

Sara Cantillon
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Feminist Political Economy

A Global Perspective



Pluralist Economics
Certificate Project



Pluralist Economics
Certificate Project

The course is based on the book by

Sara Cantillon, Glasgow Caledonian
University, UK

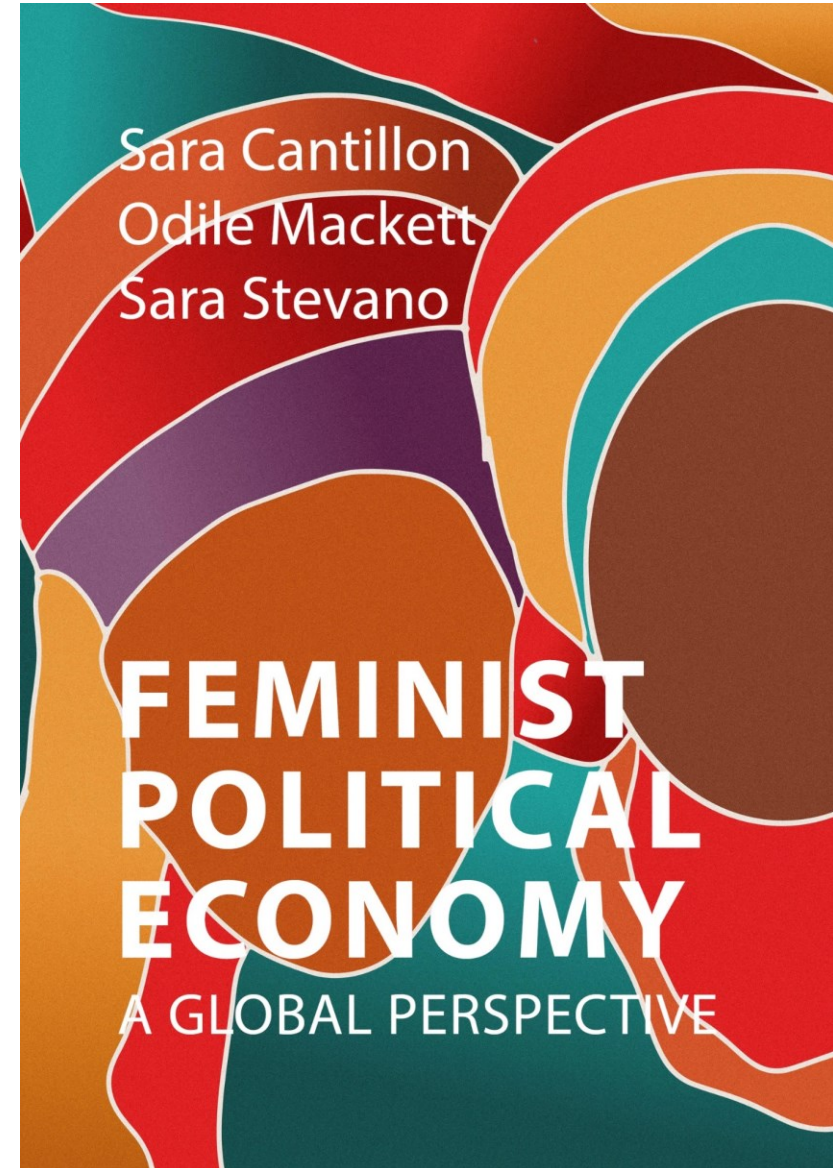
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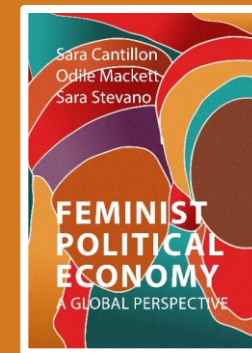


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About Us...

- Sara Cantillon is Professor of Economics and Gender and Director of the Wise Centre for Economic Justice at Glasgow Caledonian University. She is President-Elect of the International Association for Feminist Economics.
- Odile Mackett is a Senior Lecturer in the School of Governance at the University of Witwatersrand. An economist by training, her research interests are related to the division, quality and definition of both paid and unpaid work, how households and families are structured and formed around these types of work, and how the state interacts with households and the market to reinforce the gendered and racial division of work.
- Sara Stevano is a Senior Lecturer in Economics at SOAS University of London, after holding teaching and research positions at the University of the West of England, Bristol, and King's College London.





