

WORKSHOP

BEYOND GENDER EQUALITY IN  
HUMAN FLOURISHING –  
DISMANTLING VIOLENT  
DOMINANCE HIERARCHIES

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THE NEW INSTITUTE  
6 – 7 NOVEMBER 2023  
HAMBURG

The Climate Crisis, together with ecological crises, species extinction, authoritarian populism, destabilising levels of inequality, rising geo-political tensions, and a zeitgeist of exclusion, prejudice and blame, has brought the realisation that modern societies need fundamental transformation. The Covid-19 pandemic has further shone a searchlight on the underlying reality that many of the social institutions upon which we have relied for stability and direction – politics, economics, religion, technology, education - are not only failing, but they are also worsening the crises. At the same time, emerging information technologies and the rise of social media have created new types of violence and spaces that go beyond state boundaries and cultures, which create new challenges as well as new opportunities from the gender perspective.

Gender, and gender inequalities, are an issue core to human flourishing. They are intersectional and fundamental: the problems of our physical (and virtual) world have been wrought under centuries of deeply institutionalized patriarchal power and masculinist bias, including at the most fundamental levels of Baconian – Cartesian ontology and epistemology -that Nature (F) is to be conquered and exploited by Culture and Science (M). Amongst the greatest obstacles to human flourishing through deep institutional transformation and transition to sustainability are ongoing institutionalized misogyny and cultures of toxic masculinity.

This workshop aims to ‘dig up the roots’ to examine the sociology of gender in the coming climate transition and sustainability transformation, the cultural meanings associated with gender identities, gender categories and gender ordering, and understandings of sexual citizenship that include, but also going

beyond, the discourse of ‘gender equality’. Many contemporary gender equality initiatives aim to increase the participation of women and girls in work, education, and politics, without articulating the deeper historical, contested and critical development of feminisms, feminist epistemologies including the turn to culture, feminisms intersection with psychoanalytic theory, postcolonialism and ecological theories. These critical developments highlight societal changes that are needed both as a prerequisite for, and as a consequence of, equal female participation. Participation alone will not bring about the deep structural social institutional changes needed to address climate change, and the other cascading crises of our time, without a fundamental re-imagining of the concept of gender, gender ordering, identity politics, sexual violence and sites of contestation and struggle, including methodological and psycho-social advances. We need to fundamentally re-examine the cultural processes of gender identity formation, and the possibilities and processes for cultivating post-patriarchal subjectivities.

This workshop will, distinctively, bring together leading thinkers in social psychoanalytic gender analysis and societal transformation to examine the deep changes needed in our contested understandings, meanings and practices including the construction of gender, and how such a reimagining could bring about underlying transformations in economics, politics, technology, religion and education.

This workshop challenges three underlying assumptions of current sustainability transition narratives:

1. Beyond climate change – Dominant narratives of transition focus on climate change as an isolated, discrete, scientific problem. This workshop will advocate the need to move ‘beyond climate isolationism’ to reframe the ‘problem’ in a more holistic and transformational manner by including the daunting array of challenges we currently face. These challenges include climate change, of course, but also species extinction, severe environmental degradation and pollution, destabilising levels of inequality, the rise of violent authoritarian leaders, war, and the potential disruption of society by revolutionary new technologies. Gender, and gender inequalities, play a fundamental role across all these issues and have a central role both in current unsustainability and in the re-imagining of sustainable and equitable alternatives.
2. Beyond socio-technical transition to deep societal transformation – Dominant sustainability narratives typically focus on the transition from one socio-technical system (e.g. the energy system, the transport system, the agri-food system) towards more sustainable systems. This

workshop will challenge this “socio-technical transition” framing by asserting that the multiple crises we face are symptomatic of a more profound crisis in the paradigm of ‘industrial modernity’ itself. As stated above, transformation to sustainability requires a reimagining not only of technological systems, but of our social institutions of politics, economics, social relations, and ultimately of the meta-goals and values of society, which have been shaped by centuries of deeply institutionalized patriarchal power and masculinist bias.

3. Towards true transdisciplinarity – Sustainability narratives are predominantly framed using the discourses of science and technology, while transition is typically articulated in terms of mechanical change. This workshop challenges this framing and argues that a more inclusive and transdisciplinary discourse is urgently needed. A key difference between the DIIS approach and existing methodologies is the explicit inclusion of gender, religion and education as subsystems (alongside technology, economics and politics) of the ‘whole of society system’. This workshop will demonstrate the intersectional and fundamental role of gender, and gender inequalities, and the absolute necessity for the inclusion of gender for understanding and directing whole of society change.

