



Virtual Symposium

Confronting the Climate Crisis: Feminist Pathways to Just and Sustainable Futures

October 7, 8 and 9, 2020

To RSVP for the entire symposium, register [here](#).

To attend a smaller number of the sessions, please register using the links below.

This symposium aims to call attention not only to the climate crisis, but also to what is at stake in the kinds of responses to it that are proposed. Many of the proposed “fixes” are rooted in the same political economic paradigms and worldviews that created the current climate and ecological crises in the first place; they often not only pose great environmental risks themselves, but also threaten to gravely deepen existing gender, racial and global inequalities. However, there are also encouraging signs that many activists and researchers are approaching climate breakdown with a global justice perspective. Our goal is to highlight, among them, the critically important work being done by diverse feminist thinkers, from feminist political economists and ecologists to indigenous and racial justice activists, who outline the sorts of radical solutions that the crisis demands, proposing fundamental shifts in the dominant global economic model. Throughout, we explore how intersectional feminist analysis, with an emphasis on global justice, can lead to the fundamental transformations urgently needed to forestall climate catastrophe.

The symposium, *Confronting the Climate Crisis: Feminist Pathways to Just and Sustainable Futures*, will take place over three consecutive days in five sessions.

Agenda

OCTOBER 7th

FEMINIST APPROACHES TO THE CLIMATE CRISIS

9:00AM – 11:30AM (Boston, GMT-4)

FRAMING THE SYMPOSIUM

Carol Cohn, Director, Consortium on Gender, Security and Human Rights

PANEL: FEMINIST APPROACHES TO THE CLIMATE CRISIS

Indigenous Feminism and Challenging the Climate Crisis Narrative

Deborah McGregor, Associate Professor & Canada Research Chair in Indigenous Environmental Justice, York University

Indigenous women have distinct contributions to make to the international dialogue on global environmental/climate crisis while providing a powerful critique of colonialism, race and gendered power relations. This presentation will focus on the contributions that Indigenous feminism theory and practice can make to envision a future in the face of the climate crisis for all life. The questions it will address include: What actions have Indigenous women taken to address their distinct experiences, concerns? What do Indigenous women envision as their future?

Toward an Ecofeminist Green New Deal? Reflections on Politics, Process and Prospects

Sherilyn MacGregor, Reader in Environmental Politics, University of Manchester

This contribution combines an ecofeminist critique of mainstream Green New Deal (GND) discourses and some reflections on what an ecofeminist GND might look like. MacGregor will draw on her involvement in process of drafting a feminist GND for the UK to discuss the politics, process and prospects of finding inclusive, intersectional feminist visions for a climate just and sustainable future.

Petro-Bromance: Masculinities Driving the Climate Crisis

Joni Seager, Professor of Global Studies, Bentley University

At just the moment that economic and environmental logics are shifting away from fossil fuels, there is a political mobilization of an increasingly stubborn and irrational attachment to them. How is this political support synergistically tied to conservative, often explicitly misogynist, definitions of manliness? And how does this “petro-bromance” further drive the policy and cultural phenomenon of climate denial?

The Politics and Possibilities of Co-creating Anti-capitalist and Decolonial Feminist Movements for Climate Justice,

Ruth Nyambura, Kenyan, Feminist Political Ecologist

What are the possibilities of co-creating transnational ecological-feminist movements that centre the politics and praxis of anti-capitalism and decolonization?

Pandemic and Protest as Potential Portal beyond Patriarchy

Reverend Mariama White-Hammond, Founding Pastor of New Roots AME Church, Dorchester, MA

Rev. Mariama will explore how this moment has exposed the oppression and fragility of our current systems and offered us an opportunity to imagine and build something new. She will focus in on how we have a powerful opening for building an intersectional ecological community that works for both people and planet.

OCTOBER 8th

FEMINIST CRITIQUES OF MAINSTREAM “SOLUTIONS”

9:00AM – 11:00AM (Boston, GMT-4)

Climate Non-Negotiables: Not “Something that Markets Can Handle”

Anita Nayar, Director, Regions Refocus

The main policy responses to the global environmental crises have been to turn to market and technological “fixes,” such as carbon trading, agrofuels, nanotechnology, geoengineering and synthetic

biology. However, these technologies are no “fix” for today’s multiple social, economic, ecological and political crises; the resulting technocratic-industrial complex is part of the problem, not a pathway to a better future.

Rebooting the Scarcity Scare: Population, Conflict and Climate Change

Betsy Hartmann, Professor Emerita of Development Studies, Hampshire College

Today old narratives of population pressures causing poverty, migration, environmental degradation and war are being re-cloaked in the green language of climate change. This development diverts attention from the role of powerful fossil fuel interests, contributes to the resurgence of population control and Far Right ecofascism, and threatens to further militarize climate policy. How can we mount an effective challenge and advance progressive feminist alternatives?