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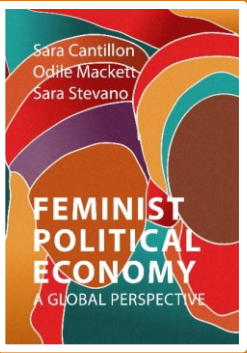
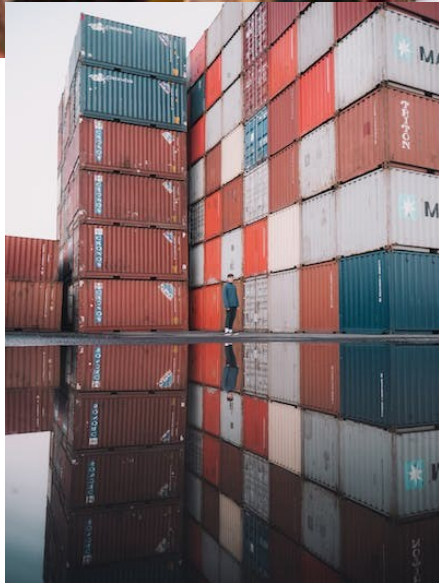


Chapter 1

A Global Perspective on Feminist Political Economy

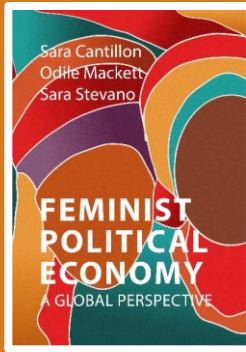


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Outline

- Introduction
- Part I: Feminist Political Economy: Evolution, critique, interdisciplinary nature, features, and paradigm reshaping of feminist political economy.
- Part 2: Global Perspectives: Global interconnectedness, historical roots, intersectionality and Global Context: complexities, eurocentrism.
- Part 3: Outline of Book and chapter themes.
- Conclusions
- Discussion Questions





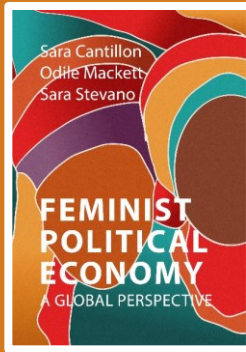
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Introduction

Contexts : Inequalities; Intersectionality

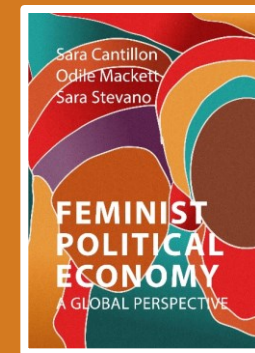
Rising Inequality

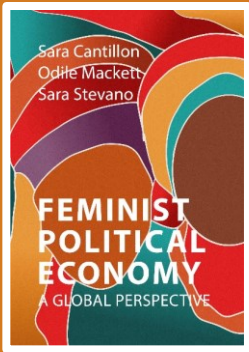
- World Inequality Report (2022) indicates growing income and wealth disparities within countries with current global inequalities resembling those seen during the peak of Western imperialism.
- Piketty's research, focusing on the top 1% of income earners, has animated academic and public discourse.
- Covid-19 pandemic highlights not only economic disparities but also gender, race, and class inequalities.
- Neoliberal era's intensification of inequalities risks undoing progress in social and economic justice.



Costs and Impacts of Inequality

- Costs manifest in political, economic, and social realms:
 - Macroeconomic instability
 - Democratic process erosion
 - Social cohesion disruption
 - Limited social mobility
- Neoclassical/neoliberal approaches increasingly questioned in academia and social movements on how they can better addressing human, social, and environmental needs, leading to a broader and heterodox concept of political economy
- International organizations and governments beginning to acknowledge the need to tackle inequality.



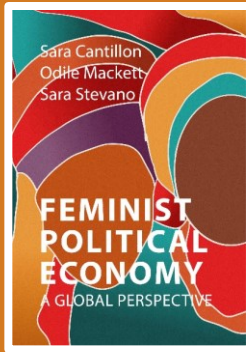


Intersectional Lens in Feminist Activism

- Foregrounding gender inequalities in political economy
 - takes issue with mainstream thinkers who have traditionally considered the economy neutral, and with Marxists, who saw it as being structured on the lines of class conflict alone.
- Importance of racial dynamics.
- Current feminist activism integrates intersectionality in the context of globalized capitalism.



