



# ACTIVIST ENERGIES

**The Australian Women's and  
Gender Studies Association  
Biennial Conference 2022**

28 November – 30 November Melbourne

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PROGRAM & IMAGERY DESIGN  
SAVANNAH J SUPSKI

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS & THANK YOU

This conference, and its theme, emerged from the scholarly, the bodily and the affective. A stilled and saddened country in the grip of a pandemic, a world rocked by disaster, isolation and conflict, and an academic sector harassed by a hostile Government. We thought about critical feminist work and the energy it requires and the energy it creates.

We are grateful to have had each other in this journey towards the Conference ... a testament to the nourishment that is there in collaboration. We are thankful to the AWGSA Executive for their support and to the ECR/Postgraduate reps for their important work on the networking event. We are thankful to CHASS for the financial support for the Conference and the collaborative engagement around Humanities and Social Sciences, a recognition of the vital contribution all our disciplines make in the world (recognised or not). We express our gratitude to the Australasian Society for Continental Philosophy for inviting AWGSA to co-facilitate their keynote event. Our appreciation, also, to the University of Melbourne Gender Studies Program for their generosity in sponsoring the Day 2 morning tea. And a special thank you to AWGSA executive member Suzanne Egan, who donated her registration to enable the attendance of presenters without financial support. Our heartfelt thanks to our volunteers, Bess Schnioffsky, Tom Short and Camille Nurka, who are key to a successful event and to all those who have sent cheery messages throughout the process.

This conference takes place on the unceded lands of the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung and Bunurong Boon Wurrung peoples of the Eastern Kulin; we pay our respects to them as enduring custodians of the oldest continuous culture in of the world and of all the lands, air and waters that sustain us.

Juliet, Savannah and JaneMaree



# WELCOME TO ACTIVIST ENERGIES

THE BIENNIAL AUSTRALIAN WOMEN'S AND  
GENDER STUDIES ASSOCIATION CONFERENCE

Colleagues, friends and allies, it's my sincerest joy to welcome to AWGSA. We are thrilled you could attend our first gathering in Naarm since the lengthy and difficult COVID lockdowns. This year, we have seen great interest in our focus topic. Fatigue. We all feel it in our bodies, intellectually, spiritually and emotionally. This year you will hear from multiple, intersectional voices that will challenge the status quo within feminism and how we (re) conceptualise conversations about labour, work and "the soft life".

As a community of feminist scholars and practitioners, we welcome this dialogue, opening spaces to reimagine the impact of doing work that consistently invites backlash and hostility – or, generally, work that occupies liminal, marginal spaces. As a community, during this conference, we are tasking ourselves to examine how our work affects our well-being and how we can reimagine rest.

During these three days of learning and building connections, I encourage you to attend panel discussions that will challenge you, make friends with colleagues outside of your discipline and engage from a place of safety and care.

I look forward to meeting all of you and welcoming you to AWGSA.

*Kathomi Gatwiri*  
*President of AWGSA*

This conference is held on the traditional lands of the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung and Bunurong Boon Wurrung peoples of the Eastern Kulin.

AWGSA acknowledges the Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the Traditional Custodians of the lands and waters where we live, study and work. We pay our respects to ancestors and Elders, past, present and future.

Acknowledgment icon design:  
<https://ingeousstudios.com/>



**AWGSA** recognises the First Nations peoples as enduring custodians of the longest living culture in the world and of all the lands, waters and air that sustain us.  
**Always was, always will be Aboriginal lands.**

The Australian Women's and Gender Studies Association (AWGSA) is the peak body representing researchers, academics and students of Women's Studies and Gender Studies in Australia. This guide aims to help participants at our conferences share intellectual space with others in accordance with the core ethical principles of inclusivity, accessibility, intellectual generosity and respect. We ask that conference attendees keep these core values in mind.

# AWGSA'S GUIDE TO ETHICAL CONFERENCE PARTICIPATION

While conferences are vital spaces for academic community and intellectual exchange, they must also be able to accommodate difference and diversity in ideas and identities. AWGSA recognises that individual and organisational dynamics can exclude and marginalise conference participants, and that the language we use can reinforce social structures of domination related to race, Indigeneity, ethnicity, ability, gender, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, body size, age and other axes of identity.

We know that in general, feminist scholars are highly aware of the reproduction of social inequality in everyday life, but we also see the practical value of a guide to ethical engagement, because it is important to us that all participants feel safe and included at AWGSA conferences.

We gratefully acknowledge the Code of Conduct developed by FASSM: The International Faculty and Staff Sexual Misconduct Conference, which informed the drafting of this guide (<https://facultysexualmisconduct.com/code-of-conduct/>). We are also grateful to the members of the AWGSA community who contributed valuable feedback on the final draft and to those who participated in our open survey on the development of a Code of Conduct for AWGSA. This guide is for all of us.





## Inclusive language

AWGSA is an inclusive feminist organisation that:

- endorses the use of language that recognises and respects the distinct identities of Australian Indigenous cultural language groups. We also recognise the multiplicity of Indigenous peoples and languages connected to a single expanse of Country (e.g., Kulin Nation; Boon Wurrung people)
- endorses the use of language that reflects the social reality of race and ethnicity in white-dominant societies and colonised lands (e.g., Black, Indigenous, First Nations, Asian Australian, Pacific Islander, non-Indigenous Australian, white). We also accept the use of 'people of colour' to refer to people minoritised through their race and ethnic social locations
- supports the use of the word 'woman' to refer to cisgender and transgender women
- recognises trans and nonbinary identification
- preferences the terms 'sex work' and 'sex workers' except in historical scholarship where 'prostitutes' and 'prostitution' may be appropriate terminology
- accepts both person-first and identity-first descriptors (e.g., people with disability/disabled people; people with autism/autistic people/autistics).

*Suggestions on pronouns:* If you are asking a question or introducing a speaker and you want to use a pronoun (e.g., she; they; he), it is courteous to ask the person what pronoun they prefer. If you are a speaker in a session, please advise the chair of your preferred pronouns before the session begins.

## Respect

We ask that conference participants remember that in feminist intellectual spaces, we are often referring to people's real embodied experiences and lives, which obliges us to try to balance abstractive logic against the immediacy of personal experience. We therefore ask conference participants to think carefully about how they speak about subjects of study in their work, as well as how they address the real people in the room. This is hard, and we don't always get it right. But that doesn't mean we shouldn't try to honour the thoughts and feelings of the person before us.

Suggestions for respectful interaction:

- Accept feedback from Indigenous scholars and scholars of colour with humility and acknowledge the value of their theoretical expertise and knowledge frameworks, which you might not know about.
- If you are writing about 'women' generally, consider letting people know at the beginning of your paper or panel whether you are mainly talking about cisgender women or transgender women, or both, to avoid confusion and offence.
- Stick to the allotted time limit for your presentation and keep your questions succinct to give others the chance to ask questions as well.

## Accessible Communication

Inclusivity requires accessibility. We ask that all conference participants consider the following methods to ensure universal access to communication:

- If microphones are provided, make use of them, even if you think or have been told that your voice is 'loud enough to hear'.
- If there are sign-language interpreters, make sure they are able to hear you, and remember to face the person to whom you are speaking (rather than the interpreter).
- In audio-visual presentations and hand-outs, use large sans-serif fonts (14 pt minimum), generous spacing and descriptive captions for your images.
- Close all blinds and use low lighting, if possible, to accommodate attendees with light sensitivity.

## Intellectual Generosity

The academic conference is, ideally, a space for rigorous intellectual conversation, exchange and critique; however, we feel that the traditional adversarial model of conference criticism is outdated and limited in its utility. We prefer to emphasise instead the principle of intellectual generosity. Intellectual generosity is about being generous in your reception of a person's ideas, even if you don't agree with them, and offering a response that is genuinely helpful, rather than dismissive. Although most AWGSA attendees will be highly conversant with this principle, we offer some suggestions for phrasing critical feedback, which may help to support participants who are new to academic conferences.

*Suggestions for phrasing critical questions:* 'Thank you for your paper. I was interested in your thoughts about x, but have you perhaps considered y?'; 'Thank you for your paper. I have some concerns about the claim that x. It may indicate y. It might be worth thinking about whether you could reframe this to incorporate z.'

Intellectual generosity also refers to inclusive citation practices. Citation is vital to intellectual inclusion in giving due acknowledgement to those whose work has been traditionally excluded from mainstream scholarship.

*Suggestions on citation:* We ask that all presenters consider the expert and leading voices in the field and to refer to those with lived experience.

- If you are writing about a community of people (e.g., queer, trans, people of colour, sex workers) and you are not part of that community, please cite the work of scholars and activists who are.
- If you are writing about Indigenous peoples, please state whether or not you are Indigenous, and, if possible, identify your mob. Please cite Indigenous scholarship.



## Respect Online

COVID has changed the way we conduct conferences, which are now increasingly being held online. Here we provide helpful tips for navigating the ethical complications introduced by the online environment and digital sharing. We ask that all conference participants consider the following suggestions on appropriate behaviour and practices to ensure courteous and respectful interactions and participants' right to privacy.

*Suggestions for online courtesy:*

- Although the online space is virtual, participants should nevertheless acknowledge Country according to the Indigenous cultural language groups of the place where they are.
- If you are using a digital background, it is best to use something neutral in colour and theme that isn't too distracting.
- Remember to turn off your microphone while another person is speaking.
- If possible, turn your camera on when asking a question.
- If possible, attend the online conference in a quiet space with little background noise.
- If a chat function is in use for the conference, be considerate and responsible in line with the values of intellectual generosity and respect.
- If a chat function is in use for the conference, avoid private messaging unless you know the person or you have been asked to message them.

At the beginning of each session, presenters and audience members will be asked for permission to take and share photos and presentations through social media and other digital platforms. Please respect stated preferences in all your activity.

*Suggestions for respecting people's right to privacy:*

- Please ask permission before taking and sharing photos or other recordings at conference or conference-related venues.
- Please be mindful about sharing sensitive information (e.g., personal stories) publicly.
- Before you share, remember that all Indigenous stories and knowledges are protected by a Cultural Intellectual Property agreement. This protects Indigenous stories and culture as it exists. It is different to project intellectual property, which belongs to the project manager/owner.

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## Advice for session chairs

Chairing conference sessions is not always an easy job, so we've provided some tips to help chairs moderate discussion more comfortably.

- If the session is to be recorded, please notify Indigenous participants. Before distribution, the recording must first be edited and approved by the Indigenous person/s supplying the information.
- At the beginning of the session, ask for presenters' preferred pronouns, and any other attributions/identifiers, and remind conference attendees to respect pronoun usage.
- If the session dialogue becomes heated or uncomfortable for presenters or audience members, remind the attendees of the principles of inclusion and respect. Chairs may refer back to this guide.

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## Sexual harassment

AWGSA has a no-tolerance policy on sexual misconduct, harassment and violence against conference participants. Sexual misconduct ranges from unwanted touching and sexual innuendo to sexual assault. Please respect people's personal boundaries, both inside and outside conference spaces. External sites include hotels, homes, Airbnbs, restaurants and other venues.

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## Hate speech

Hate speech is unacceptable. Hate speech refers to language or behaviour that oppresses, denigrates, stigmatises and dehumanises a person or group based on characteristics such as race, ethnicity, ability, gender, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, body size and age.

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## Care support at AWGSA Activist Energies

Following the great protocol laid out by #TASA2022, Activist Energies will support all delegates to bring children/others to conference sessions. Bring any items of entertainment that they will require during the conference. There are places they can also charge their electronic devices. A quiet room for care will also be available.

We will provide name badges and ensure that all catering is ample and child-friendly. When you are filling in your registration form, please select the child/care option to fill in. There are no additional cost to #ActivistEnergies conference registrants.

# Speaker and technological protocols for participants

## 1. Registration

The desk will be at the entrance of the Babel Building for registration and information: all conference sessions are here. There will always be someone there to answer your questions. Remember to bring your own name tags if you can: creativity encouraged!

## 2. Paper length

Sessions have either three or four speakers; papers are therefore ideally between 15–20 minutes to allow time for Q&A. Chairs will provide 5 minute and 2 minute notifications: do make sure to watch for them. They will call time at 20 minutes.

## 3. PPT

All rooms are equipped for slide projection: please bring your USB and make sure you load your PPT (if you have one) prior to the session.

## 4. AWGSA Conferences

We work towards an inclusive and safe academic space: our conference guidelines can be found in this booklet.

## 5. Social Media

Please respect session specific requests about photographers and social media: Chairs will confirm at the beginning of each panel what the speakers are comfortable with. Where tweets and other forms of social media are welcome, please remember to tag @AWGSA1 #ActivistEnergies

## 6. Online registrants

Your zoom meeting ID and passcodes have been emailed separately. Please do not share this information to ensure our AWGSA conference is safe and collegial.

## 7. In person at online sessions

Where a registrant present at the conference would like to attend an online presentation, please make your way to the room noted in the Program.

## 8. Post Conference

Where speakers are happy, we will make a recording of presentations only (not audiences or question time) and this will be uploaded to a private AWGSA Youtube Channel. This is primarily for online registrants, but please get in touch if you would like to access this platform. It will remain for 30 days post Conference.



# KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

## CONFERENCE OPENING KEYNOTE

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### Dr Faye Rosas Blanch

Dr Faye Rosas Blanch is a Murri woman from the Atherton Tablelands of Yidniji/Mbarbarm descent. She works on Kurna Land in Yungngorendi First Nations Centre, Flinders University. She has worked as an Aboriginal Education Worker, a secondary teacher and a tertiary lecturer. Her research and practice engages rap theory to embody sovereignty and shedding of the colonial skin. She is a member of the Unbound Collective.



## CONFERENCE KEYNOTE PANEL: FEMINIST ACTIVISM IN 21ST CENTURY

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### Dr Jacinthe Flore

Dr Jacinthe Flore is a Vice-Chancellor's Postdoctoral Research Fellow at RMIT University. Her research is interdisciplinary, drawing on methods and theories from feminist science and technology studies, health sociology, gender studies, and media and communication. Jacinthe's current research focuses on digital mental health, technologies of sexuality, and lived experiences of complex mental illness. Her first monograph, *A Genealogy of Appetite in the Sexual Sciences*, was published in 2020 by Palgrave Macmillan, and her second monograph, *Digital Mental Health: Technologies, Algorithms and Smart Devices*, will be published by Palgrave Macmillan in 2023.



### Aish Ravi

Aish Ravi is a football coach, and PhD Candidate at Monash University. Aish is the founder of the Women's Coaching Association, Member of the Football Australia Women's Council and is on the Football Coaches Australia executive committee. Aish's PhD research focuses on exploring the progression of women football coaches at both community and elite settings in Australia.



### Parisa Sekandari

Parisa Sekandari is an active young leader holding a bachelor's degree in law and political science from Herat University, Afghanistan. Her passion for advocacy led her to start her master's in International Relations at Monash University. She currently is working as an academic advisor at Legal WIND (World in Discourse).





## Jacinta Walsh

Jacinta Walsh is a Jaru / Yawuru woman and a proud mother to three young men. She is a PhD Candidate and a research officer with the Monash Indigenous Studies Centre in the School of Philosophical, Historical, and International Studies at Monash University. Jacinta is an adoptee who, in 1998, approached Link-Up and began a lifetime journey of reconnection with her birth mother, of Irish heritage, and her Aboriginal birth father and family in Western Australia. Jacinta's PhD is a transgenerational family life story told through a lens of



critical love praxis and is informed through First Nations epistemological understandings of synchronous time and relational accountability. It tells 60 years of her Great Grandmother's life, a Jaru woman, born in 1907 in the East Kimberley region of Western Australia. Jacinta's story echoes the voices of many First Nations families who are looking deeply into living family memory, Country, and to the archives created by the colonisers, to remember their ancestral lineage, reconnect with their Spirit and re-remember their love for themselves.

Jacinta is a co-author for a Nationwide study published in 2020, with the School of Social Work at Monash University detailing the experiences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Out-of-Home-Care leavers and has co-authored numerous peer reviewed and media articles discussing the experiences of Aboriginal youth leaving State care. Jacinta has one peer reviewed article soon to be published in *The Australian Journal of Politics and History* and another essay accepted for publication later this year in *The Routledge Handbook of Australian Indigenous Peoples and Futures*. Jacinta is the recipient of the 2022 Feminist Fathers Bursary from Graduate Women Victoria, the 2021 Marcia and Henry Pinski Family Bursary from Monash University's Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Indigenous) Office and is a recipient of a Monash Graduate Scholarship.

## CONFERENCE KEYNOTE: PHENOMENAL EROS! FROM SEXUALITY TO SENSUALITY

### Giulia Sissa

Forty years of scholarship in the history of sexuality and gender studies have delivered a considerable amount of knowledge, framed by an encompassing premise: power is paramount. A preferred object of this kind of attention are the erotic cultures of ancient Greece and Rome. The focus on power generates binary thinking, namely the attribution to writers and thinkers of dichotomies such as domination versus subjection, or activity versus passivity. This is a fixist view that obliterates the dialectic of desire and, therefore, its fundamental mobility. Desire aims at the other person's desire; roles are exchanged; age and social status can play in surprising ways; hyperactivity can become subjugation. It is time for a change. It is time to look at what mattered for the Ancients themselves: the subjective experience of sensations, bodies and situations; the felicitous, ironic, or tragic reversals of intersubjective games. More importantly: the quest for pleasure, rather than the use of pleasures. They thought the sexual experience as sensuality. And sensuality inflects what they thought about gender. Concrete details draw our attention to the felt phenomena of lived bodies - in the plural. Bodies can be compared, not as totalities, but as bundles of multiple discreet qualities, ready to be combined and recombined, allotted and exchanged. Qualities, namely bits and pieces of anatomy, manners and garments; but also fragments of experience, moments of sensory awareness. The logic of the concrete meets the phenomenal body. For the body is a challenge, to be taken up -- as a cinematic life, frame after frame. Sensations can be shared across the boundaries of female and male, which are adjectives, not substances. A granular, corpuscular, pointilliste redistribution of traits, distinctive - or not. Sensuality is queer. Like Plato's pharmacy, erotic materialism can deliver us, beautifully, cathartically, refreshingly from the modern strictures of binary thinking. This is what the Greeks have to tell us. Let us listen

Giulia Sissa is Distinguished Professor in the Departments of Political Science, Classics and Comparative Literature at UCLA. While anchoring her research to the societies and the cultures of the Greek and Roman world, Giulia connects the study of the past to moments of reception, modern recontextualizations and significant resonances in the contemporary world. Her publications include *Greek Virginity* (Harvard UP, 2000); *The Daily Life of the Greek Gods*, with M. Detienne, (Stanford UP, 2000); *Le Plaisir et le Mal. Philosophie de la drogue* (Paris, Odile Jacob, 1997); *L'âme est un corps de femme* (Paris, Odile Jacob, 2000); *Sex and Sensuality in the Ancient World* (Yale UC, 2008); *Utopia 1516-2016. More's Eccentric Essay and its Activist Aftermath*, co-edited with Han van Ruler (Amsterdam UP, 2017); *Jealousy. A Forbidden Passion* (Polity Press, 2017); *Le Pouvoir des femmes. Un défi pour la démocratie* (Paris, Odile Jacob, 2021); *A Cultural History of Ideas in Classical Antiquity*, co-edited with Clifford Ando, Bloomsbury, 2023; *Ovid and the Environmental Imagination*, co-edited with Francesca Martelli, Bloomsbury, 2023.

## CONFERENCE PANEL: REPRODUCTIVE JUSTICE – CRITIQUE, ACTIVISM AND ETHICS

*Barbara Baird, Summer May Finlay, Erica Millar, Aisha J. M. Sultan, Jaya Keaney*

Reproductive justice is activism and an intersectional feminist framework for bodily autonomy and decisional security in reproductive life. It is organised around, in the words of the US-based SisterSong, the intersecting capacities 'to have children, not have children, and parent the children we have in safe and sustainable communities.' This panel examines research and activism, and its absence, around reproductive justice in the Australian context. Aisha J. M. Sultan discusses the relationship between homelessness and reproductive health; Jaya Keaney considers the place of postgenomic science in considering reproductive and childhood health in Indigenous communities; Erica Millar investigates the complex position of medical professionals as abortion activists; Summer May Finlay discusses the need for Indigenising reproductive health advocacy; and Barbara Baird reflects on the activist responsibilities we have as academics.

Associate Professor Barbara Baird is a queer white feminist employed in Women's & Gender Studies at Flinders University, an institution built on unceded Kurna land. She is also co-convenor of the SA Abortion Action Coalition. Her research focuses on histories and cultural politics of reproduction and sexuality in C20th and C21st Australia, and their intersection with the politics of race and nation. It has a particular focus on abortion, queer issues and the figure of the child.

Dr Summer May Finlay is a Yorta Yorta woman, Senior Lecturer at University of Wollongong with the School of Health and Society, Deputy Chair of Australia's only community controlled suicide prevention organisation Thirrili, Co-Chair of the Aboriginal Health and Medical Research Council of NSW Human Research Ethics Committee, Australian and New Zealand Journal of Public Health Editor, and a contributing editor at Croakey Health Media.

Dr Erica Millar is a DECRA senior research fellow in the Department of Social Inquiry at La Trobe University. She lives and works on unceded Wurundjeri land. She is a member of the SA Abortion Action Coalition, and the author of several articles on reproductive justice in Australia and the monograph *Happy Abortions: Our Bodies in the Era of Choice* (Zed Books, 2017). Her DECRA research focuses on institutional abortion stigma.

Aisha J. M. Sultan is a PhD candidate at the University of Adelaide, within the department of Anthropology and Development Studies. Her doctoral research is on health, homelessness with a particular interest in identity and belonging as well as different practices, and notions of care.

Dr Jaya Keaney is a Lecturer in Gender Studies in the School of Social and Political Sciences at the University of Melbourne. Her research in feminist technoscience explores reproduction, queer kinship, race and inheritance. Her doctoral thesis was awarded the AWGSA PhD prize (2020-21). Jaya's recent work can be found in *Body & Society*, *Continuum* and *Science Technology & Human Values*. Her first monograph, titled *Making Gaybies: Queer Reproduction and Multiracial Feeling*, is forthcoming with Duke University Press.



# CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

All conference sessions are in the Babel Building, University of Melbourne, Parkville

## DAY 1: MONDAY, NOVEMBER 28

8:30 - 11:30 am	<b>Postgraduate / ECR breakfast and workshop</b>	Room 204
11:00 am - 12 pm	<b>Registration</b>	Ground Floor
12:00 - 1:30 pm	<b>Conference Welcome:</b> <i>AWGSA President, Kathomi Gatawiri</i>  <b>Welcome to Country</b>  <b>Opening Keynote session:</b> <i>Dr Faye Rosas Blanch, Flinders University</i>  <i>Chair: Monique Mulholland</i>	Chisholm Theatrette Room 305
1:30 - 2:15 pm	<b>Lunch</b>	All catering Room G04
	<b>AWGSA AGM</b>	Room G03 Lower Theatrette
2:15 - 3:45 pm	<b>Session One</b> Concurrent sessions	See below

Panel <b>INCANTATION</b>  <i>Room: G03 Lower Theatrette</i>  <b>Maxime Banks, Denise Chapman, Nilmini Fernando, Veisini Tonga</b>	<b>Feminist literature/storytelling</b> <i>Chair: Meredith Nash</i>  <i>Room: 305 Chisholm Theatrette</i>  <b>Meredith Nash</b> Breaking the silence around blood: managing menstruation during remote Antarctic fieldwork  <b>Maedeh Tajalli</b> A Persian requiem, unveiling subaltern's voice through words  <b>Emma Dalton</b> A feminist reading of "The Female of the Species"  <b>Brydie Kosmina</b> "Once upon a time there was a wicked witch and her name was...": The witch as rhetorical symbol in feminist polemic	<b>Masculinities</b> <i>Chair: Finola Laughren</i>  <i>Room: 303</i>  <b>Leah McGarrity</b> Existentialism as crisis of masculinity  <b>Jessica Kean &amp; Denise Buiten</b> Young men as subjects of feminism: Notes on gender, feminism and masculinity  <b>Finola Laughren</b> Towards an Affirmative Feminist Approach to the Manosphere	<b>Me too, speaking out</b> <i>Chair: Tanya Serisier</i>  <i>Room: 204</i>  <b>Tanya Serisier</b> Surviving rape in public: The affects and effects of speaking as a survivor  <b>Janine Little &amp; Natalia Vedric</b> #metoo, Amber Heard and navigating anger/vitriol in digital spaces.  <b>Sue Jackson &amp; Katie Graham</b> "We can call this out": #MeToo and the politicization of young women in high schools	<b>Women's work and energies</b> <i>Chair: Ali Hickling</i>  <i>Room: 119</i>  <b>Susan Flynn</b> Applying critical feminist theory to intersections of womanhood and disability: Stories of exhaustion and emotion from mother's subject to Child Protection investigation  <b>Belinda Eslick</b> Social reproduction impacts during crisis: Women's experience of food insecurity and risk-taking behaviour in Myanmar, Papua New Guinea, and the Philippines during the COVID-19 pandemic  <b>Eliza Venville</b> Exploring energy-related economic abuse in Australia: Victim-Survivor perspectives  <b>Emma Whatman</b> Feminist Baby? Didactic feminist picture books for young people	<b>Voices from everywhere 1</b> <i>Chair: Juliet Watson</i>  <i>Room: 217</i> Online participants please follow directions emailed.  <b>Cecilia Cienfuegos</b> Overloaded testimonies. Silence, anonymity and the energy politics of speaking out  <b>Farida Razaqi</b> Elevating Women-Embracing Climate Change; An Intersectional Ecofeminism Perspective  <b>Shannon Horsfall</b> How can reimagining fairy tales challenge traditional depictions of silenced entities and destabilise understandings of patriarchal sovereignty over women and nature?  <b>Amritha Mohan</b> Are domestic spaces feminist? Documenting everyday woman work in India (video presentation)
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4:00 - 5:30 pm	<b>Co-hosted Keynote:</b> <i>Giulia Sissa, Continental Philosophers</i>	Kathleen Fitzpatrick Theatre, Arts West
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DAY 2: TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 29

