



# ‘Power of economics without power *in* economics’: examinations of gender/power in the neoliberal economic order

Melissa Langworthy<sup>1</sup> 

Received: 12 January 2024 / Accepted: 14 June 2024

© The Author(s), under exclusive licence to European Association for Evolutionary Political Economy and EAEPE Academy GmbH 2024

## Abstract

Gender is a powerful governing principle in neoliberal economic logics yet is most often employed as a characteristic of economic agents rather than constitutive of a powerful economic rationale. In this paper, I utilize feminist typologies of power to explore the ways in which the normative and operational neoliberal economic logics directly address women’s access to power. I employ the term ‘gender/power’ to indicate that gender and power cannot be understood as distinct treatments, but that gender is always implicated in and foundational of power structures and relationships. Through this analysis, I show that neoliberal ideologies neutralized much of the collective *power-with* of early feminist movements and have primarily acted to reinforce *power-over* women, as labourers, mothers, entrepreneurs, and subjects. I argue that neoliberal promises of market empowerment have been realized not in *power to*, as is emphasized in neoliberal discourses, but in *power-within* cultivated through gendered neoliberal feminist subjectivities of self-confidence and self-responsibility. In situating this analysis within prevailing neoliberal family rationalities, I suggest that feminist conceptualizations of *power-through* be expanded to include not just social relational dimensions, but market relations as well (e.g. managers, clients). Finally, I suggest three gendered standpoints of gender/power that should be engaged by economic analysis, academics, and policymakers to look past ‘one-size-fits-all’ logics and to increase the power of gender *in* economics.

**Keywords** Gender · Power · Economics

You cannot easily fit women into a structure that is already coded as male; you have to change the structure. That means thinking about power differently [...]

---

✉ Melissa Langworthy  
melissa.e.langworthy@gmail.com

<sup>1</sup> Calgary, Canada

It means, above all, thinking about power as an attribute or even a verb ('to power'), not as a possession.

-Mary Beard, *Women & Power*

## 1 Introduction

Serious attention to gender is necessary to investigate power, particularly power outside of market power, in analyses of evolutionary political economy (Dow 2020). Notably, an expanding interest in gender as a key analytic directing the future of evolutionary macroeconomics, including feminist economic, heterodox macroeconomic, and social stratification analyses (Davis 2022; Sawyer 2020), offers important opportunities to further investigate power in economics. Progressing this agenda, then, demands further integration of the work of feminist thinkers with evolutionary analysis. This paper offers a starting point for such agendas, through critically engaging feminist analysis of neoliberalism, and its integrated structures of economic, social, and political power.

Neoliberalism is a broad term to describe the agenda of increased competition—through deregulation and financial liberalization—and privatization that was endorsed by international organizations (i.e. the International Monetary Fund) and states (e.g. 'Reganomics' in the USA and 'Thatcherism' in the UK). Following this 'strong and widespread global trend towards neoliberalism since the 1980s' (Ostry et al. 2016), feminist thinkers have produced valuable insights into how contemporary neoliberal logics both support manifestations of prior patriarchal capitalist systems and have created new entanglements, not least of which is the successful co-optation of feminist principles in service of deepening the neoliberal economic order (Prugel 2015; Calkin 2018; Roberts 2015; Rottenberg 2018). This body of work has illuminated gender as a powerful shaper of neoliberal institutions and logics (Griffin 2015, 2009; Heine 2022; Radhakrishnan and Solari 2023) but has yet to query the impact of this co-optation on feminist understandings of power (Galie and Farnworth 2019).

A critical characteristic of the neoliberal order is the erasure of boundaries between economic, social, and political power. Far from being a purely economic structure, neoliberalism operates as a productive ideology, constructing specific social relations, everyday ways of living, and individual subjectivities to serve this logic and its expansion into ever more intimate spaces (Rankin 2001; Rottenberg 2018; Dardot and Laval 2017). Neoliberalism changed the national and international political economy through shifting much of state power to the marketplace, freeing capital through financial liberalization and the expansion of financial frontiers, reducing state provision and welfare frameworks, and privatization of public services (Dardot and Laval 2017).

As both policy and ideology, neoliberalism holds the power to define conduct and the terms under which we—as workers, individuals, family members, and citizens—make sense. At the individual level, (largely gendered) neoliberal subjectivities—often targeted at women—preach individual self-responsibility,

discipline, creditworthiness, and acceptance of everyday encroachment of neoliberal rationality beyond the market, dictating increasingly intimate logics for household, family, and personal governance (Montgomerie and Tepe-Belfrage 2019a; Nunn and Tepe-Belfrage 2017; Montgomerie and Tepe-Belfrage 2017). As such, the power of neoliberal rationality lays in its capacity to 'organiz[e] both the actions of the rulers and the conduct of the ruled' (Dardot and Laval 2017, p. 4).

Within this landscape, the task of this paper is to position gender within the symposium topic of the 'power of economics without power in economics'. As indicated in the quote that opens this paper, meeting this task requires 'thinking about power differently' and exploring women's capacity 'to power' within the neoliberal economic order. This undertaking necessitates analysis of the gendered logics that govern the neoliberal system, the power of gender on how these logics are deployed, and the experiences of women within this system. This analysis starts from the premise, well-established by Sydney Calkin (2018) that gender in neoliberalism is widely engaged as a characteristic of economic actors that needs to be input into markets; gender is rarely engaged as a critical power relationship that shapes markets and other powerful institutions. Thus, I seek to answer the following questions: What is the power of gender as an organizing and legitimizing principle in the neoliberal economic order? Are the co-opted logics of neoliberal feminism working to promote women's gender/power, individually and/or collectively? What gender/power is available to women under the neoliberal economic order?

To do this work, I necessarily entangle the seemingly positivist methods of neoliberal rationales within the social, constructivist methods valued by feminist analysis. Thus, this paper presents an analysis of the neoliberal economic order through the application of feminist power analysis (Galie and Farnworth 2019; Pansardi 2021). This analysis consists of five specific typologies of power that relate to gendered experiences and relationships: *power-over* reflects vertical, coercive, dominating, or constraining functions of power; *power-with* represents collective, horizontal power; *power-to* describes the power to act, bring change, or effect desired outcomes; *power-within* refers to individual self-confidence; and *power-through* recognizes that individual power is partially enacted through relational processes (e.g. within families and communities and local power structures) (Galie and Farnworth 2019).

