



Gender, “Progress”, and Development: Equality, Sustainability, and Dimensions of Care

International Women’s Day Annual Conference

Feminist Legal Studies Queen’s and Queen’s University Faculty of Law

March 8-9, 2024

Robert Sutherland Hall (School of Policy Studies)
138 Union Street, Katarokwi (Kingston), Ontario

CALL FOR PAPERS AND PANEL PROPOSALS

Feminist Legal Studies Queen’s is delighted to circulate the call for our annual International Women’s Day Conference with the Faculty of Law at Queen’s University. We invite submissions of **individual paper and complete panel proposals** for presentation at this event to be held on March 8-9, 2024.

About the Conference Theme

This year’s conference theme has been chosen with consideration of the United Nations’ 68th Session on the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) that will be taking place from 11 to 22 March 2024. The priority theme for the Session is on “[a]ccelerating the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls by addressing poverty and strengthening institutions and financing with a gender perspective”; the session’s review theme is focuses on “[s]ocial protection systems, access to public services and sustainable infrastructure of gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls”.

The COVID-19 pandemic has had disproportionately negative effects on women. While the post-pandemic recession has been characterized as a “shecession”, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Risks that Matter 2020 Survey highlights it is, more accurately, a “momcession”; noting that “[a]cross countries, however, one group stands out as faring especially poor in labour force and unpaid work outcomes.”

Health, wellbeing, care, and gender equality have significantly been impacted in other ways, as all types of violence against women and girls have intensified with the pandemic. Characterized as “The Shadow Pandemic” by United Nations Women 2021 Report, domestic violence rates have significantly increased due to lockdowns, with verbal abuse and denial of basic resources as the most common forms.

Disaggregated data shows most vulnerable were women between the ages of 18-49, with 1 in 2 affected in experiencing violence against women, or knowing someone who has, since the pandemic exacerbated the preexisting crisis.

Approximately 1 in 4 women said that household conflicts became worse during the pandemic, increasing how unsafe they felt in their homes. Violence against women more generally, in non-domestic spheres, has also increased in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. For instance, 4 in 10 women feel more unsafe in public spaces, with 1 in 5 women feeling unsafe walking alone during the day and 1 in 2 women feeling unsafe

walking alone at night. These figures remind us that, although the COVID-19 pandemic has undeniably affected many—if not, all—persons, the disproportionate impact on women and girls generates new, amplifies existing, and perpetuates old forms of inequalities and gendered harms.

At the same time, Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 5’s commitment to reduce gender inequality and empower girls, and SDG 10’s commitment to reduce inequality within and between nations notwithstanding, global and gender inequality continue to proliferate and risk compromising the attainment of the 17 inter-related and indivisible Goals and the 2030 Agenda Pledge to *leave no one behind and start with the most behind first*.

The pursuit of development cannot be made in the absence of gender equality and without regard to the multiple dimensions of care, care work, and the care economy. Different dimensions of care have been explored in academic, political, and social policy work, across and within various disciplines, and merit considerably more treatment in public policy discussions, advocacy, and law reform efforts. Studies have shown that caregivers—particularly those of older adults—suffer significant levels of abuse and violence by care recipients, with findings that abuse is more likely to occur and/or be intensified among middle-aged female caregivers and more likely when the unpaid caregiver is caring for a relative. The sustainability and dimensions of care must consider the various forms of care, their potential intersections and overlap, including for children and non-elderly care-dependent adults. In 2022, Statistics Canada found that more than half of women 15 years and older (accounting for 52% of the population or almost 8.4 million women), provided some form of paid and/or unpaid care to children and care-dependent adults. How sustainable is care work, what are the values and assumptions made in care work and the care economy, and are there important and necessary limits that need to be addressed?

This call invites submissions on all forms of equality, sustainability, and dimensions of care. While there is much discussion around the concepts of “progress” and “development” within the sustainability literature, situating the importance of care, care work paid and unpaid, the political economy of care, and all its other dimensions merits dedicated attention if we are indeed to “*leave no one behind and start with the most behind first*.”

