



A Feminist Politics of Radical Hope in a Time of Oppression

**LEX, VAWGRN, FRAN, and CSEL Joint
International Conference**

**The University of Liverpool, 6th – 7th
November 2025**



Welcome!

Welcome to our fourth joint international annual conference. We are a collective of feminist academics, scholars and researchers who come together to promote collaboration and growth in feminist and gender research. Yet again, we were absolutely overwhelmed with the quality of the abstracts that we received. We were thrilled that we had many submissions for exhibits, as this was the first time we put out a call for them. Choosing between the many brilliant abstracts was, as always, very difficult. But we are delighted to be able to include everyone, now that we have a poster and exhibits session as well as panels of papers.

Thanks to the success of our previous conferences—and in recognition of the challenging funding climate in academia this year—we have allocated monies for four conference bursaries. We intended that these bursaries go to post-graduate and early career researchers, and those colleagues facing precarity in their employment status. As you would expect, we had a lot of very strong applications and choosing four was incredibly difficult – we wished we had more money to support everyone.

We look forward to hearing about all of your amazing work over the course of the conference. We have intentionally made sessions as long as possible and built in decent breaks to give us all time to network and breathe a little!

Who we are

Law, Gender, and Sexuality (LEX)

The LEX Network is a platform for academics and researchers interested in developing and supporting international and transdisciplinary scholarship on law, gender and sexuality. The LEX Network is intended as a resource for sharing research, fostering collaboration and nurturing dialogue on a range of issues that relate to and shape feminist research on the intersections of law, gender and sexuality globally. To get in touch, please see <https://www.lexnetwork.org/> or email admin@lexnetwork.org

Welcome!

Violence Against Women and Girls Research Network (VAWGRN)

The VAWG Research Network aims to bring together researchers and provide opportunities to meet regularly, share ongoing, completed and planned research in a supportive environment. Over time we hope researchers from the network will work together to apply for funding, share data and develop new research. To get in touch email VAWG-RN@uos.ac.uk, or <https://www.uos.ac.uk/vawgrn/> or find us on LinkedIn

Feminist Legal Research and Action Network (FRAN)

The Feminist Legal Research and Action Network (FRAN) is based at the School of Law and Social Justice, University of Liverpool. Founded in 2022, FRAN Invites members from all disciplines and at all career stages. FRAN takes an intersectional approach to feminist research, teaching and scholarship, exploring how law may be reconceived to promote equality and justice, and aims to advance research as well as influencing law and policy. To join our mailing list or to find upcoming events please see <https://www.liverpool.ac.uk/law/research/fran/> or email Emily.Ireland@Liverpool.ac.uk

Centre for the Study of Emotion and Law (CSEL)

The aim of CSEL is to bring together scholars from a variety of disciplines, as well as practitioners in social care, law, psychology and charities to reconsider the role of emotion within law and practice. The areas of focus covered by the Centre include tackling violence against women and girls, the treatment of witnesses and their role in evidence-gathering and courtrooms; the role emotion plays in professional decision making, including in social care settings; the use of law as a form of control and power. To find out more about the centre's work, please see www.csel.psychologyresearch.co.uk.

The conference organising committee this year were Professor Anna Carline, Dr Sarah Singh, Dr Grace Carter, Dr Sharron FitzGerald, Dr Megan Hermolle, Professor Jill Marshall and Professor Miranda Horvath.

Programme at a Glance

Day 1 – Thursday 6th November

12:00 - 12:30 Registration and networking lunch *School of Law and Social Justice Events Space*

12:30 - 12:45 Welcome to the conference *School of Law and Social Justice Events Space*

12:45 - 13:45 Keynote Address: Professor Maggie O'Neill - Radical Hope in times of crisis, endemic violence and threats to academic freedom *School of Law and Social Justice Events Space*

13:50 - 15:20 Panel Sessions 1. (New Theoretical Frameworks for Feminist Research *School of Law and Social Justice Events Space*) and 2. (Migration and far-right politics of exclusion *Lecture Theatre 5, Rendall Building*)

15:20 - 15:40 Tea and coffee *School of Law and Social Justice Events Space*

15:40 - 17:10 Panel Sessions 3. (Feminist Activism *School of Law and Social Justice Events Space*) and 4. (Domestic violence and coercive control *Lecture Theatre 5, Rendall Building*)

17:10 - 17:20 Short comfort break

17:20 - 18:50 Panel Sessions 5. (Systems and institutions *School of Law and Social Justice Events Space*) and 6. (Understanding gender-based violence *Lecture Theatre 5, Rendall Building*)

18:50- 19:30 Drinks reception *School of Law and Social Justice Events Space*

Day Two – Friday 7th November

09:30 – 10:00 Arrival, tea, coffee and networking *School of Law and Social Justice Events Space*

10:00 - 11:00 Keynote Address: Professor Aisha K Gill – Unspeakable: Overcoming inadequate responses to child abuse cases in Black and minoritised communities *School of Law and Social Justice Events Space*

11:00 - 12:30 Panel Sessions 7. (Wellbeing *School of Law and Social Justice Events Space*) and 8. (Feminist legal studies *Lecture Theatre 2, Rendall Building*)

12:30 - 14:00 Lunch and interactive exhibits and posters *School of Law and Social Justice Events Space*

13:30 – 14:00 – VAWGRN Creative Practice Special Interest Group – initial meeting to share ideas for setting up and running the group led by Dr Donna Perbely *Lecture Theatre 2, Rendall Building*

14:00 - 15:30 Panel Sessions 9 (Sexual violence and harassment *School of Law and Social Justice Events Space*) and Panel 10 - Participatory and innovative feminist methods of resistance research *Lecture Theatre 2, Rendall Building*)

15:30 - 15:45 Conference close *School of Law and Social Justice Events Space*

Keynote Papers

Professor Maggie O'Neill

Professor of Sociology and Criminology at University College Cork, and Director of ISS21 Institute for Social Science in the 21st Century and UCC Futures – Collective Social Futures.



Radical Hope in times of crisis, endemic violence and threats to academic freedom

This fourth joint international annual LEX conference 'A feminist politics of radical hope in a time of oppression' defines hope as 'central to marginal politics which speak of desires for equality or simply for a better life' and that 'Feminism might be characterised as a politics of hope, a movement underpinned by a utopian drive for equality' (Coleman & Ferreday, 2010). In my paper I will address the definition of and possibilities for 'radical hope' in the context of a long history of feminist collaborative research, theory and praxis, working with artists, communities and grass roots organisations and recent engagement *with* feminist new materialisms (Geerts 2024, van der Tuin 2025). This analysis opens dialogue with the LEX collective on the transformative power of feminist participatory and performative research in times of ongoing crisis, endemic violence and threats to academic freedom— by opening and keeping open spaces for stories to be told and heard, by doing feminist critical theory in practice, by 'staying with the trouble' (Haraway 2016) and by working together to create change, through research, pedagogy, advocacy and activism. A question is posed – how does the work that LEX scholars are engaged in contribute to critically understand, imagine and/or enact our social futures in more collective, just and sustainable ways.

Professor Aisha K. Gill

Professor of Criminology at University of Bristol, Centre for Gender and Violence, UK.



Unspeakable: Overcoming inadequate responses to child abuse cases in Black and minoritised communities

The horrifying 2023 murder of 10-year-old Sara Sharif, who died after being repeatedly abused by her father and stepmother, exposes the inadequate responses of key services in cases involving Black and minoritised children such as Sara. In 2024, jurors at the Old Bailey heard that the 10-year-old was discovered dead in a bunkbed in the family home in Woking, Surrey, on 10 August 2023. Her father Urfan Sharif, 42, and his wife, Beinash Batool, 30, were found guilty by the Central Criminal Court of murdering Sara after perpetrating a year-long "campaign of abuse" against her. Despite her school referring her to social services, the authorities failed to take action that could have prevented her death. This paper draws on the case to illustrate the importance of understanding the role culture plays (including family values and norms) in cases of child abuse; which may make it more difficult for this kind of abuse to be reported in Black and minoritised communities and examining how taking a 'hands-off' approach may incorrectly attribute what is going on to cultural norms/practices. This understanding is critical for helping us to better support victims and achieve successful prosecutions.