Through this analysis, I show that neoliberal ideologies neutralized much of the collective *power-with* of early feminist movements and have primarily acted to reinforce *power-over* women, as labourers, mothers, entrepreneurs, and subjects. I argue that neoliberal promises of market empowerment have been realized not in *power to*, as is emphasized in neoliberal discourses, but in *power-within* cultivated through individual neoliberal feminist subjectivities of self-confidence and self-responsibility. In situating this analysis within prevailing neoliberal family rationalities, I suggest that feminist conceptualizations of *power-through* be expanded to include not just social relational dimensions, but market relations as well (e.g. managers, clients). Finally, I propose three gendered standpoints of gender/power that should be engaged by economic analysis, academics, and policymakers to look past 'one-size-fits-all' logics and to increase the power of gender in economics.

In the next section, I present key intersections and the rationale behind the analysis of gender, power, and neoliberalism, with a specific focus on how women's 'power *in*' the neoliberal economy was finely shaped by neoliberalism's competitive logics.

## 2 Gender/power and the neoliberal economic order

### 2.1 Defining gender/power under neoliberal power structures

Analysis of gender, power, and neoliberalism is complex. Gender is not only a key construct of power within neoliberal logics (Folbre 2020), but gender and feminism have both been co-opted and refashioned under neoliberalism to suit its ends (Prugel 2015, 2017; Rottenberg 2018). Gender is most visible in the neoliberal economic order as a characteristic of economic actors that is an input into markets, rather than a constitutive component of market rationality in itself (Calkin 2018). Neoliberalism's selective employment of gender is itself powerful: women's labour power in the market and at home is maximized while simultaneously the logics of competition neutralize claims to structural forms of gender discrimination and quell political avenues of feminist power (Prugel 2015). Thus, I employ the term 'gender/power' throughout the paper to indicate that gender and power cannot be distinguished in isolation, but that gender is always implicated in and foundational of power structures and relationships.

V. Spike Peterson's (2005) broad analysis of gender as both empirical and analytical within political economy analysis is useful in exploring the importance of gender/power in shaping normative, systemic boundaries and motivations as well as governing individual (gendered) subjectivities. *Empirical gender* engages the male–female biological sex difference, how men and women differently shape and are differently affected by political and economic structures. *Analytic gender* operates as a governing code: it orders how we think, shapes how we act, and privileges masculine over feminine (which is a distinct course from privileging men over women).

Neoliberalism primarily focuses on empirical gender, the ways in which gender is a characteristic of economic actors (e.g. women's tapping and placement in the economy and, more implicitly, their continuing responsibility for social reproductive labour). Starting in the 1970s, neoliberal logics of competition and market rationality identified women (as a biological sex, but especially poor women in developing countries) as 'untapped' labour resources that hindered national economic growth and development. That these women were engaged in valuable (but non-market) labour in the household because of gender norms around male and female labour, remained intelligible (e.g. Folbre 2020).

The focus on empirical gender neglects the role of analytical gender and the gender/power relationships that underpin neoliberal rationality. The continuing intelligibility of unpaid care work in the neoliberal economic order, despite being assigned to biological women, is an example of analytical gender, wherein this division of labour is shaped by power dynamics, cultural norms, and economic relations that

assign this labour to women under broader systems of patriarchy, capitalism, and other intersecting forms of oppression. Importantly, these privileges intersect with the full heterogeneity of women as a group with multiple intersectional identities of race, sexuality, age, national citizenship, marital status, educational levels, disability, etc. It is through this privileging that the gender/power ascribed to the masculine becomes palpable for transgender men (men who were biologically female at birth) who report increases in power and respect and, congruently, in the loss of personal power reported by transgender women (women who were biologically male at birth) (Nordell 2021).

The power of gender in neoliberalism traverses both the empirical and analytical, shaping both the experience of political and economic structures by sexed bodies and the employment of gender as a governing code shaping the institutional logics of power. For example, gender/power has been central to shaping institutions, nation-states, and individuals according to what Radhakrishnan and Solari (2023) call the 'feminist cover story' where gender/power logics motivated economic competition between nations and promoted women's inclusion in capital labour markets (Radhakrishnan and Solari 2023).

All concepts of power are heterogeneous, contested, and serve increasingly overlapping normative and descriptive purposes (Pansardi 2021). Meanings of gender/power in the neoliberal economic order have been consolidated as the power of neoliberalism has encroached on increasingly intimate spaces to shape socially valued ends and social identities. As such, gender/power follows other forms of power insofar as it is not 'an instrument some agents use to alter the independent actions of others, but rather as a network of boundaries that delimit, for all, the field of what is socially possible' (Hayward 2000, p. 3).

In addition to the logical and normative power of neoliberalism as a governing system, this paper will draw upon work that establishes the governance and disciplinary impact of gendered neoliberal subjectivities on individual women (Rankin 2001; Altan-Olcay 2014). In Foucauldian terms, power—as subject-constituting and self-governing—highlights how feminine subjects are shaped by patriarchal and disciplinary practices, each of which impacts their status as political subjects (Oksala 2013; Rankin 2001). For women, then, gender/power is not achieved through a specific position in the neoliberal society (e.g. being an entrepreneur, a manager, or even a political representative); each of these must be understood within the institutional power framework under which these have become symbolic of 'power'.

## 2.2 Neoliberal logics of competition shaped women's place in the global economic order

The economic and ideological tenets of neoliberalism are closely linked in practice (Calkin 2018), as such the employment of neoliberalism in the analysis will not separate these pathways. The economic and ideological power of neoliberalism has shaped nation-states in the same way as it has shaped individuals. This power, in turn, is shaped by the organizations that have shaped the global economic order in ways that privilege neoliberal logics. And the logic of neoliberalism is, at its core, a

gendered order (Radhakrishnan and Solari 2023) that distils macro-level power relations between nations into the realm of the personal, individual, lived, and embodied experiences (Enloe 1990).

Under neoliberalism, women's gender/power was engaged for the market, driven by the logic of competition, through logics of 'tapping' women for market activities and the 'smart economics' of investing in women that shaped decades of policy (Calkin 2015; Berlanga and Robles 2020; Chant and Sweetman 2012). Within this, gender was positioned as an input into markets, rather than a constitutive component of markets themselves (Calkin 2018) at the same time as Euro-American corporate culture became the leading mechanism for women's empowerment (Roberts 2015).