9:30 - 11:00 am

**Session Two**

Concurrent sessions

See below

<p><b>Feminist cultures 1</b> Chair: <i>Amanda Fielder</i></p> <p><i>Room: G03 Lower Theatre</i></p> <p><b>Amanda Fiedler</b> Creative activism as feminist praxis: (re)signifying TV fiction as socio-political commentary in The Handmaid's Tale fan groups</p> <p><b>Francesca Ferrer-Best</b> Identities in movement: A dance of (dis)comfort</p> <p><b>Lily Atkinson</b> The agential cut and paste: Collaging alternative (hi)stories with/in the feminist archive</p> <p><b>Ashlee Barton</b> Making visible the invisibility of the feminine</p>	<p><b>COVID-19</b> Chair: <i>J. R. Latham</i></p> <p><i>Room: 119</i></p> <p><b>J. R. Latham</b> "YAY Covid's over!" The necropolitics of pretending</p> <p><b>Petra Brown &amp; Tamara Kayali Browne</b> Re-energising political activism in a post-pandemic world? The liberating lens of relational autonomy.</p> <p><b>Cassandra Byrnes</b> Histories of reproductive coercion and consent in mid-to-late twentieth century Australia</p> <p><b>Zoe Keys &amp; Erica Millar</b> My Body, My Choice': The appropriation and re-deployment of a feminist slogan</p>	<p><b>Care and control</b> Chair: <i>Balawyn Jones</i></p> <p><i>Room: 204</i></p> <p><b>Balawyn Jones &amp; Akuch Kuol Anyieth</b> Criminalisation of coercive control – A critical CALD perspective</p> <p><b>Sarah McCook &amp; Lena Molnar</b> Caring in prevention: An offering of collective care through research on primary prevention of gender-based violence with practitioners and young people in Australia</p> <p><b>Leticia Anderson &amp; Kathomi Gatwiri</b> Parenting black children in white spaces</p>	<p><b>Feminist spaces: At home in Australia</b> Chair: <i>Juliet Watson</i></p> <p><i>Room: 305 Chisholm Theatre</i></p> <p><b>Juliet Watson, Jacqui Theobald, Freda Haylett</b> Homelessness and pregnancy: Affective injustice</p> <p><b>Sarah Casey</b> "I am not a weird hippy activist!": Advocacy and 'accidental' activism in the Australian countryside.</p> <p><b>Anyier Yuol</b> The African cultural practice of bride price: A case of South Sudanese in Australia</p>	<p><b>Doing feminist work in sport spaces</b> Chair: <i>Kim Toffoletti</i></p> <p><i>Room: 217</i></p> <p><i>Online participants please follow directions emailed.</i></p> <p><b>Nida Ahmad (online), Adele Pavlidis (in person), Aish Ravi (in person), Holly Thorpe (online), Kim Toffoletti (in person), Danielle Warby (online)</b></p>
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11:00 - 11:30 am

**Morning tea**

*Sponsored by University of Melbourne Gender Studies Program*

Room G04

11:30 - 1:00 pm

**Conference Panel**

*Reproductive Justice - critique, activism and ethics*  
Associate Professor Barbara Baird, Dr Summer May Finlay, Dr Jaya Keaney, Dr Erica Millar, Aisha J. M. Sultan  
Chair: *Barbara Baird*

Chisholm Theatre  
Room 305

1:00 - 2:00 pm

**Lunch**

Room G04

**Book launch,**

Kathomi Gatwiri and Leticia Anderson

Room G03  
Lower Theatre

2:00 – 3:30 pm

**Session Three**

Concurrent sessions

See below

<p><b>Histories 1</b> <i>Chair: Maura Edmond</i></p> <p><i>Room: G03, Lower Theatre</i></p> <p><b>Maura Edmond</b> 50 years of gender equality talk in the media and cultural industries</p> <p><b>Junyi Cai</b> A contingent process of hegemonic articulation: Rethinking state feminism</p> <p><b>Lindy Cameron</b> The appropriation of girls' socio-political energy throughout the twentieth century.</p> <p><b>Carole Ferrier</b> We still need our rage, Outrage and anger</p>	<p><b>Feminist cultures 2</b> <i>Chair: Jessamy Gleeson</i></p> <p><i>Room: 204</i></p> <p><b>Yijia Du</b> Doing feminism through Chinese online fiction fandom</p> <p><b>Louise Richardson-Self</b> Hysteria: A self-diagnosis</p> <p><b>Jessamy Gleeson</b> Getting the knickers in a twist: Tracing the activism of Collective Shout and the advertising of Honey Birdette</p> <p><b>Pia Rowe</b> We need to calm down: The myth of the perfect activist</p>	<p><b>Anti-racism practices in feminist spaces</b> <i>Chair: Samantha Owen</i></p> <p><i>Room: 305, Chisholm Theatre</i></p> <p><b>Kathomi Gatwiri</b> I will not be lectured about feminism by white women."- Black Squares on Instagram, Will Smith, and selective rage</p> <p><b>Erfan Daliri</b> Speaking about white supremacy in modern progressive spaces": fragility and tone-policing in organisational contexts</p> <p><b>Samantha Owen</b> Establishing the Gender Research Network as a community of practice</p> <p><b>Roya Sahraei</b> Women life freedom</p>	<p><b>Feminism at work, in public, in school 1</b> <i>Chair: Kathy Newton</i></p> <p><i>Room: 204</i></p> <p><b>Cambrey Payne</b> 'we are recreating our own communities': Autistic community-making as a form of activism</p> <p><b>Kathy Newton</b> Cartoons of policewomen: Resistance to stereotypical portrayals of policewomen</p> <p><b>Belinda Eslick</b> A new politics of energy: Cultivating "energy" and breath in Luce Irigaray's politics</p>	<p>Roundtable <b>Feminist activism in unexpected places</b> <i>Chair: Renee Mickelburgh</i></p> <p><i>Room: 217</i></p> <p><b>Elizabeth Mackinlay</b> <b>Marg Henderson</b> <b>Renée Mickelburgh</b> <b>Rev Anita Munro</b> <b>Bonnie Evans</b></p>
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3:30 – 4:00 pm

**Afternoon tea**

Room G04

4:00 – 6:00 pm

**Conference Keynote Panel**

*Feminist Activism in 21st Century*

Jacinta Walsh, Dr Jacinthe Flore, Aish Ravi, Parisa Sekandari

*Chair: Kathomi Gatwiri*

Chisholm Theatre  
Room 305

6:30 – 8:30 pm

**Conference dinner**

*Prizes – awarded by Kathomi Gatwiri, AWGSA President*

Abla's  
109 Elgin St, Carlton  
VIC 3053



DAY 3: WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 30

9:30 – 11:00 am

**Session Four**

Concurrent sessions

See below

<p><b>Intersectionality: LGBTQIA+ 1</b> Chair: Bess Schnioffsky</p> <p><i>Room: G03, Lower Theatre</i></p> <p><b>James Gardiner</b> Queer youth re-writing 'wellbeing' and identity success</p> <p><b>Alessandra Chinsen</b> 'There's hope and there's a future for all of us': Preliminary findings from the co-design of a group therapy program for young trans people</p> <p><b>Rosie Clarke</b> Strategies for acespeculative literary criticism: An asexual reading of Otessa Moshfegh's 'My Year of Rest and Relaxation'</p> <p><b>Joanna McIntyre</b> We don't deserve to be disrespected like that through tweets from our Prime Minister": Australian trans celebrities and advocacy for trans children</p>	<p><b>Feminism at work, in public, in school 2</b> Chair: Sally Baker</p> <p><i>Room: 204</i></p> <p><b>Sally Baker</b> Tender truths: How to be a collaborative educational activist in times of precarity</p> <p><b>Angela Bennette</b> STEMinist sensibilities in the promotion of STEM and tech participation to young women and girls</p> <p><b>Monique Mulholland</b> Too many assumptions: Young people, sex education and cultural diversity</p> <p><b>Virginia Mapedzahama</b> Who's being overlooked?: Race(ing) workplace gender inequality and feminist organisational discourse in Australia</p>	<p><b>Gender, religion, reform and resistance: Current feminist activism in faith traditions.</b> Chair: Rosie Clare Shorter</p> <p><i>Room: 119</i></p> <p><b>Naomi Wolfe</b> Creating space for Indigenous feminist and womanist voices within and through religious and spiritual worlds</p> <p><b>Farjana Mahbuba</b> Reformation within: Rereading Muslim history in addressing financial abuse of migrant Muslim women in Australia</p> <p><b>Tracy McEwan</b> Standing in doorways: Holding a liminal feminist space in Christian traditions</p>	<p><b>Intersectionality: Race and gender</b> Chair: Kalissa Alexeyeff</p> <p><i>Room: 305, Chisholm Theatre</i></p> <p><b>Arpita Das</b> Cultural production of uterine transplants in India</p> <p><b>Frances Egan</b> The work of doing Intersectional Feminism in France</p> <p><b>Anyier Yuol</b> Advocacy and self-representation</p> <p><b>Maree Parady &amp; Kalissa Alexeyeff</b> Race, Gender and Sex Work in the Development Sector – failing by pleasing</p>	<p><b>Voices from everywhere 2</b> Chair: Erica Millar</p> <p><i>Room: 217</i></p> <p><i>Online participants please follow directions emailed.</i></p> <p><b>Lubna Jebin</b> Researching gender-based violence and the practice of self-care: A reflection from the Ph.D. fieldwork</p> <p><b>Angela Wilton</b> (Un)settling foreign policy, feminism, aid and trade in Aotearoa New Zealand</p> <p><b>Rosita Sekandari</b> Feminism approach in Afghanistan after the Taliban takeover: A huge downturn in women's political participation</p>
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11:00 – 11:30 am

**Morning tea**

See below

11:30 – 1:00 pm

**Session Five**

Concurrent sessions

See below

<p><b>Feminist spaces: constructing the digital self</b> Chair: Kai-Ti Kao</p> <p><i>Room: 303</i></p> <p><b>Kai-Ti Kao</b> Visions of desirable futures: AI imaginaries and news media</p> <p><b>Kiah Hawker</b> AR filters and gender representation</p> <p><b>Bonnie Evans</b> The "female gaze" on TikTok: Contemporary online feminisms and the visual construction of the "feminist" self</p> <p><b>Jo Church</b> Finding shelter from social and political dissatisfaction: Exploring the 'affective attachments' of anti-gender images on social media.</p>	<p><b>Social media as a feminist space</b> Chair: Finola Laughren</p> <p><i>Room: G03, Lower Theatre</i></p> <p><b>Saadia Ahmed</b> Exploring gendered harassment of Pakistani women public figures on social media</p> <p><b>Tarmia Klass</b> "I'M TIRED OF PEOPLE SAYING 'SEND ME THE LINK' OVER THINGS YOU CAN GOOGLE:** OBLIGATION, VULNERABILITY AND FAT ACTIVISM ON INSTAGRAM</p> <p><b>Jia Guo</b> Making feminism for Chinese grassroots women on social media</p>	<p><b>Religion</b> Chair: Jonnell Uptin</p> <p><i>Room: 119</i></p> <p><b>Rosie Clare Shorter</b> Developing feminist ears and finding feminist time: Reflecting on method</p> <p><b>Jonnell Uptin</b> "I hate, 'I love you": Listening to the voices of young people who have grown up in a Thai orphanage where tourists from Western countries bring their 'love'</p>	<p><b>Histories 2</b> Chair: Zora Simic</p> <p><i>Room: 204</i></p> <p><b>Connie Musolino</b> A historical analysis of the changing role of advocacy in women's health centres and services in Australia from the 1970s-2010s</p> <p><b>Zora Simic</b> Bonny Women's Refuge, 1974-present: Towards an intersectional history of feminist activism around domestic and family violence in Australia</p> <p><b>Kalissa Alexeyeff &amp; Maree Parady</b> The enduring coloniality of Development Feminism – gender and violence interventions</p> <p><b>Michaels Aibangbee</b> Migrant &amp; refugee youth sexual reproductive health &amp; rights</p>	<p><b>Voices from everywhere 3</b> Chair: JaneMaree Maher</p> <p><i>Room: 217</i></p> <p><i>Online participants please follow directions emailed.</i></p> <p><b>Anuradha Chatterjee</b> A brief history of feminist collectives in architecture in India</p> <p><b>Emma Turner</b> The rapist as monster</p> <p><b>Francisca Diaz De Valdes</b> Feminist digital media politics in Latin America: A counterhegemonic gender activism space.</p> <p><b>Sandra Amankaviciute</b> The objectification of women</p>
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1:00 – 2:00 pm

**Lunch**

Room G04

2:00 – 3:30 pm

**Session Six**

Concurrent sessions

See below

<p><b>Bodies</b> Chair: <i>Kerryn Drysdale</i></p> <p><i>Room: G03, Lower Theatre</i></p> <p><b>Kerryn Drysdale</b> Exploring the role and impact of inclusive language in the Australian National Cervical Screening Program</p> <p><b>Ali Hickling</b> The energy to lactate: The displacement of values associated with human milk production</p>	<p><b>Feminist spaces</b> Chair: <i>Frances Egan</i></p> <p><i>Room: 119</i></p> <p><b>Bess Schnioffsky</b> Australian style: White femininity in netball</p> <p><b>Angela Christian-Wilkes</b> Love and Labour in Women's Football Media-Making</p> <p><b>James Gardiner &amp; Madeleine Gray</b> "We are all in this for everybody else": Transforming Australia's Literary Ecosystem Through <i>Affects of Solidarity</i></p>	<p><b>Intersectionality: LGBTQIA+ 2</b> Chair: <i>Zoe Keys</i></p> <p><i>Room: 204</i></p> <p><b>Elizabeth Schmidt</b> Making space: Policy and practice connections impacting queer refugees in Australia</p> <p><b>Odette Mazel</b> LGBTQIA+ legal activism as queer jurisprudence</p> <p><b>Anika Shah</b> Of mothers and daughters : Mobility, kinship, and class in queer Bangladesh</p> <p><b>Josh Szymanski</b> Sex/Gender In/Distinction: Thinking Categorical Matrices with Wittig, Butler, and Gatens</p>	<p><b>Workshop</b></p> <p><i>Room: 303</i></p> <p><b>Pooja Sawrikar, Geo George, &amp; Joe Young</b> Flipping things back right in academic publishing</p> <p><b>Katherine Curchin</b> Demystifying peer-reviewed journals</p>	<p><b>Voices from everywhere 4</b> Chair: <i>Virginia Mapedzahama</i></p> <p><i>Room: 217</i></p> <p><i>Online participants please follow directions emailed</i></p> <p><b>Swati Arora</b> Epistemic oppression: Theorizing Dalit feminism</p> <p><b>Saraswati Suna</b> Examining Dalit women's activism and ethics of resistance: An ethnographical study of humanising Dalit women's experiences in universities in Odisha, India</p> <p><b>Shona Edwards (Reading Feminism)</b> Reading feminism/feminist reading</p>
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Onwards

**Drinks**

Details to come



# SESSION DETAILS

## ABSTRACTS AND BIOS

### CONCURRENT SESSION 1A: INCANTATION

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#### Incantation

Dr Nilmini Fernando, Maxime Banks, Dr Denise Chapman, & Veisini Tonga

As women of colour living on unceded colonised land, our movements and imaginations labour insidiously at the behest of whiteness and white anxiety. In these times of global eruptions and extreme social inequities, violence and trauma burrow into the body. Remembering can become dismembering if we do not resist. Nikki Giovanni reminds us that when in crisis our first language is song. Song is a yearning, a chronicling, a communing, a calling out for sistas, spiritual energy, and a familial belonging. The sonic is resistance and its collective chorus is activism that creates change. This change can be transformative and healing to women resisting the onslaught.

This panel presentation is an experiential offering of five sistas who conjure a vital feminist energy and worlding through collaboratively exploring and conceptualising a polyvocal incantation in response to iconic bla(c)k and feminist-of-colour texts to catalyse an embodied collective wisdom.

The polyvocal incantation will be presented through interconnected layers. First, the presenters share how they sought (and were shaped by) the invocation of the texts of Black feminist icons, whose visions surpass the mundane and extraordinary limitations they faced. Their responses to colonisation, slavery and legacies of white supremacist capitalist patriarchal domination reject the fetishization and consumption of suffering, but foster and nourish the expansion and evolution of all humanity. Each presenter will then respond to these nourishing words through energies of poetry, song, prose, static and moving images, and movement. Audiences will then be invited to respond to our call.

Words, images, voices, sounds, spirits as autoethnography are poetical, political and performed intentions charged with power and energy. Recited aloud, spoken together as chorus, repeated as individual echo, INCANTATION spells an academic/artistic theory, method and practice of never standing alone, to speak from multiple locations, as one or as many. INCANTATION is affective and embodied encounter, communion, black feminist praxis of collective labouring, where labour is (re)inscribed as creative force, a gravitational entwining of the intellect, aesthetic, and the spiritual. A collective sounding, a stepping into a powerful space to be seen as we are heard, across time.

Dr Nilmini Fernando is a black/third world feminist scholar, Adjunct at School of Social and Cultural Studies at Griffith University, originator of Loving Feminist Literature and resident at Seat at the Table, twosixty.

Links: <https://griffith.academia.edu/nilminifernando>  
<https://www.twosixty.com.au/nilmini-fernando/>

Maxime Banks is a transdisciplinary visual artist, writer, poet, a time traveller of the Black American diaspora with Mississippi creating an Afrofuturist autoethnographic archive.

Links: <https://www.instagram.com/maxime.art.design/>  
<https://youtu.be/yguU92dgeug>

Dr Denise Chapman is a counternarrative storyteller, spoken word poet, critical autoethnographer and lecturer at Monash University. Link: <https://research.monash.edu/en/persons/denise-chapman>

Veisini Tonga is a Tongan Kakala (plant material) artist and storyteller with a background in journalism and co-founder of Pasifika Storytellers Collective.

Link: <https://www.slv.vic.gov.au/stories/conversation-with-creative-fellow-veisinia-tonga>





CONCURRENT SESSION 1B: FEMINIST LITERATURE/STORYTELLING

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## Breaking the silence around blood: managing menstruation during remote Antarctic fieldwork

Meredith Nash

Drawing on qualitative interviews with female expeditioners in the Australian Antarctic Program, this paper examines the additional labour involved in managing menstruation during remote Antarctic fieldwork. Unlike expeditioners working on a research station, fieldworkers rarely have consistent access to private toileting facilities or dedicated times/spaces to deal with their bodily excretions. However, being able to easily access toileting facilities can significantly impact how people who menstruate experience fieldwork. This is an overlooked but crucial corporeal challenge of working in Antarctica. Findings reveal that in male-dominated spaces, expeditioners must go to great lengths to make their menstruation invisible. A primary way that women do this is through menstrual suppression technologies. When these are not available or not preferred, women negotiate trying to keep their menstruation and gynaecological health issues hidden but often do so in field settings where there is little infrastructure or support. I argue that the lack of

infrastructure to support menstrual health in the field is a form of sexism that maintains women's lower status in polar field environments. To conclude, I provide practical guidance for National Antarctic Programs to support people who menstruate.

Meredith Nash is a Professor and Associate Dean - Diversity, Belonging, Inclusion, and Equity in the College of Engineering and Computer Science at the Australian National University. She was formerly Senior Advisor - Inclusion, Diversity, and Equity at the Australian Antarctic Division and a cultural sociologist at the University of Tasmania. Meredith is an internationally recognised expert in intersectional leadership, lived experiences of historically excluded groups (e.g. women, people of colour, LGBTQIA+ folks) in Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics, and Medicine, and building inclusive workplaces.

## A Persian requiem, unveiling subaltern's voice through words

Maedeh Tajalli

Iranian women's voices have been held hostage by patriarchy for centuries. However, Iranian women's movements to reclaim their voices from patriarchal oppression have not been brought to a standstill. An embodiment of Iranian women's effort to take back their voices has been through their literary works. While mandatory Hijab veiled their bodies, literature provided the conditions for unveiling their voices. In this article, I will analyse the first Iranian female author's novel, *A Persian Requiem*, to demonstrate the effort of Simin Daneshvar, the first Iranian female novelist, to unveil her voice through her work. Daneshvar's endeavour to dismantle gender stereotypes through this novel becomes a manifestation of unveiling the voice of Iranian subaltern women through literature. The meaningful association between women and nature is another crucial method the author of *A Persian Requiem* utilises in this novel to voice Iranian women throughout their connection with nature.

Sometimes, in Daneshvar's writing technique, the association between women and nature results in their unification; therefore, natural elements represent women's feelings and desires. I will examine the methods Daneshvar employs to articulate a voice for the subaltern woman in *A Persian Requiem* through a postcolonial and ecofeminism lens.

Analysing Daneshvar's work regarding the theories mentioned above can pull out an unseen image of Zari (the protagonist) as a representative of Iranian housemaker women within their monotonous and limited lives in domesticity. Therefore, this paper can provide a perspective for anglophone readers on Iranian women's voices and resistance against gender stereotypes in their literary works. Analysing Daneshvar's voice, as an Iranian female author who lived and created her literary works within Iran's restrictions and among many other Iranian women who are considered subalterns due to their gender, can display Iranian women's way of voicing their demands while subterfuge gender stereotypes.

Maedeh is a PhD student in literature. She is currently doing her thesis on the novels of three prominent Iranian authors to unveil their voices. Since she grew up under the silence that the misogynist regime imposed on women, she intends to show that the regime could not silence women and they raise their voices through their literary works and with their writing strategies.

## A feminist reading of "The Female of the Species"

Emma Dalton

This is the story of the chapter of my thesis that took the longest to write. I started writing about this play before I started writing my PhD. I wrote about this play in my master's thesis, and in my doctoral thesis, but I never published on it. I published on another play by the same playwright. I met this playwright. I sent her the books within which my book chapters sit. I like her, I want her to like me, and I fear that if she read or heard what I have to say about this play she may like me no longer, or - worse still - she may be offended. The writer of this play is one of my favourite playwrights. But this play is not my favourite play. I met Germaine Greer just once in my life. I bought an extra copy of *The Female Eunuch* to get the opportunity to have her sign it and to speak a few words to her. This was at Melbourne Writers' Festival (2012). I will never forget my nose beginning to run as I got closer to the front of the queue. I told her I was writing about this play. She responded briefly. She signed my extra copy of *The Female Eunuch*. The play I am going to talk to you about is significant. The night I watched it a high school teacher told me my interpretation of it was wrong. That was in 2006. This play has stayed with me since the first time I saw it. Since the night I sat in a theatre feeling like the only one not laughing. I am going to tell you four stories,

the story of Germaine Greer's hostage experience, the story of Joanna Murray-Smith's play -- *The Female of the Species*, the story of my reception of that play, and the story of the framework which *Motherhood Studies* gave me to understand it.

Dr Emma Dalton née Hughes is an Adjunct Research Fellow and a Sessional Subject Coordinator in the Department of Languages and Cultures at La Trobe University. In 2022 she Subject Coordinated *Modern Drama and Shakespeare in Performance* at La Trobe. Emma completed her Doctor of Philosophy in the - now defunct - Theatre Program at La Trobe in 2017, under the Supervision of Emeritus Professor Peta Tait. Emma has several academic publications engaging with the topic of maternal representation in contemporary Australian mainstream female authored theatre (live performance) and drama (play-texts). Emma is dedicated to the academic discipline of Theatre and Performance, and to seeing it continue to be taught at tertiary institutions.

## "Once upon a time there was a wicked witch and her name was...": The witch as rhetorical symbol in feminist polemic

Brydie Kosmina

The title of this paper is taken from Andrea Dworkin's 1974 *Woman Hating*. Dworkin tells a story that is both familiar and unsettling; the story of the wicked witch. Dworkin names the witch as "...Lilith, Eve, Hagar, Jezebel..." (31). In doing so, Dworkin's manifesto became part of not only the emerging corpus of radical feminist writing, but the developing genre of feminist 'witcherature.' Much has been written about the correlation between the witch and various feminisms. The connection is so strong that the witch is often invoked in popular media as a sort of shorthand for 'capital F Feminism.' Her presence in a text is used to indicate to the audience: 'this is a text that is about feminism; this text is feminist.' In this paper, I want to consider the politics of the witch in feminist manifestos and activism since the 1970s. Tracing how the witch is deployed as a

symbol in feminist rhetoric is an exercise in tracing the nuances, inflections, and cultural contexts of feminisms across periods, places, and politics. Whether the witch is a figure of patriarchal pasts, a villain in a scary story, or on the streets protesting (or all of these and more), she embodies the affective energy of feminist polemic. In an era when demagogues cry 'witch hunt!' on Twitter and reproductive rights are being wound back by regressive states, the story of the wicked witch is more important than ever.

Dr Brydie Kosmina is a Visiting Research Fellow at the University of Adelaide in Tandanya/Adelaide. She researches and writes about witches, nuclear bombs, and other strange things.

### CONCURRENT SESSION 1C: MASCULINITIES

#### Existentialism as crisis of masculinity

Leah McGarrity

This paper considers whether the type of philosophising associated with such figures as Søren Kierkegaard, Friedrich Nietzsche and Jean-Paul Sartre, and which is later termed 'Existentialism', can be understood in terms of a crisis in traditional masculinity that parallels the crisis of modernity illustrated by Nietzsche's 'Death of God' and the collapse of the totalising vision of Enlightenment figures such as Immanuel Kant. Just as feminist thinkers, for example, Jane Flax and Moira Gatens, have argued that implicit in Enlightenment claims for the universality of reason is a normative masculinity that seeks to rise 'above' the contingency of the body, the feminine and the local, so likewise I will suggest that Existentialist thinkers, in their efforts to reject the totalising claims of reason and embrace contingency, are also grappling with a sense of crisis amidst the wider transition from the normative masculine ideals of traditional patriarchy to those of the 'Hegemonic Masculinity' of modernity (to invoke the framework developed by Raewyn Connell).

It is the crisis whereby the detached standpoint of reason that rises above contingency is revealed as the "view from nowhere" and, eventually, as the nihilism of the void so redolent of Existentialism. But why should this be related to conceptions of masculinity? I will pursue three lines of enquiry in response to this. Firstly, inasmuch as the novel Existentialist understanding of freedom as a burden to be taken up authentically - that we are, in Sartre's terms, "condemned to be free" - already presupposes the privileges of autonomy and independence, I suggest that is only the apriori autonomous (Enlightenment) masculine subject who can even experience such freedom as a 'burden'. Secondly, I argue that the very existentialist framework that allows Simone De Beauvoir to liberate womanhood from biological essence, instead emphasising womanhood as a historically and culturally determined situation, is also what describes a destabilising of normative (essential) masculinity; the loss of essence experienced as liberation for feminine subjectivity is experienced as alienation for masculine subjectivity. Or rather, what is experienced by the existentialist as a universal sense of alienation is, I argue, just as much the novel experience of male alienation from the newly realised strictures (crises) of hegemonic masculinity; it is masculine subjectivity experiencing, for the first time, the alienation that had heretofore been characteristic of feminine subjectivity under traditional patriarchy. Thirdly, I argue that in reaction against modern hegemonic masculinity's avowed eschewing of aesthetics as feminine, Existentialism provides a mode of re-aestheticising masculinity by aestheticising alienation itself, as valorised in figures such as Camus' 'first man' and Sisyphus, or Nietzsche's 'last man'. I argue that such figures represent a transformation of earlier masculine ideals of aristocratic amor fati and warrior heroism, but now accompanied also by the detached irony of the flâneur and the 'dandy' (- role models inaccessible to women, except as tragic and suicidal, such as Sylvia Plath or Edna Pontellier in Kate Chopin's *The Awakening*). More darkly, the aesthetic of masculine alienation that Existentialism - even if derived from a superficial and misplaced reading of Existentialism - sketches a line that can be drawn from the masculinity of Kierkegaard's 'Seducer', or Dostoevsky's 'Underground Man' to the toxicity of the incel in our own time.