Thursday

12:00 - 12:30	Registration and Networking Lunch	<i>School of Law and Social Justice Events Space</i>	
12:30 - 12:45	Welcome	<i>School of Law and Social Justice Events Space</i>	
12:45 - 13:45	Keynote Address Chair - Dr Sharron FitzGerald	Radical Hope in times of crisis, endemic violence and threats to academic freedom. Professor Maggie O'Neill, University College Cork, Ireland <i>School of Law and Social Justice Events Space</i>	
13:50 - 15:20	Panel Session 1: New Theoretical Frameworks for Feminist Research <i>School of Law and Social Justice Events Space</i> Chair: Dr Sarah Singh	Kelly Johnson, Michele Burman, Oona Brooks-Hay & Ruth Friskney	Reimagining procedural justice to operationalise a victim-centred approach to policing sexual violence
		Karen Phillips	'The difference is that they haven't only observed, they've actually practiced it': How virtual reality is reshaping pornography's fantasy/ reality debates
		Rachel Vogler & Molly Wilson	Notes Towards a Rupture: On the Functions and Limits of Institutional Hope
	Panel Session 2: Migration and far-right politics of exclusion <i>Lecture Theatre 5, Rendall Building</i> Chair: Professor Anna Carline	Heleen Touquet & Luka Tramosljanin	Radical Hope in Exile: Voices of Russian Anti-War Activists in Serbia
		Jana Kriechbaum	Responding to Mundane Borders, Divisive Politics and Gendered Harms at the Frontline: Practitioners' Narratives on Supporting Women with Insecure Migration Status in Post-Brexit Britain
		Ilaria Aversa	Narratives of mundane bordering resistance in Rome and Folkestone
15:20 - 15:40	Tea and Coffee		

Thursday

15:40 - 17:10	Panel Session 3: Feminist Activism	Katherine Allen & Joey Hudgell	Standing together: towards a coalitional politics of hope
	<i>School of Law and Social Justice Events Space</i>	Claire Pierson & Rebecca Smyth	Acting as if: Prefigurative human rights and abortion activism
		Donna Peberdy	Where is hope in film representations of sexual violence?
	Panel Session 4: Domestic violence & coercive control	Aisling Swaine	Conflict-related coercive control: Expanding Understanding of Women's Experiences of both Intimate and Group-based Coercive Control
	<i>Lecture Theatre 5, Rendall Building</i>	Jessica Wagner	Factors promoting resilience in men exposed to domestic abuse in childhood: a life course approach
		Mirna Guha & Katherine Allen	"We have to keep going and growing": Hopeful visions of equity and leadership in DASV services in East England
17:20 - 18:50	Panel Session 5: Systems and institutions	Linda Cooper & Katherine Allen	'The people are amazing, the system lets them down': Finding hope for systems change through trauma-informed collaboration in sexual violence provision
	<i>School of Law and Social Justice Events Space</i>	Binendri Perera	A feminist constitutional theory of local self-government
		Grace Carter & Lorna O'Doherty	UpFront Survivors: creative practice to build community among adult survivors of child sexual abuse in the UK
	<i>Lecture Theatre 5, Rendall Building</i>	Lisa Sugiura	The Necessity of Feminist Epistemologies When Researching Online Misogyny
		Lorraine Hayman	Cyberflashing: Women's Perceptions of Men Who Cyberflash in Ireland
		Carmen M. Leon , Tatiana Quiñonez-Toral & Eva Aizpurura	Pornography Consumption, Sexual Permissiveness, and the Sexual Double Standard: Pathways to Sexually Violent Behavior
		Siobhan Weare, Dominic Willmott & Maddy Millar	Male-on-Male Rape: Jury Decision Making in a Live Rape Trial Re-enactment
	Chair: Professor Miranda Horvath		
18:50 - 19:30	Drinks Reception	<i>School of Law and Social Justice Events Space</i>	

Friday

09:30-10:00	Tea and Coffee	<i>School of Law and Social Justice Events Space</i>	
10:00-11:00	Keynote Address Chair - Professor Miranda Horvath	Unspeakable: Overcoming inadequate responses to child abuse cases in Black and minoritised communities Professor Aisha K Gill, University of Bristol, UK. <i>School of Law and Social Justice Events Space</i>	
11:00-12:30	Panel Session 7: Wellbeing <i>School of Law and Justice Events Space</i> Chair: Dr Grace Carter	Lisa Culshaw-Ward	Finding hope in child abuse research - how research impacts researchers
		Sarah Warbis, Tina Skinner, Helen Beckett, Miranda Horvath, Theresa Redmond, Nadia Wager & Kristine Brance	Foundations of Flourishing: Early Career Researcher Wellbeing
		Tina Skinner & Kristine Brance	A walking workshop: putting into practice our Researcher Wellbeing Plans
	Panel Session 8: Feminist legal studies Lecture Theatre 2, Rendall Building Chair: Professor Anna Carline	Moirra Dustin & Kate Malleson	Separate but Equal: is segregated schooling (still)
		Rosario Grima Algora	Violence against women as a constitutional matter
		Jill Marshall	Feminist Jurisprudence, Personal Liberation and Hope
		Debra Haak	When violence against women is called sex: policy-based limits on consent to bodily
	Lunch, Exhibits and Posters	<i>School of Law and Social Justice Events Space</i>	
12:30-14:00			

Friday

13:30-14:00	Chair: Dr Donna Peberdy	<i>Lecture Theatre 2, Rendall Building</i> VAWGRN Creative Practice Special Interest Group	
14:00-15:30	Panel Session 9: Sexual violence and harassment <i>School of Law and Justice Events Space</i> Chair: Professor Anna Carline	Erin Pritchard	(Un)Safe Spaces: Experiences of sexual violence at associations for people with dwarfism
		Anna Gekoski, Kari Davies & Miranda Horvath	Secondary victimisation: Police officers' perceptions of sex offence victims' experiences
		Rosie Woodhams & Dominic Willmott	Running Scared: Public Sexual Harassment and its Impact upon Female Elite Endurance Runners
		Gill Kirkman , Dominic Willmott, Daniel Boduszek & Agata Debowska	Introduction and validation of the Modern Adolescent Dating Violence Attitude (MADVA) scale: A contemporary tool for assessing adolescent attitudes towards dating violence in offline and online environments
	Panel Session 10: Participatory and innovative feminist methods of resistance research Lecture Theatre 2, Rendall Building Chair: Professor Jill Marshall	Becky Clarke & Sarah Singh	Objectified motherhood and the radical hope of mothers who object
		Angelika Berg , Grace Carter U Arun Ulahannan	Participatory Feminist Methods in Transport to Address Gender-Based Harassment
		Julia Chrysostalis, Lucy Reynolds & Harriet Samuels	A 'Chorus of Disapproval': The Feminist Chorus and the Law
15:30–15:45	Conference Close	<i>School of Law and Social Justice Events Space</i> Professor Miranda Horvath (VAWGRN) and Dr Sarah Singh (FRAN)	

Abstracts

Day 1 – Thursday 6th November

Panel 1 – New Theoretical Frameworks for Feminist Research

Reimagining procedural justice to operationalise a victim-centred approach to policing sexual violence

Kelly Johnson, University of Glasgow, UK, Michele Burman, University of Glasgow, UK, Oona Brooks-Hay, University of Glasgow, UK and Ruth Friskney, University of Glasgow, UK

This paper presents insights from work undertaken as part of Operation Soteria, specifically that on improving victim-survivor experiences of police investigations of sexual violence in England & Wales. Operation Soteria developed three key principles to underpin the policing of sexual violence: victim-centred, suspect-focused, and context-led. Here we focus primarily on the first of these principles by reimagining procedural justice to centre victim-survivors in the police response. Drawing upon consultations with survivors via expert-by-experience panels, we present new conceptualisations of key procedural justice principles which underscore a feminist, situated and intersectional approach: dignity and respect, equity and fairness, voice, safety, and trustworthiness. We proceed to highlight efforts to operationalise and embed these principles in police practice – for example through the development of victim-survivor resources, impact assessments, and police learning tools – and critically reflect on the possibilities of procedural justice for victim-survivors within the limitations of the criminal justice system.

‘The difference is that they haven’t only observed, they’ve actually practiced it’: How virtual reality is reshaping pornography’s fantasy/reality debates

Karen Phillips, Child and Women's Abuse Studies Unit (CWASU), London Metropolitan University, UK

This presentation discusses how the historical fantasy/reality pornography framework contributes to enabling gender-based harms, such as discrimination, verbal abuse and sexual violence, to exist without scrutiny on pornographic platforms. It will outline the challenges that immersive forms, AI generative technologies, and the new functions of pornography pose for this framework. It also considers how these developing media forms connect to physical world harm in new ways. It presents the new concept of ‘pornality’. Pornality is defined as the real aspects of sexually explicit media which exist or are experienced. This includes varying forms and functions, the role of the industry and an acknowledgement of both pleasure and harm. This work draws on data from my MA dissertation; The methodology consisted of an in-depth literature review and expert interviews. It’s further informed by my current PhD literature review, on AI generative sexually explicit media and its harms to women and girls.

