

Feminist Economics



Crash Course

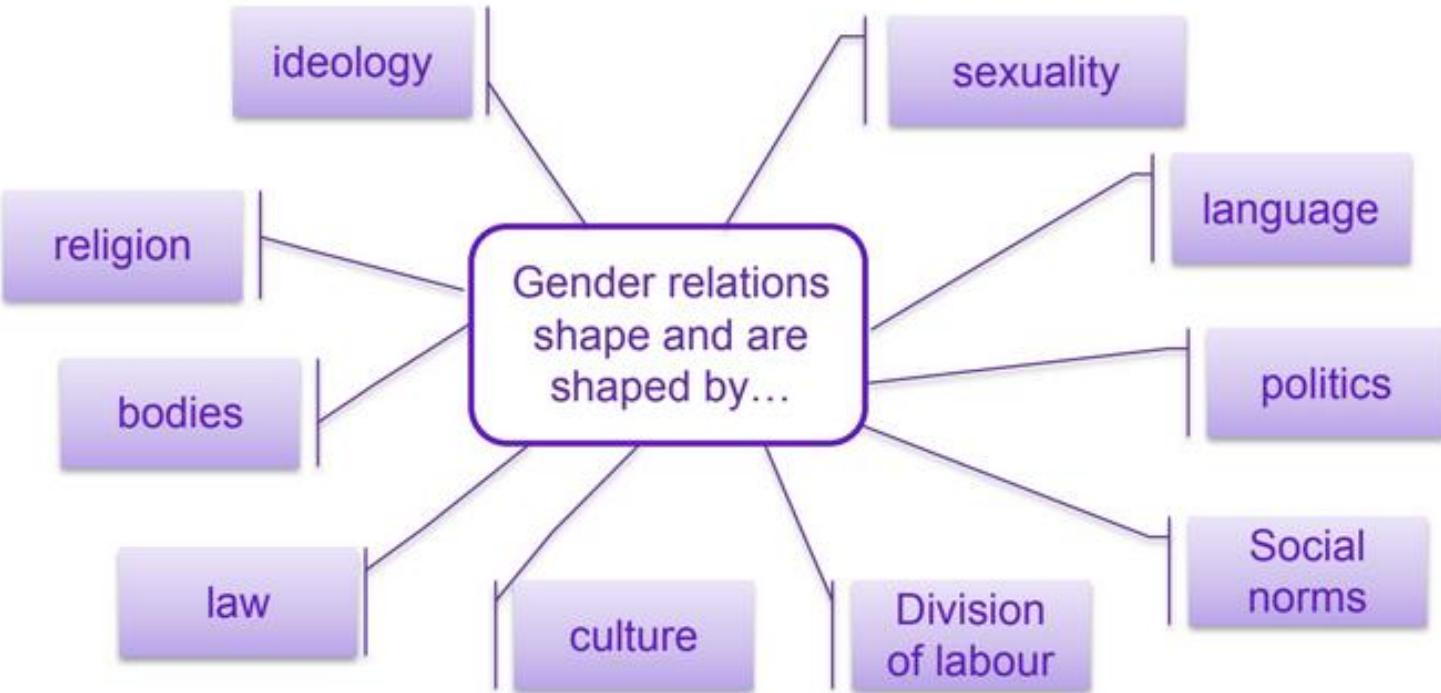
Feminism

What is Feminism?

*“Feminism is an **ensemble of social theories and political practices** which **oppose to certain perspectives that exclude feminine experiences** from their epistemological and political horizon. It reveals and **criticizes inequality between sexes and genders** at the same time that it **claims for women rights** to be guaranteed.”*

(Freie Universität Berlin)

Feminist Economics acknowledges that...



Feminist Economics

Objectives:

- include complex gender relations into economic analysis
- examine reasons for women's economic subordination
- take into account women's economic contribution
- achieve social action towards equality



Rethinking Neoclassical Economics

Market-based economy:

Economic contribution is only measured in monetary values.

Homo Oeconomicus:

Preference-based decision making driven by self-interest.

Male-oriented assumptions:

Focus lies on markets, while the access to markets is not equal for everybody. Claims to be universal, general and objective.

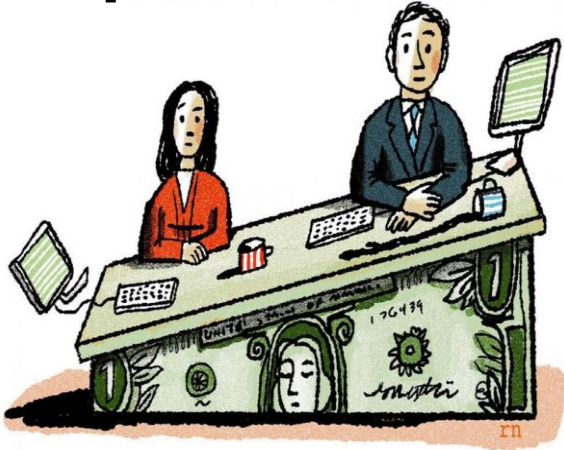


Labour Market

- Labour markets represent another dimension of gender inequality
- Gender roles and the pressure to conform to those roles manifest themselves in the workplace
- The current global labour force participation rate for women is close to 49%. For men, it's 75%