Leah McGarrity's PhD was in Comparative Philosophy and Religion (Hinduism and Buddhism) from the University of Sydney. She has been a research fellow at Ryukoku University, Kyoto, and University of California, Berkeley. Since then she has worked in History and Women's and Gender Studies at UNSW, and History and now Philosophy at the Australian Catholic University (Strathfield).



## Young men as subjects of feminism: Notes on gender, feminism and masculinity

Denise Buiten & Jessica Kean

While boys have long been positioned as objects of feminism – especially as future problems or assets requiring intervention to achieve a more feminist future (Sharkey, 2022; Waling, 2022), they should also be acknowledged as subjects of feminism (Driscoll, unpublished)\*. Young men today have grown up in and around feminist projects that address them, as well as anti-feminist projects that seek to undermine feminist gains. The impact of this on boys' and young men's articulations and experiences of gender is, however, seldom examined outside of the uptake of explicitly pro- or anti-feminist positions (for example, Peretz, 2018; Maricourt & Burrell, 2021). Drawing on data from interviews with 20 young people about their boyhoods, in this paper we explore the way feminism is threaded through the stories our participants tell about boys, men and masculinity. We did not directly ask our participants about feminism, and yet feminist projects formed a ubiquitous backdrop for the ways they articulated broader questions around boys and men. Acutely aware of popular feminist critiques of cultures of so-called

'toxic' masculinity, our participants managed this interpellation in a variety of ways, engaging with feminism both as an explicit object of reflection in relation to violence and sexuality, and an unacknowledged framing logic in their discussion of restrictive gender norms around emotional expression. This paper explores what these young people's narratives about gender reveal about the uses they make of feminism – and the ones they don't.

Denise Buiten is a Senior Lecturer in Sociology and Social Justice at the University of Notre Dame Australia, and Senior Research Associate at the University of Johannesburg. Her research examines gender, media and violence, with a special interest in evolving understandings of gender, feminism and gender-based violence in cultural spaces. Her recent book, *Familicide Gender and the Media*, offers a feminist sociological account of familicide and how it is portrayed in news.

## Towards a feminist approach to men of the manosphere

Finola Laughren

Many feminist scholars believe that it is never appropriate to engage in an "affirmative" manner – where affirmative means sympathetic – with men of the manosphere (the network of masculinist online communities). If feminists should always take care not to centre or privilege men, is this not especially true about men of the manosphere, who express a particularly pernicious form of toxic masculinity? Proponents of the orthodox feminist position certainly think so. According to this view, of which philosopher Kate Manne's work is paradigmatic, since these men explicitly reject the possibility of solidarity with women, it is a waste of time expending energy trying to understand their underlying motivations. In line with this, feminists who work on the manosphere tend to focus on detailing its misogynistic implications and critiquing instantiations of patriarchal logic found therein. Feminists generally consider this approach the only means by which feminism can reach its radical potential; any other is said to belie an implicit misogynist apologetics. What I'd like to do in this paper, by contrast, is begin to sketch an affirmative feminist approach to these men. An affirmative feminist approach must be committed to the possibility of social transformation, attentive to the unexpected, and interested in moving past a reification of patriarchal gendered relations. As part of this, feminists must avoid a false dichotomy between critique of patriarchy and sympathy for men.

I argue that, far from being mutually exclusive, sympathy for men is actually an essential component of critique of patriarchy. I also contend that in order to demonstrate a serious engagement with how patriarchy plays a constitutive role in subject formation, feminists need to consider more deeply how it seeks to impose on men a sexist masculine identity. To conclude, I suggest that by extending to men this profoundly affirmative feminist sympathy, feminists can begin to generate more just gendered relations.

Finola is a second year Ph.D. candidate in the Department of Gender and Cultural Studies at the University of Sydney and a member of the 'Affirmative Feminist Boys Studies' research team. Her research is on how feminists approach forms of misogyny that are mediated by mass media technologies and contemporary political relations and has a particular interest in the congregation of online masculinist subcultures known as the "manosphere". The central premise of her research is that feminists must analyse the complex dynamics that lead men to online spaces like the manosphere, for this might lead them elsewhere—potentially even alongside feminists.

## CONCURRENT SESSION 1D: ME TOO, SPEAKING OUT

### Surviving rape in public: The affects and effects of speaking as a survivor

Tanya Serisier

This paper considers the experiences of 'public survivors' of rape, and their impact on social and cultural responses to sexual violence. I use the term 'public survivors' to refer to individuals who construct a recognised persona as a survivor of sexual violence through speaking publicly about their experiences. As I have shown in my previous work on 'speaking out', the public speech of survivors has been central to feminist politics around sexual violence (Serisier, 2018). The past decade particularly has seen increasing numbers of women and others speaking publicly about experiences of rape, with significant cultural effects (Mendes et al, 2020). Public survivors have played a pivotal role in contemporary debates about sexual violence, from the actresses associated with #MeToo to Chanel Miller, survivor of the Stanford Swimmer rape whose Victim Impact Statement was shared millions of times on social media and was read on the floor of the US Congress. I argue that exploration of the experiences of public survivors offers essential insight into contested cultural understandings of sexual violence.

I am broadly interested in three main questions. What can public survivors tell us about contemporary politics of sexual violence, and, specifically, attempts to challenge the 'cultural scaffolding' which normalises and enables sexual violence (Gavey 2005)? What is it about this moment that makes the figure of the public survivor so prominent? What epistemological forces to individuals mobilise to obtain authority to speak on sexual violence, and what forces constrain this authority?

Dr Tanya Serisier is a Reader in Feminist Theory in the Department of Criminology, Birkbeck College, University of London. Her work focuses on the cultural politics of sexual violence and she is currently beginning a Leverhulme Trust Research Fellowship on public survivors of sexual violence.

## #metoo, Amber Heard and navigating anger/vitriol in digital spaces.

Janine Little & Natalia Vedic

Sharing stories on social media has been a key feature of the transnational (Ghadery 2020) #metoo movement, empowering women to share their stories of harassment and abuse (Nau et al 2022). The movement that began with African American activist Tarana Burke sharing her story changed when high profile female celebrities using the hashtag increased its visibility (Trott 2022; Fransen 2020) and overwhelmed minority women's voices (Dunne 2019). Making the personal political on a global platform carries risks for all women (Pain 2020). The media spectacle around Amber Heard sharing her story and the consequential US defamation trial initiated by her former husband, Johnny Depp, resulted in immense social media engagement with content that was overwhelmingly negative toward Amber Heard. We read news media coverage of the anger and negativity directed at Amber Heard to inform our focus on perfect victim and victim-blaming, as illustration of general misunderstanding of the dynamics of domestic abuse and survivor coping mechanisms. We analyse the NBC two-part Samantha Guthrie and Amber Heard interview on Today through credibility framing and a "love bombing" discourse. We ask if Victorian sensibilities of silencing women through fear are reproduced as harassment and abuse in digital spaces. Do celebrities like Amber Heard, along with Hayden Panettiere and FKA Twigs (Tahlia Barnett), personify emotional labour and distress as the enduring discourse of gendered violence?

Dr Janine Little's research and writing in media, journalism, literary, cultural, Indigenous and gender studies covers more than three decades. She has contributed to significant national and international projects and publishing on urgent social justice issues, including the dispossession of Indigenous Australians from culture and land, violence against women and children, and the ethical and legal tensions in professional communication. Janine is a recognised international scholar in media law and ethics, and socialist feminist cultural analysis of family violence, namely violence against women and children. Her current project is: *The Role of Mediated Culture in Men's Violence Against Women and Patriarchal Capitalism*. Her three 2022 publications appear in *Hecate*, the *Routledge Advances in Film Studies* book, *Breaching Down Joker: Violence, Loneliness, Tragedy* (Sean Redmond, ed., 2022), and *Feminist Media Studies*.

Co-Author: Natalia Vedic completed a dissertation on victims in true crime, graduating with First Class Honours. She has begun her PhD at Deakin University on communism, conspiracy and Croatian-Australians. She is based in Croatia. Natalia's latest article can be found at *Feminist Media Studies*.

## "We can call this out": #MeToo and the politicization of young women in high schools

Sue Jackson & Katie Graham

The #MeToo movement has created global awareness about the extent of sexual violence women experience in their everyday lives. Although not expressly begun as a feminist movement, #MeToo's effects have been feminist, for example enabling women to speak out against sexual violence and to see it as a systemic problem. But what of teenage women? We know from limited research that, in the wake of #MeToo, social media have provided them with rich sources of feminist critiques and knowledge about sexual violence. Such knowledge has politicised some young women, expressed in social media activism and on-the-ground protests calling for change. In New Zealand, for example, teenage women have organized, led, and participated in highly publicized protest action against rape culture and sexual harassment, grounded in everyday, school-based experiences of these. This paper draws on data from nine focus groups and eight interviews nested within an ongoing larger study about young people and #MeToo. Participants were young high school women and activists of mixed ethnicities and sexualities who were 16-18 years old. Using this material, we explore the ebb and flow of energies that these participants direct toward expanding their knowledge and challenging sexual harassment within their schools, homes and

communities. Findings from our critical feminist thematic analyses illuminate the significant role of social media and conversations with friends in young women's energy investments in consciousness-raising (awareness), knowledge-sharing and creating communities of practice. However, findings also underline the hidden labour of battling backlash discourses and bearing the burden of political efforts to stop sexual harassment with little support from either adults or boys. We discuss the important implications of our findings for schools and community leaders, particularly the need to take the baton of responsibility from girls to dismantle cultural scaffolding that perpetuates the sexual harassment of young women.

Sue Jackson is a Research Associate Professor in the School of Health at Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand. She currently holds a prestigious Royal Society of New Zealand Marsden Fund research grant for a three year investigation of the ways young people have made sense of, navigated and responded to #MeToo.

## CONCURRENT SESSION 1E: WOMEN'S WORK AND ENERGIES

### Applying critical feminist theory to intersections of womanhood and disability: Stories of exhaustion and emotion from mother's subject to child protection investigation

Susan Flynn

Virtually unknown within research scholarship are the experiences of mothers who have been subject to child protection and welfare investigation for their disabled child or children. This gap endures despite compelling and longstanding international evidence that disabled children and young people are at significantly higher risk of neglect and abuse than non-disabled children (Jones et al., 2012). This occurs in tandem with evidence of professional malaise, enduring short-comings and blocks to efficient safeguarding of disabled children. Drawing upon a sample of 14 in-depth qualitative interviews with parents of disabled children who have been subject to child protection and welfare investigation for allegedly harming their children, the dimension of gender and womanhood emerges

as significant. So too is emergent the theme of exhaustion and emotion, following application of a framework method of analysis (Gale et al., 2013). Critical feminist theory is used to illuminate the common nature of stories from parents subject to child protection investigation, to inform future feminist work around the energies of women experiencing motherhood in the most challenging of times.

Dr Susan Flynn is Asst. Professor in Social Work at Trinity College Dublin, the University of Dublin. More broadly her work has, and continues to, focus upon child and family services. Within this, she has a particular focus on disability, child protection and welfare, and social work and social care.

## Social reproduction impacts during crisis: Women's experience of food insecurity and risk-taking behavior in Myanmar, Papua New Guinea, and the Philippines during the COVID-19 pandemic

Belinda Eslick

Studies examining the gendered impacts of COVID-19 have shown that women have been disproportionately impacted by the socio-economic effects of the pandemic across multiple areas, including economic and food security. We sought to understand how the impacts of the pandemic on women's food security in the Indo Pacific region were influenced by women's roles in performing most of the unpaid labor, work, and care involved in social reproduction. Our research team interviewed 183 female farmers and vendors (market stallholders) in Myanmar, Papua New Guinea, and the Philippines and found that while the countries examined were being impacted by COVID-19 at different stages of the pandemic and in distinct contexts, all women described an impact on their labor, processes of reproduction, and private household dynamics. Women began to ration food before the crisis hit their region and engaged in risk-management behaviors to mitigate against food and income insecurity. The findings showed that because it was typically women's responsibility to manage household food security (along with other aspects of social reproduction, including domestic labour and care), women were engaging in risks to

mitigate food insecurity. In this paper, we will consider the need to foreground the ways that social reproduction shapes women's lives and livelihoods—and thus the ways that women are impacted by crises like COVID-19. In our study, we found that women were vulnerable to considerable health, safety, and economic risks because of their role in social production. We therefore argue, from a feminist political economy perspective, that social reproduction must be centered in responses to crises from governments and other agencies to ensure that women's specific vulnerabilities to food and economic insecurity are accounted for.

Dr Belinda Eslick is a Casual Academic in Gender Studies at The University of Queensland and a Casual Senior Research Fellow at Griffith University. Her research interests include the philosophy of Luce Irigaray, women's non-institutional political practices, and feminist perspectives on the home and reproductive work.

## Exploring energy-related economic abuse in Australia: Victim-survivor perspectives

Eliza Venville

Family violence can have many devastating impacts on victim-survivors, including impacts on the use of essential services such as energy. Because energy services are critical for health, wellbeing and participation in modern society, they can be weaponised by perpetrators of economic abuse to control victim-survivors and inflict harm. Since the Royal Commission into Family Violence (2016) in Victoria, Australia, increasing attention has been placed on energy utility responses to consumers impacted by family violence. In 2019, the Victorian energy regulator introduced new protections for Victorian family violence-affected energy customers, making it the first Australian jurisdiction to formally address the problem of family violence in the energy sector. In June 2022, the national regulatory body announced that similar protections will soon be extended to family violence-affected energy consumers nation-wide. Nevertheless, despite these policy changes, the lived experience of energy problems and energy utility responses by family violence victim-survivors remains unexplored. This presentation addresses this gap by sharing preliminary findings from the first intersectional qualitative study on energy-related economic abuse in Australia and the world. The relationship between

economic abuse, energy and energy utilities is explored through the eyes of economic abuse victim-survivors across Australia via individual, in-depth interviews. Drawing on data generated in these interviews, this presentation reflects on three things: how economic abuse can manifest in the energy context; the impact of this form of abuse on victim-survivors; and the ways in which energy utilities and their regulators can improve their family violence responses. In doing so, this presentation considers critical practice implications for energy and other essential service utilities around the world.

Eliza is a PhD researcher and Research Assistant at Monash University exploring the connection between economic abuse and energy. Eliza's thesis is the first study to consider energy utility responses to consumers impacted by family violence from victim-survivor perspectives. Eliza's work is animated by creating space for victim-survivor voices to drive change, with the aim of humanising and un-gendering our organisations and systems.

## Feminist Baby? Didactic feminist picture books for young people

Emma Whatman

Children's literature is a key site for the dissemination of ideology. This is particularly notable in children's non-fiction and informational texts. Purposefully didactic, these books have historically covered topics like the environment, war and conflict, geography, and bodies. However, in recent decades there is a growing body of non-fiction informational picture books that promote social causes like sex education and consent, LGBTQIA+ rights, anti-racism, and feminism. In this paper, I will examine a sample of feminist picture books, including Loryn Brantz's viral 'Feminist Baby' series (Feminist Baby (2017), Feminist Baby Finds Her Voice! (2018), and Feminist Baby! He&#39;s a Feminist Too (2019)). These books feature toddlers making noise, speaking out and wearing and doing what they want. They have the capacity to do activist work and promote revolution and resistance from a young age. However, they also present feminism as a neoliberal identity that one can 'put on' through individual action. In this paper, I examine the ideological constructions of feminism appearing in these books and argue that they reflect postfeminist and neoliberal feminist subjectivities while attempting to promote revolutionary feminist activism. As popular cultural artefacts, these picture books can tell us much about the ongoing production of contemporary feminism.

Dr. Emma Whatman (she/her) is a Casual Academic at Deakin University and the University of Melbourne where she teaches children's literature and gender and sexuality studies. Emma completed her PhD in 2019 and her research focuses on postfeminism and popular texts for young women. She is currently finalising her first monograph under contract with Wayne State University Press (2023). Forthcoming research focuses on feminist children's literature, Instagram feminism (with Hannah Garden), and consent picture books (with Paul Venzo). She can be found on Twitter @emmawhatman





## CONCURRENT SESSION 1F: VOICES FROM EVERYWHERE 1

### Overloaded testimonies. Silence, anonymity and the energy politics of speaking out

Cecilia Cienfuegos

The #MeToo movement has helped to make clear that, in order to address sexual violence, it is indispensable to take into account the voices of its victims. However, first-person narratives occupy a paradoxical epistemic position, and are systematically exposed to questioning, public shaming, and re-victimization. The energy required to actually speak out cannot be overlooked. To this extent, his paper aims to complexify the relations between silence and speaking out. As argued by Tanya Serisier, the "politics of speaking out" is defined by the idea that there is an intrinsic liberatory aspect to speaking out, and an inherent repressive element to silence. However, as problematised by authors such as Serisier (2018), Alcoff (2018) or Cvetkovich (2003), testimonies of sexual trauma are mediated by what has been defined as a "confessional structure" that often drains, revictimizes and "disempowers the one who confesses" (Alcoff 2018, 183). In this regard, these authors coincide in the idea that the place given to silence needs further complexification. Mostly because the current politics of speaking out reproduces a pre-foucauldian understanding of the liberatory capabilities of breaking silence, as well as an uncritical reliance on victims' testimonies and their role in ending violence. With this in mind, this paper addresses the tension that many

authors of experiential rape narratives make explicit about their desire to testify, on the one hand, and the awareness of the extremely high energy load that these denouncing exercises entail, on the other. Ultimately, taking as starting point two anonymous texts written by survivors of childhood abuse ('The Incest Diary', and 'Ella soy yo') the paper comes to present anonymity as an inbetween form of testimony: one that paradigmatically embraces this compulsion to confession while, at the same time, somehow produces a form of active silence – protecting its authors and taking them out of focus.

Cecilia Cienfuegos (Madrid, 1989) is a researcher in philosophy, gender and cultural studies. Her work focuses on sexual violence, intersectionality, political philosophy and epistemology. She studied the Master in Cultural Theory and Criticism at Carlos III University (2013-2015), and between 2016 and 2018 she obtained a scholarship from La Caixa to study the Gender Studies (Research) Master at Utrecht University, where she graduated cum laude. She is currently a PhD student and PIPF fellowship holder at Carlos III University, under the supervision of Dr. Carmen González Marín.

### Elevating women- Embracing climate change; An intersectional ecofeminism perspective

Farida Razaqi

Climate change does not impact everyone equally but is inextricably connected to various systems of power and oppression that transcend national borders. The marginalized groups—which are women in most communities, are more likely to be impoverished and face high risk during climate change-related disasters. Women constitute 80% of those displaced by climate change. Additionally, women and children are actually 14 times more likely than men to die and experience violence, exploitation, and other harm during natural disasters. This impact is not uniform even among women, as it creates complex discrimination based on women's social identity and race. This is while in many political and decision-making spheres, women are alarmingly underrepresented in global environmental policymaking. Women hold only 12% of top national ministerial positions in environmental sectors worldwide. Intersectional Ecofeminism examines the connection between women and the environment and sees climate change as a human rights issue deeply entangled with the ongoing gender inequities whose impacts are exacerbated by environmental racism, colonialism, capitalism, and hierarchies of privilege and oppression. It centers the voices of those experiencing overlapping, concurrent forms of oppression in order to understand the depths of the inequalities and the relationships among them in any given context. This paper suggests that an intersectional ecofeminist approach to climate justice can lead the way for concrete change and lead the fight against environmentally driven oppression to create more equitable societies and sustainable futures for all. It explains that the connection between the environment and gender is essential not only because of the disproportionately gendered impact of climate change but also because of the potential environmental solutions that

can emerge by elevating women. Elevating women to actively participate in environmental policymaking at all levels also allows for a more determined and proportionate political voice by indicating how women tend to prioritize environmental protection and strong climate action and consider environmentalism a more substantial part of their personal identity than men.

Farida Razaqi is an Afghan Fulbright Scholar who works as a program specialist for cultural and international issues with the State University of New York- University at Buffalo (UB) School of Law Clinical Legal Education Program. She simultaneously works as an Environmental Justice Fellow and projects with Niagara University Justice House Program. Farida pursued her Master of Laws (LL.M.) degree in Environmental Law at UB. Prior to this, she served as a Legal Expert at the Afghanistan Legal Research and Development Organization, leading the "Strengthening Afghan Women Judges Association" project in Partnering with the Max Planck Foundation for International Peace and Rule of Law in Kabul, Afghanistan. Farida also worked as a lecturer at Herat and Jami Universities of Afghanistan. In addition, she served as a regional coordinator with Afghans for Progressive Thinking Organization, a youth-led organization working for gender equality and peacebuilding in Afghanistan. Farida completed her Bachelor's degree in Law and political science at Herat University. Her research interests primarily lie in hydro-politics and hydro-terrorism, climate change, environmental peacebuilding, and gender-sensitive climate vulnerability.

## How can reimagining fairy tales challenge traditional depictions of silenced entities and destabilise understandings of patriarchal sovereignty over women and nature?

Shannon Horsfall

Storytelling makes people thrive – men, women, sultans, peasants. When I was a child and highly inquisitive, fairy tales fed my curiosity; they seemed to offer the possibility of change, of magical transformation, beyond the boundaries of their improbable plots and implausible 'happy ever afters'. Beyond their fantastically illustrated pages, where wolves threatened denouement and old crones plotted gruesome ends, these stories promised metamorphoses, not only in the world betwixt and between the pages, but in this world. And this instability of appearances, these sudden swerves of destiny, created the first sustaining excitement of experiencing such stories. Like romance, or adventure stories, to which fairy tales bear a strong affinity, they told me I could remake my world in the image of desire. These stories informed my childhood ideas of what it is to exist in the world – as a girl, and within nature. And while I was weaned on traditional fairy tales in book form, when I cast my mind back to these stories it is the images of Disney that swirl through my mind. With its musical scores that soared and swelled, these films transported me into magical places where evil is always recognisable and good takes the form of a dependable male hero. However, fairy tales have long been known as heteronormative and patriarchal narratives that perpetuate gender stereotypes and limit possibilities for interruptions to assumptions around gender roles (Naraharisetty, 2018: n.p) and as such, patriarchal directives within fairy tales delimits girls and womens' identity options. Further, these

patriarchal narratives extend to the natural world where nature is presented as an 'Other', '[wherein] the proliferation of ... fairy tales is correlated to a growing awareness of human separation from the wild and natural world' (Bernheimer, 2009: xix). In traditional tales, domination of nature is illustrated as a means to achieve a sense of safety in those spaces not under direct human control (Wood, 2011: ii). In silencing these entities, limiting possibilities of agency, both women and nature are controlled by the dominant societal force.

Shannon Horsfall is a children's author published by HarperCollins, Scholastic, Hachette and State Library of Queensland. Shannon was shortlisted for the Speech Pathology Book of the Year Award in 2017 for her picture book 'Was Not Me' and was a CBCA Notable in 2018 for 'Nomax'. She holds annual workshops with Queensland Writers Centre on writing for picture books, and has been a presenter at various literary festivals, including Voices on the Coast and Burdekin Readers and Writers Festival. She is currently undertaking a PhD in Creative Writing, after completing Honours First Class A (Creative Writing) and a Bachelor of Creative Writing majoring in English and Creative Writing, and awarded the University Medal of Academic Excellence, at the University of the Sunshine Coast.

## Are domestic spaces feminist? Documenting everyday woman work in India

Amritha Mohan

This video intends to explore how domestic work is performed by women in India, and poses the question: how can one imagine a feminist, domestic space? It aims to chronicle a day in the life of a woman home-maker (who is also my mother) in a video format. Domestic/ household labour done by women in a family is unpaid, mostly undocumented, and closely tied with the institution of marriage in India. In fact, a Time-Use Survey conducted by National Statistical Office (NSO) revealed that more than 84 percent of women participated in unpaid domestic work across all the states in the country. From an economic perspective, the location of domestic work – within the confines of a home – is one of the reasons for its lesser wages and informal employment relations. The general understanding of domestic work as unskilled, personalised and informal has also further devalued and alienated it from other organised labour unions. Even as domestic work is undervalued as a legitimate source of employment, work done by housewives, homemakers, or a normal working woman in a household/family is even more ignored, since it comes under the purview of the private sphere. Complications arise in any attempt to quantify or calculate housework, in order to provide wages; this also has the potential to further ghettoise women into the domestic realm forever.

In such a context, how may one examine this unpaid labour and what methodologies can be used? One way is to adopt an audio-visual documentary methodology, which can convey the extent of time used by an ordinary woman in a household in Kerala (India). This audio-visual essay, as opposed to a research paper, is therefore an effort to document everyday, ordinary and unpaid household labour which often escapes scrutiny, and argues that such documentation, in itself, can produce new knowledge and new ways of understanding complicated forms of labour, that is yet to be legislated while remaining devalued and relegated. It is also an attempt to ask this uncomfortable question: even as domestic spaces are mostly occupied by women, are they really feminist spaces? Have women exercised choice and agency in making this space theirs?

Amritha Mohan is a PhD researcher at the School of Media, Film and Journalism, Monash University. Her PhD project focuses particularly on women in sport (in Kerala, south India) and their experiences at the intersections of sport, media and gender. She's also interested in questions about transnational feminisms, culture in South Asia and practice-based research.



## CONCURRENT SESSION 2A: FEMINIST CULTURES 1

### Creative activism as feminist praxis: (re)signifying TV fiction as socio-political commentary in The Handmaid's Tale fan groups

Amanda Fiedler

Interpretations of empowered womanhood are constantly evolving. On-screen representation is embedded in discourses of social change and women on TV inform an epistemological praxis of off-screen embodiment. While mainstream science fiction has long been a bastion of masculinised identity, with heroism perceived through physical action, feminist sci-fi suggests women's power requires alternate definitions. Over the last five years there has been an increasing number of women-centric sci-fi TV shows with women in positions of creative control, such as *The Handmaid's Tale* (2017- present) based on the novel by Margaret Atwood, exploring a near-future religious fundamentalist dystopia. This award-winning show captures the zeitgeist of the current political environment, exploring gender-based violence, women's autonomy, and the effects of trauma, while the Handmaid's red robes have come to symbolise feminist resistance. As feminists, as women, the political is inscribed on and through our bodies, in the process of action and reaction, we participate in the entangled relationship of power and resistance.

This paper explores women-centric sci-fi TV as a reflection of wider social discourses around women's rights, suggesting certain Handmaid Tale's Facebook fan groups utilise the dystopic narrative to explore the potential implications of current affairs, thereby affectively engaging in creative activism as a form of feminist praxis.

Amanda Fiedler is a PhD candidate, sessional academic and research assistant in the School of Business and Creative Industries at the University of the Sunshine Coast. Amanda's research explores the sociohistorical intersections of fact and fiction in screen media ecologies, with a focus on representations of gender in media texts. Amanda previously published the journal article, 'Contradiction, corporeality, and conformity in *Grace and Frankie*' (2020) in *Continuum: Journal of Media & Cultural Studies*.