Abstracts

Notes Towards a Rupture: On the Functions and Limits of Institutional Hope

Rachel Vogler and Molly Wilson, Central School of Speech and Drama & Central School of Speech and Drama, UK

“There is no water. There is no food. We are losing people every day” (Bisan Owda, 2025). “Humanity installs each of its violence in a system of rules and thus proceeds from domination to domination” (Foucault, 1977). This paper interrogates how higher education institutions metabolise hope to sustain carceral feminist logics, uphold institutional legitimacy, and obscure complicity in violence. Partnerships between UK universities and arms manufacturers, alongside investments in Israeli military-linked companies, reveal their material entanglement in the ongoing genocide in Palestine. Simultaneously, universities are increasingly host to precarity, instability, and violence. Hope thus becomes instrumentalised, rhetorically deployed through statements, initiatives and reforms as a performance of moral progress. Drawing on Sara Ahmed and Jasbir Puar, this paper explores political valences of institutional hope, characterised here as pacifying and preservative work. We propose ‘rupture’ as feminist praxis to contest hope’s institutionalisation: a method that foregrounds collective undoing, abolitionist desire and reimagining beyond the institution. By examining how crises are co-opted to secure institutional futures, we ask what a radical hope untethered from reform might require and how feminist praxis might resist complicity in the continuity of harm.

Panel 2 - Migration and far-right politics of exclusion

Radical Hope in Exile: Voices of Russian Anti-War Activists in Serbia

Heleen Touquet and Luka Tramosljanin, University of Antwerp, Belgium

This paper explores the concept of radical hope through the lived experiences of 25 anti-war Russians who fled to Serbia. Amid the intensification of repression in Russia since the aggression on Ukraine and the ongoing contestation of the regime of Aleksandar Vucic, these individuals continue to enact forms of resistance, care, and meaning-making. Drawing from in-depth qualitative interviews, the study examines how hope survives and transforms. Rather than framing hope as optimism or resolution, the activists enact it as a daily practice of refusal, solidarity, and survival—deeply relational, often quiet, and embedded in creative acts, mutual aid, and memory. Serbia, as a geopolitical in-between space, has rendered their position complex: they are unwelcome intruders for the Serbian regime, but they also relate to the Serbs who are involved in the protests on a deep level. As such they navigate overlapping layers of estrangement, precarity, and resistance. In this context, radical hope emerges as a commitment to life otherwise—a future beyond empire, militarism, and repression. The paper situates these narratives within a feminist and decolonial framework, challenging liberal understandings of exile and resistance. Ultimately, it proposes that radical hope in exile is not the dream of return, but the labor of imagining and building an uncertain future.

Abstracts

Responding to Mundane Borders, Divisive Politics and Gendered Harms at the Frontline: Practitioners' Narratives on Supporting Women with Insecure Migration Status in Post-Brexit Britain

Jana Kriechbaum, City St George's, University of London, UK

In this paper, I will present empirical findings of my doctoral research project on the intersection of hostility against migrants and violence against women post-Brexit, drawing on in-depth interviews with practitioners supporting women with insecure migration status across sectors. How dramatic changes to the national immigration and asylum regime since 2020 affect women's pathways to protection from gendered violence and harm while in insecure migration remains unknown to date. Using grounded theory analysis, I explore emerging situational effects through the lens of practitioners who support this diverse cohort of women in an increasingly violent anti-immigration climate. In doing so, I shed light on complex implications for support provision, from navigating everyday barriers to mitigating border harms on the ground. Insights into the conditions of life-changing interventions in the shadows of a changing border regime provide a novel perspective on this urgent issue relevant to feminist victimology and critical migration studies.

Narratives of mundane bordering resistance in Rome and Folkestone

Ilaria Aversa, University of Kent, UK

The hostile environment of European bordering regimes has seeped into welfare, education, healthcare and private institutions, becoming "everyday" and "everywhere" (Aliverti, 2021; Bosworth, 2019). Such fragmented, ever-present border pushes already marginalised migrants (undocumented, racialised, asylum seekers) to more marginal positions in society, widely reported in research (Canning, 2019; Fabini, 2017). However, only focusing on the implementation of exclusionary practices by dominant state actors furthers the production of knowledge around narratives of suffering and scarcity. By looking at marginality and liminality as potential for resistance (hooks, 2000), this paper focuses on initiatives of solidarity in Rome and Folkestone and how narratives of resistance are articulated as "mundane everyday life". Developed with an activist research positionality (Canning, Martin and Tombs, 2023; Seoighe, 2023) this work uses collaborative counter-storytelling (Birk, 2023; Tuck and Tang, 2014) to investigate how liminal spaces of solidarity facilitate the flourishing of hopeful imaginaries beyond the border.

Abstracts

Panel 3 - Feminist Activism

Standing together: towards a coalitional politics of hope

*Katherine Allen, Institute for Social Justice & Crime, University of Suffolk, UK and
Joey Hudgell, Institute for Social Justice & Crime, University of Suffolk, UK*

The UK government declared the elimination of gender-based violence (GBV) a strategic priority, pledging to halve violence against women and girls in a decade. While this stated commitment might occasion feminist hope, it is equally likely to inspire cynicism in a national context shaped by brutal austerity, a rising tide of far-right mobilisation, and where the spectre of GBV perpetrated by culturally inimical 'Others' is regularly invoked in service of reactionary political ends. In this context, migrant, disabled and trans community members are increasingly subject to interlocking forms of injustice which limit or deny their autonomy and compound their vulnerability to abuse, advancing a necropolitical project to eject/extinguish undesirable or 'illegal' bodies (Mbembe, 2016). Reflecting on their lived experiences of creating communities of care for disabled and trans individuals weathering this hostile environment, authors outline an alternative political project: a politics of feminist hope grounded in cross-community affinities and coalition-building.

Acting as if: Prefigurative human rights and abortion activism

Claire Pierson University of Liverpool, UK and Rebecca Smyth, University of Exeter, UK

Finding consensus on the right to abortion is globally contentious and challenged by a range of actors and states. Rather than adding to this debate, we focus on abortion rights activists who act prefiguratively; as if the right to abortion already exists. Activists have created a range of strategies, discourses and methods of abortion access which go beyond the state and legal systems to ensure healthcare needs are met. Drawing on concepts of prefigurative politics (Pierson, 2025), experimentalism in human rights (de Burca, 2021) and vernacular rights cultures (Madhok, 2021) we call this 'prefigurative human rights.' Our paper will present this concept through an examination of the methods activists have deployed, how these have travelled transnationally and if they have the potential to translate upwards into global forums to transform understandings of the right to abortion.

Abstracts

Where is hope in film representations of sexual violence?

Donna Peberdy, Southampton Solent University, UK

Screening Sexual Violence is a British Academy-funded project analysing 1400 short films submitted to 16 Days 16 Films, a global film initiative inspired by 16 Days of Activism inviting female-identifying filmmakers to 'explore, emote and educate' on a form of gender-based violence. A key project output is an educational web resource developed through creative practice-based inquiry, informed by textual and thematic analysis, film curation, filmmaker interviews, and conversations with educators, training facilitators and public sector professionals. This paper examines how hope is represented in the films, how it intersects with themes such as solidarity, justice, healing, agency and voice, and how it manifests in different contexts. Drawing on filmmaker interviews, it also considers hope in relation to filmmaking approaches that reflect a feminist politics of care – aiming to honour lived experience while navigating and often subverting the systemic challenges of film production and the wider industry.