This logic, however, did not apply to all women, but identified specific neoliberal identities and behaviours through which women could gain visibility in the neoliberal economic order. The ideal neoliberal women, according to Radhakrishnan and Solari (2023), were entrepreneurial mothers, disciplined to be creditworthy, underpaid, and precarious, while maintaining responsibility for the competitive human capital of their children. As such, women's gender/power lay in the undervaluation of their labour, a key source of capital accumulation. Nancy Fraser (2020, p. 299) explains this process:

Endowing their daily struggles with an ethical meaning, then feminist romance attracts women at both ends of the social spectrum at one end, the female cadres of the professional middle classes, determined to crack the glass ceiling, at the other end, the female temps, part-timers, low-wage service workers, domestics, sex workers, migrants, EPZ workers, and microcredit borrowers, seeking not only income and material security, but also dignity, self-betterment, and liberation from traditional authority. At both ends, the dream of women's emancipation is harnessed to the engine of capitalist accumulation.

Critically, this positioning exposes the *power of neoliberalism* insofar as women's labour power was co-opted at the same time as the market became the primary site of power. What, if any, potential existed for women to claim power outside of capitalist accumulation frameworks?

### **2.3 Gender/power and the ascendancy of the logic of competition under neoliberalism**

Neoliberalism encompasses an 'unprecedented systemization' of the logics of competition that expands beyond processes of commodification to embody 'an extension of market rationality to existence in its entirety' (Dardot and Laval 2017, p. 11). The ascendancy of the logic of competition as a dominant rationale impacted women and shaped gender/power in three critical ways.

First, as identified above, it firmly established women (as gendered economic actors) as a key element of competitive labour and financial markets. At the national level, women's labour force participation and other key metrics of women's opportunities served as a source of competitive advantage among nations seeking legitimacy and competition in international markets. Much of women's competitive

advantage, however, lay in their relative disadvantage: the 'tapping' of 'rational economic women' (Rankin 2001) was not intended to bring women into the workforce on equal 'breadwinning' status with men (Fraser 2020). Instead, women were positioned as 'shock absorbers' to subsidize and protect the ever-deepening pursuit of expanding competitive financial frontiers (Elson 2014). Women provided essential income (due to increasing precarity for male and female workers) and socially reproductive labour of their households (expanded by the reduction of state welfare programmes), labour which enabled increasingly risky financial behaviours (Elias 2016). Women's role as financial 'shock absorbers' persisted during the Great Financial Crisis: in 2008 and 2009, respectively, the microfinance portfolios—the earnings of entrepreneurial mothers—of the global top ten funds grew by 31% and 23% (Radhakrishnan 2022). These assets were meaningful investments precisely because they were lent to women in noncyclical trades (Radhakrishnan 2022). As such, the financialization of the global economy is intimately linked with the frequency of crisis and the vulnerability of women (Rai and Waylen 2014).

Second, the logic of competition emphasized meritocracy and self-responsibility in ways that weakened the potential to address persistent forms of structural gender discrimination (Prugel 2015; Repo 2020). Enduring macroeconomic policy biases (Elson 2014) and legal gender discrimination (World Bank 2024) persist yet must compete against discourses that valorize gender inequalities through lack of merit or effort on the part of women. Primary among these is the invisibility of unpaid care responsibilities (Folbre 2018). Nancy Fraser (2020, p. 136–7) explains that the capitalist worker as a universal social subject is a norm that 'carries a racial and gender subtext, as it is supposed that the worker has access to a job paying a decent wage and is not also a primary parent'. This oversight of unpaid social reproductive labour in the neoliberal economic structures has legitimized the invisibility of the costs of such labour—it is considered external to 'real' value (e.g. productivity, GDP). As leading feminist economist, Nancy Folbre once exclaimed when discussing this topic, everything in the economy is produced by labour, except labour!<sup>1</sup> This critical oversight neglects to account for the time, resources, and care labour in economic production at the same time as it normalizes the heterosexual household and traditional gender identities (Griffin 2009; Folbre 2020).

Third, the neoliberal logic of competition is an individualized logic. Whereas economic actors can be gendered to maintain (or enhance) their economic value, under strong individualism, individual women's opportunities and outcomes are distilled into the arena of individual choice (Rottenberg 2018). As individuals, women become potential economically productive subjects for whom a range of interventions and behaviours can be prescribed (Calkin 2018) and extracted from their relationships, families, and other key gender/power contexts. This focus on individual achievements diminishes connection and support within state and community structures and emphasizes individual responsibility in all matters (Prugel 2015).

This section has presented a critical overview of the power of economics, through neoliberalism's selective engagement with gender/power in ways that not

<sup>1</sup> Nancy Folbre, Interview, Institute of New Economic Thinking, November 8, 2023.



only maximized women's labour value in capitalist markets and protected persistent biases in policy structures, but shaped new, subjectivities that extracted women's gender/power from its relational and political environments and tethered to the marketplace. In the next section, this overview of the power *of* neoliberalism to define (and limit) gender/power *in* the neoliberal economic order is analysed through its impact on different feminist typologies of power to further examine expressions of gender/power by women under neoliberal structures.

### 3 Screening neoliberal logics through feminist typologies of power

In this section, I offer an initial analysis of how the neoliberal economic order described above, organized around the logics of competition, meritocracy, and individuality, stands up to feminist conceptualizations of gender/power. In doing so, I create space for a new conversation of power and gender in the political economy, one that brings attention to the power *of* the neoliberal economic order that results from 'baked in' gender power hierarchies while simultaneously minimizing women's access to power *in* this economic order.

#### 3.1 Neoliberal economic logics replaced *power-with* with *power-over*

A key operation of the power of economics under the gendered neoliberal order is its effective replacement and recalibration of collective women's movements (*power-with*) with marketized and corporatized institutionalization of gender equality (*power-over*). *Power-over* reflects the ability to 'coerce, control or influence others, decision-making, and outcomes' (Bennett 2019, as cited in Pansardi 2021, p. 70). Thus, *power-over* here refers primarily to the neoliberal gender power structures of agenda-setting and defining gendered subjectivities.

This process impacted gender/power in neoliberal societies in three important ways: first, it transferred agenda-setting power from collective women's movements to international neoliberal institutions; second, it defined women's gender/power by market metrics; and third, it neutralized the capacity to effectively identify and correct the ways in which gender inequality is constitutive of the neoliberal order. I examine each of these three elements in more detail below.