### Identities in Movement: a dance of (dis)comfort

Francesca Ferrer-Best

What is a ballet barre for dancers? It's a home, a support system; it's something they reach for. In this paper, I draw from Sara Ahmed's (2007) work on comfort to examine how ballet dancers experience the ballet world as a home-like space, in a gendered and raced way. Although there have been many, well-motivated critiques of ballet by academic feminists since the 1980s (Daly, Fraleigh, Novack), these often work to inadvertently background the agential capacities of the dancers themselves, casting them as voiceless and making victims of them. As such, the motivation behind this research is to amplify and enrich understandings of the experiences of ballet dancers without pathologising them. Accordingly, the paper draws from a project that utilised a mixed-methodology to ask: what can the sensory details of doing ballet tell us about its generative capacities as a professional practice - as well as its problematic tendencies? And, how do systemic and structural factors contribute to and produce those sensorial details? With these questions in mind, I consider how whiteness is baked-in to ballet and what comforts being

a white ballet dancer predicates. In sum, I suggest there is still much to be gained from feminist enquiries into ballet, particularly ones that disrupt habitual knowledges of ballet, that foreground dancers' voices and account for a variety of, perhaps ambivalent, experiential textures.

Francesca Ferrer-Best is a PhD candidate with the department of Gender and Cultural Studies at the University of Sydney. Her doctoral research is motivated by the academic tendency towards pathologising ballet dancers, and therefore aims to unearth and communicate ballet dancers' experiences in an in-depth, embodied analysis of how they interface with the world. Francesca's broader research interests include phenomenology, movement cultures, embodiment and drinking. Outside university, she is involved in the independent dance-making community in Sydney.

### The agential cut and paste : collaging alternative (hi)stories with/in the feminist archive

Lily Atkinson

Collage is a practice with particular and significant feminist resonances that has both touched and been touched by many and varied feminist hands for many and varied feminist means. Figures such as Mary Delany, Claude Cahun, and Wangechi Mutu have all practiced collage as a strategy for subversive and disruptive world-making. As feminist art critic Lucy Lippard describes, collage is 'born of interruption' (1995, p.168). This paper traces some of these interruptive, feminist uses of collage and asks what it might mean to use collage as a feminist research and (hi)storytelling strategy. Drawing on Karen Barad's (2007) theorisations of the agential cut as a boundary-making practice, I propose a collage-based feminist research-strategy wherein archival materials, knowledges, bodies, subjects, and things are agentially cut, arranged, and pasted together/apart in unexpected ways to produce unexpected (dis)connections, attachments, and relationships. A collage-based approach to feminist materials and knowledge disrupts hegemonic understandings of materiality, linearity, clarity, and coherency, and opens up alternative ways of knowing feminism and its things. I argue that collage locates the feminist researcher and (hi)story teller as actively response-able to and for their research, its gestures, its narratives, and

its results, and ask what kinds of visions and versions of response-ability emerge from this. What kinds of structures are our cuts supporting? Whose histories are our cuts re-membling? Whose histories are our cuts forgetting? In short, who lives and who dies in our feminist research and (hi)storytelling? With collage, these questions are felt and touched by the researcher, the cutter and the pasteur, and therefore felt as embodied questions that matter ethically, ontologically, and epistemologically.

Lily Atkinson is PhD Candidate in Gender Studies at the University of Adelaide. She is broadly interested in feminist theory, practice, art-making, and political labour and the ways that feminists deal with the question of time and inheritance. Her PhD explores the ways that domestic world-making practices might be used as methods for disruptive feminist story-telling. In her spare time she co-convenes a feminist reading group and does volunteer work at a feminist bookshop. Her personal and political life is grounded in a desire to create and sustain feminist pasts, presents, and futures.



## Making visible the invisibility of the feminine

Ashlee Barton

The notion of femininity is a contested space in feminist discourse with the rejection of femininity as constitutive of second-wave feminist identity. It has been argued that this rejection of femininity privileges the voices of Western women who, through earlier feminist activism, gained a level of visibility. In arts practices however, the materialisation of femininity through visual image has played a major role in the development of feminist art history (Johnson 2013). According to dance practitioner and scholar, Philipa Rothfield, 'feminist activism constitutes one means of redeploing patriarchal givens, artistic creation offers another' (Rothfield 2020:173). Through my own contemporary art making practice, my work explores the construction of femininity through processes, forms and materiality, as a 'counter strategic reinscription' (Grosz 1990:53) of rendering visible the invisibility of the feminine. This paper will examine femininity through the interdisciplinary and intergenerational relationship between Eleanor Antin's photographic work, *Carving: A Traditional Sculpture* (1972) and my own dance film, *Moments captured in time* (2022), which share a number of artistic and aesthetic characteristics. Antin's work chronicles a 37-day dieting regime presented as daily photographs of her naked body taken from multiple angles. My work documents my improvised dancing over expanding intervals of time— every

hour on the hour for six hours, every day for six days, every week for six weeks and so on. Through placing my work in dialogue with Antin's, I aim to highlight (make visible) the understated references to femininity as an alternative understanding of femininity-as-image. Grosz, Elizabeth. 1990. "Inscriptions and Body-Maps: Representations and the Corporeal." Pp. 52–60 in *Feminine, masculine and representation*, edited by T. Threadgold. Sydney: Allen & Unwin. Johnson, Clare. 2013. *Femininity, Time and Feminist Art*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan. Rothfield, Philipa. 2020. *Dance and the Corporeal Uncanny: Philosophy in Motion*. First. New York: Routledge.

Ashlee Barton is a queer, female dance artist and researcher whose current practice-led research traverses dance improvisation, dance film and live digital choreographic practices as a means of dancing with (her) multiple bodies in these isolated times. Her recent performance works include: 'NOW Pieces # 6' (2022), 'Low Line Event – MoreArt' (2022), and 'NOW Pieces – Another' (2021). Since 2016, she has been a sessional academic at Deakin University and is currently undertaking her PhD.

## CONCURRENT SESSION 2B: COVID-19

### "YAY Covid's over!" The necropolitics of pretending

J. R. Latham

Have you been participating in indoor work functions, such as staff meetings, without a mask mandate? Have you attended an event that turned out to be a super spreader? Were you forced or pressured to do so? How have these conditions been justified? In this paper I explore some of the assumptions that underpin pretending that COVID-19 is no longer an ongoing pandemic, and what impacts these have on contemporary feminist goals, such as universal access to healthcare, or increased social participation of marginalised people. Social life was profoundly interrupted by mitigating strategies to lower transmission rates (and hence excess deaths) via restrictions to in-person contact in 2020–21, especially here in Melbourne, where residents spent 262+ days in lockdown. While the majority appeared to rejoice at the easing of restrictions and so-called 'return to normal' heralded by high vaccination rates, people who know that their vulnerability to severe disease/death is heightened—and those who care for/about such people—now must contend with living in a society where we have been condemned to perpetual social isolation/death. Mobilising the concept of necropolitics, I consider the

changing norms in so-called 'post-Covid' life, and the implications for accessibility. Drawing on analysis of access needs for LGBTIQ+ people with disability, based on a Victorian research project I conducted in 2019, I suggest how we might consider (and prioritise) the interpersonal interaction needs of people vulnerable to severe disease and the implications for a range of Australia's public health goals.

Dr J. R. Latham is Alfred Deakin Postdoctoral Research Fellow at Deakin University, and Honorary Fellow in Cultural Studies at The University of Melbourne, Australia. He is a social scientist and feminist theorist with expertise in health and medicine, transgender and sexuality studies, and literary studies. His work combines critical concepts of 'drugs', ageing and narrative with bioethics, queer theory, and science and technology studies (STS) with a focus on improving healthcare for marginalised people.

### Re-energising political activism in a post-pandemic world? The liberating lens of relational autonomy.

Petra Brown & Tamara Kayali Browne

Political agency is generally understood as requiring autonomy and independence from constraining responsibilities and obligations to others, including caring duties. As such, those in caring roles (most of whom are women) have traditionally found themselves excluded from full participation in public life. Whilst the 20th century had seen significant political gains for women, the impact of COVID-19 increased the burden of unpaid care work on women, resulting in reduced employment and educational opportunities, and growing inequality. The pandemic's negative impact on women has been recognised, yet political policies, even in liberal democratic countries, have in many instances directly exacerbated the burden of 'women's work'. While there are complex reasons for this, we argue that at least part of this is due to the patriarchal nature of the social contract that has shaped contemporary neoliberal democracies. This paper proposes relational autonomy as an alternative form of political agency to address the continued undervaluing of care labour. Already widely theorised in applied disciplines, including bioethics, health studies, nursing, law, psychology, education, and aged care, this paper explores the political liberating potential of relational autonomy in recognising and affirming caring as a highly valued part of public life, and marginalised carers as citizens. We suggest that applying

relational autonomy in the political sphere can be an energising force for politically-fatigued feminists in a post-pandemic world.

Petra Brown is a Lecturer the School of Humanities and Social Sciences at Deakin University. She has research expertise in mid-20th century German philosophy and political theology. Her book *Bonhoeffer – God's Conspirator in a State of Exception* was published in 2019. She has growing interest in feminist approaches to phenomenology, religion, ethics, and political philosophy. Recent research interests include a feminist reading of Arendt's critique of sovereignty and violence, and feminist visions of political community.

Tamara Kayali Browne is a Senior Lecturer in Health Ethics and Professionalism at Deakin University and an Adjunct Research Fellow at Charles Sturt University. They completed their PhD at the University of Cambridge and later served as Lecturer in Bioethics at the Australian National University, winning three teaching awards. Their primary research expertise is in the ethics of reproductive technology, gender and mental illness. Their book, *Depression and the Self* was published with Cambridge University Press.

## Histories of reproductive coercion and consent in mid-to-late twentieth century Australia

Cassandra Byrnes

Reproductive coercion is a recently defined concept in academic literature that encompasses any intervention into reproductive choices that will dictate the onset or outcome of another person's pregnancy. Although there has been selected scholarship in the last five years on experiences of reproductive coercion in the disciplines of law, sociology, medicine, social work, and psychology, there has been little in the way of historical investigation that examines its long and insidious past. The history of forced reproductive control in twentieth-century Australia illustrates constructions of rights and bodies that inform current understandings of the role of coercion in reproductive justice. Technological developments in biomedical contraception and abortion techniques facilitated increased awareness of and access to family planning methods. This noticeable growth in available birth control was at once advantageous for some and prohibitive for others: individual people reaped the benefits of intentionally spacing out births, restricting pregnancies, and remaining altogether childless, yet those who suffered in the more vulnerable spaces of institutionalisation or medical authoritarianism were more likely to be subjected to coercive reproductive practices. This research will use historical case studies to show the ways individual partner violence and institutional violence both contributed to experiences of reproductive coercion. While this form of coercion was not criminalised, laws concerning the illegality and distribution of abortion,

birth control, and sterilization also influenced the degree of control over these reproductive decisions. This research aligns with recent scholarly interest in histories of sexual violence and experiences of consent and coercion.

Dr Cassandra Byrnes researches histories of gender and sexuality, focusing on reproductive rights and control. She is working on a history of reproductive coercion in Australia's recent past, and how that directly influences our current understandings of laws and social practices. Her past research has examined reproduction regulation in Queensland in the mid-to-late twentieth century, illustrating how political, moral, and social control over contracepting bodies influenced broader attitudes regarding agency and autonomy. She researches and teaches Australian history, gender history, and histories of sexuality. Cassandra has published on the history of 'gender', the history of women's higher education, and the family, household, and health in the nineteenth century. She was a National Library of Australia Summer Scholar and a Global Change Scholar at UQ, collaborating with peers in interdisciplinary networks, and is currently a Postdoctoral Fellow on the project Sexual Violence and the Limits of Consent.

## 'My Body, My Choice': the appropriation and re-deployment of a feminist slogan

Zoe Keys And Dr Erica Millar

The political slogan 'My Body, My Choice' has long been associated with feminist movements to promote access to abortion services. While the notion of 'a woman's right to choose' grew from the predominately white feminism of the 1970s, the language of 'choice' remained fixed to abortion rights and the way abortion is spoken about in the broader social world. In the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic, anti-vaccine and anti-lockdown protesters co-opted the slogan 'My Body, My Choice' to express opposition to vaccine mandates and lockdowns. This paper will reflect on the appropriation of this feminist slogan in these new pandemic contexts, utilising key examples from rallies, online posts and websites to conceptualise how this rallying cry has been re-deployed, for what purpose and to what political effect.

Zoe Keys is a PhD candidate and Research Assistant, working on projects about abortion in Australia. She is currently working as a Research Assistant on a DECRA project with Dr Erica Millar, examining the hospital provision of abortion in Australia. She is also a member of the South Australian Abortion Action Coalition. Zoe lives and works on the unceded lands of the Kurna People.

Dr Erica Millar is a DECRA senior research fellow in the Department of Social Inquiry at La Trobe University. She lives and works on unceded Wurundjeri land. She is a member of the SA Abortion Action Coalition, and the author of several articles on reproductive justice in Australia and the monograph *Happy Abortions: Our Bodies in the Era of Choice* (Zed Books, 2017). Her DECRA research focuses on institutional abortion stigma.

## CONCURRENT SESSION 2C: CARE AND CONTROL

### Criminalisation of coercive control – a critical CALD perspective

Balawyn Jones & Akuch Kuol Anyieth

When posing the question of whether Victoria should follow other Australian states in moving towards criminalising coercive control as a form of domestic and family violence there are many arguments for and against in the literature. However, scholars and advocates from marginalised communities, or in allyship with marginalised communities, tend to be cautious of embracing further criminalisation, particularly due to the risks such an approach poses for women from First Nations and Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) Communities. In the context of Australia's colonial legal system, this paper argues that women from marginalised communities are treated as 'collateral damage' in the campaign to eliminate domestic and family violence via criminal law interventions. This paper questions why carceral responses seem to be accepted by many as inherently better avenues for responding to domestic and family violence. As part of this conversation, we touch on the existence of the civil system in Victoria which includes indirect criminalisation of coercive control via breaches of Family Violence Intervention Orders.

Dr Balawyn Jones completed her PhD at Melbourne Law School in 2022. She researches across the fields of domestic and family violence, Muslim women's agency, Indonesian law and society, and the implementation of women's rights at the intersection of gender, religion and law.

Akuch Kuol Anyieth is a graduate researcher in crime, justice, and legal studies. Her research engages with masculinity and domestic violence, examining customary law, pre- and post-migration experiences of South Sudanese families and how they adapt to the western rule of law in the diaspora. Akuch is the author of "South Sudanese Manhood and Family Crisis in the Diaspora" and her memoir "Unknown". Among other boards, Akuch sits as an Editorial Board member for the Australian Feminist Law Journal. She is a frequent contributor to discussions about her community, youth, and families and on matters concerning refugees and social justice. Akuch has worked within the family violence sector, youth justice and community service and development. Currently, her PhD is examining Family Violence Intervention Orders within the South Sudanese community in Victoria using a decolonial theoretical approach.

## Caring in prevention: An offering of collective care through research on primary prevention of gender-based violence with practitioners and young people in Australia

Sarah McCook & Lena Molnar

Both gender-based violence and the labour of care surface within affective relations wherein power, vulnerability and connection are negotiated. Indeed, violence may be considered a failure or absence of care across the interpersonal, symbolic, and structural levels. In this area, feminist scholars have called for closer attention to the conditions for transformative empathy and caring as pathways to feminist solidarity (e.g. Hemmings 2012; Puig de la Bellacasa 2012; Tronto 2017; Keddie 2020). Works from Bla(c)k, Indigenous, queer and disability writers and activists have similarly illustrated the transformative potential of collective care efforts for challenging systemic inequalities and oppression. Drawing on this intersectional feminist literature, in this paper we ask what possibilities emerge for conceptualising 'collective care' as a practice ethic for the primary prevention of gender-based violence. We draw on empirical data from two Australian research projects: with young people using social media for primary prevention, and with anti-violence practitioners doing gender-transformative work with men. Throughout our research, we identified energetic patterns among participants and from ourselves that we argue reflect shared, transformative commitments to empathy,

compassion, and mutual vulnerabilities. These patterns are significantly distinct from mainstream prevention discourse that reproduce individualised accounts of risk and responsibility and conceal gendered labour. Such critical practices enable us to engage with and care for one another whilst balancing feminist political concerns with the pragmatic realities of addressing gender inequality. In this spirit, we offer contributions from these studies to demonstrate how careful collaboration to prevent gender-based violence is applied within feminist social change movements.

Sarah McCook (she/they) is a gendered violence researcher living and working on unceded Wurundjeri Country. Sarah is currently completing a PhD with the Social & Global Studies Centre at RMIT University, which examines Australian men's lived experiences of masculinity, normativity, and social change. Sarah has previously worked on primary prevention policy and programmatic responses for gendered violence in Australia and internationally with a focus on engaging men and boys for feminist-oriented gender transformative change.

## Parenting black children in white spaces

Leticia Anderson and Kathomi Gatwiri

The invisible racial labour of parenting black children in white Australia  
This paper employs a critical race theory perspective to probe how Black African migrants parent Black children in Australia. The data from our research revealed two principal themes highlighting the extra labour that informs parenting approaches for African families in Australia. The first theme explores the importance of explicitly teaching children about their Blackness and fostering positive racial identities within a white-majority society in a context of shifting familial gender dynamics. The second theme reflects the complexities for families attempting to navigate between 'African' and 'Western' values and the need to develop intercultural parenting approaches that effectively incorporate elements from diverse cultural influences. A significant paradox was also apparent in the tension between parental desires to inculcate pride in African ancestry and culture while simultaneously encouraging children to 'curate' their Blackness to minimise experiences of racialisation, including

gendered dimensions of exoticisation and criminalisation. This paper offers a glimpse into the fatiguing impact of racial labour in the parenting experiences of skilled African migrants and how they creatively manage the tensions and change emerging from this process.

Leticia is a Senior Lecturer in Humanities at Southern Cross University. She is an awarded educator and researcher who was previously a Lecturer in Peace and Conflict Studies and Cultural Competence at the University of Sydney. Leticia has a dual research speciality on diversity, inclusion, belonging and anti-racism in contemporary Australian society and on inclusive higher education research, teaching and partnerships and is the co-author of *Afrodiasporic identities in Australia: Articulations of Blackness and Africanness* (Springer, 2022).



CONCURRENT SESSION 2D: FEMINIST SPACES: AT HOME IN AUSTRALIA

Homelessness and pregnancy: Affective injustice

Dr Juliet Watson, Dr Jacqui Theobald, & Dr Freda Haylett

A significant number of women experience pregnancy while homeless, with pregnancy occurring at rates higher than the wider population of Australian women (Murray et al., 2018). However, their unique experiences of homelessness as distinct from men's have not received a great deal of scholarly attention. Homelessness is typically framed according to men's subjectivities, which are assumed to characterise a common experience (Watson, 2018). When homelessness is treated as gender neutral, it invisibilises women's experiences and can lead to inadequate and insensitive care from support services. This is a concern for services who work with homeless women, as they have higher rates of diagnosed mental health issues and higher rates of adverse childhood trauma than homeless men (Milaney et al., 2020). Too often, policy and practice responses to homelessness conceptualise "home" as a place of safety and stability, but for many homeless women "home" is a site of violence they have had to flee from (Zufferey, 2015). Without supports that recognise the distinct needs of homeless women, homeless pregnant and parenting women are institutionally disabled from carrying out the care work they wish to do (Bimpson, Parr and Reeve, 2022: 285).

Reflecting on the perspectives of fourteen women who have had recent experiences of pregnancy and homelessness, this paper examines the gendered experience of homelessness to produce further gendered understandings of women's homelessness. Participants in our research reported a range of experiences during their pregnancy, including gendered violence, reproductive-related traumas and coercion, accommodation that was masculine-dominated and hostile to navigate, survival sex, and involvement with child protection. Most participants could not access long-term safe and secure housing until very late in their pregnancy or until after the birth of their baby, depriving them of the ability to develop the nurturing capital required to prepare for motherhood practically, physically, and emotionally.

"I am not a weird hippy activist!": Advocacy and 'accidental' activism in the Australian countryside.

Sarah Casey

In this paper we explore a series of interviews across three related research projects from 2018-2022 with women in rural and remote Australia, who agitate for better support and services in their communities, against environmental impacts, and about changes to land clearing legislation. An aspect reconstituting rural women's activism is the use of online and digital spaces; however there is a significant gap in research considering rural women's digital activism in Australia. We explore, then, participants' uses of online advocacy in conjunction with their offline actions and digital access issues. We also examine their rejection or identification with the 'activist' label. We address the importance of approaching rural activism and advocacy from a perspective that addresses gendered and power relationships, and time-space complexities including how activism and/or advocacy develop in place.

Dr Juliet Watson is a senior lecturer in the School of Global, Urban and Social Studies at RMIT University and Vice President of AWGSA. Juliet's research is focused on gender-based violence, homelessness, and feminisms. Her doctoral thesis won the AWGSA PhD Award in 2016. Juliet is the author of 'Youth Homelessness and Survival Sex: Intimate Relationships and Gendered Subjectivities' (2018) and 'Hashtag Feminisms: Australian Media Feminists, Activism, and Digital Campaigns' (forthcoming with Sarah Casey).

Dr Jacqui Theobald is a senior lecturer in social work and social policy at La Trobe University Bendigo with expertise in historical, sociological and social work research. Jacqui has expertise in qualitative research methods, and her primary areas of research interest include the historical and contemporary context of domestic violence services, gendered violence, women's homelessness, and their related social policy and practice responses. She has published on these topics and is the author, with Suellen Murray, of *From the Margins to the Mainstream: The Domestic Violence Services Movement in Victoria, Australia 1974-2016* (2017). Jacqui is also a board member for the Centre Against Sexual Assault, Central Victoria.

Dr Freda Haylett is a researcher in the School of Global, Urban and Social Studies at RMIT University. Freda has a PhD on the co-option of feminist language. Prior to academia, Freda worked in the community sector advocating for incarcerated Indigenous children. Her research in recent years has focused on the impacts of homelessness on women and babies in the pre- and post-natal period.

Dr Sarah Casey teaches communication at the University of the Sunshine Coast. She leads the Real Stories of Country Women, Real Rural Digital Solutions and Real Rural Women's Leadership projects. She produces NTROs such a microdocumentaries and podcasts. Sarah is an executive member of AWGSA. She is a member of the National Rural Women's Coalition Communication Reference Team (2021-), the key industry alliance for rural, regional and remote women in Australia. With Gail Crimmins, Rose Barrowcliffe, Tara Brabazon, and Jacqueline Ewart, is working on a book related to this paper: *Rural, Regional and Remote women: Power, Communication and Advocacy*, (Palgrave MacMillan, 2023) Dr Gail Crimmins is the Deputy Head of School of Business and Creative Industries at the University of the Sunshine Coast, and is widely published in gender equity, gender in education, and the lived experience of women in developing gender equity strategy and cultural change management. She has worked alongside Sarah Casey on the 'Real Rural' projects, is an executive member (2021-) of AWGSA, and she sits on the Board of high ranking gender journals such as *Gender and Education*. Dr Crimmins has published three books, is experienced in creating NTROs, and producing scholarly works in high-ranking journals.



## The African cultural practice of bride price: A case of South Sudanese in Australia

Anyier Yuol

Bride price is a practice in many cultures across Africa. It is culturally valued as a practice that defines the transition from being a girl to being a married woman. Different people hold different perceptions about the practice of bride price. Among the South Sudanese Dinka community, bride price is one of the essential cultural values that bonds people together in marriage and kinships. It is embedded in everyday life and understood culturally as normal practice undertaken for women as a rite of passage to enter into the institution of marriage. It is an act that unifies families, recognises legal marriage and forms kinship. However, in the context of modern globalisation and increased migration, the South Sudanese Dinka community have experienced a disruption of established cultural traditions and traditional practices. Through unpacking narratives about the cultural practice of bride price, this research aims to understand how global processes are re-shaping the practice of bride price within Australia's South Sudanese Dinka community. As a new migrant group in Australia, there is limited understanding of how the South Sudanese Dinka community acculturated to their new context. There is even less research on the South Sudanese Dinka community

practice of bride price in Australia and how changing practices impact women and family dynamics and relationships. This research will address this gap in understanding how members of the South Sudanese Dinka community in Australia understand the practice of bride price.

Driven by social change, Diversity, Equity & Inclusion, Anyier uses her lived experience and expertise to work with leaders in every industry to create meaningful partnerships and improve DEI outcomes by reimagining their organisation's workforces and workplaces. Anyier is the founder and CEO of Anyier Model Management and the Founder and Chair of Miss Sahara, an initiative by LEAD BEYOND EDUCATION, a not-for-profit organisation seeking to break down education barriers and create pathways for stability and empowerment through its leadership and capacity-building programs. Anyier is also the Business Development Executive at Creating Chances Organisation and is currently undertaking her PhD at Western Sydney University.

## CONCURRENT SESSION 2E: DOING FEMINIST WORK IN SPORT SPACES

### Doing feminist work in sport spaces

Nida Ahmad (online), Adele Pavlidi (in person), Aish Ravi (in person), Holly Thorpe (online), Kim Toffoletti (in person), Danielle Warby (online)

Feminist contributions to the development of women's sport in Australia and internationally are rarely seen or heard. Yet feminist activism underpinned by values of equity, inclusion, collaboration, care, respect and bodily autonomy, has played an important part in challenging patriarchal, ablest, corporate and colonial sporting traditions, structures, economies and practices. It is in the context of growing attention and investment in women's sport that this roundtable brings together feminist scholars and practitioners to critically reflect on their experiences of doing feminist, queer and anti-racist work in sport settings such as community sport, industry and government, sport for development programs, academia and sport media.

Topics to be addressed include:

- How feminist scholars can build relationships with sport organisations to effect social change – compromises, challenges and collaboration;
- Driving change through feminist values and approaches, and the kinds of feminisms that are visible and allowable;
- The invisible labour of feminist sports advocacy and its costs;
- Working with women's sport organisations/bodies/groups who are not feminist;
- Using feminist paradigms to work with men in sport;
- How are varying feminist perspectives and solutions to issues in sport received by different stakeholders? – hostility, backlash, contestations and denial;
- Safety and wellbeing when doing feminist advocacy work in sport.

Nida Ahmad is an independent researcher and sports for development consultant. She received her PhD from the University of Waikato in New Zealand and an MA in Communication, Culture, and Technology from Georgetown University. Her doctoral research focused on the digital lives of Muslim sportswomen and how they use social media to represent aspects of their identities. Her research strands are feminist digital ethnography, new media, race/ethnicity, religion, culture, and sports. Across these strands, she brings innovative and interdisciplinary approaches to help explain the changing sporting landscape and lived experiences within sport and digital cultures. She also holds mentorship and advisory roles in a variety of settings. As a North American Advisory Board Member to Education New Zealand (ENZ), she works with the team to implement inclusive and diverse practices in the NZ education sector. As an Executive Board Member of the Muslim Women in Sport Network (MWSN) she supports the organization's mission to amplify the voices of Muslim sportswomen. She continues to work across various disciplines, engaging in intersectional and cross-cultural research, and collaborating with diverse organisations to ensure the research reflects the complexities of everyday life and with real-life impact.

