Within a setting where women's lives are circumscribed and regulated by male relatives, the authors explore the agency of Emirati

women entrepreneurs in negotiating an entrepreneurial path. Drawing on the notion of strategic (dis)obedience, the paper surfaces the way in which respondents secure a position of micro-emancipation which allows them to pursue their entrepreneurial activities within a context which is heavily circumscribed by traditional gender norms and practices. While facing significant restriction, Barragan et al, show how any form of micro-emancipation must be tailored to the context of specific societies if strategic acts of obedience and disobedience are to be successful in securing some freedom of action.

The Journal Going Forward

Building on the success of the Sydney conference, we see *Gender, Work and Organization* embarking on a new phase which builds on its valuable history and the careful stewardship of previous editors. With an editorial team which is based in different parts of the world – Australia, the United Kingdom and the United States of America – we further open-up conversations about gender, work and organizing to new parts of the world, with new audiences and with the intention of creating spaces where marginalised and new ways of thinking becomes visible.

References

Eisenstein, H. (2009). *Feminism Seduced: How Global Elites use Women's Labor and Ideas to Exploit the World*. Boulder and London: Paradigm Publishers.

Calás, M. B., Smircich, L., Tienari, J., & Ellehave, C. F. (2010). Observing globalized capitalism: Gender and ethnicity as an entry point. *Gender, Work & Organization*, 17(3): 243-247.

Lewis, P. (2018). The lived experience of female entrepreneurship in postfeminist times. *Re-thinking Female Entrepreneurship*, British Academy One Day Conference, Durham

University Business School, 20th June.

Schieder, C.S. (2014). Womenomics versus women: Neoliberal cooptation of feminism in Japan. *Meiji Journal of Political Science and Economics*, 3: 53-60.