##### 3.1.1 Established and empowered neoliberal institutions to speak for women

Early global collective feminist movements (*power-with*) catalysed key global conferences (e.g. Mexico City 1975, Copenhagen 1980, Nairobi 1985, and Beijing in 1995) and national (later joined by commercial) commitments to gender equality and women's empowerment (e.g. the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action) (Sen 2019). Implementing and managing these commitments became the purview of global governance institutions like the United Nations and the World Bank, who quickly became the agenda-setters for addressing women's rights and inequality



(Griffin 2009) along with a growing role for corporations (Grosser and McCarthy 2019; Tornhill 2019; Moeller 2018).

Against these organizations, the voice of collective feminist groups was weakened, divided into those who were 'co-opted' and those who resisted neoliberal rationality (Eschle and Maiguashca 2018). Within the new agenda-setting organizations, gender 'experts' were given the power to determine goals for women's empowerment, replacing in access to power—but not entirely silencing—collective women's voices and movements (Gerard 2023; Prugel 2015). At the same time, the changing political and economic landscapes geared towards capital have undermined many of the goals of these original agendas through 'intrinsically dis-equalizing' forms of economic growth (Sen 2019, p. 3), rising inequality (Piketty 2014), and increasing political populism (Sen 2019; Gidron and Hall 2017).

The co-optation of the women's agenda by these institutions deepened their capacity to direct the development of women's power to the needs of the private sector while undermining claims to structural discrimination (Prugel 2015).

### 3.1.2 ... at the same time as gender/power was deeply implicated in neoliberal economic logics

Gender/power is a powerful constitutive force in shaping neoliberal policies (Heine 2022; Cavallero and Gago 2021). Credit and debt logics are built on precarious and feminized economies that are attractive for capital but also on disciplining neoliberal subjects and households to consume beyond their wage power (Cavallero and Gago 2021).

Discourses of finance are deeply gendered (de Goede 2005) at the same time as gendered power dynamics are intrinsic to neoliberal modes of governance. For example, Heine (2022) describes how gender power politics were at play in the constitution of the European Monetary Union's (EMU) priorities. Utilizing discourse analysis of the governors of the German Bundesbank in the years leading up to the creation of the EMU, Heine (2022, p. 681) shows that:

[i]n their public discourses of monetary policy principles, they mobilized metaphors of disciplinary masculinity, shaped by discourses of gender as well as nationality and race, and supported their narrative by performing their own role as "strict fathers" with the moral strength to confront external evils as well as internal weaknesses. This discourse sought to create consent for their monetary policy principles, morally and affectively rooting them in a valorised masculine subjectivity.

This work illustrates how 'gendered meanings contribute to shaping economic governance in specific ways' and 'captures how gender affects the economy "in the making" and counters representation of the economy as an acultural and apolitical domain of pure economic logic' (Heine 2022, p. 672).

Against this analysis of masculinity in monetary policy, neoliberal constructions of gender/power emphasize discipline and identity-making, especially in times of financial crisis and austerity (Griffin 2015; Hozic and True 2016). This reinvention happens at the level of individuals and families in the service of capital (Cooper

2017). These constructions establish women as the ‘saviours’ and ‘shock absorbers’ when the masculinity of financial actors leads to crisis (Elias 2016, 2013; Prugel 2016). Within this framework, empirical, not analytical gender is enacted, which severely curtails the capacity to critique the ways in which neoliberal policies are inherently gendered to privilege masculine gender power within seemingly ‘neutral’ economic policies (Seguino 2020; Powell 2023; Elson 2014).

The focus of much of this gender/power reflects women’s position in (primarily traditional) households wherein neoliberal and neoconservative logics discipline gender/power in families through welfare reform, taxation, and monetary policy (Cooper 2017). Recently, this discipline has included the transfer of deficit spending from states to households and targeted expansion of consumer credit markets—with women (and mothers) being particularly squeezed (*ibid.*). For example, lessons from the aftermath of austerity in response to the 2008 global financial crisis and COVID-19 pandemic have highlighted the fundamental leveraging of exploitative gender/power dynamics in these policies, dynamics that discipline women (as mothers and as ‘deserving’ neoliberal subjects against other, ‘undeserving’ women (Dabrowski 2020; Fawcett et al. 2023) and engage them as shock absorbers providing (underpaid) labour and (unpaid) social reproduction services, with even greater impacts on women by ethnic and class membership (Pearson 2019).

Thus, gender/power is not something that can be granted by neoliberal logics, but something that is dictated and shaped by these logics—and deepened as neoliberal logics spread into even more intimate areas of everyday gender/power (Arslan 2022; Montgomerie and Tepe-Belfrage 2019b). This is not a hopeless story, however. Research of the Global South shows that, in contrast to models of women’s subordination in neoliberal infrastructures, ‘striking models of the assertion of women’s power’ are visible where women’s transnational alliances (e.g. *power-with*) create a different strategic value of gender (Brule 2023, p. 50). In comparison, the neoliberal gender order does not allow women agentic participation in cocreating new forms of power in their lives; instead, it defines women under market terms and restricts their interests to those that align with neoliberal interests, effectively shifting forms of *power-with* to forms of *power-over*.

### 3.2 Neoliberal subjectivities reframed *power-to* as *power-within*

A second key element of how neoliberal economic power has shaped women’s power is through the governance of neoliberal identities. I contend that neoliberal discourses have promoted women’s *power-to* (bring about outcomes or resist change (Galie and Farnworth 2019)) while reframing this power through the confidence and self-responsibilization discourses of *power-within*. Led by private sector-born discourses such as *Lean In*, written by technology executive Sherl Sandberg, popular discourses promote women’s self-change (and less often, self-care) as an effective pathway to increasing their power in the neoliberal workplace (Sandberg 2013; Rottenberg 2018). In films, a different genre of neoliberal identity tracking, Sutherland and Feltey (2017) analysed over 130 feminist films of the neoliberal era (1970s

onwards) and found that *power-to* storylines, 'women finding the courage to individually confront and challenge existing norms,' were most common.<sup>2</sup>

Compared with the institutional co-optation described above, this section aims to speak directly to the cultivation of individualistic and choice-focused drive of gendered neoliberal subjectivities (Rottenberg 2018; Rankin 2001; Calkin 2018; Dardot and Laval 2017) often in the service of neoliberal institutions (Langworthy 2023). Gendered neoliberal subjectivities are primarily shaped by women's individual acceptance of choice, entrepreneurialism, and self-responsibility (Scharff 2016; Kanna 2010; Altan-Olcay 2014). As Repo (2020, p. 220) explains, '[t]he choice-making subject is not just a female subject... but she is a *feminist* subject ...[and] an entrepreneurial subject making free, strategic choices based on self-interest' (e.g. Prugel 2015; Roberts 2015; Rottenberg 2018).