FPE in Context of Covid-19

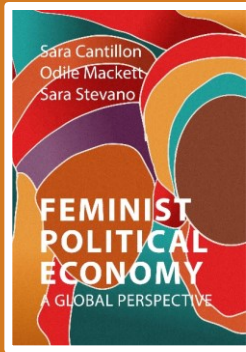


- Covid-19 pandemic magnifies inequalities and socio-economic impacts, exposing the formal economy's reliance on invisible, unpaid care labor often performed by women and marginalised groups.
- Pandemic disproportionately affects women's employment, income, and care burden.
 - Violence against women escalates, termed as 'Shadow Pandemic' by UN.
 - Past economic crises impact women's economic security much longer than men.
 - Pre-pandemic gender disparities amplify the negative effects.
- Recognizing pandemic's deepened inequalities signify the need for transformative economic policy changes.



Impact of Social Movements on Equality

- Social movements raise awareness about economic and social justice and in some instances led to tangible legislative changes and policy reforms.
- LGBTQ+ movements globally contributed to legalizing same-sex marriages.
- Recent movements like #MeToo and Black Lives Matter spotlight gender and racial inequalities.
- Social movements/activism have addressed social and economic issues that are central to the concerns of feminist political economists.



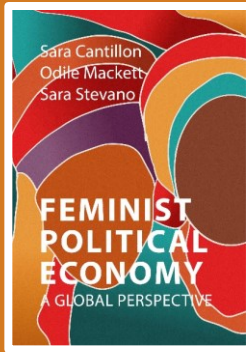


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PART 1

Feminist Political Economy

Evolution of Political Economy

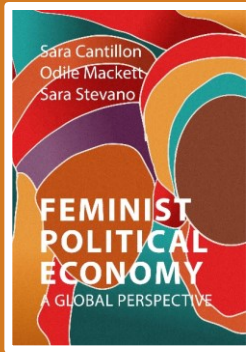


Political Economy: Study of economic theories/systems in relation to political and social context.

- Multidisciplinary approach considers history, culture, customs, and their connection to economic systems.
- Key questions: ownership, division of labor, income distribution, social relations of consumption, reproduction, and accumulation.
- Political economy examines social relations underlying production and consumption, challenges detachment of economics from social, political, and cultural dimensions, and focuses on power dynamics, distribution, marginalization, and exploitation.



Evolution of Political Economy



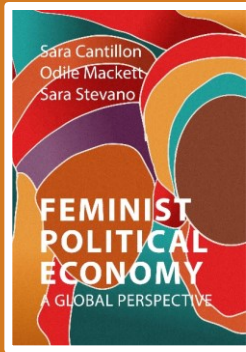
Classical Political Economy: Originated in the 17th and 18th centuries.

- Early economists like Adam Smith, John Stuart Mill, Karl Marx integrated politics, philosophy, law, history.
- Emphasized mutual influence of social, cultural, and historical forces on economic activity.
- Income distribution a significant concern, with different classes receiving different proportions.
- Classical political economy addressed the problem of distribution of rent, profit, and wages

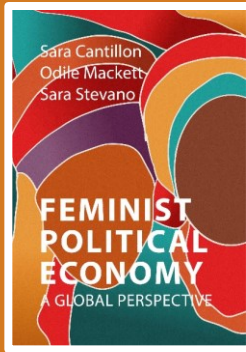


Evolution of Political Economy

- **Marginalist Revolution** - Economics separated from political economy favoring formalism and abstraction. Markets (and self-interested individual) primary domain of economic activity. Market activities were conceptualized as discrete spheres; separate from state and non-market activities.



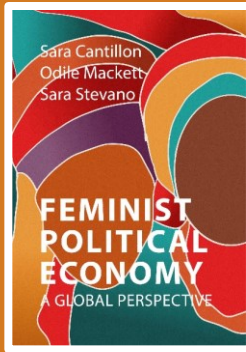
Evolution Feminist Perspective



- Feminist perspective criticizes the narrowing scope of economics as detrimental to women and understanding inequality.
- Neoclassical focus on markets as separate from state but markets do not operate in a vacuum but are social institutions which depend for their operation on background property rules and a complex of social, cultural, and legal institutions.



