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Feminist Political Economy

A Global Perspective



Pluralist Economics
Certificate Project

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Chapter 7

Labour Market Inequalities





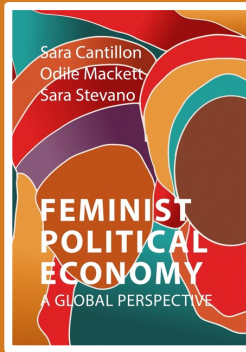
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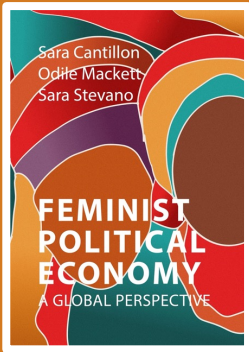
PART I

The work continuum

Dichotomies in work

- Labour/leisure model as a main reference for decision making
- Gary Becker (1965) and Jacob Mincer (1962) brings in household production.
- This allows for a three-way split in time
- Gendered division of labour places men and women in appropriate types of work





Gendered division of work

- Social and cultural norms are key elements maintaining a gendered division of work
- Untenable dichotomies makes visible the household as a site of value production and exploitation (Prügl, 2020)
- Simple dichotomies allow for exploitation of that which is invisible (or unseen)



Work as a continuum

Unpaid reproductive

Paid productive



Private sphere

Public sphere

Informal

Formal

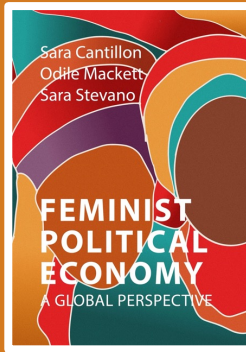
Use-values

Exchange values

Invisible

Visible

Source: Mackett (2022, 12)



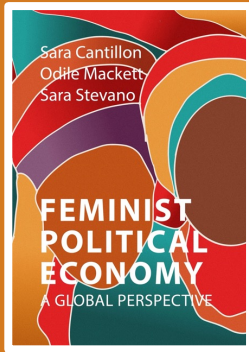


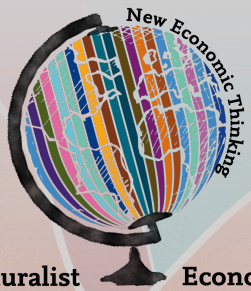
Dichotomies in work

“I have arrived at an off place with “private” households emerging as sites of ruthlessly exploitative labour and the “public” state as the site of household rule, “caring” for its population. The figure of the home-based worker led me there as she disobeys the separation of public and private spheres in Political Economy. She makes visible the home as a site of exploitation and value production, bringing into view household as both deeply gendered and historically variable, and highlights the way in which state policies draw on patriarchal household rule when inventing varieties of gender regimes. But she also instructs us that households are at the core of politics and economics, and invites us to theorize householding beyond frozen dichotomies of public and private.”

Prügl (2020, 8)

Image sources: <https://www.homenetinternational.org/about/home-based-workers/>;
<https://www.dawn.com/news/1556435>





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PART II

Theories of labour market segregation

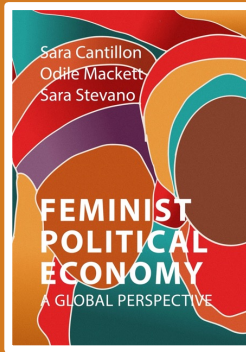
A Persistent Inequity

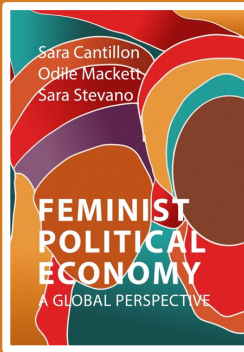
Over half a century after pay discrimination became illegal in the United States, a persistent pay gap between men and women continues to hurt our nation's workers and our national economy.