One primary impact of this neoliberal logic, as noted above, is the shifting of feminism from a collective to an individual enterprise along with its effective depoliticization and desocialization (Repo 2020). In lieu of the *power-with* of collective feminist groups, under neoliberalism, women are increasingly turning to feminist companies and entrepreneurs, who 'represent a reactivation of feminist grassroots activism according to the rationale of neoliberal governmentality, where enterprise as most rational way of organizing all human action and relations' (Repo 2020, p. 225).

Neoliberal feminism has not just individualized and politically anaesthetized feminism but has shifted women themselves to disavow 'the social, cultural, and economic forces producing this inequality', to meld 'neoliberal rationality as an emancipatory project', and to accept 'full responsibility for her own well-being and self-care' (Rottenberg 2018, p. 54–55, 78). Under neoliberalism, women's access to power via the labour market becomes regulated by their own individual embodiment of confidence, self-responsibility and entrepreneurialism and rejection of political claims for greater support (e.g. stronger safety nets, free childcare).

If markets profit from tapping women, then women should also follow this logic and 'tap' themselves. This 'happy, confidence-building feminism' forms a key precursor—rather than outcome—of women's enterprise wherein feminist logics legitimize women's 'self-brand' yet demands silence in political arenas (Lauri and Lauri 2023). This follows the 'resilient' and 'positive mental attitude' utilized by middle-class women in the context of UK austerity to create distance and (classed and racialized) distinctions that help them to deal with the increasing inequality and suffering of other women (Dabrowski 2020). Far from the *power-with* aspects of collectivist feminist groups, Dabrowski (2020, p. 90) explains that this distancing is founded on 'indifference towards those who are understood as 'bad subjects' and are 'crucial to the maintenance of the austerity project'. If those women cannot manage themselves, then they are undeserving of help under the neoliberal gender order.

<sup>2</sup> There were also deep racial divisions, with *power-over* storylines being most prevalent with Black women protagonists.

In empowering women's choice, however, for many neoliberal, enterprising women, expanding *power-within* does not adhere to the 'happy, confidence building feminism' but coexists with neoconservative gender expectations. In their research on women's entrepreneurial identities in Latvia, Rugina and Ahl (2024) find that women's exposure to neoliberal subjectivities in post-communist states had a different impact than that catalogued by Rottenberg, Repo and Lauri & Lauri. Instead, Rugina and Ahl (2024, p. 281) find that women selectively absorbed neoliberal sensibilities of 'making it on one's own' on market terms, while also being entangled with neoconservative social norms celebrating femininity. As a result, many women entrepreneurs fell far from the neoliberal projects of confidence-building and *power-within*. Instead, these women entrepreneurs embody 'a fragile, feminine image of a woman who stays at home, takes care of her appearance, cares for her family and children, and positions her husband as the main family provider, thus accepting the traditional patriarchal gender order' (ibid.).

Through focusing on the *power-within* of entrepreneurialism and choice as the primary drivers of gendered neoliberal subjectivities, the gendered neoliberal order has successfully entrenched women's power in the labour market, while undermining political calls for greater power or equality in family, state, or political arenas. These subjectivities may be less successful at promoting *power-within* for the women who adopt them.

### **3.3 *Power-through* emphasizes the importance of (market) relationships as women's relational labour is co-opted under neoliberal logics**

The most recent addition to the feminist power typology, *power-through* is intended to capture the elements of power that are relational with both the exercise of power and outcomes (positive or negative) of that power being necessarily dependent on those around them (usually family and community members) (Galie and Farnworth 2019). Through their empirical work with women in agricultural communities in Syria, Kenya, and Tanzania, they revealed that women behaving counter to traditional gender norms can reduce their power status within families as well as reduce the power status of relatives within the community (ibid.).

Under neoliberalism, households (primarily heteronormative households (Smith 2016; Griffin 2015, 2009)) are increasingly key interlocutors in the global economy (e.g. as consumers, debtors, and sites of care labour) (Montgomerie and Tepe-Belfrage 2019a; Montgomerie and Tepe-Belfrage 2017) at the same time as the value of care labour lost visibility in the neoliberal economic order (e.g. as the 'family wage' was overturned) (Fraser 2020; Cooper 2017). However, feminists have shown how neoliberal logics and institutions have co-opted women's relational gender/power (e.g. affective labour as mothers and care providers) in addition to their labour power (Radhakrishnan 2022; Fraser 2020) while remaining wildly oblivious to the value of this care. Current ILO estimates place the value of unpaid care labour at upwards of 40% of national GDP in some countries (ILOSTAT).

The COVID-19 pandemic showed that women bear the burden of the neoliberal gender/power system. The Women's Budget Group in the UK reported that

during COVID women's overrepresentation in low-paid and insecure employment increased their vulnerability—at the time of the crisis, 69% were low-paid earners, 74% were in part-time employment, and 54% of women were on zero-hours contracts (WBG 2020). This insecurity was compounded by the fact that women comprised the majority of health and service sector workers and that government responses failed to consider how women's economic positioning defined their vulnerabilities to the pandemic. Women's insecurities were abundantly clear: during COVID, over 4.6 million women in the UK were prevented from securing a job or increasing their working hours due to unsuitable childcare options; further, the lowest-income mothers were eight times more at risk of losing their jobs than those on the highest incomes when schools closed (ibid). Similarly, in Australia, the government's 2020 budget was called out for having 'callous disregard for women facing long-term unemployment, poverty, higher caring burdens, and heightened risks to their health and safety' (ACTU 2020). This analysis highlighted that proposed tax cuts, for example, would disproportionately benefit men—for every \$1 benefiting women, an estimated \$2.28 would accrue to men (ibid).

However, in service to the question at hand, it is necessary to ask whether it is even possible to positively position *power-through* when the prevailing neoliberal logics have disciplined and co-opted women's relational labour. Given the strongly individualistic bent of neoliberal logics, is it possible to (re)establish gender/power in relational terms? Perhaps there is value in applying this question to market relationships.