Gender Pay Gap



Sex Typing



Glass Ceilings & Sticky Floors



Unpaid Care Work

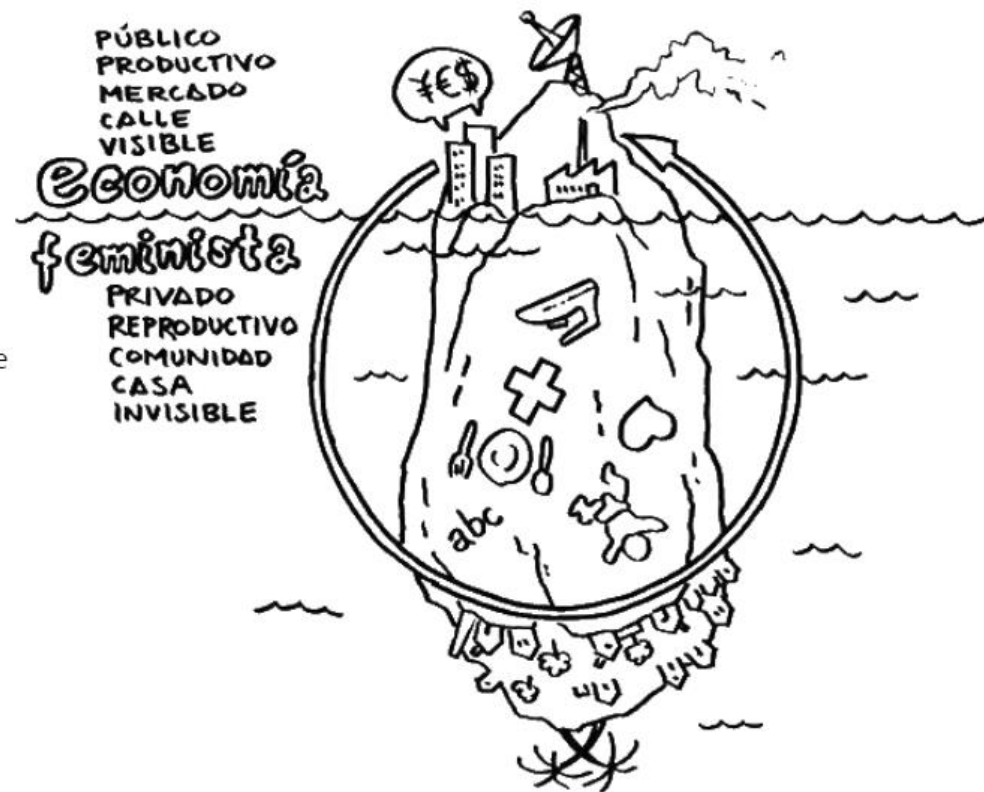
- Productive work → mostly male vs. **reproductive work** → **mostly female**
- Feminist economics tries to make **care responsibilities** more **visible**
- We need to value care work to create an equal society and **motorize the economy!** → value and professionalization of care
- **Global Care Chain:** When women enter the labor market, they cannot fulfil the care work anymore → a **care crisis** results → women which live in extreme poverty migrate from the Global South to the Global North to take care of their care tasks as women there can no longer fulfil these tasks



Public
Productive
Market
Street
Visible

**Feminist
Economics**

Private
Reproductive
Community
Home
Invisible



Gender Budgeting

- “**Gender responsive budgeting** refers to a variety of procedures and tools that aim to disaggregate fiscal policy impacts on gender inequality” (Budlender & Sharp, 1998)
- Idea: **Public expenditure** decisions can have **materially different impacts** on economic and social outcomes for **different genders**
- Governments should be **sensible to gender issues** when preparing the budget
- **Cutting spending** on social programs affects women more
- Government spending shows **priorities**

Feminist Economics & the Pandemic

- **Structural Problems:** Pandemic reveals long-time inequalities in health, education, development → social and economic fallout from Covid affects women more
- **Setbacks:** Containment measures like school closures have consequences for achieving equality, development, and also overall economic growth
- **Old patterns:** Women care for children & the elderly, absorb state and industry failings with little support
- **What this means:** Current policies are not only bad for women but for society as a whole → no better time to tackle injustices and inequities than now
- **Solutions:** Gender-responsive social protection, cash transfers for people in the informal economy, better access to public services, change social norms about women's and men's roles in society

Discussion Questions

1. What did you first imagine when you heard the term “Feminist Economics”?
What were your expectations?
2. Is Economics as a discipline more male- or female-dominated in your country of origin/university? Do you have an idea why?
3. Does the Feminist critique on Neoclassical Economics have anything in common with what you have learned in your workshop?