Dr Adele Pavlidi is a Senior Lecturer in Sociology with the School of Humanities, Languages and Social Science, and previously a DECRA Fellow (2018 to 2021). She is author of two books, *Sport, Gender and Power: The Rise of Roller Derby* (2016, Routledge, with Simone Fullagar) and *Feminism and a Vital Politics of Depression and Recovery* (Palgrave, with Simone Fullagar and Wendy O'Brien) and is currently working on her third book, *Collision Paths in the Pursuit of Gender Equity: A Feminist Perspective on the Affective Dynamics of Contact Sports* (under contract, with Simone Fullagar and Wendy O'Brien). She has published widely on a range of sociocultural issues in sport and leisure, with a focus on gender and power relations. Theoretically her work traverses contemporary scholarship on affect, power and organizations, and she is deeply interested in social, cultural and personal transformation and the entanglements between people, organizations, and wellbeing.

Dr Holly Thorpe (she/her) is a Professor in the Sociology of Sport and Physical Culture at the University of Waikato, Aotearoa, New Zealand. Her research focuses on sport, physical culture and gender, and she continues to seek new innovations in social theory, qualitative methods, and representational styles to better understand the complexities of moving bodies and sporting cultures. She has published over 100 articles and chapters on these topics, and has authored five books and nine edited books. Her most recent books include *Action Sports and the Olympic Games* (with Belinda Wheaton, Palgrave, 2022), *Gender, Sport and Development* (with Lyndsay Hayhurst and Megan Chawansky, Emerald, 2021), and *Feminist New Materialisms, Sport and Fitness: A Lively Entanglement* (with Julie Brice and Marianne Clark, Palgrave, 2020). Continued below.

She is co-editor of the Palgrave series *New Femininities in Digital, Physical and Sporting Cultures* (with Kim Toffoletti, Aarti Ratna, and Jessica Francombe-Webb). Driven to do research that contributes towards social change, Professor Thorpe works closely with an array of international and national sports organizations to inform new practices, processes and policy development.

Kim Toffoletti is an Associate Professor of Sociology at Deakin University, Melbourne, Australia. As a feminist scholar of sport, I am interested in the cultural conditions and social contexts (including globalisation, digital networked technologies, consumerism, neoliberalism and postfeminism) informing women's sport experiences. Through my research on women sport fans, recreational athletes and representations of elite sportswomen in the media and on social media, I have explored the power dynamics of gender, ethnicity, ableism and sexuality influencing women's sport participation. Collaborations with feminist colleagues and sport communities and organisations have been central to these explorations, and the generation of effects and affects to propel change. Over the past few years, I have been drawn to feminist relational theories, including theories of affect, to help understand the complex dynamics of evolving sport spaces and practices as they are experienced by different groups of women.

Danielle Warby is an Inclusive media 'mogul' and advocate for women in sport. Director of Siren: a women in sport collective and life member of The Flying Bats Football Club.

See Conference Keynote speakers for Aish's bio



## CONCURRENT SESSION 3A: HISTORIES 1

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### 50 years of gender equality talk in the media and cultural industries

Maura Edmond

This paper reports on an analysis of fifty years of gender equality talk within the media, arts and cultural industries. Using a case study of Australian cultural policy discourse from the 1970s to 2020, I examine how the problem of the 'cultural gender gap' has been represented, understood and addressed. While there are important differences across the decades there are also recurring notions of pragmatism, self-empowerment, resilience, vigilance and trickle-down logics. By looking at policy discourses and gender equality talk through a longer lens, considering situations of feminist visibility and invisibility, acceptance and repudiation, and inequalities that are speakable and unspeakable, this paper theorises how inequalities in the creative and cultural industries come to be both enduring and endurable.

Dr Maura Edmond's is Senior Lecturer in the School of Media, Film and Journalism at Monash University. Maura's research addresses changes and challenges in the contemporary media, arts and cultural industries, with a focus on digital transformation, policy and gender. Recent work on cultural policy, gender and creative labour have been published in *The Bloomsbury Handbook of Popular Music Policy* (2021), *Toward Gender Equality in the Music Industry: Education, Activism and Practice* (Bloomsbury 2019) and *The Routledge Handbook of Global Cultural Policy* (2018).

### A contingent process of hegemonic articulation: Rethinking state feminism

Junyi Cai

This paper takes a first attempt at combining the perspective of discursive power and state feminist theoretic framework, with a specific focus on China, and offers an alternative perspective contributing to how feminist political theorists consider what state feminism might mean. Drawing on Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe's post-structuralist political theory, this paper argues that state feminism should not be understood simply as a substantial institutional operation, but rather as the product of a discursive field in which its meaning is continually signified by changing hegemonic discourses across periods of cultural and political change. By linking the analysis of hegemony to the idea of antagonism in the discussion of discursive formation of "women" as a floating signifier, this paper demonstrates that antagonism can be an "ideological strategy" of the party-state which maintains the stability of "total equivalence" in defining women's emancipation in China. Specifically, the use of "antagonism" as an ideological construction relies on the suppression of alternative antagonisms. The paper then further discusses how multiple

heterogeneous historical forces have interacted with each other in Chinese society in specific periods, blending into particular articulations which eventually formulated a hegemonic, although shifting, discourse of Chinese women's liberation. This discourse became the grounds for the discursive manoeuvres of the state's agenda for women. These insights in turn might be of use to all theorists of state feminism, and such a perspective would also be valuable for feminists in seeking ways of competing with ideological hegemonic articulations of women's interests in sites of discursive struggle.

Junyi Cai is a PhD candidate in the Department of Gender and Cultural Studies at The University of Sydney. Her dissertation is on conceptualising state feminism in China. Junyi's research interests include feminism, politics and discourse.

## The appropriation of girls' socio-political energy throughout the twentieth century.

Lindy Cameron

Even though girls are a driving force behind several contemporary activist movements, historically, they have struggled to be taken seriously as socio-political actors. Western liberal theory excluded girls from citizenship and political subjectivity from the outset. Paradoxically it is through notions of citizenship that girls have claimed rights to a public voice. This paper highlights critical moments that transformed conceptualisations of girls' citizenship, including the turn of the twentieth century, post-World War Two and the 'riot grrrl' subcultures of the 1990s. However, whilst contributing to the normalisation of girls' activism, this progress frequently appropriated their energy to advance the values of nation-states and neoliberal ideals. Specifically, discourses of citizenship in the early twentieth century incorporated girls' because they were recognised as a vital resource in expanding English and American values. This use of girls' energy intensified in the late twentieth century, as regimes of neoliberalism and paradigms of 'girl power' constructed girls as symbols of progress. This contributes to a cultural context that compels girls to actively participate in fixing problems at community, national and global levels. Additionally, trends in public activism encourage them to engage in performative displays of political subjectivity, thus subjecting them to new modes of governmentality, regulation, surveillance, critique

and judgment. Drawing from my PhD research analysing public responses to activists Malala Yousufzai, Emma Gonzalez and Greta Thunberg, I argue that this history informs the dichotomous discourses framing girls' contemporary activism. Contextualising my findings through this historical framework explains why their public visibility sits alongside backlash sanctioning them for taking up space in a world that still struggles to make room for the activist energies of outspoken political girls who challenge the status quo.

Lindy is a PhD candidate with interdisciplinary interests across gender, sexuality and diversity studies, sociology, culture and media studies and feminist political science. Lindy's doctoral project uses feminist theory to interrogate responses to teenage girls who are opinionated, independent, have a clear sense of agency, and prominent public voices. Her interest is the use of discursive discipline against girls who are socio-political actors, the myriad ways they fight back and demand to be heard, and the social structures that create, enable and constrain these gendered struggles. You can follow her research at: [scholars.latrobe.edu.au/l2cameron](mailto:scholars.latrobe.edu.au/l2cameron)

## We still need our rage, outrage and anger

Carole Ferrier

The paper enthusiastically acknowledges the role of rage, outrage and anger as a driving force in the formation of myself and many of my contemporaries as women's liberationists from the 1960s--and for many until now. The anger is constructive and positive and it comes from experiencing outrage about oppression, exploitation, discrimination and injustice, and the abuses of power especially by those espousing patriarchal and masculinist attitudes and acting in accordance with them around the world. The paper will offer some thoughts about the normalisation of binary thinking, about colonisation and economic

inequality being seen as being seen as inevitable, and about racially supremacist and nationalistic mindsets being tolerable. It will discuss some key figures--activists, writers and artists, thinkers and theorists--that have been inspiring and enspiriting in maintaining our rage, and the various modes of resistance that they deployed.

Carole Ferrier taught women's/gender studies for 50 years, been an activist, published widely, edited *Hecate* at UQ since 1975.

## CONCURRENT SESSION 3B: FEMINIST CULTURES 2

### Doing feminism through Chinese online fiction fandom

Yijia Du

This paper explores the connections between Chinese online fiction fandom and feminism. The connections between online fiction and feminism are built up through two ways, becoming feminist and doing feminism. Fans not only understand and perceive feminism through online fiction fandom, but also integrate doing feminism into their participation in the production and consumption of online fiction. I argue that engaging with feminism through online fiction is a form of digital feminism. Such digital feminism creates feminist consciousness among its fans through literary and discursive constructs. Online fiction fandom is both a "counterpublic" and "intimate public". Women and queer fans constantly rethink and disrupts the existing gender relations and sexual discourses. Their participation in online fiction becomes one of the ways in which their feminist identities are formed. Fans also gain a sense of community and

solidarity. Connections among fans are established through their shared passion for online fiction, and their shared values along with their understanding of feminism. Online fiction fandom, especially women-oriented online fiction fandom, has become a space for young Chinese women and queers to criticise and challenge patriarchal gender norms and reflect on mainstream gender relations. This space continues to produce educational cultural resources that make feminist learning and practice a work in progress.

Yijia Du is a PhD Candidate at the Department of Gender and Cultural Studies at the University of Sydney. Her research focuses on fandoms around online genre fiction in China.

### Hysteria: A self-diagnosis

Louise Richardson-Self

An auto-ethnographic and philosophical exploration of medical androcentrism and sexism, which in turn leads to a self-diagnosis of Hysteria.

Lecturer in Philosophy at the University of Tasmania. Author of "Hate Speech Against Women Online" (2021), and "Justifying Same-Sex Marriage" (2015). Most recent publication is "Becoming Cisgender" (2022) available open access in the *Journal for the Theory of Social Behaviour*. Former DECRA recipient and current Discovery fellow exploring the intersection of queer rights and religious freedom.

## Getting the knickers in a twist: Tracing the activism of Collective Shout and the advertising of Honey Birdette

Jessamy Gleeson

The activism of Collective Shout – a self-described grassroots campaign group – has its origins in opposing the “pornification of culture” (CS 2015). The group was founded in 2009 by Melinda Tankard-Reist, and in the last 13 years has campaigned against the self-regulation of the advertising industry in Australia. Of particular focus to CS over the last decade has been the advertisements of Honey Birdette: a series of popular lingerie boutiques, with 44 stores based across the country. This paper investigates the role of Collective Shout (CS) in its attempts to lobby for stricter regulation of the Honey Birdette (HB) advertisements and promotional material. In doing so, the paper also draws on a series of semi-structured interviews with CS campaigners to explore the group’s specific understandings of gender, power, and sexuality. Importantly, the issue of how both CS and HB approach women’s sexuality is considered. The particular framing of women’s sexuality and sexualisation as outlined by both CS and HB is examined for its contradictions: on one side, women’s bodies are argued by CS to be “pornified”, whilst simultaneously are elevated by HB as “empowered”. In undertaking this examination, this paper draws on Foucault’s understandings of sexuality as a particularly

“dense transfer point for relations of power” (1976:103): that the multiple meanings of any images featuring a person’s sexuality lead to wider connections back to a person’s race, class, and gender. As Showden (2011:152) notes, “there is no one meaning of sex, whether in public or in private”. In much the same fashion, I argue that there is no singular meaning of a Honey Birdette lingerie advertisement, and that the work of both CS and HB must be critiqued for their competing representations of women’s sexuality and sexualisation.

Dr Jessamy Gleeson is a senior lecturer in Indigenous Knowledges at the NIKERI Institute, Deakin University. She completed her PhD in 2018, and has since worked on research projects examining image based sexual abuse, street harassment, and the role of trauma in academic research. Most recently, she has undertaken curriculum design for a series of Indigenous Studies units at Deakin University. Jessamy’s PhD examined feminist activism and social media.

## We need to calm down: The myth of the perfect activist

Pia Rowe

When Taylor Swift released her hit single, “We need to calm down”, the song was met with significant resistance and backlash online. Some of the criticisms levelled at the song – such as the increasing corporatisation of Pride, and the question of minority representation – were both valid and necessary. However, the backlash also highlighted a far more concerning trend directed at individual activists themselves. In this instance, Swift’s relative newcomer status as an LGBTIQ+ ally caused people to question the validity of her activism, and thus downplay or ignore any potential benefits gained from such publicity. The incident had striking similarities of arguments made throughout decades and across different movements regarding who can speak for a group, and what are they allowed to say. In 1970 for example, Carol Hanisch highlighted a similar concern regarding the feminist movement, and cautioned people to listen to others’

viewpoints, even when they contradict the current dominant narrative. Using Taylor Swift as a case study, this article focuses on the following question: In our quest for perfection, and with a propensity for instant reactions amplified by digital technologies, do we run the risk of inadvertently silencing those who fall outside the accepted narratives, and therefore undermining valuable activist voices? It explores the concept of universality in the context of social media hatred and trolling, and attempts to bridge the gap between individuality and mass movements. In doing so, the article argues that privileging standpoint epistemology, taken to the very extreme, renders activists silent, and is corrosive for solidarity across multiple lines of oppression.

Dr Pia Rowe is Senior Research Fellow at 50/50 by 2030 Foundation, University of Canberra. She is also the Academic Editor of the Foundation’s flagship media portal, BroadAgenda.

## CONCURRENT SESSION 3C: ANTI-RACISM PRACTICES IN FEMINIST SPACES

### I will not be lectured about feminism by white women.” – Black Squares on Instagram, Will Smith, and selective rage

Kathomi Gatwiri

Feminism has come under heavy criticism as an ideology that has been co-opted by middle-class white women in the West. As such, borrowing a famous line, “I will not be lectured about sexism by this man”, spoken by a powerful white feminist, to contextualize this presentation may seem contradictory. However, I wish to use the power of these words spoken within the Australian parliament by former Prime Minister Julia Gillard to theorize how Australian feminism and feminisms of the West have continually functioned as colonizing agents causing great harm to Black, Brown and Indigenous communities.

In this presentation, I reflect on a collective discomfort within these communities about being schooled about feminism by white women. To do this, I use recent but significant pop-cultural moments such as the postage of the black squares on Instagram and the outrage after Will Smith’s infamous “slap” at the Oscars. I argue that performances of selective rage through expressions of virtue signalling often exclude the struggles of Black, Brown and Indigenous women and do not result in sustainable, long-term change. I propose ways in which we can learn from

the feminisms of the South and, more specifically, how Afro-centric feminist knowledges, theories, and practices can inform a more intersectional dialoguing in feminist discourses.

Dr Kathomi Gatwiri is a senior lecturer, a DECRA Fellow at the Centre for Children & Young People at Southern Cross University, President of the Australian Women & Gender studies Association and a practising psychotherapist. Her award-winning interdisciplinary research investigates the topics of racial trauma, belonging, blackness, and Africanness in Australia. Dr Gatwiri is a semi-regular writer and commentator for SBS and the Conversation. She is the Founder and Director of Healing Together, a service that provides accessible, culturally sensitive therapeutic support for people who have been impacted by racial trauma. She is also the author of African Womanhood and Incontinent Bodies, and Afrodiasporic identities in Australia.



## Speaking about white supremacy in modern progressive spaces”: fragility and tone-policing in organisational contexts

Erfan Daliri

Peace and prosperity needs a foundational level of unity; unity requires the establishment of justice; and justice necessitates truth. But what happens when discussing the truth of racism is denied, derailed and deflected by fragility under the guise of politeness and propriety, otherwise known as tone-policing. How are we to address systemic racism if even our allies will not allow us to speak about white supremacy in modern progressive spaces? Why is raising an issue of racism with our organisations, a greater career risk, than actually being explicitly racist? And for how much longer must our global economic and ecological woes continue before we are finally allowed to address the core underlying cause of social discord? It's time to evolve the conversation around racism, power and systemic global oppression.

Erfan Daliri is an author, educator, poet, social change consultant and JEDI specialist; Justice, Equity, Diversity & Inclusion. His 20 years of professional experience in social change initiatives includes participatory community development, First Nations advocacy, cross-cultural communication, migration and settlement services, anti-racism training and consulting, systems thinking for social change and motivational speaking. Erfan has a Masters Degree in Communication for Social Change from the University of Queensland, has written 3 books and is the founding director of Newkind Social Justice Conference.

## Establishing the Gender Research Network as a community of practice

Samantha Owen

The Curtin University Gender Research Network (GRN) was established under the Terms of Reference in 2021 as a space to share best practice, raise awareness and influence change in gender equity policy and practice at Curtin and to promote gender research within the university and externally. Led by Prof Therese Jefferson and Dr Samantha Owen as Academic Leads, the GRN brings together almost 160 people across the five Curtin campuses who are working as gender researchers and on gender research related projects as well as those interested in learning about gender research. The structure for the GRN is modelled on the Ostrom Workshop and through a group of Gender Research Champions (GRCs) we have formed communities of practice. In mid-2021 we also launched our workshop and seminar series to bring together interdisciplinary conversations on gender and gender research.

In all the work we do we call on our members to be researchers and activists and invited them to join with us to be active bystanders against discrimination in all its forms, especially with respect to gender and race, and to work with us to promote respect and social justice and develop strategies of inclusion and sustainable practice, recognising deep historic local and global inequalities and cultural prejudices that shape these and inhibit full participation in society. In this talk we will outline how the GRN operates with a feminist ethic of care to be an activist research network in the university, supporting the work of our colleagues and promoting and doing gender research.

Samantha Owen is the co-Academic Leanan historian at Curtin.

## Women life freedom

Roya Sahraei

To illustrate the unjust & inhumane treatment of women (& men) in Iran, particularly in relation to women's rights and the current situation - which has been 'highlighted' by the murder of Mahsa Amini. To bring to light, the horrific conditions that many women face having been incarcerated, and the sheer numbers of innocent women & men currently being gaoled indiscriminately.

Roya Sahraei is an Iranian-Australian, human rights/women's rights activist. She is passionate about furthering the rights of women in both Iran, and internationally. She joined the Women's Cultural Centre in Tehran after she had graduated from Azard University of Arak. She has been a translator & writer of articles and short stories for a well-known feminist website and magazines such as Zanan magazine, Feminist school, ZaneStan.. As a member of the One Million Signatures for the Repeal of Discriminatory Laws, she assembled a collection of signatures in Australia and personally delivered them to an Iranian academic activist in Iran. She has a master's by research in Women and Gender studies from the University of NSW - having filed a study in contemporary Iranian feminism. Currently living in Sydney, Roya has her sights set on a Doctorate in women's rights in the Middle East - all the while running her small business for children with disabilities.



CONCURRENT SESSION 3D: FEMINISM AT WORK, IN PUBLIC, IN SCHOOL 1

**'we are recreating our own communities': Autistic community-making as a form of activism**

Cambrey Payne

Despite significant shifts in how autism is publicly understood and represented, the anti-social, isolated autistic remains a dominant cultural figure. Autism is still (mis)understood in many spaces as a phenomenon which reduces empathy and forecloses connection. By contrast, the autistics in my project *Embodying Autism* show a deep desire for, and enactment of, connection and community—not only amongst fellow autistics, but across a variety of intersecting communities, including queer, feminist, and disability activist groups. For these autistics, community formation—with its inherent need for mutual care, empathy, and embracing of difference—becomes a form of activism, and also requires activism. I will engage with Judith Butler's work on vulnerability, subjectivity, and performativity to explore how "communities" are experienced as vibrant spaces of connection and empathy, where autistics negotiate complex social environments despite (and because of) a range of challenges arising from neuro-normative standards.

The work of these autistic activists explicitly challenges the stereotype of the disconnected, self-isolating autistic. Their engagement in community also provides opportunities to expand the emancipatory possibilities of identity-based community activism. And finally, we might learn through their experiences new ways to incorporate a range of neurotypes and (dis)abilities into existing activist spaces.

Cambrey Payne (he/they) is a queer, autistic author and researcher from the University of Adelaide. His current research explores how autism is embodied, with emphasis on autistic individuals as experts in their own experiences. Cam has a background in Gender Studies, with particular interest in how politics of identity are enacted by queer and other marginalised groups. He lives in the Adelaide Hills with his children and a cat who likes sitting on keyboards during work hours.

**Cartoons of policewomen: Resistance to stereotypical portrayals of policewomen.**

Kathy Newton

Cartoons are often used to highlight social or political views. In 2000, Brown and Heidensohn's international comparison of policewomen contained a discourse analysis of cartoons depicting policewomen. They chose to include cartoons because comic images provide explicit rhetorical devices that express dominant representations of policewomen in society. Many cartoons of policewomen objectify them in hyper sexualised drawings. Conversely, there is an absence of cartoons that show policewomen as mothers or undertaking maternal bodywork. This paper aims to address this lacuna by presenting cartoons that were commissioned to illustrate policewomen in a different light; thus, disrupting the patriarchal narrative in which policewomen are often portrayed. The paper concludes that cartoons can be used as a form of feminist activism.

Dr Kathy Newton is a sessional academic at Western Sydney university, where she teaches policing, criminology, and keystone subjects in the social sciences. In 2022 she completed a PhD. Her dissertation, titled *Flying the Mother Flag: Gendered Institutions and the Lived Experiences of Police Mothers in Australia*, combined research into policing with feminist understandings of gender, mothering, and work. Prior to pursuing her work in academia Kathy was a sworn police officer with the New South Wales Police Force for 21 years. During this time, she worked as a patrol officer and in the Police Prosecutions Command.

**A new politics of energy: cultivating "energy" and breath in Luce Irigaray's politics**

Belinda Eslick

In her second key feminist text, *This Sex Which Is Not One*, French feminist philosopher Luce Irigaray criticised the phallogentrism of "politics" and claimed that 'no "women's politics" exists, not yet, at least not in the broad sense'. She called for 'a "radical" evolution in our way of conceptualising and managing the political realm' and argued that, to enact feminist change, women must not simply adopt the politics of men but instead 'invent new modes of organisation'. In her later works, Irigaray has called, more generally, for a politics grounded in relationality, an ethic of intersubjectivity, and a "living energy". Previously, I have considered whether this "new" politics that Irigaray calls for might actually be embodied in many examples of women's non-institutional, non-party political theory and practice—both historically and in contemporary Australia. In doing so, I question whether framing such politics as an Irigarayan politics allows us to see the radicalness of women's non-institutional political theory and practice—and thus disrupt the

characterisation of women's informal and semi-formal political practice as deficient. In this paper, I will expand on this by considering how Irigaray's most recent work can contribute to such a notion of Irigarayan politics. I will pay particular attention to her consideration of the breath and (both psychic and bodily) "energy"—offered through an account of her experiences as both a psychoanalyst and a practitioner of yoga—in her most recent book, *A New Culture of Energy: Between East and West* (2021).

Dr Belinda Eslick is a Casual Academic in Gender Studies at The University of Queensland and a Casual Senior Research Fellow at Griffith University. Her research interests include the philosophy of Luce Irigaray, women's non-institutional political practices, and feminist perspectives on the home and reproductive work.

## CONCURRENT SESSION 3E: ROUNDTABLE

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### Feminist activism in unexpected places

Renée Mickelburgh, Bonnie Evans, Marg Henderson, Elizabeth Mackinlay, & Anita Munro

We propose a panel/roundtable that braids together the historical, contemporary, and digital nature of the feminist activist project to end rape culture in Australia, with a particular focus on the history of consent activism and education in Australian schools and residential colleges. Professor Elizabeth Mackinlay (Director HDR, Faculty of Education, SCU) will lead the panel discussion with a performative, autoethnographic paper reflecting on her experience of sexual assault as a student living in an Australian residential college, and its impact on her life and scholarly work. Associate Professor Marg Henderson, (Deputy Head of School, School of Communication and Arts, UQ) and Dr Renée Mickelburgh, Post-doctoral research fellow, School of Historical and Philosophical Inquiry, UQ) will discuss their work understanding online testimonies of trauma as archives of pain and the relationship of these testimonies to the feminist goal of ending rape culture in an age of judgement. The scholars will then be joined by other members of their research team including Rev Dr Anita Munro (Grace College, UQ) and Bonnie Evans (Research Associate, UQ) to discuss how these experiences, theories and feminist methods are informing to a collaborative research project on sexual consent education with residential college staff and students. We welcome other panellists whose research relates to these issues to present their work with us for this discussion.

Dr Renée Mickelburgh is a feminist academic whose research examines the way Australian women communicate gender justice and environmental issues through digital storytelling. Her PhD focused on women's digital storytelling of their gardens. She lives and works and hikes on unceded Turrbal and Jagera country.

Bonnie Evans is a PhD Candidate and sessional academic at the University of Queensland. Bonnie's research interests include feminist screen theory, contemporary feminisms, and visual culture. Her dissertation explores the relationship between contemporary feminisms, gendered violence, and lived experience in horror and true crime film and television.

Margaret Henderson teaches literary studies at the University of Queensland.

## CONCURRENT SESSION 4A: INTERSECTIONALITY- LGBTQIA+ 1

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### Queer youth re-writing 'wellbeing' and identity success

James Gardiner

Queer youth figure in public discourses in a variety of arenas: in activism and advocacy, in education policy, in popular culture, in news media, and in public health policy. Over the last decade, discourses around queer youth in Australia have demonstrated a particular concentration on 'wellbeing', and have often positioned queer youth as victims in need of affirmation. This subject position has emerged in response to their disproportionate vulnerability, but tends to limit how these subjects are represented, by themselves and others. While alternative frameworks for understanding queer youth subjectivity, such as 'queer thriving', move beyond the victim, these can create new exclusions around what counts as an authentic, successful, or liveable queer life. These exclusions run

counter to an intersectional approach sensitive to the ways that 'success' and 'safety' are bound up with other modes of power and privilege. This paper explores how queer youth have utilised writing practices to re-imagine how wellbeing is defined and embodied. It argues that writing can be put to use as an identity tool that contributes to the messy, affective, and creative labour of selfhood in a hostile political climate.

James is a PhD Candidate within Gender and Cultural Studies at The University of Sydney whose work focuses on youth, gender, sexuality, reading, writing, and wellbeing.

### 'There's hope and there's a future for all of us': Preliminary findings from the co-design of a group therapy program for young trans people

Alessandra Chinsen

Trans young people are at a greater risk of anxiety and depression than cis young people (Becerra-Culqui et al., 2018), which is associated with the rejection and discrimination that many trans young people experience due to transphobia (Strauss et al., 2020). While there is thus a significant need for psychosocial interventions targeted to the experiences of young trans people, there is a lack of programs that have been developed with and for this group (Busa et al., 2018). This study builds on research that has shown the effectiveness of cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) interventions for other young minority communities (Pachankis et al., 2015). We used a participatory research approach to collaborate with young trans people to develop a CBT group program, to be piloted with young trans people on the waitlist for the Royal Children's Hospital Gender Service (RCHGS). We used co-design, a participatory method where consumers are involved in service design and are given decision-making power. We recruited eight young trans people aged 15 to 21 years (mean 17.88, SD 1.73) who had attended the RCHGS. Over two months, they participated in three online workshops where they designed the program,

and an online survey where they assessed their experience of the workshops. Here we present preliminary results from the workshops and survey, and observations from the co-design process. In the workshops, participants designed a six-session program facilitated by a psychologist and trans peer worker, with content around issues experienced by young trans people. In the survey, participants reported that the workshops were enjoyable and worthwhile, and that they were happy with the program design. More broadly, we found that co-design was an effective method for collaborating with young trans people, though some adaptations to activities were needed to facilitate engagement with neurodivergent participants.

Alessandra Chinsen (she/her) is a first year PhD student with the University of Melbourne, Murdoch Children's Research Institute and Royal Children's Hospital. Her PhD is centred around designing and trialling a group therapy program for young trans people, with a focus on the use of participatory research methods.

## Strategies for acespeculative literary criticism: An asexual reading of Ottessa Moshfegh's 'My Year of Rest and Relaxation'

Rosie Clarke

This paper responds to emerging critical theories of pleasure, exhaustion and erotic refusal developing in the young field of asexuality and aromanticism (acespec) studies. Scholarship on asexuality has grown significantly within cultural studies over the last decade to consider alternative perspectives along the ace-spectrum (acespec), drawing heavily from Black and lesbian feminist theory to examine sexuality, romance, and gender from acespec perspectives. Here I position acespec as an umbrella term for identity categories predominantly associated with absence in Western culture, including asexual, aromantic, and agender identities. In this paper, I present a close reading of Ottessa Moshfegh's 2018 novel, *My Year of Rest and Relaxation*, to advance an emerging branch of what I call "acespeculative" literary criticism that uses explicit acespec interpretive strategies. I interrogate notions of erotic exhaustion offered by cultural and acespec critic Ela Przybylo, who has called for a shift in asexuality studies toward a model of erotics conceptualised by feminist and civil rights activist, Audre Lorde that centres non-sexual empowerment rather than psychosexual or pornographic definitions of erotics. This call has sparked an emergence of literary acespec studies interested in how narratives construct alternative and speculative forms of

erotic pleasure that I build on by interrogating constructs of pleasure, exhaustion, and erotic refusal in Moshfegh's novel. Commercially successful and critically acclaimed yet divisive among readers, *My Year of Rest and Relaxation* follows an unnamed, wealthy, white, female narrator on her medicated quest to avoid reality by sleeping for an entire year. I argue that the novel complicates Przybylo's suggestion that individuals can "grow into" asexuality through sheer exhaustion caused by the psychosexual expectations thrust upon them by social systems and institutions. Ultimately, I consider how *My Year of Rest and Relaxation*—without any explicit acespec character representation—in fact functions as an acespec narrative.

Rosie Clarke is a literary studies MPhil candidate at the University of Queensland. Her research focuses on developing acespec reading practices. She won the 2021 A. E. E. Pearse Prize for her article, "Schrödinger's Katniss: A Diffractive Reading of Quantum Entanglement and young adult fiction series *The Hunger Games*" published in *Rhizomes*.

## We don't deserve to be disrespected like that through tweets from our Prime Minister": Australian trans celebrities and advocacy for trans children

Joanna McIntyre

The public visibility of trans people has increased exponentially in the last decade, and trans celebrities are a determining force in this important cultural movement. Media interest in trans lives and experiences has expanded to encompass those of trans children, and the trans child celebrity is a relatively new recruit in the realm of stardom. In Australia, two young trans celebrities have emerged who are both famous for their acting work and their trans advocacy, particularly for the rights of trans children: Evie Macdonald (now 15) who starred as the central trans character in the children's television series *First Day*, and famously confronted then Prime Minister Scott Morrison about his comments relating to trans children in Australian schools; and Georgie Stone (now 21) who helped change Australian laws that determine trans children's access to hormone treatments, and played the first trans character on *Neighbours*. To explore contemporary trans celebrity in an Australian context, this paper examines how Macdonald and Stone have each intersected a trans identity, celebrity, and advocacy work to become

significant voices in current trans politics in Australia. To do so, it pays particular attention to the ways in which their celebrity has been constructed through acting roles as well as advocacy work. I contend that these contemporary Australian trans child celebrities are caught in a unique socio-cultural and generational moment that significantly affects how their celebrification and activism have influenced discourses regarding childhood innocence, trans bodies, and broader inclusion of trans people in Australia.

Joanna McIntyre is the Course Director of the Bachelor of Media and Communication and a Senior Lecturer in Media Studies at Swinburne University of Technology. Her research interests include trans and queer representation, celebrity, and screen media. She is the co-editor of *Gender and Australian Celebrity Culture* with Anthea Taylor (Routledge, 2021), and the author of *Transgender Celebrity* (forthcoming, Routledge).

## CONCURRENT SESSION 4B: FEMINISM AT WORK, IN PUBLIC, IN SCHOOL 2

### Tender truths: how to be a collaborative educational activist in times of precarity

Sally Baker

Given the slippery nature of what 'counts' as academic activism, it can be easily misunderstood, sidelined, or maligned within the increasingly measured corporate university (Gray, 2013; Rhodes, Wright & Pullen, 2018). Despite being sites of the 'public intellectual', the strong pull of the impact agenda works to diminish democratic politics to tacitly prevent political impact that may disrupt the neoliberal project at work (Rhodes, Wright & Pullen, 2018), particularly in times of precarity. Especially under these conditions, it is of interest that academics<sup>3</sup>4particularly women<sup>3</sup>4continue to engage in activism. This presentation offers an account from a collective biography from a group of women academic activists, who have been engaged in a project of slow scholarship to explore what drives us to engage in activism around issues of forced migration. Against a hostile international policy landscape with regard to seeking asylum in Australia, New Zealand and the UK, we will explore the different forms of activism that we engage with in the local, institutional, regional, national and international contexts within which we operate. To

this end, we will discursively trace a working/organic definition of academic activism to describe the work that constitutes and carries our identities as academic activists. We will discuss what sustains us as collaborative educational activists, particularly in the context of what Choudry (2019) describes as the 'star system' of academia: a self-interested and ego-driven space, which promotes individualism and delimits the possibilities of collaboration according to research funding criteria.

Dr Sally Baker is a Senior Lecturer in the School of Education. Sally's teaching and research interests centre on forced migration and equity in higher education, particularly with regard to culturally and linguistically diverse students, and refugee students in particular. Sally is a Co-Chair of the national Refugee Education Special Interest Group for/with students from refugee backgrounds, supported by the Refugee Council of Australia (<http://www.refugee-education.org/>)

## STEMinist sensibilities in the promotion of STEM and tech participation to young women and girls

Angela Bennette

This paper considers the ways organisations deploy feminist representations on their websites to promote STEM and tech education and careers to young women and girls. In recent years organisations aiming to empower young women and girls to participate in STEM and tech have proliferated. While the issue of gender inequality in STEM is well documented, little is known about the feminist appeals these organisations make to girls. An analysis of the websites of five such Australian organisations (Code Like a Girl, Girl Geek Academy, Girls in Tech, Robogals and Tech Girls Movement) was undertaken to understand how they frame the problem of gender inequality within STEM and their response to it, and what feminist sentiments they reflect. Drawing on feminist critiques of postfeminist media representations and the work of Myers, Gallaher and McCarragher (2019), we argue that these organisation websites deploy a 'STEMinist sensibility' whereby they acknowledge the structural impediments young women and girls face, yet

simultaneously represent girls as both problematic and as problem-solvers in a way that renders them individually responsible for resolving the issues of gender inequality in STEM. Organisation websites deploy language and representations of empowerment, community, girlfriendliness and femininity as a way of appealing to young women in a way that works to obscure their individualistic approach and sidelines feminist political action

Angela Bennette is a Sociology PhD candidate at Deakin University investigating women's experiences of gender equity initiatives that advocate for improved representation, participation and retention of women in STEM in the Australian context. The project is particularly interested in what discourses and subjects are produced and privileged within these programs, and their implications for understanding and mitigating issues of gender inequality in STEM.

## Too many assumptions: Young people, sex education and cultural diversity

Monique Mulholland

The idea that sex and relationships education (SRE) needs to more adequately speak to the broad range of religious and cultural diversities in classrooms is long established in the literature. The diversity of cultures that exist in Australia raises questions that are necessarily exciting, complicated and uncomfortable – how can difference and diversity be addressed in ways that challenge the normative and colonial logics of existing SRE frameworks? How can diversities be represented in ways that acknowledge difference, without overdetermining and producing the difference of 'others'? Despite this sustained critique of SRE, very little empirical work has been undertaken in the Australian context that centres the voices of young people. This paper presents findings from a recent project with 'non-Anglo' young people who speak back to the ways in which SRE curricula obfuscates their needs and experiences. It also offers some exploratory reflections on how to address the ongoing cultural and religious blindness of SRE.

My research works with feminist, queer and post-colonial/critical race theory to explore young people's negotiations and experiences of gender, sex and sexuality norms, subjectivities and identities. My recent articles include Parents, Whiteness and Sex Education: Parents, Whiteness and Sex Education: A critical race critique of Parent sex education guides (Sexualities 2021) and Parent-child communication, sexuality and intergenerational conflict in multicultural and multifaith communities (Sex education 2021) In particular, my research is undertaken with community partner with a focus on strategies, interventions and resource production to tackle issues of gender, sex and race inequality. My current projects include 'Sex Education and Cultural Diversity' How can sex education better account for multiple lives and experiences? I am a member of the executive committee of the Australian Womens' and Gender Studies Association.

## Who's being overlooked?: Race(ing) workplace gender inequality and feminist organisational discourse in Australia

Virginia Mapedzahama

This paper takes as its starting point the contention that in spite of significant gains in advancing gender equality at work, feminist discourse in Australia continues to position 'gender equality' within an invisible white lens that (re)presents the experiences, positionality and needs of white women. By employing a single axis focus (i.e., gender), the feminist drive for gender inclusive and equitable workplaces not only problematically homogenises the category 'woman', it does so in ways that further marginalise non-white women who experience multiple and intersecting discriminations. Moreover, this focus reinforces a normative white (woman's) voice. Drawing on the findings of a scoping exercise recently undertaken by the Diversity Council Australia (DCA) to explore the representation and experiences of culturally and racially marginalised (CARM) women in executive leadership in Australian organisations, the paper discusses the intersections of race and gender and how these amplify experiences of workplace gender inequality. To date, such discussions remain peripheral or incidental in Australian organisational diversity and inclusion research. Theoretically, paper utilises a pluralist approach that incorporates intersectional feminism, Black feminisms and Critical Race Theory to critically discuss two key findings from the scoping exercise. First are the profound differences in the career progression and representation in executive leadership between CARM women and white women. This finding not only reaffirms debates that experiences of gender inequality are not the same for all women, it highlights the complex intersection of race and gender and the specific and unique challenges that poses for CARM women in Australian organisations. Second are structural and systemic barriers restricting CARM women's progression into leadership. This finding highlights and challenges the extent to which

'race neutral', single axis 'gender' lens can make visible the plight of CARM women in Australian organisations. In fact, the paper contends that such lenses serve to perpetuate and reinforce the exclusion of non-white women from leadership roles. In the end, the discussions in this paper underscore the problematics of the marginality of race in Australian feminist analyses of workplace gender inequality: it centres one category of women (i.e. white women) while silencing, invisibilising and marginalising 'voices of colour'. Moreover, the discussions are a call to action for feminist organisational research to centre intersectional approaches if they are to truly understand and (re)present the diversity of women's experiences in Australian organisations.

Dr Virginia Mapedzahama (PhD, Sociology) is the Member Education Director at Diversity Council Australia. She is a first-generation Black African migrant woman and a critical race Black feminist scholar in the broader field of sociology of difference. Her research interest is in understanding the social construction of all categories of difference. This interest is fuelled by her own experiences of racism, racialisation, racial discrimination, and intersectional harms as a racially marginalised person living in Australia. Virginia explores her research interest in the context of subjective experiences of race, racism and ethnicity, migration, diaspora, Blackness and Black subjectivities, sexuality, hybridity, intersectionality and gendered violence. Virginia has published extensively in these areas as well as the broader fields of cross-cultural identities, African feminisms, post-colonial feminisms, new African diaspora in Australia and African women diaspora.

CONCURRENT SESSION 4C: PANEL

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**Gender, religion, reform and resistance: Current feminist activism in faith traditions.**

Chair: Rosie Clare Shorter

This panel will consider examples of contemporary and historical reform events and movements concerned with challenging and transforming sexism, gender-based violence and gender inequality in religious organisations. There have been significant reform movements that have resulted in changes to sacred language and texts, the inclusion of women in leadership roles, and the restructuring of religious bureaucracies. However, there has also been a backlash against reform from conservative forces within religious organisations which has impeded gender change. Women have also moved outside of the organisational setting to set up alternative forms of religious based social action. The presentations will consider the impacts and outcomes of dynamic reform efforts by feminists and their contribution to the politics of institutional transformation.

Creating Space for Indigenous Feminist and Womanist Voices Within and Through Religious and Spiritual Worlds

**Naomi Wolfe, University of Divinity**

Naomi Wolfe is a trawloolway woman, and Lecturer of Indigenous Studies NAIIITS: an Indigenous learning community and Whitley College. Naomi holds a Bachelor Arts and Bachelor of Teaching and is finalising a Masters of Philosophy (Research) degree at Australian Catholic University, writing about the lives of the Hasmonean and Herodian women of the Late Second Temple Period. She is a graduate of the University of Divinity, having received a Graduate Certificate in Divinity in 2019. Naomi will also remain an academic within the ACU Faculty of Education and Arts. Naomi encourages a collaborative learning between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal staff and students at the University to break down barriers destroy stereotypes and to cultivate new relationships based on respect. She has a professional and personal interest in Indigenous cross-cultural training and awareness as well as Indigenous pedagogies and theology.

Reformation Within: Rereading Muslim History in Addressing Financial Abuse of Migrant Muslim Women in Australia

**Farjana Mahbuba, Australian Catholic University**

Farjana Mahbuba is currently a PhD student at Australian Catholic University. Her research title is: "Financial Abuse and Bangladeshi Migrant Muslim Women in Australia".

Standing in Doorways: Holding a liminal feminist space in Christian Traditions

**Tracy McEwan, University of Newcastle**

Dr Tracy McEwan is a theologian and sociologist of religion. Her doctoral thesis explored the religious identity and participation of Gen X Catholic women in Australia. Tracy is a research affiliate at the University of Newcastle and a sessional tutor at BBI-TAITE. She is the current vice president of WATAC (Women and the Australian Church) and is past member of the executive committee of the global Catholic Women's Council. Her recent projects include the podcast "Australian Women Preach" which celebrates the diverse talents of woman preachers in Australia, an international survey of Catholic women for the Catholic Women Speak network, and the "Australian Women in Religion" project which addresses the under representation of women on Wikipedia and other digital platforms.



CONCURRENT SESSION 4D: INTERSECTIONALITY: RACE AND GENDER

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**Cultural production of uterine transplants in India**

Arpita Das

Reproduction is considered a core event in a woman's life. Ideas of heteronormativity are often based on the presumption of reproduction. Several hierarchies exist within fields of reproduction, with biological reproduction privileged especially among people from dominant races, classes, castes, ages, and abilities among other factors. Although diverse methods of having children are available, advancing one's genetic pool assumes primacy. Advancement in reproductive technologies through IVF, surrogacy and the like have made biological reproduction accessible and possible for people who may otherwise find difficulties with conception or reproduction. In this presentation, I explore uterine transplant as a method of reproduction. I examine the medical, cultural and social discourses

around uterine transplants leading to reproduction. I explore the event and the occurrence of uterine transplant especially within the context of India, and discuss the various ways in which ideas of reproduction are mobilised for women within heteronormative marriages, and how meaning is made for uterine transplant.

Arpita Das is a sessional academic in Gender & Cultural Studies at the University of Sydney. She has recently completed her PhD exploring the medicalisation of intersex people in postcolonial India. Her research interests include politics of reproduction and reproductive technologies, queer rights, and gender-based violence.

## The work of doing intersectional feminism in France

Frances Egan

Intersectionality, and as I will examine 'féminisme intersectionnel', occupies a marginal position in France, at least in these explicit terms. The history of French Republicanism works to smooth away differences in the name of an 'equal' and exclusively national belonging, producing a feminism informed by universalism, and the power of colonisation enables this largely white 'French feminism' to predominate over more plural modes. At the same time, intersectionality is often criticised as a US import, seen to be incompatible with French values.

My analysis centres on transnational Franco-Maghrebi feminisms to reveal intersectional work that is deeply connected to the French context and culture, yet often misrecognised or invisible in mainstream spheres. I take as case studies two second-generation French-Algerian women writers, Fatima Daas and Faïza Guène, and their latest novels, both published in France in 2020: *The Last One* (translated by Lara Vergnaud) and *Discretion* (translated by Sarah Ardizzone). Through an analysis of the work, the paratextual material, including author interviews, and the critical reception, I examine the creative ways these authors resist intersecting systems of patriarchal and colonial oppression, as well as the way the media coverage flattens their efforts, locating freedom and equality only

in French feminism and obscuring racial and religious discrimination. Significantly, although these authors both note the influence of American feminist and civil rights movements, their work and interviews foreground the inheritance of a subtler feminist struggle from discrete yet courageous migrant mothers. My paper argues that these examples of French-Algerian feminisms point us to intersectional modes of resistance that are based in praxis, place, and solidarities, if only they were recognised as such.

Frances Egan is a Lecturer at Monash University, teaching in the Bachelor of Global Studies. She has a PhD in French from The University of Melbourne and the Université Sorbonne Nouvelle and her research is interdisciplinary, centring on representations and experiences of gendered and cultural identities, particularly in Francophone and transnational contexts. Her research interests more broadly include social movements, intersectionality and feminist theory, Franco-Maghrebi literature, feminist pedagogies, migration, nationalism, translation and identity studies.

## Advocacy and self-representation

Anyier Yuol

My name is Anyier Yuol; I am a former refugee and an advocate for refugee women and girls, Founder of Miss Sahara Organisation, Anyier Model Management, Business Development Executive at Creating Chances and a doctoral student at Western Sydney University. As an advocate and working in the refugee sector for the last eight years, I have had the privilege of working and collaborating with women from refugee backgrounds who have been active in advocacy at both national and international. With my growing interest in the feminist movement, I realised that feminism must be intersectional. Understanding how women's overlapping identities intersect - including race, class, ethnicity, religion and sexual orientation impacts how they experience oppression and discrimination. Through this realisation, my work and advocacy developed with a purpose to provide an inclusive and informed voice on the diversity impacting refugee women's experiences and to enable opportunities to engage in driving positive change directly. Through this work, I had the pleasure of being appointed the Chair of the Australian National Committee on Refugee Women (ANCORW) in 2017 - 2020, a long-standing partner of the UNSW Forced Migration Research Network (formerly the Centre for Refugee Research); we collaborated on research projects to ensure that the outcomes have high policy impact and most

importantly also actively involve women from refugee communities as co-collaborators in research projects and community engagement activities. In addition, in 2018 - I joined a delegation of community and NGO representatives from Australia taking part in the annual UNHCR NGO Consultations in Geneva. Representing ANCORW and refugee women from Australia, I spoke eloquently and effectively at these meetings, including as an invited speaker on several of the high-level panel discussing regional refugee protection issues in Africa. Within Australia, I was also appointed co-chair of the Young Women Advisory Group as part of the Harmony Alliance of Migrant and Refugee Women, a national network funded by the Australian Government that aims to bring women from refugee and migrant backgrounds and civil society perspectives to the fore in public discourse and policy debates. In my work and personal capacity, I have demonstrated my commitment and passion for representing and furthering the leadership capacities of women of African descent, including establishing and coordinating a voluntary organisation celebrating African Australian women's leadership - the Miss Sahara Program. I believe representation matters, and it is a commitment I aspire to carry on in my work mission.

## Race, Gender and Sex Work in the Development Sector - failing by pleasing

Maree Pardy & Kalissa Alexeyeff

In 2018, a global media scandal erupted, in which Oxfam, one of the largest and most respected international development non-government organisations, was accused of covering up incidents of its staff engaging sex workers in Haiti following the country's devastating 2010 earthquake. The scandal sparked widespread public condemnation of the development and humanitarian sectors for their complicity in the sexual exploitation and abuse of Haitian sex workers. In the aftermath of the scandal, the sector scrambled to restore its damaged reputation, in part by positioning its care for vulnerable women as central to its work. The sector however did not position Haitian sex workers as active subjects of the controversy, but as figures of suffering through whom development organisations might atone for their alleged transgressions. In this paper we examine an archive of communication documents from Oxfam and the sector responding to this media generating scandal. We show that the representations of Haitian sex workers, and sex work in general, reveals a deeply embedded racism and enduring coloniality in the sector's approaches to gender, sexuality, and sex work.

Kalissa Alexeyeff teaches in the Gender Studies Program, School of Social and Political Sciences at The University of Melbourne. She specialises in the areas of gender and sexuality, globalisation and development. She has conducted research in the Pacific and the Pacific diaspora over the last 25 years, particularly Cook Islands and Sāmoan communities. Her publications cover contemporary gender identities, migration, performance and affect, and more recently fashion cultures in the region. *Dancing from the Heart: Gender, Movement and Cook Islands Globalization* (University of Hawai'i Press 2008) is her first monograph. She has co-edited volumes on Pacific sexuality, *Gender on the Edge: Transgender, Gay and other Pacific Islanders* (2014 with Niko Besnier) as well as touring and tourism, *Touring Pacific Cultures* (2016 with John Taylor).

Maree Pardy is trained in anthropology and gender studies, and works at Deakin University, researching in the areas of gender, culture, the law and development, and teaching in International Studies and International and Community Development.



## CONCURRENT SESSION 4E: VOICES FROM EVERYWHERE 2

### Researching gender-based violence and the practice of self-care: a reflection from the Ph.D. fieldwork

Lubna Jebin

This paper is a reflection on navigating research-induced emotions while researching with Bangladeshi women domestic workers who experienced various forms of gender-based violence in Saudi Arabian paid domestic labour regime. For myself, being a Bangladeshi woman and a novice researcher who is a mother of one young child, the emotional and psychological journey of researching such a sensitive area was challenging and complex. Prior to the interviews, I was concerned about women's experiences of sexual and gendered violence and that sharing those experiences might trigger their emotions during the interview process. But I did not recognise that my mental and emotional health might also be affected at the same time, and I did not have any preparation for that. During and after the interviews, most often I found resonance in my experiences as a Bangladeshi woman with those of my participants, being grown up within the same patriarchal values and ideologies which shape women's experiences in the same way irrespective of their social class. Women's stories and their comments helped me to understand the everyday gender dynamics of my life which I have never been able to see through the lens of class privilege. I acknowledge that due to my educational attainment and my current employment with a public university in Bangladesh, my experiences are far removed from my

participants. But there are some gendered social norms operating in Bangladeshi society which are the same for every woman irrespective of their class. Therefore, the negotiation of my role as a mother, myself as a female researcher, my participants' experience as women, and I as an individual human became enmeshed; often one was impacting the other which I was not conscious of. In this paper, I will share some of the challenges I experienced during and after the fieldwork and the strategies through which I navigated my role as a researcher.

Lubna Jebin is a Bangladeshi woman, currently a Sociology PhD student at Monash University, Australia and a faculty of Public Administration, Jagannath University, Bangladesh. Her current research broadly focuses on women's work from a feminist lens. More specifically, Lubna's study seeks to investigate the patterns of migration for Bangladeshi women domestic workers who returned from Saudi Arabia and their experiences with a special focus on gender-based violence. Being an early career researcher, Lubna's research interests are broadly in feminist migration, critical social policy and decolonial feminism.

### (Un)settling foreign policy, feminism, aid and trade in Aotearoa New Zealand

Angela Wilton

As feminist foreign policies gain more prominence within global spaces, what could they mean for a settler-colony like Aotearoa New Zealand? Aotearoa has an openly feminist Prime Minister, a highly diverse Cabinet, and an Indigenous female Minister of Foreign Affairs who has committed to values-based, Indigenous-driven approaches to foreign policy. The political landscape seems ripe for more overt feminist and/or decolonial approaches on the international stage. Within the foreign policy and aid space in Aotearoa, rhetoric about 'decolonisation', gender equality, or 'shifting the power' is plentiful. However, some argue that the rhetoric is simply a distraction, obscuring the ongoing patriarchal, (neo)colonial, neoliberal violence of the settler-state. Some have challenged the use of the term 'decolonisation' as a catch-all for a wide array of social justice work, when in reality this work 'walks all over land/people in settler contexts' (Tuck & Yang 2012:7). Equally Indigenous critics of 'whitestream' feminism see 'progressive' feminists as 'privileged subjects unwilling to examine their own complicity in the ongoing project of colonization', benefiting from the 'continued occupation of Indigenous land' (Grande 2004: 150f). To truly 'decolonise' then, is it enough for the foreign policy and international development sector in Aotearoa to undergo a 'radical self-examination of unreflective settler-colonial bias' and 'hidden colonial logics' (Bardwell-Jones & McLaren 2020: 4)? How ubiquitous are settler-colonial ideologies in aid and development in Aotearoa? And how do we reconcile settler-colonialism with international development's focus on

reducing inequality and injustice? Drawing on the insights from various scholars and development practitioners, this session will provide an opportunity to consider foreign policy and development's role, and feminism's potential, in perpetuating or unsettling settler-colonialism and development futures.

Angela Wilton is an Aotearoa-based triple settler-occupier of UK heritage. She was born in in Aotearoa NZ, grew up in Turtle Island Canada, and is connected to Kenya through her Kenyan Kiwi Canadian kids. She continues to explore what that means in terms of her place on these lands. She is nearing the completion of her doctoral research at Waiapapa Taumata Rau / University of Auckland on the intersection of feminism, Indigenous values, and foreign policy, aid and trade in Aotearoa. Angela also teaches a postgraduate course on Gender and Development at the university. She has a discerningly ranty but diplomatic disposition brought about by a lifelong commitment to social justice. Angela lives in Tāmaki Makaurau / Auckland which is repeatedly voted one of the best cities in the world, however inequality is rife, GBV is common, racism is rampant, and houses are ridiculously unaffordable. That said, she loves being a part of Aotearoa, as uneasy as that feels.