Arguably, the neoliberal focus on women's bodies rather than gender/power as an organizing and powerful construct in neoliberal economic sensibilities also shapes the market relations through which women engage in the economy. For example, women entrepreneurs can face discrimination by suppliers and clients (Langworthy 2021), which forms a relational conduit capable of filtering women's access to power in the marketplace and may shape women's adherence to traditional gender norms (Bullough et al. 2021).

Drawing from their work with women miners in Zimbabwe, Tiernan and O'Conner (2020) document how women use 'good behaviour' as a negotiating strategy to access forums of power in their workplace. Using this behaviour, however, does not give women power through access to decision-makers; instead, it highlights the ways in which women's access to power is shaped by their own adherence to gendered subjectivities in the workplace. The result is what the authors term 'effective disempowerment' because the use of good behaviour legitimates, reinforces, and reproduces the male-dominated power structure that fundamentally disempowers them (Tiernan and O'Conner 2020, p. 101).

As neoliberal logics circulate deeper into the relational spaces that determine the roles and responsibilities of women, families, and households, it is important to examine *power-through* as enacted through these logics. The transactional nature of competitive, individualistic, and meritocratic gender/power necessitates a relational element—without this, women's capacity 'to power' under the neoliberal economic order will remain significantly (and invisibly) curtailed.

## 4 Engaging neoliberal standpoints of gender/power

In the previous sections, I have detailed, first, the gender/power logics endemic to the neoliberal economic order, and second, the impact of these logics when held against feminist typologies of power. When viewed through these typologies of power, an entirely new perspective of gender/power in the neoliberal economic order emerges: one that has sacrificed collective *power-with* for increasingly intimate forms of *power-over* culminating in the privileging of the *power-within* endowed by gendered neoliberal subjectivities. Within this framework, the emerging concept of *power-through* reinforces the weakening of social relationships under neoliberalism and their replacement of market relationships as sources of power.

From the preceding analysis, known limitations in gender/power *in* the neoliberal economic order have been re-emphasized and their impact on women's access to power repeatedly related to the selective engagement of gender/power in building the power *of* neoliberal logics (e.g. undervaluing women's labour in a neoliberal order predicated on gender/power, discounting unpaid care labour while tethering women to provide this care under state austerity). To remedy this situation, I propose three specific neoliberal standpoints of gender/power that are necessary supplements to reforming the question of 'the power *of* economics without power *in* economics.' I draw on feminist standpoint theory (Hartsock 1983; Hesse-Biber 2019) to break the 'one-size-fits-all' nature of neoliberal economic logics and policymaking through the integration of neoliberal standpoints of gender power. These standpoints build on Nancy Fraser's (2020) identification of (in)visibility and (in)dependence as being moderated by economic systems. To this, and in consideration of the current trends in political economy towards inequality, populism, and crisis, I add (in)security (Taylor 2023). Through the positioning of neoliberal economic logics through the power lens of 'who is visible, independent, and secure', the deeply held gender/power dynamics embedded in the neoliberal gender order become more readily available.

### 4.1 (In)Visibility

Visibility as a gendered standpoint of power requires that gendered inequalities in the prevailing economic power hierarchies become visible, palpable, and modifiable. Neoliberalism's privileging of *power-over* and gradual assignment of this power to international political organizations and the private sector has weakened the capacity of women to be viewed to leverage rights dialogues. The preceding discussion highlights that the neoliberal gender order gave great visibility to women, but this visibility did not serve to expand women's power but to reinforce the prevailing economic order. As Sydney Calkin (2018, 6) at the same time as women are 'celebrated visibly', the economy remains 'underpinned by gendered hierarchies of that have harmful effects on girls and women'.

Visibility is not a solution in isolation. Yet it is a critical tool in the exercise of power. Power through visibility for women (and their intersectional impact when combined with other social categories) would mean that the quality of economic

inclusion matters; that the clear indications of women's labour as precarious, vulnerable, and invisible would be considered failures of the economic system rather than critical exploitation that makes the system run. More and better collection of gender data, sex-disaggregated data, and qualitative research is needed to achieve this, as is a general will among researchers, advocates, and policymakers to challenge prevailing dis-equalizing economic logics that accepts deepening inequality.

## 4.2 (In)Dependence

Nancy Fraser (2020) details how wage labour in capitalist systems created white male independence and female economic dependence. The privileging of the affective cultivation of *power within* symbolizes a highly gendered neoliberal subjectivity, and perhaps the pinnacle of the individualized and competitive norms of neoliberalism: complete dependence on oneself with no claims on familial, economic, or political institutions. Such independence, however, is not possible while neoliberal economies remain tethered to women's un and underpaid labour to support current and future (re)production and consumption.

The capacity to establish independence is not only rooted in labour market and the household, but also in economic power structures of race, precarity, sexuality, etc. (Fraser 2020). Women and other marginalized groups have not been 'tapped' in the labour force as breadwinners capable of establishing economic independence. One of the reasons for this is the continuing invisible, racialized, and gendered demand for unpaid care labour that subsidizes the prevailing neoliberal order. Thus, independence as a gendered standpoint demands recognition of the 'feminization' of women and other 'dependent' groups, particularly those performing care labour, and the ways in which political and economic biases preclude these populations from economic independence.

## 4.3 (In)Security

Security as a gendered standpoint of power is a necessary corollary to the fact that the capitalist system is an 'insecurity-producing machine' (Taylor 2023). Into this insecurity, neoliberal gender/power's weakening of relational power, *power-through*, social and community structures (e.g. families) has deprived women of a key access point for gender/power. As a result, feminist conceptions of *power-through* should be expanded to include market relations, as this is a critical construct for neoliberal gender/power. As a standpoint, (in)security demands that economic power structures are engaged to make all persons more secure, rather than defining 'how inequality is lived day after day' (ibid). At a time of mounting and overlapping crises—climate crisis, deepening inequality, rising populism—security is even more critical to our conceptualization of gender/power and to our capacity to envision a different, more secure future (UNRISD 2022; Gidron and Hall 2017).

The constitution of gender/power in the neoliberal economic order is critically implicated in the rise of neoconservative and populist regimes in Europe, the USA, India, and elsewhere (Gidron and Hall 2017; Cooper 2017; Radhakrishnan and Solari 2023). Increasingly, traditional gender roles are being reinvented and



reinscribed by neoliberal logics as modern (Rugina and Ahl 2024; Radhakrishnan and Solari 2023). Analysis of neoliberal logics must identify where and how (in) security is growing and aim to provide security for the gendered economic actors upon which it depends.