Women working full time in the U.S. are still paid just 84 cents to every dollar earned by men — and the consequences of this gap affect women throughout their lives. The pay gap even follows women into retirement: As a result of lower lifetime earnings, they receive [less in Social Security and pensions](#). In terms of overall retirement income, women have only 70% of what men do.

Pay equity will remain an AAUW priority until the gap is fully eliminated. We hope *The Simple Truth* motivates and empowers you to join us in this cause.

Image source: <https://www.aauw.org/resources/research/simple-truth/>





The gender wage gap

- Gender wage gap illustrates the extent to which men and women are differentially rewarded for their labour
- Human capital theory is most prominent in explaining such differences
- Based on individual preferences and differences in the choices men and women make in relation to human capital accumulation



Occupational segregation



Women's



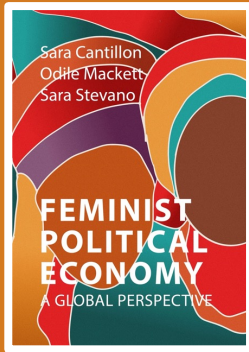
Men's



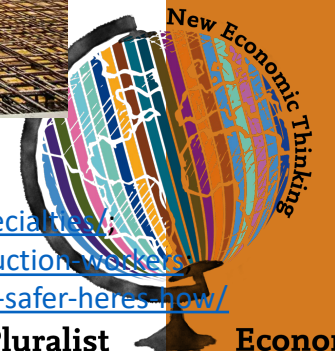
work

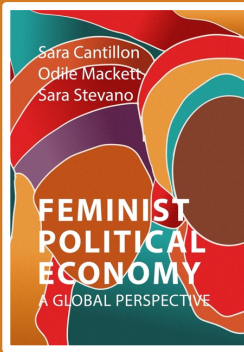


work



Images sources: <https://absn.northeastern.edu/blog/types-of-nurses/>; <https://www.intelycare.com/career-advice/types-of-nurses-a-guide-to-nursing-specialties/>; <https://nursejournal.org/registered-nursing/top-registered-nursing-jobs-and-careers/>; <https://elearningindustry.com/investing-in-ld-programs-for-construction-workers/>; <https://www.bigrentz.com/blog/construction-skills/>; <https://www.moneyweb.co.za/news/south-africa/south-africas-construction-industry-could-become-safer-heres-how/>





Labour market segmentation

- Segmentation theorists introduce the primary and secondary economies (Reich, Gordon & Edwards, 1973; King, 1999)
- Primary economy: ‘good’ jobs
- Secondary economy: ‘bad’ jobs





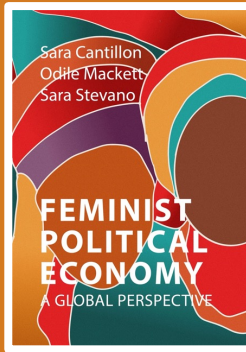
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PART III

Labour market interventions

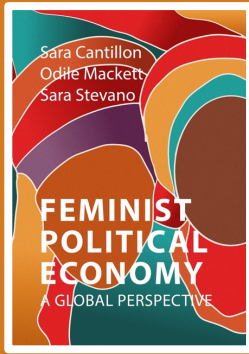
Fixing what can be seen

- Policy interventions can perpetuate inequalities
- Mommy tracks (Korzec, 1997)
- Benefits of full-time permanent employment
- Varying approaches in different contexts



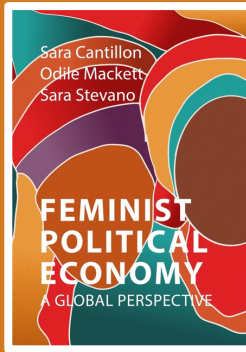
Noticing what cannot be seen

- Ignoring unpaid work responsibilities
- Within-group inequalities
- Inter-generational inequalities
- Indirect interventions



The emergence of new labour market challenges

- Growing prevalence of non-standard forms of employment and crowding in the informal economy
- Sharing, platform, and gig economies can also perpetuate gender inequality



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Thanks for watching! 😊



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