## Feminism approach in Afghanistan after the Taliban takeover; A huge downturn in women's political participation

Rosita Sekandari

It seems that women in Afghanistan are turning back to a time when the community and public works are reserved by men who deem to be the representatives of their mothers, daughters, and sisters in outer affairs. This research paper focuses on three critical issues. Firstly, the importance of the inclusion of women in the Taliban government. Second, protection of women's lives in the government to perform political tasks without fear, and thirdly possible recommendations to the international community to include and protect women in political positions. Considering the patriarchal culture promoted by the Taliban policies, the unequal distribution of power, and structural barriers to the participation of women in politics result in the normalization of women's disappearance from society. Moreover, twenty years have passed since resolution 1325 on women, peace, and security is adopted. It is very disappointing to examine that its efforts are not implemented in the country. As the United Nations recently adopted the first-ever global policy document on girls' and young women's activism, we must continue to work to change the decision maker's mentalities to remove discriminatory laws and behaviors. If the Taliban increase women's inclusion in the government, there is no guarantee of their lives. Some cases show women former politicians were threatened or forcibly disappeared from society. For instance, the house

arrest of Fawzia Kofi and the disappearance of Alia Azizi, women's prison director in Herat. We urgently recommend UN and similar agencies make sure women are included and their lives are safeguarded while performing their duties in the government. It is further expected to implement resolution 1325 and negotiate with the Taliban by monitoring the process with appropriate global indicators, creating a committee that includes Afghan women by putting gender issues on agenda, and sanctioning the Taliban government to ease the implementation.

Rosita Sekandari holds a bachelor's degree from the Law and Political Science faculty of Herat University. She is currently working as a safety advisor assistant for an NGO. In her academic journey, Rosita was passionate to focus on including gender issues in her studies, research, and work. She believes that paying attention to and observing women's rights as human rights will build sustainable peace worldwide. Therefore, she admits that doing research on women's rights is a great tool by which youths can broaden their worldviews and think globally by addressing and advocating the needs of women at the national and international levels.

## CONCURRENT SESSION 5A: FEMINIST SPACES – CONSTRUCTING THE DIGITAL SELF

### Visions of desirable futures: AI imaginaries and news media

Kai-Ti Kao

This paper examines Artificial Intelligence (AI) imaginaries of race and gender within the context of news media. The AI sector has long battled ethical issues of racial discrimination and gender bias (Campolo et al., 2017; Crawford et al., 2016, 2019). Efforts to address these ethical AI issues have largely proved insufficient as they not only persist but continue to emerge in new and different forms. Also concerning is the relatively little critical attention yet directed towards the use of AI in the news media industry. This lack of attention is significant given the influence that news media wield in shaping social norms and values, as well as reports about embedded racial and gender discrimination and bias within the news media industry itself (Meade, 2021; Rodrigues et al., 2019; Rogers, 2020). Further, as AI is present in the news media industry, and news media play a key role in reporting news about AI to the public, the two have a symbiotic relationship that warrants deeper interrogation. Efforts to address racial and gender discrimination and bias within AI have been complicated by imaginaries of AI technologies as 'neutral' and 'objective'; descriptors which are also shared by the news media industry. These assumptions of 'neutral' and 'objective' problematically ignore the ways that prevailing attitudes towards race and gender sit deep within

the social systems and cultures that shape both sectors. Employing a sociotechnical imaginaries framework, this paper offers a theoretically driven critique of how AI imaginaries and the news media constitute "performed visions of desirable futures" (Jasanoff, 2015, p. 4). By unpacking these imaginaries and tracing their roots, this paper argues that news media can play a crucial role in helping the AI sector better address the problem of racial and gender discrimination and bias.

Kai-Ti Kao is a PhD candidate and researcher with the School of Media, Creative Arts & Social Inquiry (MCASI) and the Centre for Culture and Technology (CCAT) at Curtin University, Australia. Her research interests lie in social engagement with digital media, particularly in relation to power, representation and inequality. She has published on a range of these topics including disability access and representation, policy framing of communication technologies, digital engagement and mental health, as well as intersectional and cross-cultural representation. Her current PhD research examines the sociotechnical imaginaries of ethical AI in the context of the news media industry.

### AR filters and gender representation

Kiah Hawker

The integration of Augmented Reality (AR) filters and lenses within social media platforms has shifted the way everyday users perform the 'self'. AR produces 3D computer-generated simulations, which overlay and enhance real-world environments. A filter or lens (used interchangeably) overlays digital animations and artifacts on an image, typically a selfie of a user. The first filters were developed by the social media platform Snapchat in 2015 (Hawker and Carah 2019). Since their original development, these filters have consistently aligned with and reinforced heteronormative western beauty standards. Beauty filters are now the most popular and common form of AR on social media. The functionality of these filters has continued to expand - from clearing a user's skin and adding make-up, to completely transforming the appearance of a user by shifting facial

structuring and changing the look of core features like the nose, eyes and lips. Elias and Gill (2018) describe the ways these filters and other beauty apps, enforce a strong surveillant gaze upon the female body. This paper builds upon their argument, along with scholarship on selfie-taking practices, to examine how beauty filters reinforce gendered beauty standards, for both feminine, masculine and non-binary presenting users.

Kiah Hawker is a PhD student from the University of Queensland. Their research focuses on the ways Augmented Reality impacts the simulated self and representation of the body within a digital environment.

## The “female gaze” on TikTok: Contemporary online feminisms and the visual construction of the “feminist” self

Bonnie Evans

The rise of feminism across the 2010s–2020s, sometimes described as a “fourth wave” by feminists and scholars, has been understood as particularly tied to digital culture and platforms, often in the form of feminist hashtags like #MeToo. Temporally situated alongside this shift in the public status of feminism, we have also seen the rise of new digital platforms that emphasise audio-visuality, particularly TikTok, which was launched for the international market in 2017. This paper explores how Tiktok users understand or express feminist ideas about visual culture on TikTok through their mobilisation of the concept of the “female gaze”, a term which originates from feminist film scholar Laura Mulvey’s 1972 conceptualisation of the “male gaze”. I examine how TikTokers use the “female gaze” concept to critique aspects of contemporary visual culture, ranging from period dramas to popular fashion, constructing a series of visual features or tropes of the “female gaze”. Particularly, I focus on videos within a TikTok trend that involves users describing their own

physical features and clothing choices as “catering to” or embodying a female gaze, often in comparison to the “male gaze”. In doing so, I consider the relationship between how the “female gaze” is understood, and how Tiktok users visually construct their identities as women, girls, and feminists in relation to the concept. Finally, I consider links between these TikTok “female gaze” videos and contemporary feminisms more broadly.

Bonnie Evans is a PhD Candidate and sessional academic at the University of Queensland. Bonnie’s research interests include feminist screen theory, contemporary feminisms, and visual culture. Her dissertation explores the relationship between contemporary feminisms, gendered violence, and lived experience in horror and true crime film and television.

## Finding shelter from social and political dissatisfaction: Exploring the ‘affective attachments’ of anti-gender images on social media.

Jo Church

Since the mid-2000’s, anti-gender movements have gained momentum within the Global North. Mobilising against the notion of ‘gender ideology’, or more broadly the concept of ‘gender’, anti-gender movements regularly accuse feminists, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex and queer (LGBTIQ) activists of spreading a dangerous ideology which variously seeks to destroy the heterosexual nuclear family, corrupt the minds of ‘innocent’ and ‘vulnerable’ children and/or defy the laws of ‘nature’ and/or ‘common-sense’. Although anti-gender movements have historical religious connections, particularly within the Catholic Church and the global Christian Right, their activism is often grounded in a secular, scientific and human rights discourse. Increasingly, this discourse can appear as ‘feminist’ through arguments which vilify transwomen in the name of protecting ‘women’s sex-based rights’. This paper contends that anti-gender movements are not simply the continuation of a backlash to ‘gender’ and/or LGBTIQ rights but rather part of a new political configuration aimed at promoting an alternative social and political order, one which is less democratic and less liberal. Mobilising individuals across social and political divides, anti-gender movements seek to unite those who are mourning a perceived sense of loss and who feel politically abandoned in “their” own lands. Discussing this within the context of

Australia and on social media, this paper will explore how anti-gender images are providing a shelter from dissatisfaction and offering a place to reinvigorate pride for one’s self and place. In order to strive towards creating a future which is less fearful and more inclusive of diverse genders and sexualities, this paper contends that feminist energies needed to counter these movements must stem from a place of deeper understanding. We must avoid treating these movements as a mere ‘backlash’ and instead seek to understand those mobilised to the anti-gender cause, and the contexts which give rise to social and political dissatisfaction.

Jo Church is a PhD candidate in the School of Social and Political Sciences at the University of Melbourne. Her research is focused on the global phenomenon of anti-gender movements within the context of Australia and on social media. Examining the political and emotional dimensions of the anti-gender cause, her research seeks to understand the individuals who constitute these movements and how their objections to ‘gender’ may connect to wider social and political dissatisfactions.

## CONCURRENT SESSION 5B: SOCIAL MEDIA AS A FEMINIST SPACE

### Exploring gendered harassment of Pakistani women public figures on social media

Saadia Ahmed

This research explores the gendered harassment of Pakistani women public figures on social media through an analysis of their lived experiences. I use the term gendered harassment because gender cannot be isolated from the online harassment faced by women. This study aims to map the social, political, and structural factors that contribute to gendered harassment of Pakistani women. The issue stems from the misogyny inherent in the social scripts. Therefore, ignoring gendered harassment can strengthen gender inequalities in society. Also, gendered harassment needs to be acknowledged as a human rights issue by the platforms, legislators, institutions, and society. To understand the gendered harassment of Pakistani women public figures online, we must map the ways in which Pakistan’s post-colonial political landscape has shaped gender relations. Pakistan is an Islamic state where women are considered the torchbearers of family and societal honour. Women public figures show a transgression from the traditional gender roles prescribed for Pakistani women. Now they are also accessible through social media

subjecting them to harassment online. Gendered harassment of Pakistani women public figures on social media can be better understood through the examples of some high-profile gendered harassment cases over the past few years. These cases illustrate why my research is particularly important in the current environment. In addition, these public figures represent society at large hence investigating their lived experiences on social media can potentially help us understand the issues faced by less visible women in Pakistan. Despite extensive research available on gendered harassment, the unavailability of literature in the Pakistani context further adds to the need for this research.

Saadia Ahmed is a digital journalist and theatre practitioner; originally from Pakistan and now based in Perth Western Australia. She is pursuing her Ph.D. in Media, Creative Arts, and Social Inquiry from Curtin University Perth.

## "I'M TIRED OF PEOPLE SAYING 'SEND ME THE LINK' OVER THINGS YOU CAN GOOGLE:"\* OBLIGATION, VULNERABILITY AND FAT ACTIVISM ON INSTAGRAM

Tarmia Klass

This project examines body advocacy on Instagram, across fat activism, fat positivity and body positivity. While body advocacy on social media is centrally concerned with people sharing their experiences of vulnerability and 'everydayness,' my research reveals that fat trans, queer and black advocates experience obligation-fatigue and heightened pressure to 'speak-up.' This paper examines how the concept of obligation for Instagram advocates and content creators has arisen and is managed, both in reference to 'speaking-up' and the pressure to remain, and present as, vulnerable and 'real' on the platform. I argue that the politics of obligation and vulnerability produce two kinds of demands: 1) the necessity to demonstrate their identity politics for their audience, 2) and the embodied burden to disclose and educate. This politics of obligation and vulnerability is amorphous and located no more specifically than

coming from "people on Instagram" or "other content creators." Yet, it led many of the advocates I spoke with to feel invalidated in their gendered, racial and queer identities. By attending to these experiences of obligation, this paper demonstrates the complexities of vulnerability and visibility in Instagram activism.

Tarmia Klass is a PhD candidate in Gender Studies and Anthropology at the University of Adelaide. Her research focuses on the lived experiences of fat activists on Instagram, with a focus on the intricacies of and interactions of the 'digital' with the fleshy body. Her work involves feminist autotheory and aims to highlight the entanglement of the researcher and research participant in digital ethnographic research.

## Making feminism for Chinese grassroots women on social media

Jia Guo

This research focuses on a Chinese female vlogger WANG Huiling and her vlogs. Wang is known as the name @玲玲peter和四只猫 (@Lingling peter and four cats) on social media, and has more than 200 million followers across main platforms in China. Her vlogs centre on popular gender-related topics in China, such as family's preference for sons over daughters, Chinese dating culture, marriage, feminine beauty, etc. On Chinese social media, female creators who can be understood as feminist, usually speak for and speak to middle-class women. Different from the majority, Wang is from a low social-economic background, and her aim is to inspire Chinese grassroots women, such as rural women and female factory workers, to get away from their 'destinies' and become fully independent. By employing the Critical Discourse Analysis on Wang's vlogs, this research asks: 1. What are the main themes of Wang's opinions on Chinese grassroots women's self-help in her vlogs? 2. Under what specific social context of today's China do these themes make sense? 3. What does the analysis of Wang's case bring to the understanding of de-westernised feminisms?

First, I identify three discursive themes from Wang's vlogs: the cut-off from original family; marriage as a partnership of benefits; independence as the ultimate goal. I then understand these themes as self-help strategies for Chinese lower-class women when they are faced with oppressions from traditional, authoritarian and capitalist patriarchies, as well as class-based social hierarchies. On the other hand, these self-help strategies are articulated to neoliberal governmentality in the Chinese society since the Reform. 'Self-help' here is a double-layered signifier. Lastly, I discuss the complexities of the making of grassroots feminism in China and the incapability of using West-centred feminism to explain third-world women's struggles and resistances.

Jia Guo is a PhD candidate in the Department of Gender and Cultural Studies, the University of Sydney. Her research interests include social media, postfeminism, Chinese feminisms, and fandom.



## CONCURRENT SESSION 5C: RELIGION

### Developing feminist ears and finding feminist time: Reflecting on method

Rosie Clare Shorter

While writing my PhD on the conceptual slide between 'right' belief and 'right' gendered and sexual behaviour within the Sydney Anglican Diocese, I interviewed parishioners and ministry staff, becoming what Sara Ahmed (2017, 2021) would term a 'feminist ear.' From July 2019 to November 2020, I heard people's stories of life in the Diocese. I did my best to give their stories 'somewhere to go' (Ahmed 2021, p. 9). This paper is a work-in-progress, in which I reflect on how developing feminist ears shaped the stories I heard, how I heard them, and how I wrote about them. While people told positive accounts of church life, of finding refuge in a particular parish or biblical text, they also spoke of experiencing ostracism, gendered violence and religious trauma.

These stories are important, but they can be hard to hear. How do I (we) find the energy and time to support feminist ears to keep hearing what is hard to hear?

Rosie Clare Shorter is a feminist researcher interested in gender, sexuality, religion and posthumanism. She is a PhD candidate in the Religion and Society Research Cluster at Western Sydney University. Her PhD research has focused on gender, sexuality and evangelism in the Sydney Anglican Diocese.

## "I hate, I love you": Listening to the voices of young people who have grown up in a Thai orphanage where tourists from Western countries bring their 'love'

Jonnell Uptin

The growing attention upon how the rights of children are enacted in countries outside Western democracies has led to the UN General Assembly and partner organisations resolve to make orphanages history declaring that orphanages do not protect but harm children (UN 2019). One such harm was identified as 'orphanage tourism' with the main argument being that it props up an industry 'that tears families apart and exploits children' UNICEF (2002 p.1). This justified call is established by the evidence that 80% of children in orphanages have one living parent. Yet, the literature on the child's perspective is scarce. In this presentation I draw upon qualitative research of nine young people who grew up in an orphanage in Thailand, all are double-orphans and are among the 20% with no living parents. Now, in their early 20s, the young people use the interviews and focus groups to advocate to reposition themselves away from 'hopeless orphan' reflecting upon how they remember being the

relationships affected the young people in identity formation. It argues that deeper conversations that include young people with lived experiences of orphanages must be considered in finding solutions for orphaned children.

Jonnell is an Academic Fellow at The University of Sydney in the School on Education and Social Work. She lectures in Teaching in Multilingual Classrooms and Intercultural Understanding in Education. Her research began examining teaching former refugee youth and students from disadvantaged backgrounds. Recently, Jonnell's research has been drawn from her experiences of caring for children and young adults in orphanages in Northern Thailand. Her research attempts to understand the experience of institutionalised care by listening to those who have lived their childhoods in an orphanage.

### CONCURRENT SESSION 5D: HISTORIES 2

## A historical analysis of the changing role of advocacy in women's health centres and services in Australia from the 1970s-2010s

Connie Musolino

In Australia women's health services and centres were born out of feminist and women's health social movements in response to neglect of women's health issues and harm caused to women by mainstream patriarchal health services. Activism and advocacy in the 1960s and '70s played a central role in the development of community driven and locally run women's health services across Australia. Since, political, social and institutional changes have inhibited and supported women's health services in various ways, including the ability of services and organisations to advocate for women's issues. This paper is based on findings from a project examining the history of community health services in Australia, including women's health services from the 1970s, and how they have changed over time. Data collection included analysis of archival and policy materials, and oral history interviews conducted with ~ 70 people who were involved in community health services policy or practice in Australia since the 1970s. Our results highlight how changes in political and social forces over time have impacted the configuration of women's health services, including their function, governance structures and community participation, and their relationship to governments and health systems. Funding from the Commonwealth Federal Community Health Program in 1973 gave critical support to women's health centres for the first time, but when this program was withdrawn, they were left to the States to fund, which led to differences in how women's health services developed in different jurisdictions from the 1980s onwards. Throughout

the waxing and waning of government support, women's health has remained in a marginalised position in health policy and systems, and therefore the role of advocacy has remained critical. We examine how women's health organisations have continued their advocacy work and how feminist health movements have evolved over this time.

Connie Musolino is a Research Fellow at Stretton Health Equity in the Stretton Institute. She is an early career researcher with expertise in social science, gender studies and public health. Connie completed a PhD in Social Science with a focus on young women with eating disorders and examined the gendered and socio-cultural factors of their experiences to understand why they were reluctant to seek therapeutic help. Connie previously worked at the Southgate Institute for Health, Society and Equity in the College of Medicine and Public Health at Flinders University from 2017-2022 as a Research Fellow and Project Manager. Connie is currently a Research Fellow on Prof Fran Baum's NHMRC Investigator Fellowship entitled "Restoring the Fair Go: which policies and practices are likely to reverse growing health inequities in Australia post-COVID-19". She is working across a range of projects examining health inequities, the social determinants of health, gender and health, health promotion and community health services, and civil society and social movements.

## Bonny Women's Refuge, 1974-present: Towards an intersectional history of feminist activism around domestic and family violence in Australia

Zora Simic

The story of Australia's first feminist-initiated refuge Elsie, established in 1973, has been oft-told, including as part of a wider history of transnational feminist activism around domestic and family violence. Founded by members of Sydney Women's Liberation in the inner-city Sydney suburb of Glebe, Elsie has come to stand in for a nation-wide network of grassroots refuges dedicated to providing safety, shelter and resources to women and children fleeing violence in the home. Far less known is the history of Bonny, the second feminist-initiated Women's Refuge, set up by Women's Liberationists and local women in south-western Sydney in 1974. In this paper, I trace the history of what is now called Bonnie Support Services, as a generative entry point into an intersectional history of feminist activism around domestic and family violence in Australia. Reflecting the demographics of one of Australia's most diverse and working-class areas, the staff and residents from the outset dedicated themselves to developing a feminist politics of gender-

based violence attentive to class, race, ethnicity, Indigeneity and sexuality, as well as gender. By bringing Bonny to the fore, I aim to reconceptualise mainstream narratives of domestic violence activism which tend to present (for example) recognition of the specificity of gender-based violence in Aboriginal and migrant and refugee communities as recent developments. Instead, the example of Bonny makes vivid the significance of the local and of lived experience, including to wider transnational histories of feminist activism.

Dr Zora Simic is a Senior Lecturer in History and Gender Studies at UNSW where she teaches and researches histories of sexuality, gender, and migration. She has written extensively on past and present feminisms. Along with Professor Ann Curthoys and Dr Catherine Kevin she is currently working on an ARC-funded history of domestic violence in Australia, from 1850-present.

## The enduring coloniality of Development Feminism – gender and violence interventions

Kalissa Alexeyeff & Maree Pardy

Development feminism, as both theory and practice, relies heavily on 'gender' as its principal analytical category. Its dominant rubric, 'gender and development,' promotes feminist interventions through the language and practice of gender analysis, gender empowerment, gender justice, and gender rights, for example. In this paper we subject development feminism's dependence on an ahistorical and transhistorical use of gender. We critically probe the gender category deployed in 'gender and development' asking whether gender itself has become a methodological and normative imposition. We undertake this inquiry both theoretically and empirically. Drawing on theorists and activists that broadly coalesce under the scaffold of 'the coloniality of gender' (including Lugones, Icaza and Vazquez, de Lima Costa, Mohanty, Puar), we analyse the links between

gender as a mechanism of colonial power and gender and development as a technology of racializing non-Western 'gendered' bodies. Empirically, drawing from each author's respective research fields, we examine the predominance of development interventions on gender-based violence, and question the meanings of 'gender' and 'violence' utilised by the sector, and their translatability to the life worlds of non-white, non-Western women. We scrutinise gender and violence interventions in the Pacific, and in development and activist campaigns to eradicate Female Genital Cutting.

Please find Kalissa and Maree's bios in Session 4D.

## Migrant & refugee youth sexual reproductive health & rights

Michaels Aibangbee

Migrants and refugee youths (MRY) in Western nations are less likely to participate in sexual reproductive health (SRH) services. Consequently, MRY are more likely to encounter adverse SRH experiences due to limited access to and knowledge of SRH services. This study examined how MRY understood their sexual reproductive health and rights (SRHR) and their experiences and use of existing SRH services. Eighteen focus groups were conducted using participatory action research (PAR) methodology to understand the phenomena. The focus groups included MRY participants (ages 16–24) living in Greater Western Sydney and facilitated by youth project liaisons (YPL). The data was afterwards synthesised and analysed using thematic-synthesis method. In total, 86 MRY (male n= 25, female n= 61) MRY (across 20 different cultural backgrounds) participated in the focus groups. The findings highlighted significant barriers and the under-implementation of SRHR support and services by MRY. Key themes from the data included traditional and institutional stigma, lack of SRH

education, high reliance on social media for SRH information, anonymity and privacy concerns. The data shows a limited extent to which MRY SRHR is considered and the intergenerational understanding and stigma affecting the rights of MRY. Therefore, these findings suggest a need for policies and practices to empower MRY's agency through a collaborative design of SRHR strategy and policy to maintain relevance in multicultural contexts.

Michaels Aibangbee is a PhD candidate in the School of Health Sciences, Western Sydney University. His thesis focuses on understanding the perspectives and experiences of young migrants and refugees' sexual reproductive health and rights. As a Psychotherapist, Michaels focuses on engaging stakeholders, advocating, navigating and bridging existing systems to support the holistic well-being of the CALD population.

## CONCURRENT SESSION 5E: VOICES FROM EVERYWHERE 3

### A brief history of feminist collectives in architecture in India

Anuradha Chatterjee

Women led organizations and feminist collectives have been important in the advancing the objectives of gender equity in architectural education and practice, augmenting the representation of women and enhancing peer networks. The landscape of practice and profession in architecture in India is huge with 480 architecture colleges across 28 states across the nation. The first such collective was formed in 1991 by architect, researcher, educator Madhavi Desai who initiated the Women Architect's Forum (WAF) in India, which remained active only for a few years. The 90s was a key decade for the emergence of many women led organizations across Asia, due to constitutional changes and laws pertaining to equal opportunity and gender quality. The momentum of the 90s is revived more recently. In India, in the last five years, four collectives have emerged between variously active at regional, national, and international level. This includes networking focused WADe Asia (founded in 2016); Hecar Foundation's 'Women in Design' platform (launched during the WID2020+ International Conference and Exhibition), which connect women architects from Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal, and Sri Lanka; industry orientated pan-India Architecture Council under the umbrella of Women's Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (WICCI); and Ahmedabad based Feminist Collective in Architecture (founded by Desai in 2021) for "people of all genders, primarily for non cis-males." The objective of this paper is to chart out a brief history of women led/feminist networks in architecture in India, concurrent with feminist collectives working across other domains of spatial practices, and to gain understanding of the feminist ethics of organizing and action in architecture in India.

Dr Anuradha Chatterjee is an Indian born Australian academic practitioner in architecture and design based in Sydney, Australia. She has twenty years of experience in research, teaching and administration gained through various academic positions in Australia (University of New South Wales, University of Sydney, University of Technology Sydney, University of Tasmania, University of South Australia), China (Xi'an Jiaotong-Liverpool University), and India (Manipal University Jaipur, Srishti Manipal Institute of Art Design and Technology, Pearl Academy and Sushant School of Architecture), where her focus has been on developing critical and research-based pedagogies in studio and history and theory subjects. She has held prominent academic leadership roles in India as Dean, Faculty of Design, Manipal University Jaipur; Dean Academics, Avani Institute of Design; and Head, Research and Innovation, Pearl Academy where she was responsible for institution building, establishing cultures of academic excellence, enhancing internationalisation initiatives and research outputs, and driving a high-performance culture based on inclusive and embodied leadership. Dr Chatterjee also works in professional practice, currently as Senior Researcher at PTW Architects in Australia (with Diane Jones on the design of older people's housing; built heritage assessment reports; and research in practice model at PTW).

## The rapist as monster

Emma Turner

The Rapist as Monster With focus on contemporary literature, this paper argues that the mythology of the rapist as an unknowable violent monster or as an absent character halts or deters productive conversations around rape prevention. Many twenty-first century literary texts are reliant upon and informed by rape myths, such as the archetypal man that rapes. As a result, the rapist is usually referred to as an unknowable mentally deranged monster who exists on the margins of society or is excluded from the text entirely. The risk of alluding to rapists in this way, while it may seek to provide autonomy and focalisation to victims and their stories, is that it encourages society to view rapists as other worldly. Through avoidance of language that acknowledges that knowable, real human men rape women, it becomes impossible to have productive conversations about men who rape. In contrast, Rosie Price's *What Red Was* offers a unique opportunity to critique the inclusion of a rapist using alternate points of view. Providing readers with the rapist's internal monologue allows for the deep characterisation of him as both a knowable normal man and as a rapist.

This text allows for interrogation into the ways in which his view of women, view of self and his world view form a volatile combination, resulting in perceivably normal men raping women. This depiction allows for authentic discussion into the motivations and the systems which facilitate men raping women, and how masculinity can contribute to making rape a thinkable act. With so few texts exploring the rapists as a character, it becomes important to analyse who the exclusion or mystification of rapists is serving, and how these narratives are projecting victims and their bodies.

Emma Turner is a PhD candidate in the School of Communication and Creative Arts at Deakin University, Australia. She received First Class Honours in 2021 and her current research examines representations of rape, sexual assault and coercive consent across multiple literary genres.