Injustices of Solar Geoengineering: A Feminist, Antiracist Perspective on the Ultimate Technological Fix

Jennie Stephens, Director, School of Public Policy & Urban Affairs; Dean’s Professor of Sustainability Science & Policy; Director for Strategic Research Collaborations, Global Resilience Institute, Northeastern University

As the climate crisis has worsened, advocacy for advancing research into solar geoengineering has been steadily increasing. Solar geoengineering research is being advocated by a small group of primarily white men at elite institutions in the Global North, funded largely by billionaires or their philanthropies who are envisioning a militarized approach to controlling the earth’s climate. Researching this climate intervention perpetuates injustices by reinforcing systems that allow the rich and powerful to control conditions for everyone else.

Women, E-Waste and Technological Solutions to Climate Change

Lucy McAllister, Postdoctoral Researcher of Sustainability, Technical University of Munich, Center for Energy Markets

The informal disposal of electronic waste unfairly and disproportionately burdens women in less developed countries by affecting their mortality/morbidity, fertility, and the development of their children. As technological solutions to climate change increasingly enter the waste stream, there is a need for greater inclusion and recognition of women waste workers and other disenfranchised groups in forging future climate agreements.

Confronting the Climate Crisis: A View From Feminist Economics

Julie Nelson, Professor Emeritus of Economics, University of Massachusetts Boston

Mainstream economics promotes a narrow mindset when it comes to climate, yet many who criticize the mainstream have narrow views as well. What might be possible if we think past the binary of "hard" versus "soft" solutions?

RESTORING RESILIENCE

11:20AM - 11:30AM (Boston, GMT-4)

Join us for 10 minutes of breath and energy work between panels!

Led by Mariama Williams, C-IAYT Yoga Therapist

No separate registration required.

GENDER, SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND THE CLIMATE CRISIS

11:30AM – 1:30PM (Boston, GMT-4)

More than (Wo)men: Why Intersectionality is Critical for Effective and Just Adaptation

Edward Carr, Director and Professor of the International Development, Community, and Environment Department, Clark University

Most “gender-sensitive” approaches to adaptation project design and implementation rest on binary constructions of gender and identity that can obscure the needs of the most vulnerable, marginalized, and challenged in a given population. Adopting and implementing intersectional approaches to identity is a critical means of identifying and addressing these needs, and thus moving toward just and effective adaptation policy and projects.

Weathering Development on an Empty Stomach: Women Farmers, Climate Precarity, and the Fate of the "Green Revolution" in Mozambique

Heidi Gengenbach, Associate Professor of History, University of Massachusetts Boston

In southern Mozambique, an area defined by increasingly unpredictable and extreme weather events, female farmers are five years into a Western donor-funded scheme to reduce chronic malnutrition by "modernizing" smallholder agriculture. However, the scheme's failure to involve rural women in project design--and deafness to their agroecologically expert critique of the project once underway--threaten to worsen hunger vulnerability in the very communities the scheme purports to help.

Gender Perspectives in UN Climate Processes

Maria Ivanova, Associate Professor of Global Governance and Director of Center for Governance and Sustainability, and **Candace Famiglietti**, PhD student, Global Governance and Human Security, University of Massachusetts Boston

To what degree and in what ways have people tried to get gender analysis or feminist perspectives into UN climate processes, and what has happened when they tried? What might be fruitful entry points for researchers and advocates who would like to try to bring these perspectives more centrally into UN climate processes?

Feminist Fears in Gender(ed) Discourses of Sustainable Development and the Environment

Kiran Asher, Professor of Women, Gender, Sexuality Studies, University of Massachusetts Amherst

Although feminist and environmental justice struggles are interrelated, explicitly *political*, projects, institutionalized environmental conservation and sustainable development endeavors are often policy-driven, *technical* projects. Asher draws on long-term fieldwork with Afro-Colombian social movements to explore this disjunction, tracing the synergies and slippages—in ideas and intent—when feminist-inspired concerns about women and gender are addressed in sustainable development projects.

Trade, Climate Change and Gender: Challenges for Development and Social and Gender Equity

Mariama Williams, Programme Coordinator, Sustainable Development, Climate Change and Gender, South Centre

This talk uses a feminist lens to explore the connections between international trade, infrastructure development projects and the extractive economic model that underlies the climate crisis. While work

making the interconnections between these topics is at a very early stage, it is clear that there are a number of key challenges and constraints underlying this relationship which rotate around the nature of the “greening” of infrastructure and the continuing reliance on neoliberal economic models that reinforce the drivers of climate change and exacerbate gender inequality.

OCTOBER 9th

FEMINIST PATHWAYS TO JUST AND SUSTAINABLE FUTURES, PART 1

9:00AM – 11:00AM (Boston, GMT-4)

Engendering Just Transitions: Dilemmas in Climate Policy

Seema Arora-Jonsson, Professor, Rural Development, Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences

In attempts towards a low-carbon and climate-resilient economy, the imperative of just transitions has gained ground in climate policy debates. Climate interventions may be perpetuating inequalities and creating new ones. I will reflect on what justice from a feminist perspective can mean in times of transition? Can active work with social policy enable a just transition?