The one-and-a-half day workshop is divided into three parts, each employing a different type of interactive format of knowledge co-creation:

## Day 1 (6 November 2023)

### 1. Gender (In)Equality, Climate Change and Human Flourishing (Morning, 9:00-12:30)

This “fish bowl” workshop addresses gender inequalities through climate justice, resistance to climate change, and possible transformations to sustainability, by facilitating a space to discuss feminist research, including psychoanalytic research, the importance of listening to voices of experience, i.e. climate activists and indigenous rights; the politics of participation and communication.

- 9:00 – 9:30 Welcome remarks and check-in (TNI director, tbc, & Dr. Ariel Hernandez)
- 9:30 – 10:30 Impulses:  
Prof. Janice Haaken, Portland State University  
Prof. Maggie O’Neill, UCC  
Serusha Governder, Chatham House
- 10:30 – 10:45 Coffee Break
- 10:45 – 12:30 Fish Bowl Discussion (moderator: Dr. Ian Hughes, UCC)

Prof. Jan Haaken’s keynote sets the scene through two of her recent films ‘Necessity’ and her important analysis in drawing upon First Nation voices using feminist psychoanalytic analysis and ethnographic/listening to voices of experience, that in turn contributes to the politics and issue of participation.

### 2. Dismantling Violent Dominance Hierarchies (Afternoon, 14:00 – 17:30)

This “theory meets practice” workshop on ‘Dismantling Violent Dominance Hierarchies’ will explore the hypothesis that transformation to greater sustainability and human flourishing is conditional upon the containment of hegemonic violent hypermasculinity and the dismantling of violent dominance hierarchies. The rise in recent years of hypermasculine authoritarian leaders across the world, including Vladimir Putin’s invasion of Ukraine, demonstrates vividly the importance of gender for understanding contemporary international politics. Hudson et al (2009) argue that violent male dominance

hierarchies create templates that widely diffuse violence throughout society, affecting even state behaviour in relation to war and conflict. New conceptions of “feminist foreign policy” or “feminist international development policy” are emerging. This workshop will explore how gender equality can be taken as a measure of the degree to which forces predisposing to male violence-based.

- 14:00 – 14:30 Onboarding & Check-in (moderator: Dr. Maggie O’Neill, UCC)
- 14:30 – 15:30 Impulses:  
Dr. Ian Hughes, UCC  
Dr. Ina Friesen, IDOS  
Dr. Bandy Lee, Center for the Study of Violence (online)
- 15:30 – 16:00 Coffee Break
- 16:00 – 17:00 Discussion
- 17:00 – 17:30 Day Rapporteur and Check-out, Wakanyi Hofman, TNI

Dr. Ina Friesen explores the connection between gender relations / gender violence in Russian society and Russia’s war(fare) in Ukraine and demonstrates how the Feminist Anti-War Resistance is protesting against the war and the underlying societal gender-relations.

## Day 2 (7 November 2023)

**Future Scenario Workshop and Roundtable: Reimagining Collective Social Futures and the Centrality of Care**  
(Hybrid), 9:00 – 12:00

The roundtable starts with each participant presenting her own vision of a “desirable” future. She will describe the necessary concrete changes that need to occur (e.g., social, organisation, technological) to achieve this future. The other participants are able to ask clarifying questions (but no evaluation at this point).

The next step is for the participants to “negotiate” on a common future scenario that is both (1) desirable and (2) feasible.

The roundtable ends with reflections from two rapporteurs (Ian Hughes and Maggie O’Neill). The first rapporteur will reflect on the process and dynamics

of how the participants co-created knowledge. The second rapporteur will reflect on concrete outcomes of the roundtable and provide possible opportunities for future collaboration.

Facilitator:

Dr. Ariel Hernandez, IDOS and TNI

Roundtable participants:

Dr. Janice Haaken (Portland State University)

Dr. Bandy Lee (Center for the Study of Violence) (online)

Serusha Governder (Chatham House)

Dr. Ina Friesen (German Institute of Development and Sustainability)

Dr. Santana Khanikar (Jawaharlal Nehru University) (online)

Saransh Sugandh (In Vaarta) (online)

Rapporteurs:

*Dr. Ian Hughes* (Environmental Research Institute, UCC)

*Dr. Maggie O'Neill* (Royal Irish Academy, and ISS21 and Collective Social Futures, UCC)

## Short Bio of Participants:

**Dr. Ina Friesen** is Political Scientist and Senior Researcher in International Conflict Analysis in the research programme "Inter- and transnational cooperation" at the German Institute of Development and Sustainability.