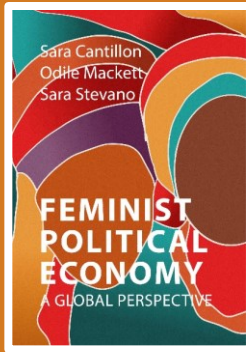
Evolution Feminist Perspective



- Revival of political economy in late 20th and early 21st century addresses complex issues, inequalities, crises.
 - Increased government role, new theoretical approaches like institutional economics renewed focus on social structures, collective action.
 - Modern political economy encompasses politics of economic relations, national/international issues, comparative studies.
- Re-emergence of political economy promotes holistic understanding of relationships between individuals, states, markets, and society.
- BUT remains gender blind and devoid of any feminist perspective.



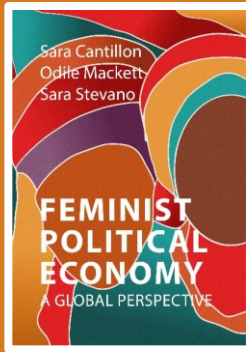
Understanding Feminist Political Economy



- Interdisciplinary field at the intersection of feminist economics, political economy, gender, and development.
- FPE encompasses various terms, like Feminist International Political Economy and Feminist Political Economy of Development, areas of inquiry which are interconnected and often overlapping.
- Feminist Economics: Situated within economics, focuses on gendered economic analysis and critique.
- Feminist Political Economy: Rooted in political economy, interdisciplinary in nature, explores socio-economic power dynamics



Understanding Feminist Political Economy

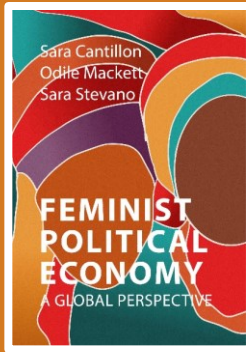


- Feminist International Political Economy: Part of feminist thinking in international relations, challenges mainstream perspectives.
- All of these responses to mainstream economics, political economy, and international political economy approaches.
- It is a complex and evolving field.

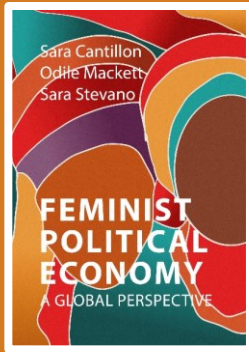


Feminist Political Economy

- FPE seeks a clear understanding of the interaction between individual choice, collective identity and action, and structural inequality.
- Emerging paradigms challenge classical and neoclassical approaches.
- Feminist theory plays a significant role in reshaping these paradigms.



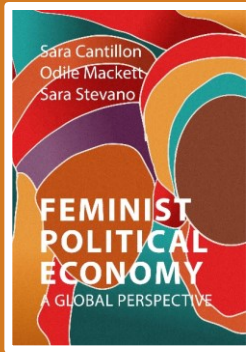
Key Features of FPE



- **Recognition of Embedded Gender:** FPE views gender as embedded in all economic and social relations.
- **Expanding Scope:** FPE extends beyond state and market to include household, family, community, and social reproduction.
- **Challenging Public-Private Dichotomy:** FPE questions the separation of public and private spheres.
- **Addressing Inequalities:** FPE not only documents but also analyzes co-constituted gender, class, and race inequalities.
- **Capitalist-Patriarchy System:** FPE identifies how capitalist and patriarchal relations uphold discrimination and perpetuate capitalism.



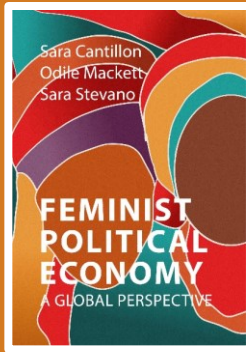
Key Features of FPE



- **Understanding Capitalism:** FPE seeks a deeper understanding of capitalism by highlighting the role of inequalities.
- **Methodological Plurality:** FPE employs critical, theoretically-rich, and empirically-grounded research methods.
- **Power Relations in Knowledge:** FPE addresses power relations in knowledge production, revealing androcentric biases.
- **Intersectional Analysis:** FPE conducts intersectional analysis, examining interactions between gender, race, class, and citizenship inequalities.