Panel 4 - Domestic violence and coercive control

Conflict-related coercive control: Expanding Understanding of Women's Experiences of both Intimate and Group-based Coercive Control

Aisling Swaine, Sutherland School of Law, University College Dublin, Ireland

The study of conflict-related violence against women has advanced significantly in the last three decades. That work has expanded recognition of the range and forms of harm that women experience as a result of armed conflict, from strategic rape to wider armed-group abuses. However, 'coercive control', to date primarily studied in the context of domestic violence in non-conflict settings, is completely absent across multidisciplinary bodies of work on conflict violence. The proposed paper presents the findings of research that aimed to address that gap and to advance the first exploration of 'coercive control' related to armed conflict. Focused on post-conflict Northern Ireland, the research aimed to assess whether and how coercive control within women's intimate relationships is impacted by the ways that paramilitary groups exert social control over communities. Empirical research was undertaken between 2020-2023, including 33 interviews and focus groups with victims-survivors and community sector workers. The research found that women's partners draw paramilitary group-based social controls happening at community levels into the coercive control that they exert in the relationship. The research identifies patterns of intimate coercive control that mimics patterns of paramilitary group-based control. It advances the concept of 'conflict-related coercive control', evidencing how the coercive and predatory nature of armed group social control intersects with the coercion and control of women within their intimate relationships. The research evidences that coercion and control must be used as both a lens to understand women's experiences of conflict, as well as recognised as a specific harm that occurs within conflict settings. It has two core contributions: It first expands the field of conflict-related violence against women towards inclusion of coercive harm by armed groups and second, expands the field of domestic violence research on coercive control by evidencing how group-based coercive control of women operates.

Abstracts

Factors promoting resilience in men exposed to domestic abuse in childhood: a life course approach

Jessica Wagner, Birmingham City University, UK

This paper draws on the first UK based doctoral study exploring factors promoting resilience and coping in men who were exposed to domestic abuse as children but are now in nonviolent relationships as adults. The study used an innovative qualitative life calendar approach to explore participants' ecological systems, highlighting their coping strategies and strengths on their journey into adult relationships that are violence free. Identifying support mechanisms and intrinsic factors such as hope for the future contributes to work focussed on the reduction of male violence against women in the context of perceived intergenerational transmission.

"We have to keep going and growing": Hopeful visions of equity and leadership in DASV services in East England

Mirna Guha, Anglia Ruskin University, UK and Katherine Allen, Institute for Social Justice and Crime, University of Suffolk, UK

This article shares hopeful visions of equity and culturally responsive trauma-informed leadership articulated by Black and racialised women who have experienced/witnessed domestic abuse, and/or work as frontline practitioners within domestic abuse and sexual violence services in East England; a region adversely affected by the postcode lottery of support (DAC, 2022). These visions emerge from a Medical Research Council UKPRP funded project (led by Dr Guha and Dr Allen) on fostering the leadership of racially marginalised women regionally and a pilot study on Asian women's vulnerabilities around domestic abuse in Cambridgeshire (led by Dr Guha). Together, these hopeful accounts of world-making illuminate the aspirations and resistance(s) of marginalised victims-survivors from scattered and under researched diasporic communities as they challenge the epistemic erasure of their complex experiences through institutionally imposed 'solutions'. Furthermore, they illuminate the potential of 'accidental leadership', emanating from trauma and pain, to significantly transform an unequitable and exclusionary landscape of public services.

Abstracts

Panel 5 - Systems and institutions

‘The people are amazing, the system lets them down’: Finding hope for systems change through trauma-informed collaboration in sexual violence provision

Linda Cooper, Institute for Social Justice and Crime, University of Suffolk, UK and

Katherine Allen, Institute for Social Justice and Crime, University of Suffolk, UK

University of Suffolk researchers recently completed a mapping exercise of sexual violence provision in Suffolk, employing a mixed methods approach, including a public call for evidence from local victim-survivors and bespoke interviews with professionals and commissioners. Qualitative data highlighted a range of systemic barriers impacting victim-survivors’ access to justice and support, including lengthy waiting lists, criminal justice system delays, prescriptive timelines for accessing services, and unclear, inconsistent or unempathetic communications by some professionals. More hopeful findings suggest existing pockets of good practice and delineated possible pathways to positive systems change. Based on evidence from victim-survivors, professionals and commissioners, the research team framed recommendations for developing an inclusive, trauma-informed and ‘joined-up’ local system, including formalising and extending promising multi-agency working practices, implementing relationship-based, ongoing consultations with victim-survivors, co-producing a more accessible and sensitive vocabulary around sexual violence, and instituting a unified entry point or ‘one front door’ into services.

A feminist constitutional theory of local self-government

Binendri Perera, Faculty of Law, University of Oxford, UK

In this chapter of my doctoral thesis, I provide a feminist analysis of local self-government. This concept focuses on the scope and limits of the legislative and executive competences of local government. Even though constitutional theory generally focuses on enabling and limiting government powers, feminist constitutional theory goes beyond this by analysing the subject matters over which governmental powers are exercised. I analyse the subject matters within the concept of local self-government and how they facilitate functions important to women. Firstly, local self-government facilitates functions that promote women’s autonomy and well-being, such as primary education, health, sanitation, security, and local development. Secondly, local self-government also facilitates functions that women have borne disproportionate responsibilities for in the private sphere, such as household management and care. I also argue for the importance of collaboration between the levels of government to facilitate local self-governance.

Abstracts

UpFront Survivors: creative practice to build community among adult survivors of child sexual abuse in the UK

Grace Carter, Coventry University, UK and Lorna O'Doherty, Coventry University, UK and Viv Gordon Company, The Green House, and Somerset & Avon Rape & Sexual Abuse Support, UK

In the UK, 15% of girls and 5% of boys experience child sexual abuse (CSA) before the age of 16. UpFront Survivors (UFS) is a novel community, peer-led response to CSA. Designed by survivor-artists and activists working alongside sexual violence services, UFS is the first creative arts programme of its kind, promoting access and inclusion for CSA survivors through arts-based activities (exhibitions, pop-up spaces, writing workshops and creative leadership training). A Home Office funded evaluation examined what UFS achieved and how. Twenty in-depth interviews with survivors were analysed using Dialogical Narrative Analysis. The findings demonstrate how individual and collective identities were shaped through UFS, how survivors were enabled to thrive in a visible survivor community and the critical role of creative arts in survivors' healing. This novel survivor-led, arts-based programme heralds a step-change in opportunities for healing, with implications for peer support, the arts, community agencies and mental health services.

Panel 6 - Understanding gender-based violence

The Necessity of Feminist Epistemologies When Researching Online Misogyny

Lisa Sugiura, University of Portsmouth, UK

Feminist epistemologies offer a critical lens through which to explore the complexities of knowledge production, especially in the context of online misogyny. Drawing on the author's experiences of conducting research on online misogynist groups, including incels (involuntary celibates), over the past eight years, this talk examines how feminist approaches to knowledge can inform and strengthen research on the digital landscape of gendered harassment. Feminist approaches challenge traditional epistemic frameworks that often ignore or marginalise women's experiences and enables researchers to acknowledge how online misogyny is not just an isolated phenomenon, but a manifestation of broader patriarchal structures that shape digital spaces.

Abstracts

Cyberflashing: Women's Perceptions of Men Who Cyberflash in Ireland

Lorraine (Lorrie) Hayman, University of Galway, Ireland

Cyberflashing includes sending an image of genitalia, often a penis, to someone without their consent. Drawing on interviews with women living in Ireland who have experienced cyberflashing by a man, I explore how these women characterise men who cyberflash: The men are (1) motivated by sex, (2) have an altered state of mind when they cyberflash, such as being drunk, and, (3) are exercising their power and control over the receiver of the image. Additionally, several women highlighted how harmful cyberflashing was when perpetrated by someone they knew, breaching trust in the relationship. Others considered cyberflashing by strangers on dating apps as reflecting and shaping gender equality in Ireland. Combined, I highlight the contradictions existing in the different ways that men who perpetrate cyberflashing against women are characterised by victim-survivors, which often account for whether the men are known by the woman or strangers on dating apps.

Pornography Consumption, Sexual Permissiveness, and the Sexual Double Standard: Pathways to Sexually Violent Behavior

Carmen M. Leon, School of Law, University of Castilla-La Mancha, Spain, Tatiana Quiñonez-Toral, School of Law, University of Castilla-La Mancha, Spain and Eva Aizpurua, NatCen for Social Research, UK

Understanding the dynamics of sexually violent behavior is essential for developing effective prevention strategies. This study analyzes the relationship between pornography consumption and engagement in sexually violent practices, focusing on the mediating roles of sexually permissive attitudes and the sexual double standard. Based on data from a general sample in Castilla-La Mancha, Spain (N = 1,003), findings reveal gender differences: men are more likely to perpetrate such behaviors, while women are more likely to experience them. The sexual double standard— where male permissiveness is normalized and female sexuality stigmatized—emerges as a key sociocultural factor. Both lifetime and recent pornography consumption are associated with increased involvement in sexually violent behaviors. This relationship is partially mediated by sexually permissive attitudes, particularly among men. The results underscore the importance of addressing sexual norms and gendered attitudes in efforts to reduce the potential harms associated with pornography consumption and promote healthier, more respectful sexual relationships.