We are delighted to announce that **Professor Anita L. Allen** will launch the FLSQ conference event with delivery of the keynote lecture, “Legal Embodiments of Unconditional Love - On Loving the Unborn” on **Friday, March 8, 2024** on the Queen’s University campus. Further details may be found here: <https://femlaw.queensu.ca/conferences/flsq-conference-2024>.

Professor Allen is the Henry R. Silverman Professor of Law and Professor of Philosophy at University of Pennsylvania’s Carey Law School. She is an internationally renowned expert and leading scholar in the fields of privacy and data protection laws, ethics, bioethics, legal philosophy, and women’s rights. Dr. Allen served on President Barack Obama’s Presidential Commission for the Study of Bioethical Issues (2010-2017) and is an elected member of various societies including the National Academy of Medicine, the American Law Institute, and the American Philosophical Society. She is also a fellow of the prestigious American Academy of Arts and Sciences. She served as the University of Pennsylvania’s Vice Provost for Faculty (2013-2020), and also chaired the Provost’s Arts Advisory Council.

We are so very excited to welcome Dr. Allen to Queen’s University and the Kingston community. We look forward to the opportunity to advance important conversations regarding gender equality, sustainability, and dimensions of care together with you in celebration of International Women’s Day.

Canada is a signatory to a number of international instruments that together commit to the elimination of all forms of discrimination on the basis of race, disability, and gender. The Beijing Platform for Action was adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995 to secure active state engagement in

bringing all laws, policies, and practices into compliance with the Convention on the Eradication of Discrimination against Women.

This conference continues the FLSQ annual tradition of hosting a major event in honour and celebration of International Women's Day. Centering the elimination of gender inequality and discrimination seeks to focus on the wellbeing of all members of society and to consider care in relation to those who are disproportionately impacted as caregivers. Target 5.4 of Goal 5 is particularly pertinent to the conference theme as it aims to recognize and value unpaid care and domestic work undertaken by many women and girls. Care and care obligations require examination not only to better understand the nature of care and who is providing it, at what costs, and to benefit, but also the conditions under which care is and is expected to be provided in assessing its sustainability.

We particularly encourage submissions that address issues relating to gender equality within the spheres of care (care work, care economy, and the multi-dimensions of care). We also welcome submissions on the elimination of all forms of violence and inequalities toward all women and girls and their respective empowerment. Contributions that demonstrate how research and data gaps can be filled to ensure full analysis of the indicators being used to measure progress in meeting the SDGs are also welcome.

Conference Details

Dates: Friday, March 8, 2024 from noon to late afternoon/early evening; Saturday, March 9, 2024 (~9:00 am) to mid to late afternoon (~4pm). All times TBC.

Location and accessibility: The conference will be conducted **in-person and in a hybrid format** at Queen's University in Katarokwi (Kingston), Ontario. Parts of the conference may be streamed via secure links to be provided to conference participants and registrants.

Submitting proposals: Please e-mail title, one paragraph abstract, and brief bio, to Bitá Amani (amanib@queensu.ca) and Kathleen Lahey (kal2@queensu.ca), copying Natalie Moniz-Henne (natalie.henne@queensu.ca). Acceptances may be issued on a rolling basis.

- **Individual paper proposals:** Email presentation title and one-paragraph abstract.
- **Complete panel proposals:** Proposed panels should include three to four papers. Please e-mail proposed panel title and designated panel chair (who may or may not be presenting in the panel), along with a one-paragraph abstract.

Deadline for receipt: February 09, 2024, at 11:59 pm -- **Extended:** February 20, 2024, at 11:59 pm.

For further information, please contact Bitá Amani (amanib@queensu.ca) and Kathleen Lahey (kal2@queensu.ca)

For registration details and future updates, please check our [conference website](#) (registration free but required, whether attending in person or online).

Block hotel room conference rate secured: [Book your group rate for FLSQ Conference 2024](#)

Queen's University is situated on traditional Anishinaabe and Haudenosaunee territories.