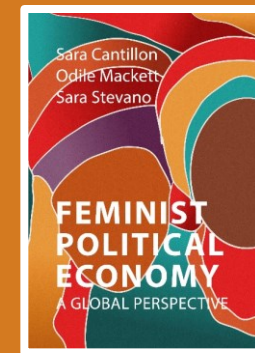
Key Areas of Analysis of FPE



- **Social Reproduction:** Analyzing the roles of care, unpaid work, and gendered responsibilities in reproduction of labor force.
- **Production/Consumption and Labor Market Inequalities:** Examining gendered divisions within work, wage gaps, and labor market discrimination.
- **Intra-Household Inequalities:** Investigating power dynamics within households and their impact on women's economic position.
- **Public-Private Sphere Exchange:** Analyzing the gendered division of unpaid care work and its effect on gender equality.
- **Critiques of Progress and Well-being Indicators:** Assessing economic and social progress indicators and their relevance to women's well-being.
- **Globalization and Changing Relationships:** Understanding the changing interactions among states, markets, civil society, and NGOs.



Key Areas of Impact of FPE



- **Complex Institutional Analysis:** FPE unveils institutions, power relations, and exploitation embedded in economic contexts.
- **Exploring Structural Inequalities:** FPE delves into underlying inequalities affecting women's material conditions and vulnerability.
- **Care and Social Norms:** FPE examines gendered care responsibilities, reciprocity, and societal norms.
- **Connection of Macro and Micro Processes:** FPE connects global capitalist circuits to women's lives, filling gaps in knowledge.
- **Recognition of Gender Inequalities:** FPE highlights the centrality of gender, race, and class in the functioning of global capitalism.
- **Contributing to Broader Theories:** FPE enriches theories recognizing gender inequalities in economic systems





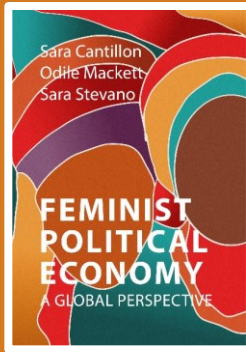
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Part 2

Global Perspective

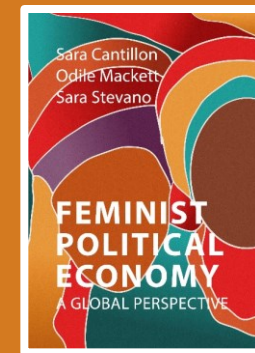
Global interconnectedness

- We live in an interconnected world
- Gender analyses need to recognize the global nature of political economy (Rai and Waylen, 2014)
- Covid-19 crisis exposed not only spatial interconnectedness but also how health and well-being are shaped by social, economic and political processes – ‘syndemic’ (Horton, 2020)
- Global nature of poverty and inequality – debate in development studies, see most recent intervention [here](#)
- But the need for a global perspective goes beyond the recognition of such global interconnectedness



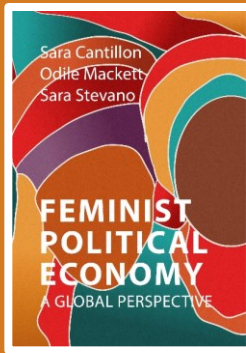
Starting point

- What are the origins of the contemporary structure of the global economy?
- Globalisation as a long-term process that dates back to the 13th century – but changes in modes of integration, global division of labour, trade (Nayyar, 2019)
- See chapter 2 on the global division of labour
- Such processes are inherently gendered – key insight emerging from feminist scholarship, especially concerned with neoliberal globalisation



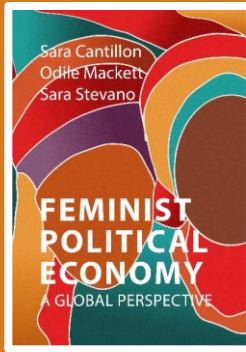
Coloniality & location in the global economy

- Consider how regions, countries and people are located within the global economy: What is their role? How do they relate to each other?
- Contemporary hierarchies in the global economy have their roots in the international economic order created by European colonial expansion to the West and the South
- Colonial domination encompasses *colonialism* – land/resource expropriation, political domination – and *coloniality* – colonisation of the mind (Tamale, 2020)
- Coloniality links to a system of labour control based on racial difference (Quijano, 2000)
- Persistence of (neo)colonialism and coloniality in a (largely) post-colonial world? Growing body of literature documenting the contemporary legacies of colonialism in the functioning of the socio-economic system
- As gender relations are brought into the picture, it is necessary to understand their articulation with power relations of class, race, colonial legacies and other axes of differentiation



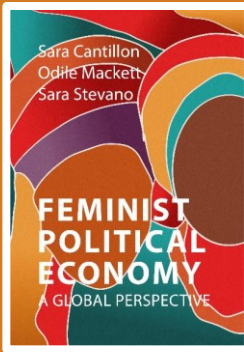
Intersectionality in global feminist analyses

- It refers to the concomitant nature of discrimination and inequality on grounds of gender, race, class, caste, and so forth (Crenshaw, 1991)
- The roots of intersectionality are in the Black radical and Third World liberation traditions (Salem, 2018)
- An intersectional lens is a necessary companion to a global perspective in feminist political economy



Why a global perspective?