Abstracts

Male-on-Male Rape: Jury Decision Making in a Live Rape Trial Re-enactment

Siobhan Weare, Lancaster University, UK, Dominic Willmott, Loughborough University, UK and Maddy Millar, Lancaster University, UK

To date, no realistic studies high in ecological validity, have examined whether juror attitudes and rape stereotypes have any prejudicial influence on juror decision making within English male-on-male rape trials. To test this, jury eligible participants (N=131) aged 18-83 (M = 49.93) were selected via a systematic random community sample and later volunteered to take part in this study. Comprising 12 separate jury-panels, participants observed a live trial re-enactment of a genuine male rape case over the course of one full day. Evidence was presented in a courtroom by genuine lawyers, professional actors and a 'rape-ticketed' judge before assessing jurors' individual verdict decisions pre- and post-deliberation alongside analysing jury-group deliberations. Preliminary analysis indicates the importance of varied pre-trial attitudes on individual juror decision-making pre- and post-deliberation as well as the role that rape myth beliefs have within group deliberations, especially those resulting in not guilty verdicts.

Day Two – Friday 7th November

Panel 7 – Wellbeing

Finding hope in child abuse research - how research impacts researchers

Lisa Culshaw-Ward, The Child & Woman Abuse Studies Unit (CWASU), London Metropolitan University, UK

Much is documented about impacts of violence and abuse research on participants and researcher wellbeing, especially in relation to ethical working and reducing distress. Similarly, there is a growing evidence base on the positive impacts for engaged in research as participants, but less is known about the impacts on researchers. Recognising that many of those working in the violence against women and girls' sector do so as a result of their own lived experience this paper outlines both the findings of a literature review on child perpetrated child sexual abuse as well as the unintended hope and healing the work brought for the researcher. Using creative and autoethnographic approaches grounded in feminist epistemologies, it questions the drive for 'objective' researcher, showcasing the benefits to knowledge when relational and reflective approaches are used.

Abstracts

Foundations of Flourishing: Early Career Researcher Wellbeing

Sarah Warbis, Bath Spa University, UK, Tina Skinner, University of Bath, UK, Helen Beckett, University of Lancashire, UK, Miranda Horvath, Institute for Social Justice and Crime, University of Suffolk, UK, Theresa Redmond, Anglia Ruskin University, UK, Nadia Wager, Consultant and Kristine Brance, University of Limerick, Ireland

Starting a career in research can be a very daunting one, especially one involving an emotionally evocative topic like sexual assault. With no institutional guidance on how to look after myself as a researcher during my PhD, I took it upon myself to set up the now interdisciplinary, interuniversity and international Researcher Wellbeing Group (RWG), to provide peer support for early career researchers in a similar situation. Taking this further, I went on to be part of the Researcher Wellbeing Strategic Change Group (RWSCG) leadership team, aiming to create change across the industry and beyond. Having now finished my PhD, I would like to share the insights I have gathered from these experiences. More specifically, this talk will focus on the guidance for ECRs published by the RWSCG leadership team, as well as more informal tips and tricks from the RWG and my own personal experiences when conducting my research.

A walking workshop: putting into practice our Researcher Wellbeing Plans

Tina Skinner, University of Bath, UK and Kristine Brance, University of Limerick, Ireland.

The Researcher Wellbeing Project, funded by the UKRI Research England Research Culture Fund, developed the Researcher Wellbeing Plan Guidance and the Researcher Wellbeing Plan Template. Lots of different things that might be contained in our Researcher Wellbeing Plans, but it is not always easy to find the time to do them. Building them into our work is one way to help us do this. For example, playing music and dancing at the start of a lecture to get the stress out of our bodies. One of the things often in a wellbeing plan is to go for walks, another is to talk about wellbeing and how we manage it with friends, family and colleagues. So, in this workshop we are going to 'practice what we preach' and Tina invites you to walk with her around the University of Liverpool campus and beyond, while we all share our tips on how to look after ourselves a little more than, perhaps, we currently do. This workshop is open to all, whether you came on the walking workshop last year or are completely new to it.

Abstracts

Panel 8 - Feminist legal studies

Separate but Equal: is segregated schooling (still) good for girls?

Moira Dustin, School of Law, Politics and Sociology, University of Sussex, UK and

Kate Malleson, Queen Mary University of London, UK

The UK's Equality legislation prohibits formal segregation with limited exemptions. Single-sex schools are one such exemption. No rationale for this was provided at the time of the legislation, and it was not until 2017 in the case of *Al Hijrah* that the question arose of whether and when sex-segregation in schools is lawful. We take up this question, reviewing the equality costs and benefits of sex-segregated schools conceptually and empirically. We highlight the incoherence of equality law regarding schools, and the limited evidence of their benefits. Drawing on feminist theory, we recommend improvements that may be useful in future cases where sex-segregation is contested in the context of faith-based schools. Lastly, we note that these legal questions may one day be challenged by a deeper source of instability if there is a breakdown in the binary sex categories on which sex-segregation in schools currently depends.

Violence against women as a constitutional matter

Rosario Grima Algora, University of Oxford, UK

This paper explores how constitutional courts have engaged with violence against women (VAW). I propose three different categories of the engagement of VAW in the public sphere: (i) VAW as partly public (certain forms of VAW are considered a constitutional matter and others are relinquished to the private sphere); (ii) VAW as a public matter (this is the paradigmatic case of the CEDAW, as it conceptualises VAW as a violation of sex discrimination and the right to equality); and (iii) the right to a life free from violence as a standalone right (the additional step taken to recognise this as a standalone right is a trend present in the jurisprudence of some Latin American constitutional courts). I conclude by noting the importance of the latter category in recognising women's citizenship as a milestone in feminist constitutionalism and a full embracement of equal citizenship.

Abstracts

Feminist Jurisprudence, Personal Liberation and Hope

Jill Marshall, Royal Holloway, University of London, UK

Global backlashes against women's rights evidence the failure of achieving gender equality, a need to revisit feminist jurisprudence and its methods. My paper examines aspects of theories that highlight structural injustices brought about in and through law – how law participates in removing hope for gender justice, but also how feminists suggest ways to reimagine law differently with the hope of bringing positive change, aiming for gender justice. Selections of a paper on hope and liberation will be presented. The paper begins with a brief overview of the vast feminist critiques of law that relate to hope. Paraphrasing Adrienne Rich, this is revisioning, seeing with fresh eyes, entering old texts from new critical directions. I connect personal liberation to hope oriented to action - an ordinary, horizontal hope in and through our everyday lives an emancipatory project in hope for epistemic justice: framed, scaffolded and socially structured by law.

When violence against women is called sex: policy-based limits on consent to bodily harm

Debra Haak, Queen's University, Canada

In the 1993 Declaration to Eliminate Violence Against Women, the United Nations General Assembly recognized that violence against women is a manifestation of historically unequal power relations between men and women. They defined violence against women as “any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women.” The concept of “rough sex” blurs the boundary between sex and violence against women. Rough sex involves aggressive and violent acts such as biting, slapping, punching, and strangulation. In criminal sexual assault cases, male accused increasingly raise what is referred to as a “rough sex defence” to argue that female complainants have consented to these aggressive and violent acts, including acts that result in physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering. By treating some violence as sex, consent operates to legitimate male violence against women. Two Courts of Appeal in Canada have now ruled that consent given in sexual contexts where bodily harm occurs may be legally ineffective. The circumstances where consent will be vitiated in criminal sexual assault cases currently differ between these jurisdictions in two important ways: (1) the degree of bodily harm required to render consent invalid; and (2) whether consent will be vitiated only when a perpetrator has subjective knowledge of the risk of bodily harm and intends to cause that harm. This article focusses on the first of these differences, providing an overview of the key cases and central arguments relevant to determining, as a matter of policy, how much violence against women should be legally tolerated in the name of sex.

Abstracts

Exhibits

The Abortion Herb Garden

Landon Newton, Independent Researcher and Artist, USA

The Abortion Herb Garden is a collaborative social sculpture, garden guide, and pedagogy foregrounding abortifacient, emmenagogic, and contraceptive plants—herbs and plants historically used for contraception, birth control, and abortion. This project creates multi-site garden installations, public workshops, and printed matter to transform exhibition sites into spaces of resistance, care, perennial growth, and reciprocity. Locating conversations about abortion and bodily autonomy within the garden—both conceptually and physically—challenges harmful and discriminatory frameworks while building infrastructure for social and multispecies justice.