**Serusha Governder** is Mo Ibrahim Foundation Academy Fellow at Chatham House. She is part of the International Security Programme. Serusha's research explores the opportunities and challenges around gender safety and inclusion in the metaverse. Before joining Chatham House, Serusha worked as an award-winning science journalist, specialist writer and multimedia producer covering the intersection of science, development and human rights across the Global South for various media, including the BBC, Africa.com, Al Jazeera and CNN.

**Prof. Janice Haaken** is professor emeritus of psychology at Portland State University, clinical psychologist, author, and documentary filmmaker. Haaken has published extensively in the areas of psychoanalysis and feminism, the history of psychiatric diagnosis, the psychology of storytelling, group responses to violence, and the dynamics of social change. From refugee camps, war zones, abortion clinics, and asylums to drag bars, dairy farms, hip-hop clubs and climate justice, her projects focus on people who inhabit the border zones of society and their insights on the broader social order.

**Dr. Ariel Hernandez** is currently a fellow at THE NEW INSTITUTE under the programme Conceptions of Human Flourishing and a Senior Researcher at the German Institute of Development and Sustainability (IDOS). Since 2021, he has also been a private lecturer at the University of Duisburg-Essen. His research and teaching interests include international negotiations, mediation, stakeholder dialogue, knowledge diplomacy, transformation to sustainability, climate change, climate and environmental justice, sustainability standards and due diligence, international cooperation and development policies of rising powers, sustainable energy, sustainable mobility, game theory, systems analysis, and Global North–Global South cooperation.

**Dr. Ian Hughes** is Senior Research Fellow at MaREI Centre, Environmental Research Institute, University College Cork, Ireland. He is also Senior Policy Advisor on Innovation Policy at the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science. He is leading the DIIS initiative at UCC which comprises a transdisciplinary community of over 30 academics and practitioners, and has developed collaborations with the OECD, Columbia University, The German Institute of Development and Sustainability, and the International Humanistic Management Network. His recent books include

Disordered Minds: How Dangerous Personalities Are Destroying Democracy (Zero Books, 2018) and Metaphor, Sustainability, Transformation: Transdisciplinary Perspectives (editor with Edmond Byrne, Gerard Mullally and Colin Sage).

**Dr. Bandy Lee** is a medical doctor and forensic psychiatrist. She served as Director of Research for the Center for the Study of Violence (Harvard, U. Penn., N.Y.U., and Yale). She authored “Violence: An Interdisciplinary Approach to Causes, Consequences, and Cures” (Wiley-Blackwell, 2019) and has published over 100 peer-reviewed articles and chapters, 17 edited scholarly books and journal special issues, and over 300 op-eds. She is also editor of “The Dangerous Case of Donald Trump: 37 Psychiatrists and Mental Health Experts Assess a President” (Macmillan, 2017 and 2019).

**Prof. Dr. Santana Khanikar** is Assistant Professor at the School of International Studies of the Jawaharlal Nehru University. She taught postgraduate courses in political theory and comparative politics at Delhi University and since 2015 teaches MA and MPhil courses on political geography. She has supervised MPhil and PhD research on the issues of territoriality and map making, identity movements, migration and refugee crisis, and spaces of violence. Her 2018 book “*State, Violence, and Legitimacy in India*” examines the violent practices of power at marginalized locales – both spatial and politico-social. The book provides insights offered by ethnographic explorations of everyday policing in Delhi and the anti-insurgency measures of the Indian army in Lakhpathar village in Assam. She argues that use of violence does not necessarily detract from the legitimacy of the modern territorial nation-state.

**Prof. Dr. Maggie O’Neill**, Professor in Sociology & Criminology at University College Cork, a newly elected member of the Royal Irish Academy, and incoming Director of ISS21 and Collective Social Futures, one strand of UCC Futures. Maggie has a long history of conducting innovative culture work at the intersections of Sociology, Criminology and Women & Gender Studies. She is a leading proponent of participatory action research, biographical and creative methods, including visual, performative and walking methods. Former Chair of ESA Research Network ‘Biographical Perspectives of European Societies’, a member of the Executive Board of the European Sociological Association, and is a trustee of London Arts into Health Board. Maggie co-founded the SEX Work Research hub and the North East Race, Crime and Justice Network. Recent books include *Criminal Women: Gender Matters* (co-authored with the Women, Voice and Recognition Network); *Walking methods: research on the move* (with Brian Roberts) and *Imaginative Criminology of spaces past, present and future* (with Lizzie Seal).



## List of Workshop Participants

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