

## Editorial – GWO March 2018

### *Gender, Work and Organization in 2018*

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“The journal is dedicated to advancing theory, research and applications concerning gender relations at work, the organization of gender and the gendering of organizations” (Knights, D. and Rubery, J. (1994) Editors’ Introduction, *Gender, Work and Organization*, 1(1): 1.

“Neoliberalism is increasingly becoming our cultural modus operandi, molding all spheres of life into the model of the market, where competition and capital appreciation override all other considerations. A feminism animated by such an agenda is a feminism only in name.” (Rottenberg, C. (2018) The Neoliberal Feminist Subject. *Los Angeles Review of Books*. 7/1/2018: Np.)

In this first issue of 2018 we would like to say a very big hello to our readership and stress how very happy we are to be appointed as the incoming Joint Editors of *Gender, Work and Organization*. 2017 was an eventful year at the *Gender, Work and Organization* office. Alison Pullen started her three year term taking over from David Knights as Founding Editor. Alison often remarks what big shoes she has to fill and how this drives what she sees as a personal responsibility towards the journal, especially after she met David Knights at her first *Gender, Work and Organization* conference as a PhD student in the UK and became colleagues thereafter. Patricia Lewis was appointed during the same recruitment period, her three year term starting formally in January 2018 to replace founding Associate Editor and latterly Joint Editor Deborah Kerfoot. Alison and Patricia will be working with Ida Sabelis until a new Joint Editor is appointed to start in January 2019. We pay homage to Professors Jill Rubery and David Knights the founders of the journal and to Drs Deborah Kerfoot and Ida Sabelis, who have carefully nurtured the journal to its current robust good health. We are honoured to take the helm from these editors and to continue to take the journal from strength-to-strength over the coming years. Further, we respect the unique interdisciplinary contributions that *Gender, Work and Organization* has brought to its readership since 1994 and the space created for those working in critical gender studies across a broad range of fields such as Women’s Studies, Sociology, Industrial Relations and Organization Studies.

Yet 2017 marked a period of profound feminist resistance and we are now living in challenging feminist times, but what a feminist time it is to become the new joint editors of *Gender, Work and Organization*. It seems to us we have a duty of care to situate *Gender, Work and Organization* within its geo-political context and the challenges this invokes for researching gender and organizations globally. Feminist history has recorded women’s

progress and the struggles involved in making such progress, and we know only too well that women's experiences are not universal in their access to safety, health and equality with many women being denied basic human rights, including control over their bodies. In our part of the world we are seeing feminism become part of everyday, popular discourse. However, feminism is also going through a moment when it is revered and reviled in public discourse, and we are reminded by Sara Ahmed that we learn much from the backlash against feminism. We are also experiencing a time when we have never needed it more than we do now. From the continued gender pay gap to persistent vertical segregation to systemic sexual abuse to Donald Trump and Brexit and the danger that the latter two pose to hard won rights – the multitude of feminist positions and their intersection with other analyses of difference are a continuing source of intellectual, political, activist, power and pride. Even though it appears that much of the contemporary value assigned to feminism derives from a moderate version embraced by celebrities from Beyonce and Emma Watson to celebrity business women such as Sheryl Sandberg and Karren Brady, there has also been a resurgence in feminist activism through campaigns such as the Everyday Sexism Project, the #Me Too campaign and the Women's Marches against Donald Trump (Lewis, Benschop & Simpson, 2018; Vachhani & Pullen, unpublished paper).

While there has always been debate and disagreement among the large variety of feminisms that make up the cannon of feminist thinking, the '...desire to transform the political, social, legal and cultural systems'... (Tyler, 2007: 173) that prevents diverse groups of women from achieving full equality is what unites them. A belief in the potential of feminist thinking in conjunction with other critical cannons to enact positive change in all our lives is what fundamentally drives those who read and publish in *Gender, Work and Organization*. Continuing to make visible the ways in which organizations are simultaneously gendered, raced, heteronormative and classed and the consequences of privilege for the "One" and persistent inequality for the "Other" (Nkomo & Ariss, 2014) remains the focus of the journal.