'I choose': A comic about forced marriage

Hannah Baumeister, Liverpool John Moores University, UK

Forced marriages lack consent of at least one spouse. They are a human rights violation and illegal in the UK. Nevertheless, in 2023, 800 people asked the Forced Marriage Unit for advice. States, NGOs, researchers, and affected communities identified education as key to tackle forced marriage. In response, we developed a comic to educate young people and support their development as allies. The process of creating the comic and using it as a basis for discussion gives hope in the fight for justice and resistance in a world of increasing anti-feminist politics and oppression. Learning from and with project partners and building bridges across disciplinary and professional differences created sustaining relationships and effective resources to identify and examine injustice and rehearse resistance. Young readers thoughtfully engage with the comic and its subject matter and offer transformative responses. I submit (part of) the comic as an interactive conference poster/exhibit under the participatory research/domestic violence and coercive control theme.

Malta Abortion Rights Timeline

Claire Pierson, University of Liverpool, UK, Liza Caruana-Finkel, University of Liverpool, UK and Andrea Dibben, University of Malta, Malta

This timeline was created in a workshop with abortion rights activists in Malta in 2023 and then hand drawn by artist Anthony O'Connell from the Liverpool Independent Arts School. Malta continues to have the most restrictive abortion laws in the EU and the timeline illustrates the work done by activists to date and their future hopes.

Abstracts

Posters

Resisting a Carceral World: Abolitionism and Gender Based Violence

Baljit Kaur, Birkbeck, University of London and Radhika Pradhan, London School of Economics and Political Science. Both are also affiliated with University of Sussex

The Abolitionist Book Club (ABC) was formed in 2023 by a group of PhD students and Early Career Researchers, supported by The Sussex Centre for Cultural Studies (SCCS). This year, two members facilitated a workshop series entitled 'Resisting a Carceral World: Abolitionism and Gender-Based Violence'. Our contribution to this conference is a poster—a collective co-production by workshop participants. It will visually present topics discussed, key learnings, and questions that emerged, such as 'how do we start?' and 'why am I fearful of this?'. The workshop aimed to cultivate both vision and action, as well as radical hope—imagining alternatives to carceral responses to gender-based violence through everyday work of transformation, community-building and resistance. In the belief that there are no individual solutions to collective problems, we hope to spark conversations that unite us in working towards a society free from the cycles of violence we see today.

Everyday Prevention of Sexual Harm: Lessons Learned from Action Research with Undergraduate Students

Rhys Turner-Moore, Leeds Beckett University, UK, Erin Shannon, Leeds Beckett University, UK, Harris Heaton, Leeds Beckett University, UK, Estelle McGhee, Leeds Beckett University, UK and Adele Care, Leeds Beckett University, UK

In spring 2025, we—a group of researchers and second-year undergraduate students in Psychology at Leeds Beckett University—engaged in an action research project around the concept of 'everyday prevention' of sexual harm (i.e., small steps we can take in our daily lives to prevent sexually harmful behaviour). We aimed to understand what would help the Leeds Beckett University community understand and embrace 'everyday prevention'. Using a participatory, democratic, and problem-oriented action research approach, we created a poster campaign and Instagram account aimed at raising awareness of everyday prevention of sexual harm. Our key impacts occurred on the interpersonal and individual levels: we started conversations about sexual harm and its prevention, embraced non-hierarchical teamwork, and learned what we (did not) know. In this paper presentation, we introduce the concept of everyday prevention and discuss the lessons learned from engaging in action research across student and staff levels.

Abstracts

Examining Femicide in Post-Conflict Northern Ireland Through the Lens of Feminist Jurisprudence and Making Recommendations for Effective and Impactful Legislative Reform

Nichola McNulty, Queen's University Belfast, UK

Femicide, defined as the gender-based killing of women by men rooted in misogyny and inequality, has reached alarming levels in Northern Ireland, a post-conflict society recently termed one of Europe's most dangerous for women. Despite global prevalence, femicide remains under-researched, particularly in this unique context. This research investigates whether distinguishing femicide from homicide will enhance its visibility, improve gender-specific data collection and perpetrator profiling, and facilitate preventative measures. It will also examine the correlation between femicide rates and Northern Ireland's transitional status. By employing a unique socio-legal feminist methodology involving stakeholder interviews and systematic data collection, this study will also analyze comparator states to identify effective legislative classifications of femicide.

The impact of domestic abuse on child protection proceedings

Julie Abernethy, University of Suffolk, UK

Four birth mothers who had lost custody of their children and had experienced domestic abuse were interviewed about the impact of domestic abuse on their child protection proceedings. These mums were known to the researcher through the Christian charity Beam. This research seeks to make the mothers voices heard and takes a feminist theological approach. All four mothers felt they had lost custody of children because they had experienced domestic abuse. When asked about the impact of abuse, one mother responded 'I lost my kids'. The mothers felt they did not receive any support, the domestic abuse was used against them, and they were denied the chance to be mothers. Beam seeks to provide hope for birth mothers by letting them know they are loved, accepted and not judged. The peer support provides a self of belonging, acceptance and understanding, letting the mothers know they are not alone.

Abstracts

Undertaking Emotionally Demanding Research: How Content, Context and Culture Influence Researcher Experiences

Lorraine (Lorrie) Hayman, University of Galway, Ireland

The emotional impacts of research can be considerable. In subjects like violence, crime, and conflict, the negative effects of undertaking research may result in researchers withdrawing to protect their well-being, resulting in a loss of research staff, or suffering negative impacts that impede their work. To further examine these impacts, we draw on a mixed-methods study with researchers engaged in self-defined emotionally demanding research, including 25+ in-depth interviews. We consider how personal, institutional, and socio-cultural factors combine to mitigate or intensify the emotional demands of research. This conceptual framing situates researchers within an ecological framework wherein emotional impacts and vicarious trauma are not only linked to the research content but also account for researchers' lived experiences beyond their research. We seek to identify appropriate institutional supports, developing a protective framework for researchers that supports conducting challenging research while providing researchers with the support and skills to manage its emotional demands.

Re-imagining Research: From Extraction to Co-Creation and Friendship

Sarah Marie Hall, University of Manchester, UK and Sally Bonnie, Inspiring Futures Partnership, UK

Co-creation and collaboration span feminist activism and practice, including and beyond academic spaces. This paper reflects on my experiences of co-creating with Inspire, a women's wellbeing organisation based in Oldham, UK. I argue that collaborative and creative methodologies can offer relational spaces of friendship and mutuality, reflecting a prefigurative politics of doing academia differently. To do this, I draw on the example of co-creating a methods series. This was one of several co-produced activities from years working together, and was intended to extend our collaboration, create learning opportunities, and to capacity-build community researchers and volunteers. Crafting the series, from ideas to delivery and evaluation, revealed much about the creeping neoliberalisation of academia. Expectations around pace, products and performativity, however, were soon eclipsed by a renewed focus on joy, trust and companionship. I close by exploring how collaborative future-making can provide important spaces of hope and solidarity in the research community.

Abstracts

Challenging coalitions: building diverse coalitions for solidarity on abortion rights

Claire Pierson, University of Liverpool, UK, Liza Caruana-Finkel, University of Liverpool, UK and Andreana Dibben, University of Malta, Malta

Diverse coalitions between social movement actors have been recognised as crucial in increasing the chances of movement success. Whilst research indicates factors that enhance coalition building, there is a lack of understanding of how such coalitions are developed and sustained. This article examines the case of Malta, which has some of the most restrictive abortion legislation in Europe and a growing movement to challenge these laws. Utilising unique empirical data – 26 semi-structured interviews and a workshop with a range of social movement actors – we argue that the socio-political context in Malta ‘others’ abortion as a social justice issue and hinders diverse coalition building on abortion rights. We conclude that diverse coalition building can only be sustained by looking beyond advocacy for legal change to challenging wider societal perceptions of abortion and a process of dialogue with other social justice actors where framing tactics situate abortion in the broader frame of reproductive justice.