A global perspective is necessary, not only because the world is interconnected but because contemporary global hierarchies are historically determined and structured by gender, race and class. Thus, a global FPE perspective aims to uncover how intersecting inequalities serve the modalities of production and reproduction of global capitalism.





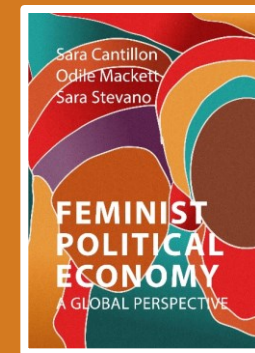
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Part 3

Book Outline and Chapters

Books Approach

- Engaging Global North and South Perspectives: Case studies from diverse contexts.
- Highlighting Implications for FPE Theory: Insights for theory building.
- Capturing Co-Constitution of Oppression: Gender, race, class, and power axes.
- Exposing Global Exploitation: Global North's dependence on Global South resources



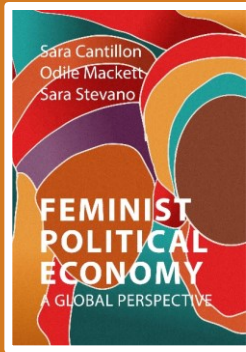
Chapter Outline

Overview of Pertinent Topics

- Global North and South Perspective
- Intersectional Approach: Analyzing intersecting inequalities.
- Contextualizing Inequalities: Historical and contemporary lens.
- Impact of Covid-19 Pandemic: Highlighting pandemic's effects on inequalities.

Chapter 2 Global Division of Labour

- Mapping global division of labour in colonial and neoliberal eras.
- Insights into racialized capitalism's functioning.
- Core-peripheral geographical divisions and subordination.
- Challenges in neoliberal era, feminization, and informalization of labor.
- Gendered division of labor as a pillar of capitalist societies.



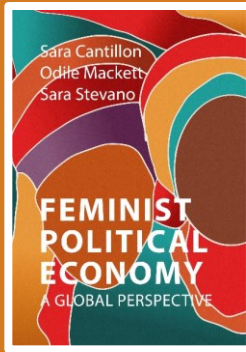
Chapter Outline

Chapter 3 Social Reproduction

- Contested debate on social reproduction and emergence of social reproduction feminism.
- Role of women in maintaining social order.
- Framework for understanding human life and labor reproduction.
- Interplay between social reproduction and capitalist relations.

Chapter 4 Care

- Undervaluation of care work and its impact on capitalist reproduction.
- Predominant role of women in performing care work.
- Care economy, paid and unpaid care work examined.
- Measurement of care and conflicting motivations explored.



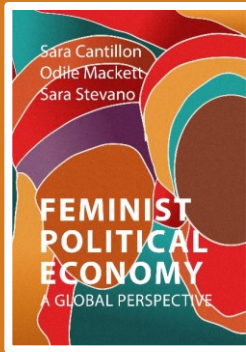
Chapter Outline

Chapter 5 Household

- Uncovering the household's role in women's subordinate status.
- Problematic portrayal of households as harmonious.
- Alternative perspectives on households' economic significance.
- Connection between household and broader capitalist economy.

Chapter 6 Intra-Household Inequalities

- Household's continuum of influence on women's status.
- Invisibility of intrahousehold inequalities.
- Role of gender in financial control, autonomy, and decision making



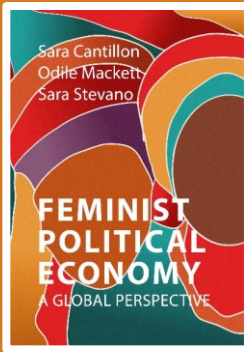
Chapter Outline

Chapter 7 Labor Market Inequalities

- Role of the state in mediating market and household dynamics.
- Gender inequalities in the labor market and household.
- Time-use inequality and discriminatory practices.
- Gender wage gap and state intervention.