Feminist "Just Transitions" and the Sustainability of Peace

Carol Cohn, Director, Consortium on Gender, Security and Human Rights, and **Claire Duncanson**, Senior Lecturer in International Relations, University of Edinburgh

Efforts to build sustainable peace after armed conflict, already fraught with failure, will be made increasingly difficult by burgeoning climate and ecological crises. In what ways does taking these crises seriously change the ways we think about peacebuilding? And could a transition from post-war economic recovery models based on extractivism to models based on regeneration, rooted in feminist conceptions of care and global justice, contribute to a more just, inclusive and sustainable peace?

Towards Gender-Transformative Change: Experience of the Climate Investment Funds

Anne Kuriakose, Senior Social Development Specialist, Climate Investment Funds (CIF)

Climate change threatens poverty and development gains, with differential impacts for women and men, including indigenous groups, farmers, and migrants. The Climate Investment Funds (CIF) foster transformational change towards climate-resilient, low carbon development in developing countries, and seek to advance gender equality through mitigation and resilience investments that improve women’s asset position, voice, livelihoods, and gender-responsiveness of local and national institutions in climate planning. Case examples from CIF’s portfolio in renewable energy, sustainable forest management, and climate resilience are discussed.

Care Not Growth: Rethinking Sustainability

Giovanna Di Chiro, Professor of Environmental Studies, Swarthmore College

Many feminist critics argue that the corporate-led, privatized, and individualistic “Green Economy” basically serves to sustain global capitalism’s pro-growth agenda while it reproduces and leaves intact deep-rooted colonialist relationships. In the face of the growing crises of poverty, dispossession, and climate disruption, can feminist and anti/de-colonial approaches lead to a more “just transition,” imagining and practicing more just and care-based forms of “sustainability”?

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FEMINIST PATHWAYS TO JUST AND SUSTAINABLE FUTURES, PART 2

11:30AM – 1:30PM (Boston, GMT-4)

Healing the Land is Healing Ourselves: Indigenous Solutions to Climate Change

Lindsey Bacigal, Communications Director, Indigenous Climate Action

Climate change and environmental degradation have had adverse effects on Indigenous Peoples all over the world. Indigenous womxn are often acutely affected by these ills, but also drive the resistance against climate change and the systems of oppression that accelerate it. This talk will speak to the leadership of Indigenous womxn in the fight for climate justice, along with profiling Indigenous solutions to the climate crisis.

Towards a Feminist Green New Deal

Bridget Burns, Director, Women's Environment and Development Organization

Some say we are living in the decade of the Green New Deal, with unprecedented political and popular momentum for sweeping, ambitious climate justice policies. But what does this look like from a feminist and global justice perspective & how can we build power to influence change?

Fertilizing Engagement: Building Trans-Community Collaborations Inspiring and Moving Us toward Climate Justice

.O, Climate and Social Justice Activist in Philadelphia

.O will share her experience as an activist and community organizer in Philadelphia working in collaboration with faculty, students, and community residents to support and sustain the transformation that is needed at this time in his/herstory for global healing. She will focus on two climate justice organizations, Serenity Soular and Philly Thrive.

Revolutionary Power: An Activist's Love Letter to Heal the Planet and Transform Our Energy System

Shalanda Baker, Professor of Law, Public Policy and Urban Affairs, Northeastern University

Stemming from her work in Mexico, Hawaii and Puerto Rico, Baker will discuss energy policy through the lens of a queer woman of color, arguing that the climate crisis gives us an unprecedented opportunity to reshape the energy system with justice (and love) at the center.

Transnational Feminist Analysis: Spotighting Pitfalls and Pathways on the Road to a Just, Sustainable Future

Diana Duarte, Director of Policy and Strategic Engagement, MADRE

We need more than new policy prescriptions to chart pathways to sustainable futures: we need entirely new paradigms to shape and evaluate policy. A transnational feminist analysis lights the way to making those vital shifts, revealing for instance that any effective Green New Deal must prioritize global justice, center a gender analysis, and be driven by grassroots leadership from the frontlines of climate breakdown. This talk will share principles and learnings from the Feminist Green New Deal campaign and explore the need for a specifically transnational and global approach to feminist analyses.

The Consortium on Gender, Security and Human Rights is based at the University of Massachusetts Boston, which resides on the ancestral lands of the Massachusetts and Pawtucket people. We acknowledge the violent history of genocide and forced removal from this territory, and we honor and respect the Indigenous peoples still connected to this land. Land acknowledgements are only one small step towards ensuring a culture of respect, truth, and accountability in our community; it is imperative that this acknowledgement develop into action combating the ongoing violence directed towards Indigenous peoples.

This symposium is cosponsored by the University of Massachusetts Boston's College of Liberal Arts Dean's Office; Africana Studies Dept; Anthropology Dept; Conflict Resolution, Human Security and Global Governance Dept; Economics Dept; History Dept; Political Science Dept; Women's, Gender and Sexuality Studies Dept; Human Rights Minor; the Honors College; the School for Global Inclusion and Social Development; the School for the Environment; the Sustainable Solutions Lab; the Center for Women in Politics and Public Policy; and the John W. McCormack Graduate School of Policy and Global Studies.

This symposium is part of the Consortium on Gender, Security and Human [Feminist Roadmap for Sustainable Peace](#) project. Support for the project comes from the Compton Foundation, the Rockefeller Brothers Fund and the Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs.