



Gender, Work & Organization Conference

28-30 June 2023 | Stellenbosch | South Africa

GENDER, WORK + ORGANIZATION



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Gender, Work and Organization

13th International Interdisciplinary Conference

28-30 June 2023, Stellenbosch, South Africa

Conference theme

Marginalized gender identities - how can intellectual activism transform work and organization?

(Read more about the conference theme on the conference website).

CALL FOR ABSTRACTS/PAPER SUBMISSIONS

STREAM TITLE:

Decolonial activism, pluriversal strategies and possibilities for organizing/strategizing/alliancing 'otherwise' in work and organizations

STREAM LEADERS:

Nuria Cadete (University of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa) Jenny Rodriguez (Work & Equalities Institute, University of Manchester, UK)
Sadhvi Dar (Queen Mary, University of London, UK)
Alex Faria (Fundação Getúlio Vargas, Brazil)
Zahro Hassan (University of Alberta, Canada)

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“La historia es el más grande conjunto de aberraciones, guerras, persecuciones, torturas e injusticias, pero, a la vez, o por eso mismo, millones de hombres y mujeres se sacrifican para cuidar a los más desventurados. Ellos encarnan la resistencia.”

Ernesto Sabato, Quinta Carta: La Resistencia. In *La Resistencia* (2000)

This stream aims to engage with works that explore decolonial activism, focusing on pluriversal strategies beyond the universalist activism/academy binarism and possibilities for organising/strategising/alliancing ‘otherwise’ to rupture, transform and rehumanise work and organisations. This stream calls to those who discuss, examine and experiment with decolonial activisms and organising/strategising/alliancing otherwise to interrogate ruptures in gendered and intersectional marginalisation in work and organisations by regenerating “the imperative of making the world in which we live intelligible to ourselves and to each other - in other words, teaching ourselves” (Alexander, 2005, p. 21).

Ideas about activism have gained popularity as we grapple with the complex realities of heightened marginalisation, exploitation and invisibility experienced by many peoples and workers throughout the world. In the context of wider discussions of racial capitalism and its associated dynamics and consequences, the decolonial/colonial importance of collective organising/strategising/alliancing cannot be underestimated.

However, whilst activism was traditionally associated with radical and militant organising/strategising/alliancing otherwise, contemporary discourses of not-dissent have seen it being co-opted into institutionalised forms of resistance and universalist theorisations. This has seen the popularity of performative, virtue-signalling and other forms of solidaristic action that reproduce hegemonic power.

These forms of White resistance are colonial in nature as they are articulated within lasting frameworks that simultaneously exterminate and imprison dissenters in an anti-Black world and ‘allow’ or ‘give permission to’ those who wish to resist and establish the features or conditions for approved resistance. In this respect, any contestation and resistance must be articulated within the framework of existing structures, making resistance planned, scripted and authorised.

This speaks to the ways in which the coloniality of power has found in neoliberal racial capitalism its natural home; as noted by Silvia Rivera Cusicanqui (2010), colonialism uses language not to designate but to conceal. Indeed, the language of the present alludes to individual freedom, emancipation and self-determination as central to activism and resistance. By enfolding all activism in anti-Black universalist discourse forms of liberal individualism, the possibility for pluriversality is mitigated. In addition, the racialised nature of exclusion that underpins decolonial activism is being undermined through intentional efforts to fracture and separate antiracism and anticolonial/decolonial work/activism, which poses challenges to the positionality of those doing the work.

The challenge is then to resist with/through the pluriversal. Steve Biko (see Gerhart, 2008) spoke of the importance of the collective and understanding the possibility of change as emerging from “a movement with the people, rather than a situation where one conceives an idea and actually addresses it very neatly, and then transposes it onto a situation” (p. 25). As a praxis and concept that signals a clear commitment to radical coexistence through acts of imagination and collective resistance/re-existence, the pluriversal operationalises ways of being and acting in the world that challenge and refuse ideas about individual freedom and multiculturalism based on the preservation of White European male dominance.

Through this call, we look to engage with activism(s) with/through the pluriversal to articulate ways of organising/strategising/alliancing otherwise for decolonial feminist futures that rehumanise all. This involves critical reflection and dialoguing about the ways in which we simultaneously create, inhabit,

perpetuate and resist epistemicide, linguicide and culturicide in social, educational and economic life (Mpotu & Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2020).

Important questions for this stream include but are not limited to the following:

- How can decolonial thinking and praxis inform activism(s) in work and organisations?
- How can we describe or enact the pluriversal in relation to workplace and scholar activism?
- To what extent does decolonial activism differ from other forms of work/organisational activism?
- How can we organise otherwise to responsibly bring to the fore epistemes of difference to rupture marginalising dynamics/structures in work and organisations?
- What is the potential of decolonial activism to ‘corrupt’ the production of universal and apolitical knowledge in universities? (See Ruggunan, 2016.)
- What does it mean to be an everyday decolonial activist?
- What does the praxis of moving beyond radical colonisation of activism involve?
- What does it mean to organise otherwise, to re-exist in an expanding anti-Black world?
- What do unlearning and dis-interpreting mean and involve in the praxis of re-existence and rehumanising?
- What does it mean to be a decolonial ally in solidarity with the wretched? What organising/strategising/alliancing affirms the sovereignty of the marginalised without imposing a burden on them? (See Sullivan-Clarke, 2020.)
- Who is ‘us’ in organising/strategising/alliancing otherwise, and how do we articulate collective rehumanising amidst fragmentations in the struggle for social justice?

Send enquiries for this stream to Jenny Rodriguez: jenny.rodriguez@manchester.ac.uk.

Abstracts of approximately 500 words should be submitted directly to the GWO2023 conference website in a ONE-page (A4-size, single-spaced, excluding references, with no headers, footers or track changes) Word document, NOT PDF. Abstracts are invited by the end of day 7 November 2022 (Central Africa Time - CAT), with decisions on acceptance to be made by stream leaders by December 2022. Prospective contributions will be independently refereed. Abstracts should include full contact details, including your name, institutional affiliation, mailing address and e-mail address. We are hoping to circulate abstracts prior to the 2023 GWO conference to those attending the conference.

Subject to full peer review, this stream may select suitable full papers for a special issue of the *Gender, Work and Organization* journal post the conference. If your abstract is accepted for this stream, you are encouraged to submit a full paper (5 000 to 7 000 words excluding references) by 28 February 2023, which may be considered for such a GWO journal special edition.

More information about the conference can be found at:

https://www.usb.ac.za/usb_events/gender-work-organization/

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More information about the *Gender, Work and Organization* journal can be found here:

Gender, Work and Organization is a scholarly journal published by Wiley and edited by Alison Pullen and Banu Ozkazanc-Pan. The journal has an Impact Factor of 5.428 (2021) ISI Journal Citation Reports and a ranking of 2/44 (Women's Studies); 95/226 (Management).

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