## 5 Conclusion

To investigate the symposium prompt of ‘power of economics without power in economics’, this paper has provided a detailed rendering of the interplay of gender/power within the neoliberal economic agenda and established that gender/power is at the very heart of the power of economics, albeit in ways that disadvantage women. This analysis has shown that the constitution of gender/power functioning within neoliberal realities falls far short of the emancipatory and empowering agentic capabilities sought by feminists. It provides evidence that the neoliberal turn employs gender/power in specific ‘baked-in’ ways that undermine critical discourses and re-evaluation of competition and meritocracy. Furthermore, neoliberal ideologies seeded an environment where feminist goals of *power-with* and *power-to* were replaced with market-mediated *power-over* and strong cultural emphasis on individual *power-within* (e.g. women’s self-confidence and resilience to structural inequities), while fundamentally neglecting the *power-through* dynamics of market relations themselves. Within this environment, I put forward three neoliberal standpoints of gender/power ((in)visibility, (in)dependence, and (in)security) that are necessary perspectives that illuminate the deeply held gender/power dynamics embedded in the neoliberal gender order.

Critically, such standpoints offer avenues towards the analytical evolution necessary to properly situate gender dynamics across critical fields of study, including evolutionary political economy, social stratification, and heterodox macroeconomics (Dow 2020; Sawyer 2020; Davis 2022). Such analysis is critical to establishing how the neoliberal gender order is deeply enmeshed in the logics of the marketplace and in the formation of global values, hierarchies, and identities in service of these needs. This analysis suggests that among the most pernicious wielding of gender/power in neoliberalism has been the dismantling of the most promising pathways to power for women—Mary Beard’s ‘to power’ or feminists’ *power-to* take agentic action or to resist the imposition of neoliberal logics, or, even, to address questions of power meaningfully outside of frameworks of capitalist accumulation. It is such an analysis of power that can indicate how our systems will meet (or fail) future crises and shape the creation of new social contracts around visibility, independence, and security.

This work has attempted to present feminist power analysis to international political economy analysis. As such, this paper is just a beginning, with all the limitations inherent in the initial cleaving of disparate materials. Future work would strengthen this analysis through a more systemic approach to the analysis. Specific case studies illuminating neoliberal gender/power and original qualitative/textual research employing a deeper examination of the feminist typologies of power and/or neoliberal standpoints of gender/power would be especially relevant.

## Declarations

**Competing interests** The author declares no competing interests.

## References

- ACTU (2020) Leaving women behind: the real cost of the COVID recovery. Australian Council of Trade Unions [https://futurework.org.au/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2020/12/Women\\_and\\_COVID\\_-\\_A\\_Gender-Inclusive\\_Recovery.pdf](https://futurework.org.au/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2020/12/Women_and_COVID_-_A_Gender-Inclusive_Recovery.pdf)
- Altan-Olcay O (2014) Entrepreneurial subjectivities and gendered complexities: Neoliberal citizenship in Turkey. *Fem Econ* 20(4):235–259
- Arslan A (2022) Relations of production and social reproduction, the state and the everyday: women's labour in Turkey. *Rev Int Political Econ* 29(6):1894–1916
- Berlanga C, Robles A (2020) 'Gender equality as smart economics': questioning the assumptions behind the claim. LSE Blogs: <https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/gender/2020/07/23/gender-equality-as-smart-economics-questioning-the-assumptions-behind-the-claim/>
- Brule R (2023) Women and power in the developing world. *Annu Rev Polit Sci* 26:33–54
- Bullough A, Guelich U, Manolova T, Schjoedt L (2021) Women's entrepreneurship and culture: gender role expectations and identities, societal culture, and the entrepreneurial environment. *Small Bus Econ* 58:985–996
- Calkin S (2015) 'Tapping' women for post-crisis capitalism: evidence from the 2012 World Development Report. *Int Fem J Polit* 17(4):611–629
- Calkin S (2018) *Human capital in gender and development*. Routledge, New York
- Cavallero L, Gago V (2021) *A feminist reading of debt*. Pluto Press, London
- Chant S, Sweetman C (2012) Fixing women or fixing the world? 'Smart economics', efficiency approaches, and gender equality in development. *Gend Dev* 20(3):517–529
- Cooper M (2017) *Family values: Between neoliberalism and the new social conservatism*. Zone Books, New York
- Dabrowski V (2020) 'Neoliberal feminism': legitimising the gendered moral project of austerity. *Soc Rev* 69(1):1–17
- Dardot P, Laval C (2017) *The new way of the world: on neoliberal society*. Verso, London
- Davis J (2022) A general theory of social economic stratification: stigmatization, exclusion and capability shortfalls. *Rev Evol Political Econ* 3:493–513
- de Goede M (2005) *Virtue, fortune, and faith: a genealogy of finance*. University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, MN
- Dow S (2020) Gender and the future of macroeconomics: an evolutionary approach. *Rev Evol Political Econ* 1:55–66
- Elias J (2013) Davos woman to the rescue of global capitalism: postfeminist politics and competitiveness promotion at the World Economic Forum. *Int Political Sociol* 7:152–169
- Elias J (2016) Whose crisis? Whose recovery? Lessons learned (and not) from the Asian crisis. In: Hozic A, True J (eds) *Scandalous economics: gender and the politics of financial crises*. Oxford University Press, New York, pp 109–125
- Elson D (2014) Economic crises from the 1980s to the 2010s. In: Rai S, Waylen G (eds) *New frontiers in feminist political economy*. Routledge, New York, pp 189–212
- Enloe C (1990) *Bananas, beaches and bases: making feminist sense of international politics*. University of California Press
- Eschle C, Maiguashca B (2018) Theorising feminist organizing in and against neoliberalism: beyond co-optation and resistance? *Euro J Politics Gender* 1(1–2):223–239
- Fawcett R, Gray E, Nunn A (2023) Depletion through social reproduction and contingent coping in the lived experience of parents on Universal Credit in England. *Soc Politics* 30(4):1040–1063
- Folbre N (2020) *The rise and decline of patriarchal systems: an intersectional political economy*. Verso, London
- Folbre N (2018) The care penalty and gender inequality. In: Averett S, Argys L, Hoffman S (eds) *The Oxford handbook of women and the economy*. Oxford University Press, Oxford