## Feminist digital media politics in Latin America: a counterhegemonic gender activism space.

Francisca Diaz De Valdes

New technology has become fundamental in the emergence of a political feminist digital journalism across Latin America (LATAM). I explore LATAM feminist digital media as a counter-hegemonic gender activism space to achieve socio-political change and democratise citizenship in the region. Femi-journalists - feminist activists and journalists - are central to feminist journalism. They work, communicate and militate virtually by circulating counter-hegemonic narratives in line with the feminist political agenda. They combine online activism with offline political actions. Femi-journalists propose an alternative news epistemology informed by a feminist decolonial perspective, offering approaches and voices based on the experiences of marginalised groups in traditional media. Feminist digital media challenge the traditional androcentric understanding of journalistic objectivity while advancing women's and human rights, shaping public policy with a gender perspective, and challenging anti-rights government policies. Femi-journalists are active participants in the socio-political

conflicts shaping contemporary LATAM. It is multidisciplinary research that not only touches on the decolonization of LATAM journalistic practices but also on techno-politics: These feminist journalists combine online and offline activism. In fact, one of the goals of these media organisations is to translate their online activism into socio-political change, mainly impacting public policies.

Francisca Diaz de Valdes is a media journalist with a background in the academy and holds a master of international politics from The University of Melbourne. She has worked in universities in Chile, at The University of Melbourne, and RMIT University, in Australia. She is interested in the intersection of media, gender, culture and politics in Latin America (LATAM). Francisca is a current PhD candidate at RMIT, researching LATAM feminist digital journalism as a counter-hegemonic gender activism space.

## The Objectification of Women

Sandra Amankaviciute

In this paper I address the question of whether the concept of objectification remains central to feminist analysis. In doing so, I re-cast objectification as a form of systemic discrimination. The paper explores the ways in which the prevalence of pornographic images has been presented as progressive and liberating rather than as propagating the perception of woman as objects to be used. I address the claim by some feminist writers that the concept of objectification is no longer useful to feminism. Drawing on work by classic writers such as Martha Nussbaum, Rae Langton, Catharine MacKinnon and others, I consider the interconnection between the notions of objectification, pornographic imagery and substantive equality.

Sandra Amankaviciute is a Lithuanian PhD researcher in political and feminist theory, at the University of New South Wales in Sydney, Australia. Her research is informed by her experience in activism - Sandra is a co-founder and organiser of the first ever lesbian festival in Lithuania - PiLeFe (Angry Lesbian's Festival). Sandra is a deputy director at the Zephiro (Progressive Platform for Human rights) and is a co-author of multiple submissions for institutions such as Human Rights Council and Australian Parliament. Her research focuses on interconnection between objectification, pornographic imagery and substantive equality. Sandra is also curious about ideology of neoliberalism, LGBTI rights, visual culture, jazz music and nature.



## CONCURRENT SESSION 6A: BODIES

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### Exploring the role and impact of inclusive language in the Australian National Cervical Screening Program

Kerryn Drysdale

As a broad medical speciality, 'women's health' has historically been characterised by gendered language, and cervical screening, especially, as it has conventionally been understood is as something 'women' need to screen for. Yet, emerging literature points to the partiality of definition which continue to unsettle the universality and applicability implied in the speciality. A key domain where shifts in language to make 'women's health' more inclusive are currently being negotiated within the Australian National Cervical Screening Program. Changes to policy around cervical screening represents a timely case study for examining the role and impact of inclusive language. This project sought to obtain stakeholder views working in health policy and promotion, cancer prevention, and women's, LGBTIQ+, First Nations and Culturally and Linguistically Diverse community health organisations (N=20). Emerging findings speak to (i) the importance of language to reflect both targeted communities' preferences and the need for medical accuracy, (ii) a notion of inclusivity that is predominately framed in respect to LGBTIQ+ diversity, though the

phrase 'women and people with a cervix' was largely acceptable for other under screened population; and (iii) broad agreement that the principles of inclusivity require greater flexibility within the healthcare system, but which need to be aligned with incremental shifts in policy.

Dr Kerryn Drysdale (she/her) is a Research Fellow at the Centre for Social Research in Health at UNSW Sydney. She conducts research at the intersection of social inquiry and public health, particularly in the experiences and expressions of health and wellbeing among marginalised communities. Kerryn has a particular interest in social configurations, with a specific focus on scene-making in precarious urban infrastructure. Her first monograph, *Intimate Investments in Drag King Cultures: The Rise and Fall of a Lesbian Social Scene*, was published by Palgrave in 2019. She lives and works on unceded Aboriginal land.

### The energy to lactate: The displacement of values associated with human milk production

Ali Hickling

Human milk production is traditionally considered a private act in the domestic sphere that is 'free' and is generally not associated with time (as a valuable resource), labour and energy expended in order to produce milk for an infant. While some recent research focuses on constructing a framework of economic value of milk through measurement of the physical product and its market value, this paper intends to explore the value of milk through the labour of the producer. I will trace a brief history of the attempts to value the labour of work historically confined to the domestic sphere and outline the systems that diminish and obscure the value of human milk and the people producing it. I contend with the history of terms used in this space that are historically gendered and politicised. I will use social reproduction theory and feminist political economy to

examine the social systems that re/produce representations of the value of human milk. In doing so, I demonstrate the importance making visible the energy and labour exhausted by the producer of human milk in order to conceptualise an embodied value of milk and its production.

Ali Hickling is a PhD candidate at the University of the Sunshine Coast. Ali has taught into communication and creative industries at the University of the Sunshine Coast, and is a research assistant with Central Queensland University on the Creative Business Champions 2022 project.

## CONCURRENT SESSION 6B: FEMINIST SPACES

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### Australian style: White femininity in netball

Bess Schnioffsky

Netball is one of the most popular team sports in Australia and remains the number one participation sport for Australian girls (Netball Australia, 2022). In spite of the game's popularity and its unique position as a professional sport dominated by women (as players and officials), there are gaps in the academic analysis of netball, particularly discussions which incorporate race and other intersectional understandings of identity. One of the ways in which implicit gendered and racial norms are reproduced in Australian netball is through the (racially) coded language of "style" of play. In this paper, I argue that the Australian style of netball, as opposed to solely a technical definition of game strategy, is a set of values which underpin netball in Australia. From its beginning, netball was a sport that (white) women could play without threatening the expectations of femininity at the time and these expectations remain part of Australian netball today. In this paper, I draw on historical analysis to examine the circumstances that gave rise to the style of play now recognised as Australian. This historical analysis was then complemented by interviews with 25 Victorian netballers to explore how "style" remains central to how the game is perceived and played today. I outline how this coded

language of Australian style is an important device where subtle, often implicit norms of white femininity are reproduced in Australian netball and act as a barrier for participants. Identifying the potency of such a restrictive understanding of Australian style of netball is the first step in resisting the unmarked white feminine norm within Australian netball. I align this modest resistance work to the broader discussions and efforts by intersectional feminists within sports with the hope of creating more inclusive sporting spaces for all.

Bess is a final year PhD candidate at the Social and Global Studies Centre at RMIT University. Her research explores gender, race, and sports in Australia and the Pacific from a feminist and critical race studies perspective. Her PhD is on Netball in Australia, considering whiteness, femininity, and exclusion. Bess has a background in international and community development and is an experienced player and coach in the elite Victorian netball pathway. Her work advocates for sports as sites for positive change.

## Love and labour in women's football media-making

Angela Christian-Wilkes

Women's athletes and sport are strikingly absent from sport media, and women are strikingly absent from the production of this media. While women's marginalisation within sports media production and its contents is well-documented, the negotiations involved in being a woman choosing to cover women's sport aren't clearly understood in current literature. Prior research shows that women are more likely to cover women's sport compared to their male colleagues within mainstream media structures. Yet this skew more likely reflects the values of news and media organisations than the motivations of individuals. In contrast, independent media producers have cited advocacy and activist commitments for why they voluntarily make media about women's sport. Extending upon insight developed through the researcher's own background in women's football media, this presentation explores the affective and material connections between women being mediated and women making this media, with a specific focus on women's football

(soccer) media in Australia. This paper features preliminary findings from interviews with women "media-makers" – a category encompassing the diverse ways women's football media is produced both in and out of the mainstream. Across their different roles and capacities, feminist and activist qualities have emerged in their motivations for covering women's football. Love and passion are central affective undercurrents in these women's media-making lives. Yet the ways in which love and passion inform their experiences and choices are not simple or uniform, as will be explored.

Angela Christian-Wilkes is a PhD Candidate from the School of Humanities and Social Sciences at Deakin University. Her academic interests align closely with her background in women's football as a writer, podcaster, player and fan. She can be found on Twitter at @captainangelo.

## "We are all in this for everybody else": Transforming Australia's Literary Ecosystem Through Affects of Solidarity

James Gardiner & Madeleine Gray

"We are all in this for everybody else": Transforming Australia's Literary Ecosystem Through Affects of Solidarity Over the last thirty years, Australia has experienced a steady decline in union membership and the erosion of conditions such as Sunday penalty rates alongside the rise of the gig economy and ever-increasing rates of casualisation. In popular culture texts and discourse, union membership is often associated with gruff masculinity and with non-arts industries. This paper explores the transformative potential of collective organizing in Australia's literary ecosystem, using the successful attainment of an Enterprise Agreement by a group of independent book store employees as an autoethnographic case study. We ask: What can be learned when a group of mostly young, queer, female and non-binary, and casualised retail employees fight with and for each other to secure sector-leading working conditions?

What are the affects that sustain activist work in precarious circumstances? In this paper we begin to theorise the role of queer, feminist epistemologies in retail workplace organising, drawing on Sara Ahmed's work in queer phenomenology and feminist care ethics, as well as Lauren Berlant's work on juxtapolitical feminist communities' negotiations with the prospect of a neoliberal "good life." We think through queer and feminist affects of care, humour, and love, and consider the ethical interdependence involved in cultivating a successful union movement within late capitalism.

This co-authored paper will be presented by James, please see Session 4A for James' bio.

## CONCURRENT SESSION 6C: INTERSECTIONALITY: LGBTQIA+ 2

### Making space: Policy and practice connections impacting queer refugees in Australia

Elizabeth Schmidt

The intersections of Queer identity and displacement, particularly for those whose primary asylum claim is not gender or sexual orientation, are not well addressed in policy internationally or in countries of asylum and resettlement. This research aims to identify how policy, as a discursive tool, may meet the unique needs of Queer refugees and asylum seekers and explores possibilities for Australia's government policy framework to better support a peaceful and dignified migration process. A discourse analysis is undertaken to identify the construction of Queer refugees and asylum seekers by national migration policies. Policies that Queer refugees interact with are examined in the context of colonial constructions of gender, sexuality, family, race, and foreignness. Interviews with migration service providers identify existing coping mechanisms for Queer refugees and their advocates as they navigate policy, which are then used to inform ways that service providers across geographical locations and industries can better navigate policy and advocate for policy reforms in partnership with affected communities. The inclusion of these perspectives in policy reform encourages a bottom-up

model of knowledge creation and governance that is essential to building more peaceful frameworks.

Liz is a community organizer and researcher focused on peaceful outcomes for people in forced migration and justice in identity-based, asymmetrical conflicts. She primarily works in refugee spaces and has been active in resettlement services, local peacebuilding initiatives, intergovernmental communication campaigns, and first response on the Greek border. As an activist, she has organized around issues involving sexual violence, migrant rights, racial injustice, reproductive justice, and environmental protections. She is also a founding member of The Body, a non-profit that provides training and consultation on activism strategy, legal support, healing guidance, and research support to feminist, Queer, Indigenous, anti-racist, and anti-imperialist community organizers. Liz studied Conflict Management at Kent State University and is completing a Master of Research at Western Sydney University, funded by Fulbright Australia.



## LGBTQIA+ legal activism as queer jurisprudence

Odette Mazel

Queer theory exists in tension with LGBTQIA+ law reform projects. Queer theory's commitments are radical and disruptive and operate to interrogate the discursive production of sexuality and gender and to expose and problematise hidden relations of power and privilege in the institutional structures and systems with which we live and operate. Queer's deconstructive and anti-normative tendencies, however, can be antithetical to productive engagements by LGBTQIA+ people with law reform projects: the pursuit of equal rights framed in much of the queer scholarship as reinforcing heteronormative structures of knowledge and power and promoting normative ideas of monogamy, social productivity and gender identity. Drawing on the methodological tools provided by Eve Sedgwick's technique of reparative reading and Michel Foucault's ethics of care of the self, I work with this tension to substantiate an approach that frames LGBTQIA+ law reform efforts as queer reparative practice. Bringing the practice of repair and the ethics of care of the self into

relationship with jurist Robert Cover's articulation of 'nomos and narrative', what emerges through stories of LGBTQIA+ engagement with and responses to legal reform are not themes of naivety, compliance or assimilation, but ongoing commitments to disruption, creativity and hope. By grounding queer theory in quotidian materiality and paying attention to the lived experience of LGBTQIA+ people, I show how queer sensibilities are operating in the ways LGBTQIA+ people engage with law for transformative change.

Odette is a PhD student at the Melbourne Law School and a Research Fellow with the Faculty of Medicine, Dentistry and Health Sciences at The University of Melbourne. Drawing on feminist, decolonial and queer theories, her research focuses on the rights and experiences of LGBTQIA+ and Indigenous peoples and the cultural, social and legal avenues through which to pursue those rights.

## Of mothers and daughters : Mobility, kinship, and class in queer Bangladesh

Anika Shah

The mobility of women in Bangladesh has frequently been discussed within contexts ranging from religious veiling (Feldman 2001), development and empowerment (Khan 2019), and marriage and matchmaking (Sabur 2014). As Shuchi Karim (2021) notes, the idea of class, particularly the middle-class, is changing through generations, and along with inspirations and aspirations of mobility are evolving as well. However, mobility still remains a gendered experience, especially when read alongside the notions of privacy, surveillance, and conditional liberty. Using empirical data collected from semi-structured interviews, this paper explores the roles that women play within the family, especially across generations, in enabling this mobility. Part of a broader project that investigates how queerness is understood in Bangladesh, particularly through the paradigms of the closet and coming out, mobility appears as a recurrent theme in discussions of gender and sexuality, especially in relation to economic independence, parental expectations, and imagining queer

futures. In the lived experiences of queer women, anecdotal narratives often illustrate nuances of strategic silences, tacit understandings, and active economic contributions that take place between mothers and daughters, where the line between knowledge and ignorance often remains blurry. The paper explores how mobility plays out in conjunction with kinship and class, and how queer women navigate these complex decision-making contexts and ambivalent emotions that accompany them.

Anika Shah is a PhD Candidate at the University of Technology Sydney. She is currently researching the lived experiences of queer Bangladeshi women, with a focus on the discourse of the closet and coming out. Her interest lies in the areas of gender and sexuality, popular culture, literature, and the gothic/horror subgenre.

## Sex/gender in/distinction: Thinking categorical matrices with Wittig, Butler, and Gatens

Josh Szymanski

The questioning of simple, binary relations and boundaries between sex and gender categories has for some time been foundational to contemporary feminist and queer theorizing. Indeed, such questioning has come into even starker relief as issues and prejudices surrounding trans/nonbinary persons increasingly enter the mainstream. Yet, the dangerously vocal backlash of transphobia to these issues, particularly from ostensible feminists, shows that the status of and relations between sex/gender categories remains a significant political issue for feminist practice. Drawing on the work of Moira Gatens, Judith Butler, and Monique Wittig, this paper argues that the seeming re-entrenchment of biologizing views of 'woman-hood' within trans-exclusionary feminism signals a concerning return to direct, binarized relations between male/man/masculine and female/woman/feminine. In this conception of 'woman,' the distinction between sex and gender familiar to Anglo-American feminism becomes essentially collapsed: 'woman' is seen to proceed necessarily and unproblematically from 'female', in a parallel structure to 'man' from 'male'. I argue that what is productively required in response to trans-exclusionary feminism is a categorical collapse in the opposite direction. That is, that sex proceeds from gender, and not the contrary. Or, in what Wittig calls the 'mark of sex', that sex must be considered to be just as culturally constructed as gender—both existing as part of a matrix of categories that operate to support heterosexist, transphobic, and ultimately phallogocentric conceptions of the self.

I argue Wittig's view of sex/gender categories in this way results in a feminism which remains centred on the situation of women under phallogocentric systems of symbolic and literal exchange, while leaving little room for transphobic exclusionary practices. This paper thus functions in an ongoing (re)consideration of Monique Wittig's work on issues of sex and gender, highlighting the original and continuing relevance of her work to feminist theorizing and practice alongside her contemporaries.

Josh is a PhD student working in Philosophy at the University of Queensland. Their thesis is broadly concerned with the socially constructed status of categories of sex, gender, and sexuality, how these categories interact with subjectivity and the fields of meaning available to the self, and the place of such categories in feminist thought and political action. Their thesis is particularly emphasising an exploration of these issues through the work of French lesbian-feminist Monique Wittig. They aim to provide a re-reading of her literary and theoretical work against her early critics, such as Judith Butler, as well as bring her into conversation with Derrida's work on 'deconstruction,' Cixous' writing on 'bisexuality', and the work of other poststructuralist feminists such as Alice Jardine, Rosi Braidotti, María Lugones, and Trinh Minh-Ha.



## CONCURRENT SESSION 6D: WORKSHOP

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### Flipping things back right in academic publishing

Pooja Sawrikar, Geo George, and Joe Young

Having endured two years of wage theft duped on the false promise that hard work is rewarded in the form of a promotion and pay rise, and having my confidence in my knowledge and writing battered by 65 rejections of my research manuscripts within two years, I was a mess when I left academia after 20 years. The first half I loved because I did not have child caring responsibilities and neoliberalism had not yet taken full hold, but the second half choked my voice and kept me and my family in poverty despite working round the clock. As part of my trauma healing from multiple system abuses, I slept a lot. But I also dreamt a lot. My energies centred, and the activist was born. My future still squarely depended on words and the balm they offer, but there were less of them now because they were being put into action. I was building the system that would not need me to talk so much about systems – because when it's working, we don't see it's there. Scholar Freedom is a system that allows every researcher, no matter their discipline or methodology, to disseminate their credible research straight to the public and get paid for it. The average rejection rate of journals is 55% and can be as high as 90%, and the average open access fee is US\$1,500 and can be as high as US\$11,000. The top five publishers together earn \$20 billion p.a. in profits. The current publication system is designed to keep academics out because scarcity increases prestige and the journal's reputation has now become more important than the robustness of knowledge. Scholar Freedom is designed to keep academics in – it puts the power and money back in their hands. They remain their final gatekeeper.

Dr Pooja Sawrikar, Founder of Scholar Freedom, has worked at the School of Human Services and Social Work at Griffith University (2010–2020), Social Policy Research Centre at the University of New South Wales (2005–2014), and Department of Psychology at The University of Sydney (2000–2005). She obtained her B Science (Hons) in 1999, was awarded her PhD in Psychology in 2004, and completed her Postdoctoral Fellowship in Social Work/Social Policy between 2007–2010. Her academic career spans 20 years; since 2000, she has taught over 10,000 students Psychology and Research Methods subjects, and worked on 15 commissioned projects for Australian state and federal governments, and national and international NGOs, to total value \$4m+. Her research areas and 60+ publications cover racism, sexism, child protection, domestic violence, culturally appropriate service delivery, culture, migration, mental illness, social cognition, and academic publishing and funding. She is experienced in a wide range of quantitative and qualitative methodologies, including multiple and logistic regression, structural equation modelling, semi structured interviews, focus groups, auto ethnography, systematic literature reviews, and theory development. She uses research to not just comprehensively capture and explain the size and nature of a phenomena, but to use that evidence to reduce injustice and increase well-being.

Geo George is the co-founder of Mayfly Accelerator. A company where he channels his passion for startups and disruptive technology products to help startup founders go from ignition to launch. In a past life, Geo had a stint as an executive in Government where he advised boards and leaders regarding strategy and risk, developed and implemented public policy and led organisational transformation of governance and performance systems. In his spare time, Geo loves cloud gazing, often in the company of his friends and his dog Puff.

Joe Young is the co-founder of Mayfly Accelerator. A company built with the purpose of finding passionate people with ideas, to help turn their ideas into business and turn those businesses into movements. Joe is on a mission to empower startups to change the landscape of how society operates in meaningful and positive ways. In the past two years, Joe co-founded a startup focused Venture Capital Firm and an Expert Network company which as the head of marketing, Joe helped make those businesses do \$1Million+ revenue in the first year of operation. When the sun goes down, Joe moonlights as a Latin dance teacher.

### Demystifying peer-reviewed journals

Katherine Curchin

Do you want to get your research published in peer reviewed journals? Would you like to hear the inside story on how these journals work? Katherine Curchin is one of the editors of the Australian Journal of Social Issues. She will talk through the peer reviewing process, tips for responding to reviewers' comments, traps for new players and strategies that successful researchers use to build their CVs.

Dr Katherine Curchin is editor-in-chief of the Australian Journal of Social Issues. She is a Senior Lecturer in Social Policy at the Centre for Social Research and Methods (CSRSM). Before joining CSRSM she held an Australian Research Council Early Career Researcher Fellowship at the Centre for Aboriginal Economic Policy Research (CAEPR). Her research focuses on the ethics of social policy interventions aimed at behavioural change. She has published in highly regarded international journals such as the Journal of Social Policy, Social Policy & Administration, Journal of Political Philosophy, Women's Studies International Forum and the International Political Science Review.

## Epistemic oppression: Theorizing Dalit feminism

Swati Arora

Epistemic oppression occurs when particular knowers are precluded from making an impact to knowledge producing and knowledge sharing activities. This not only causes damage to the individual knowers, but it also produced deficiencies in the state of social knowledge. This paper examines the role that epistemic oppression plays in Fricker's conceptualization of epistemic injustice in her book *Power and Ethics of knowing*. Fricker's work produces epistemic oppression through several methods: i) the outright denial of the Dalit feminist standpoint in articulating the concept of epistemic injustice and ii) the use of a closed conceptual structure to understand systematic oppression that women

face. Given that Dalit feminists have been theorizing on issues of epistemic injustices as long as they have been experiencing it. I argue that Fricker's discussion of epistemic injustice perpetuates epistemic oppression that fails to treat Dalit women as knowers and exemplifies a strategic form of 'white feminism' that applies only to particularly situated women, namely those who are white, class-privileged, straight, and non-disabled.

Swati is doing her PhD in the department of Philosophy at Macquarie University.

## Examining Dalit women's activism and ethics of resistance; An ethnographical study of humanising Dalit women's experiences in universities in Odisha, India

Saraswati Suna

Dalit women (known as "Untouchables") are gradually entering universities in India. The movement toward including the marginalised is changing structural systems of Brahminical patriarchy and caste discrimination in society and academia. However, the experiences of Dalit women with the residue of gender and caste segregation have had little examination. This paper foregrounds the voices of Dalit women attending university in the state of Odisha, India. It reports upon an ethnographical study as a part of a PhD thesis analysing 11 in-depth interviews and three focus groups with 15 Dalit women students. As an insider, the researcher's positioning will underscore the nuances of Dalit women students' experiences in regional universities of Odisha, India. It highlights their experiences of oppression and discrimination, as well as how they negotiate to find quality education. This is realised through their activist stance and resistance in the BAPSA (Birs, Ambedkar, Phule Students Association) and

the Dalit feminist movement. These movements inspire resistance and provide room for discourse and change. This paper employs Dalit feminist theory to show how the long-held socio-cultural webs of hierarchy permeate academic environments. The findings explore how Dalit women in universities are a complex mix of discrimination and resistance to the context-specific identity issue. They highlight the active involvement in student associations that raise awareness of oppression and motivate resistance to casteism and gendered discrimination.

Saraswati Suna is a PhD candidate at the Faculty of Education and Social Work, The University of Sydney, Australia. She is working on "Experiences, Challenges and Resistance: A Study of Dalit Women's Experience in Higher Educational Institutions in Odisha, India."

## Reading feminism/feminist reading

Shona Edwards (Reading Feminism)

Feminist labour has always and necessarily been collective. To trace feminist thought and practice is to trace webs and networks of feminists who have supported and been supported by each/other. This support has also always and necessarily been precarious, to survive as feminist networks is to work against hegemonic structures and institutions. In 2021, a group of feminist students working and studying with/in the University of Adelaide came together and formed Reading Feminism. What initially began as a reading group that met monthly to talk about feminist writing, particularly feminist work that has been forgotten, misremembered, or ignored, quickly transformed into something else: a collective space where we formed feminist attachments both with the feminists we read and, most significantly, each other. This paper emerged from a series of conversations we had as a group about collective reading, making, and thinking. If we do not record what we are doing with this group, we asked, how can the work we are doing, the ethics we are thinking, the knowledges we are sharing be used to build more expansive feminist futures? We de/cided to diffractively cut our thoughts together in the form of a zine, a particularly resonant feminist genre. This presentation will be based around this material object. We will trace the making of our zine – an assemblage of our notes, marginalia, and engagements with Matrix's collectively written *Making Space* (1984) – to think about the ethics, epistemologies, and ontologies that emerged from this doing. This collectively written paper tells a story about reading, collectivity, feminist re-membering, care work and the possibilities of consciousness raising in neoliberal times.



## MAP OF VENUES

All conference sessions will be in the Babel building. Please [click here](#) for more information



The conference dinner will be at Abla's. Abla's is a one km walk from the Babel building.



109 Elgin St, Carlton VIC 3053

## TRANSPORT

Car parking is expensive in Carlton. Please [click here](#) for options on carparks at the university. Luckily, there is also an abundance of trams to the University of Melbourne. Please use the apps TramTracker, PTV, or Google Maps to plan your journey here.

Trams 1, 3, 5, 6, 16, 64, 67, 72: to Stop 1 Melbourne University/Swanston St  
or  
Tram 19: to Stop 11-University of Melbourne/Royal Parade

Once you arrive, use Google Maps to guide you to the Babel building if you have not been to the university before.

## LOCAL SPOTS FOR DRINKS

**Jimmy Watsons, Lygon St**

**Milk the Cow Licensed Fromagerie, Lygon St**

**Prince Alfred Rooftop & Bar, Grattan St**

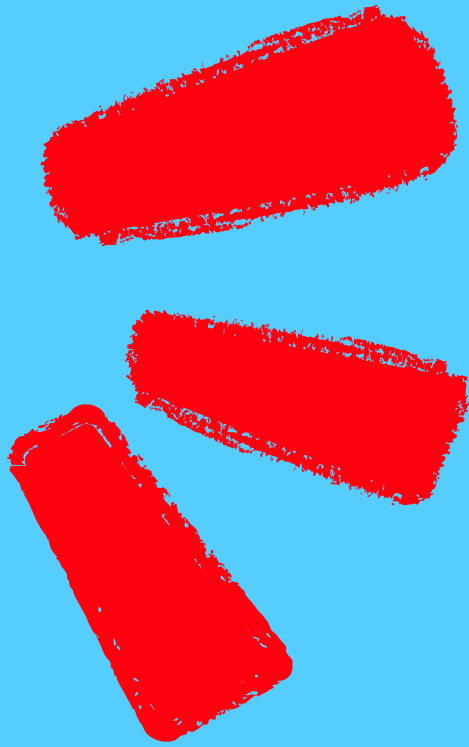
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