As editors we bring different life histories to our work and the ways in which our editorial dialogue emerges. Patricia was born and educated in Ireland and Alison in South Wales, we both have one son, and we have both worked with Professor Ruth Simpson who has been a long standing Associate Editor of the journal until her retirement this year. Despite commonalities, there are many differences in the ways in which our lives have shaped our academic values and research trajectories and through these differences we have been able to embody feminist ways of working that emerge in the ways we work together on *Gender, Work and Organization* and will contribute to the future development of a shared vision with the Editorial Board of the journal. We bring two decades of joint experience working as Associate Editors of *Gender, Work and Organization*. Drawing on poststructuralist feminism, Patricia's work has largely focused on the experience of living outside the masculine norm and the impact this has had on female entrepreneurial identity, a sense of authenticity and more recently the emergence of postfeminist entrepreneurial identities. She enjoys re-reading influential texts through the lens of poststructuralist feminism including Kanter's *Men and Women of the Corporation* published in the *International Journal of*

*Management Reviews* (with Ruth Simpson) and Hakim's much criticized text *Work-Lifestyle Choices in the 21st Century: Preference Theory* published in *Gender, Work and Organization* (with Ruth Simpson). Her most recent book is *Postfeminism and Organization* (2018) edited with Yvonne Benschop and Ruth Simpson. Alison Pullen's work has been concerned with analyzing and intervening in the politics of work as it concerns gender discrimination, identity politics, and organizational injustice. Her recent books were *Feminist and queer theorists debate the future of Critical Management Studies* (2017, with Nancy Harding and Mary Phillips) and *The Routledge Companion to Ethics, Politics and Organization* (2015, with Carl Rhodes). Alison is writing on feminist resistance and activism, employing feminist critiques of neoliberalism.

As we take up the editorial reins of the journal, the metrics – yes those things we are all subject to – indicate its good health. There is a 22 per cent year-on-year growth of downloads and a regular annual increase in citations. All of which is occurring while the quality of the journal is being maintained through a rejection rate of 89% in 2016 and in 2017. To build on this success we need your continued support and contribution through attendance at the *Gender, Work and Organization* conference, the submission of your research for publication in the journal and by taking-on the task of reviewing submitted manuscripts. Reviewing is a task which is central to the development of our field and one of our immediate editorial objectives is to speed up the time manuscripts are in review. To achieve this objective we would like as many of you as possible to review for the journal. If you are interested in becoming a regular reviewer for *Gender, Work and Organization* please email us to let us know as we are in the process of establishing a reviewer board. Members of this board will review between four and eight manuscripts a year and we will draw on this expertise along with requesting other colleagues with specific knowledge to also support the reviewing activity of the journal. Speeding up the review process will support colleagues within the wider gender and organization studies community and also get our ideas, analyses and plans for change out into the open as quickly as possible. At our next Editorial Board meeting in June 2018, we, together with the incoming Joint Editor, will present our experiences of the journal and work with the board to set a future vision for *Gender, Work and Organization*.

Before looking forward, we remember Professors Joan Acker and Heather Höpfl who not only contributed intellectually and politically to *Gender, Work and Organization* but nurtured generations of gender scholars. We are currently preparing our 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary issue for January 2019 when our contributors will celebrate *Gender, Work and Organization's* successes. In June 2018 the *Gender, Work and Organization* conference will take place in Sydney. Six hundred and twenty three submissions from the international community were received across thirty four streams. These streams will debate class, hegemonic masculinity, gender transgressions, corporate responsibility, energy, race and decolonising, Indigenous knowledge and organization, migration, social reproduction, women and collectivism, and so much more including men and change, women professors, and the persistence of barriers for working women. In 2020 the conference returns to the UK

at The University of Kent and will be organised by Patricia Lewis, before moving to another international city.

We hope that *Gender, Work and Organization* continues to be a journal that reflects on historical developments in the field, creates a space for researching gender at work and the gendering of organizations including academe, anticipates future debates by publishing new research trajectories which are theoretically driven and philosophically informed, and is politically engaged with the aim of changing the lives of those who continue to be marginalised, violated and oppressed.

## **References**

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