Chapter 8 Welfare Regimes

- Welfare state emergence and variations.
- Contesting gender equality in welfare.
- Feminist views on social provisioning.
- Antipoverty principle, feminization of poverty, policy debates



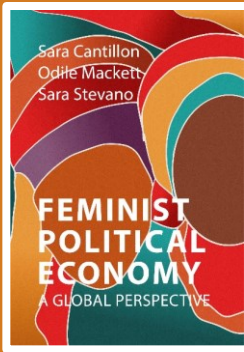
Chapter Outline

Chapter 9 Feminisation of Poverty

- Concept origins and contemporary relevance.
- Female-headed households, poverty interrelation.
- Impact on policy debates.
- Measurement challenges, women's poverty highlighted.

Chapter 10 Economic Crises

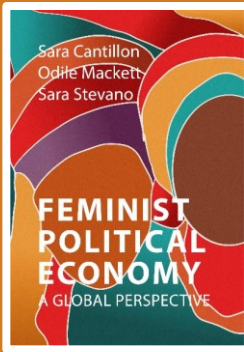
- Neoliberal era crises' frequency and global impact.
- Women's care work maintains household stability during crises.
- Women's care work reinforces global capitalist system during crises.
- Crises perpetuate gender inequalities, biased policy responses.



Chapter Outline

Chapter 11 GDP and its Alternatives

- GDP's role as economic measurement.
- GDP limitations: ignores marginalized groups' contributions.
- Alternate indicators: GPI, HDI, feminist economics proposed.
- FPE challenges conventional measurement, highlights women's economic roles





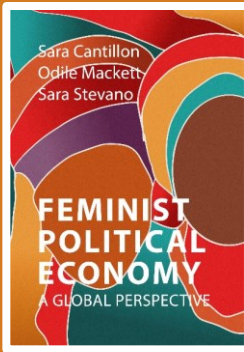
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Conclusions

Discussion questions and resources

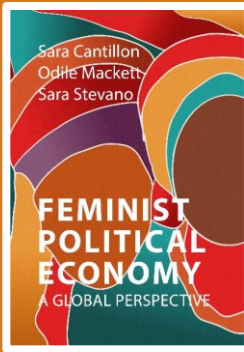
Conclusions

- Feminist political economy is fundamentally concerned with inequalities, with a primary focus on gender inequality; as such, feminist political economy offers concepts and tools that are critical to understand the causes and perpetuation of inequalities, which are on the rise at present.
- The origins of feminist political economy can be traced to the feminist critique of political economy and the development of the field of inquiry – which is inherently interdisciplinary – and intersects with feminist economics, feminist international political economy, and gender and development.



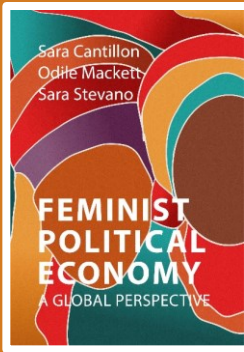
Conclusions

- Feminist political economy is concerned with (i) extending the sites and locations where we see and study economic activity, overcoming the fictitious public-private divide; (ii) recognising how gender, race and class inequalities serve the functioning of contemporary capitalism, and (iii) diversifying the methods of research in political economy, centring mixed methods and reflexivity.
- A global perspective in feminist political economy is necessary not only to capture the globally interconnected nature of production and reproduction, but crucially to foreground the contemporary global hierarchies, which are historically determined and structured by gender, race and class.



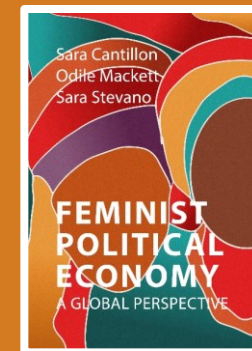
Discussion questions

- How can the origins of feminist political economy be described? Why do you think that there is a current renewed interest in this field?
- What are the main features of feminist political economy? How would you characterize feminist political economy?
- What is intersectionality and how does it matter to a global feminist political economy approach?



Resources

- Lebohang Liepollo Pheko's TED Talk on 'Feminist economics is everything. The revolution is now!' (17min)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bDiOXjBK8xM>
- Angela Davis on 'Black feminism and intersectionality' (4min) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6Rim3dpdYsU>
- Shirin Rai on 'Feminist everyday political economy: space, time and violence' (46min)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tMIVIIMFFGc>
- Global Protest Tracker:
<https://carnegieendowment.org/publications/interactive/protest-tracker>



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Thanks for watching! 😊



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