Participatory Photography for Reproductive Justice: Recommendations from a Collaborative Community Pilot Project Incorporating Care as an Ethical Foundation

Sophie Patterson, Lancaster University, UK Liza Caruana-Finkel, University of Liverpool, UK, Jude Jones, Freelance Researcher, UK, Felicity Dobrush, Liverpool John Moores University & Toxteth Women's Centre, UK, Kate Chadwick, Tomorrow's Women, Wirral, UK and Jasmine Fledderjohann, Lancaster University, UK

Reproductive justice is a framework applied to interrogate and challenge structural factors which constrain individual (non)reproductive choices. This framework necessitates an intersectionally-aware and rights-based approach, which prioritises working with local communities and centres the experiences and needs of overlooked or marginalised populations. This paper describes our collective experience of a pilot research project that used participatory photography to explore perceptions and experiences of reproductive (in)justice in Northern England, and to consider how ‘place’ shapes these injustices. The project was co-designed by members of ReproNorth, who took photographs, captioned them, and curated an exhibition. ReproNorth is a network of partners (academics, community organisations, people with lived experience) committed to interrogating systems of oppression compromising reproductive justice in Northern England. We share our approach to co-design, collective interpretation and dissemination, incorporating care as an ethical foundation. We present broad thematic findings to consider how place shapes reproductive (in)justice and discuss priorities for local research and

Abstracts

Smashing the patriarchy through zine-making

Natalie Rutter, Leeds Trinity University, UK, Sarah Waite, Leeds Beckett University, UK, Danica Darley, University of Sheffield, UK, Julie Eden-Barnard, De Montfort University, UK and Sarah Tatton, Sheffield Hallam University, UK

The creative process of zine-making invites a powerful mechanism to challenge the traditional hierarchies of knowledge experienced across society (Zobl, 2009), and facilitates the production of equitable and organic forms of knowledge (Waite et al., 2024). Zines, and the practice of engaging in zine-making enables people to communicate their experience and insight in a way that is inclusive, innovative and socially engaging to encourage activism and resistance. With zine-making a participatory and innovative feminist method of resistance research, and built within feminist movements, this paper will explore the experiences of using them within research, pedagogy and criminal justice spaces and practice and how they can be used to spark hope, and offer transformative power. The paper will offer examples of using zine-making for different purposes and in different settings, it will reflect on the experiences of doing so and draw conclusions of the value and opportunities this feminist methodology enables.

Against all odds: Cultivating radical hope in times of global uncertainty

Sara Paloni, Sigmund Freud Private University Vienna, Austria and Daphne Nechyba, Sigmund Freud Private University Vienna, Austria

What distinguishes radical hope from “wishful thinking and false optimism” (Mosley et al. 2020, p. 4)? For many of those who have experienced oppression in the face of global inequality, this distinction is not immediately apparent. Orienting radical hope and strategies of resistance (ibid.) requires collective pondering, celebrating, and, perhaps even, delegating. With the often limited resources of uniquely positioned individuals, it becomes easy for communities of resistance to gravitate towards the immediate goals and long-term motivations of those who, despite the common ground of oppression, have more resources at their disposal. Aiming to interrogate the conditionality and materiality of radical hope from the locations of chronic illness and grief, our goal is to address hope as a set of historical, spatial and affective practices that create friction between the tenets of accessibility and solidarity and, simply put, the neoliberal dogma of who is deemed “capable” enough for radical change.

Abstracts

Panel 9 - Sexual violence and harassment

(Un)Safe Spaces: Experiences of sexual violence at associations for people with dwarfism

Erin Pritchard, Liverpool Hope University

Associations for people with dwarfism provide their members with invaluable support. Their annual conventions provide the opportunity for their members to meet other people with dwarfism, whilst engaging in leisure and social activities free from social abuse. This also includes typical dating opportunities, which outside of these spaces, are impacted by stereotypes of dwarfism and sexuality. While conventions supposedly offer people with dwarfism a safe space, when considering intersecting identities, in this case gender and dwarfism, this paper demonstrates how they become unsafe spaces for women with dwarfism. Drawing on survey data, this paper focuses on incidents of sexual violence experienced by women with dwarfism when attending conventions. The aim of this paper is not to shame associations but to expose unethical behaviours and offer recommendations as to how they can reduce the risk of sexual violence occurring and therefore make their conventions safer for women with dwarfism to attend.

Secondary victimisation: Police officers' perceptions of sex offence victims' experiences

Anna Gekoski, Bournemouth University, UK, Kari Davies, Bournemouth University, UK and Miranda Horvath, University of Suffolk, UK

Secondary victimisation occurs when a victim of crime feels they have been subjected to inadequate, insensitive, or inappropriate treatment and practices by criminal justice and social agencies, compounding their original trauma. This study explores police officers' perceptions of how victims of rape and serious sexual offences may be subjected to secondary victimisation by the police. Fifty semi-structured interviews were conducted with police officers across four forces in England and Wales and analysed using reflective thematic analysis. Four themes were identified relating to how victims may feel re-victimised by their experiences with the police: (1) during the initial reporting phase; (2) if/when they experience distressing evidence gathering; (3) when investigations are victim, not suspect, focused; and (4) when cases do not progress through the system in a timely manner. However, there was awareness among officers of the need for change, and of new legislation and guidance aimed at reducing secondary victimisation.

Abstracts

Running Scared: Public Sexual Harassment and its Impact upon Female Elite Endurance Runners

Rosie Woodhams, Loughborough University, UK and Dominic Willmott, Loughborough University, UK

In the post #MeToo era, increasing attention has been paid to the pervasive sexual harassment endured

by women in public spaces, including during physical exercise. However, this has not yet been investigated within the context of elite runner populations in the UK. This research fills this gap through a qualitative analysis of the experiences of 38 female elite endurance runners. Findings are constructed through six key themes: 1) *it's everywhere and every context*, 2) *it felt a bit insignificant*, 3) *men will never understand that fear*, 4) *invisible boundaries*, 5) *they train hard, they shut up*, and 6) *it's a non-negotiable*. Through these insights, unique challenges facing elite runner populations are uncovered while contributing to broader debate around safeguarding, wellbeing, and institutional misogyny in sport. They also underscore the need for improved preventative and responsive structures to sexual harassment more widely.

Introduction and validation of the Modern Adolescent Dating Violence Attitude (MADVA) scale: A contemporary tool for assessing adolescent attitudes towards dating violence in offline and online environments

Gill Kirkman, Loughborough University, UK, Dominic Willmott, Loughborough University, UK, Daniel Boduszek, SWPS University, Poland and Dr Agata Debowska, SWPS University, Poland

The study developed and validated the Modern Adolescent Dating Violence Attitude (MADVA) scale, examining young people's attitudes towards online and offline variants of adolescent dating violence and abuse (ADVA). Data were collected among 2011 adolescents from England, aged 10–25 (M 15.72 years). Dimensionality and construct validity of the MADVA was investigated using traditional Confirmatory Factor Analysis. Results indicate a six-factor model (Attitudes towards: Sexual Abuse-Online; Sexual Abuse-Offline; Psychological Abuse-Online; Psychological Abuse-Offline; Physical Abuse-Offline; Controlling Behaviour-Offline). Excellent composite reliability and differential predictive validity were observed for all six subscales. The MADVA scale enables users to better evaluate ADVA prevention-programmes. The presentation will consider the qualitative research that underpinned the development of the scale and the consultation with young people to ensure authenticity.

Abstracts

Panel 10 - Participatory and innovative feminist methods of resistance research

Objectified motherhood and the radical hope of mothers who object

Becky Clarke, Manchester Metropolitan University and Sarah Singh, University of Liverpool

Traditional constructs of motherhood are a form of social control which have long been enshrined in the criminal law. To date, critique has predominantly focused on contexts where motherhood is central to the primary offences committed. In contrast, in this paper we undertake a detailed analysis of two cases of mothers prosecuted as secondary offenders under two interrelated, yet distinct, legal mechanisms (Joint enterprise and causing or allowing a child to die). Both recognise relationships as constitutive, but always in ways that repeatedly disfavour women, playing into the criminalisation creep of mothers who fail to manage male violence. Drawing out similarities and tensions between these cases reveals how constructs of motherhood slide in and out of view when women are on trial. We conclude by outlining how the status of 'mother' remains pivotal to the grass-roots campaigns which are a key source of hope for securing reform in this field.

Participatory Feminist Methods in Transport to Address Gender-Based Harassment

Angelika Berg, Coventry University, UK, Dr. Grace Carter, Coventry University, UK and Dr. Arun Ulahannan, Coventry University, UK

This paper argues that embedding participatory feminist methods in male-dominated systems like transport is a critical act of hope. Public transport is a key site of gender-based harassment—with over a third of UK women experiencing it—yet transport planning often excludes women's voices, reinforcing silence and inaction. The MoveEqual Project adopts a participatory framework to underpin research aimed at reducing gender-based harassment in public transport, whereby a Lived Experience Group (women and gender minorities, particularly from marginalised communities) and a Stakeholder Group (including transport providers and police) guide the research across its lifecycle. This approach is a first in transport research, grounding research in lived experiences while enabling practical and impactful change. This paper reflects on participants' and the researchers' experiences of participatory methods in the transport sector, providing methodological recommendations for accessible communication and engagement strategies, and demonstrating how the framework cultivates a hopeful perspective for institutional change from within.

Abstracts

A 'Chorus of Disapproval': The Feminist Chorus and the Law

Julia Chryssostalis, University of Westminster, UK, Lucy Reynolds, University of Westminster, UK and Harriet Samuels, University of Westminster, UK

The Feminist Chorus is a sound work created by artist and academic Dr Lucy Reynolds. It was first staged at Glasgow Women's Library where participants were asked to choose their favourite book in the library to facilitate the production of a score composed by Reynolds and then performed by a feminist chorus made up of users from the library. The latest iteration of the Feminist Chorus is a response to the attack on women's reproductive rights. Reynolds has created a score based on the United States Supreme Court decisions in *Roe v Wade* 410 U.S. 113 (1973) and *Dobbs v Jackson Women's Health Organisation* 597 U.S. 215 (2022). The score blacks out words, omits phrases, presents sentences backwards and out of sequence. It is read by a Feminist Chorus and has been performed at various sites. The inclusion of both Chryssostalis and Samuels, both legal academics, as participants in the chorus provided a different sound and authority to the rhythm of the chorus as noted by the audience. This provoked conversations between the artist and the participants about the meaning and purpose of the chorus. This version of the Feminist Chorus raises issues of law and performance (Stone Peters 2008) and is a form of 'cheeky witnessing' (Fletcher 2020) with its playful and irreverent form. It has potential as a new tool of feminist legal activism disrupting how law is conceived in the public consciousness and as a means to draw attention to its obscurity and grandiosity. It raises the question of how can collective choruses offer a valuable methodology to address legal questions, both historic and contemporary? The presentation is structured as a series of brief reflections and conversations among the three presenters, exploring the potential of the chorus within the feminist imaginary and as a tool of hope and resistance.

Social Media

Please post about the conference on any social media you use and use the hashtag **#FeministLiverpool2025** in your posts so we can find and promote them.

You can find the networks and the Gender & Justice Journal on:

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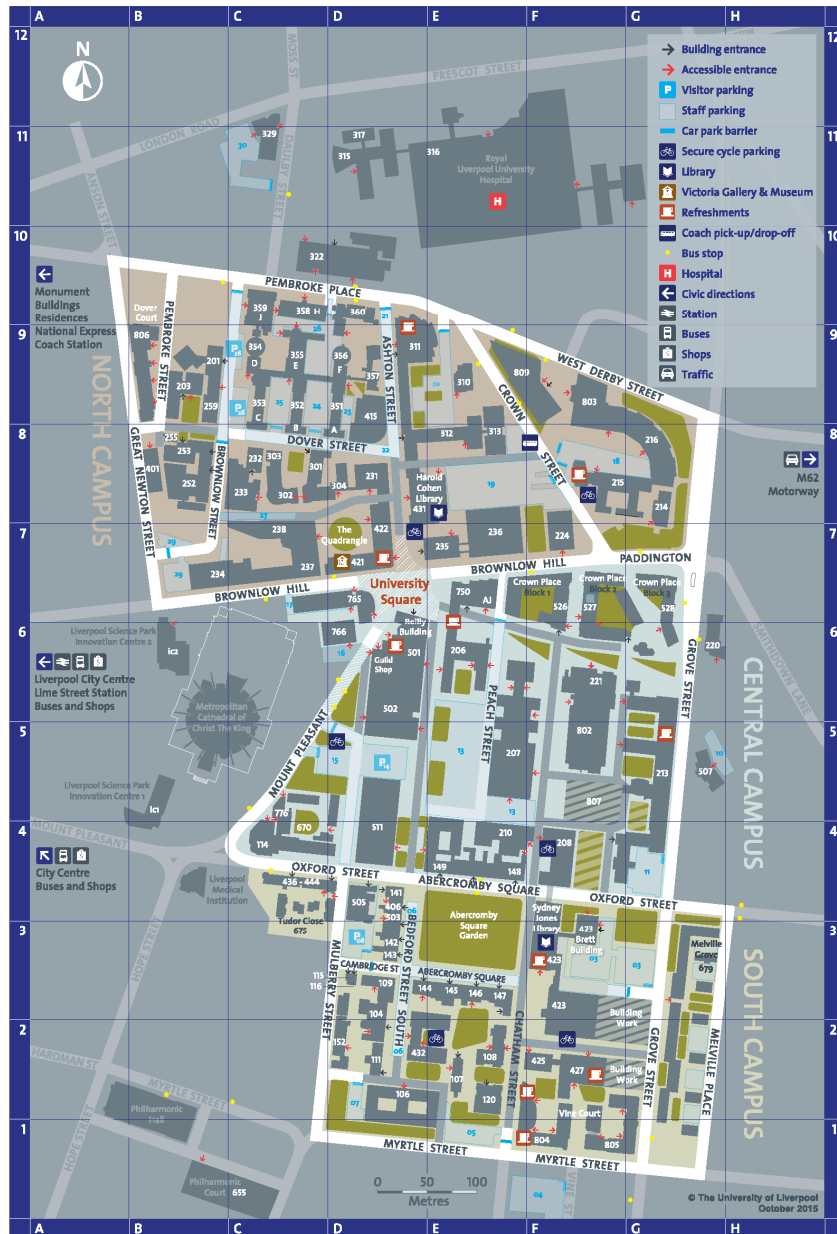
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School of Law and Social Justice — 108



The LEX Network's new journal, *Gender and Justice*, is now open for submissions!

Gender and Justice is an international and transdisciplinary journal dedicated to advancing critical feminist scholarship on justice in the social sciences, and from different methodological perspectives.



Scan here for link to *Gender and Justice*!

Out and About in Liverpool



Lots of information available from: <https://www.liverpool.ac.uk/law-and-social-justice/events/>

Places to eat

There are plenty of great restaurants in Liverpool City Centre.

Just off Hope Street is The Quarter, an Italian restaurant. It's recommended to book as it does get busy!

On Bold Street for is Fat Hippo, a burger chain with vegan, gluten free, and dairy free options. Also on Bold Street Bondobust has great vegan and gluten free selections.

There are also lots of great coffee and tea shops, including Bold Street Coffee, Moose Coffee on Hope Street, TSUJIRI Matcha House, a Japanese tea house.

For more places to eat, go to

<https://independent-liverpool.co.uk/profiles/>

Things to do

If you plan to sightsee while in Liverpool, here are some recommendations:

Liverpool Maritime Museum—great for social history.

Liverpool Cathedral—The tower tour is highly recommended, as you can see the whole city from the top!

The Baltic Triangle—for quirky shopping in a creative district, a 20 minute walk away from the University.

News From Nowhere—A feminist bookshop on Bold Street, run by a women worker's co-operative.

For more ideas on what to do in Liverpool, go to www.visitliverpool.com/things-to-do

Facilities on Campus

The University of Liverpool offers a range of facilities for our conference delegates, ensuring that your experience at the University is both enjoyable and accommodating.

Childcare

[Kids In Bloom at University Of Liverpool Nursery](#) is registered for 100 children from 0-5 years. Each room is designated to specific age groups in order to maximise all vital aspects of development of each individual child.

Alternatively, the city has a range of childminders that you may want to contact directly. You can find a list of approved childminders in Liverpool on the [Liverpool Council website](#).

Breast feeding and baby changing facilities

The University has a range of breast-feeding areas and baby changing facilities. We are a member of the Liverpool Mayor's Breastfeeding Charter ([bambis](#)), which promotes the right of women to breastfeed in public. Full details can be found on the [breast feeding and baby facilities web page](#).

Faith facilities

The University has connections to local faith facilities and also offers some onsite facilities. You can find a full detailed list of the different facilities available on the [Faith Facilities web page](#).

Sustainability

The University of Liverpool is committed to sustainability as outlined in our [Liverpool 2031 strategy](#). In line with this commitment, we aim to provide sustainable events by following these goals: 1) Minimise plastic use, 2) Minimise paper use

You can read more about the University's sustainability strategy on our [Sustainability web pages](#). Find out more <https://www.liverpool.ac.uk/law-and-social-justice/events/university-facilities/>

Maker Space

The Maker space is open 10am -3pm Monday to Thursday during term time and is located on the ground floor of the Sydney Jones Library. Within this space, you can experiment with a variety of exciting new technologies; whether you want to create something for your university studies or just want to enhance your digital skills. Find out more https://libguides.liverpool.ac.uk/knowhow_digital

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