- Fraser N (2020) *Fortunes of feminism: from state-managed capitalism to neoliberal crisis*. Verso, London
- Galie A, Farnworth CR (2019) Power through: a new concept in the empowerment discourse. *Global Food Sec* 21:13–17 <https://europepmc.org/backend/ptpmcrender.fcgi?accid=PMC6659586&blobtype=pdf>
- Gerard K (2023) The political practices of gender experts: repurposing women's empowerment. *Globalizations* 21(4):648–666
- Gidron N, Hall P (2017) The politics of social status: economic and cultural roots of the populist right. *Br J Sociol* 68(S1):S57–S84
- Griffin P (2009) *Gendering the World Bank: neoliberalism and the gendered foundations of global governance*. Palgrave Macmillan, New York
- Griffin P (2015) Crisis, austerity and gendered governance: a feminist perspective. *Fem Rev* 109(1):49–72
- Grosser K, McCarthy L (2019) Imagining new feminist futures: how feminist social movements contest the neoliberalization of feminism in an increasingly corporate-dominated world. *Gend Work Organ* 26:1101–1116
- Hartssock N (1983) The feminist standpoint: developing ground for a specifically feminist historical materialism. In: Harding S, Hintikka M (eds) *Discovering reality: feminist perspectives on epistemology, metaphysics, methodology and philosophy of science*. Reidel, Boston
- Hayward C (2000) *De-facing power*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge
- Heine F (2022) Performing hard money: monetary policy, metaphor and masculinity in the making of EMU. *J Cult Econ* 15(5):671–687
- Hesse-Biber S (2019) Using a feminist standpoint perspective and praxis lens to challenge neoliberalism in Eurozone Austerity Policy. *Qual Inq* 25(8):773–785
- Hozic A, True J (eds) (2016) *Scandalous economics: gender and the politics of financial crises*. Oxford University Press, New York
- Kanna A (2010) Flexible citizenship in Dubai: Neoliberal subjectivity in the emerging “City-Corporation”. *Cult Anthropol* 25(1):100–129
- Langworthy M (2021) “They know what they want, and they don’t settle for less”: identity and young women entrepreneurs in Kuwait. In: Buscemi E, Kaposi I (eds) *Everyday youth cultures in the Gulf Peninsula: change and challenges*. Routledge, London, pp 156–173
- Langworthy M (2023) Towards an institutional aesthetic of women's entrepreneurship: a political economy perspective. *Arab Econ Bus J* 15(2):295–307
- Lauri J, Lauri M (2023) Selling feminist stories: popular feminism, authenticity, and happiness. *Euro J Cult Stud* 27(2):457–473
- Moeller K (2018) *The gender effect: capitalism, feminism, and the corporate politics of development*. University of California Press, Oakland
- Montgomerie J, Tepe-Belfrage D (2019a) Narrating the search for a methodology of the household. In: Conference Paper. EAEPE Conference, Nice
- Montgomerie J, Tepe-Belfrage D (2017) Caring for debts: how the household economy exposes the limits of financialisation. *Crit Sociol* 43(4–5):653–668
- Montgomerie J, Tepe-Belfrage D (2019b) Spaces of debt resistance and the contemporary politics of financialized capitalism. *Geoforum* 98:309–317
- Nordell J (2021) *The end of bias: a beginning*. Metropolitan Books, New York
- Nunn A, Tepe-Belfrage D (2017) Disciplinary social policy and the failing promise of the new middle classes: the troubled families programme. *Soc Policy Soc* 16(1):119–129
- Oksala J (2013) Feminism and neoliberal governmentality. *Foucault Studies* 16:32–53
- Ostry J, Loungani P, Furceri D (2016) Neoliberalism: oversold? *Finan Dev* 53:2
- Pansardi P (2021) The new concepts of power? Power-over, power-to, and power with. *J Polit Power* 14(1):51–71
- Pearson R (2019) A feminist analysis of neoliberalism and austerity policies in the UK. *Soundings* 71(2):28–39
- Peterson S (2005) How (the meaning of) gender matters in political economy. *New Polit Econ* 10(4):499–521
- Piketty T (2014) *Capital in the twenty-first century*. Cambridge
- Powell J (2023) Feminist perspectives on monetary policy. Women's Budget Group <https://wbg.org.uk/wpcontent/uploads/2023/09/Feminist-Perspectives-on-MP-Paper-2-Aguila-FINAL.pdf>
- Prugel E (2017) Neoliberalism with a feminist face: crafting a new hegemony at the World Bank. *Fem Econ* 23(1):30–53
- Prugel E (2015) Neoliberalizing feminism. *New Polit Econ* 20(4):614–631

- Prugel E (2016) "Lehman brothers and sisters:" revisiting gender and myth after the financial crisis. In: Hozic A, True J (eds) *Sandalous economics: gender and the politics of financial crises*. Oxford University Press, New York, pp 21–40
- Radhakrishnan S (2022) *Making women pay: microfinance in urban India*. Duke University Press, Durham
- Radhakrishnan S, Solari C (2023) *The gender order of neoliberalism*. Polity Press, Cambridge
- Rai S, Waylen G (2014) *Feminist political economy: looking back, looking forward*. In: Rai S, Waylen G (eds) *New frontiers in feminist political economy*. Routledge, New York
- Rankin KN (2001) Governing development: neoliberalism, microcredit, and rational economic woman. *Econ Soc* 30(1):18–37
- Repo J (2020) Feminist commodity activism: the new political economy of feminist protest. *Int Political Sociol* 14:215–232
- Roberts A (2015) The political economy of "transnational business feminism": problematizing the corporate-led gender equality agenda. *Int Fem J Polit* 17(2):209–231
- Rottenberg C (2018) *The rise of neoliberal feminism*. Oxford University Press, New York
- Rugina S, Ahl H (2024) Patriarchy repackaged: how a neoliberal economy and conservative gender norms shape entrepreneurial identities in Eastern Europe. *Entrep Reg Dev* 36(3–4):266–293
- Sandberg S (2013) *Lean in: women, work, and the will to lead*. Alfred A. Knopf, New York
- Sawyer M (2020) The past, present and future of evolutionary macroeconomics. *Rev Evol Polit Econ* 1:37–54
- Scharff C (2016) The psychic life of neoliberalism: mapping the contours of entrepreneurial subjectivity. *Culture & Society, Theory* 33(6):107–122
- Sequino S (2020) Engendering macroeconomic theory and policy. *Fem Econ* 26(2):27–61
- Sen G (2019) The changing landscape of feminist organizing since Beijing. In: *Sixty-fourth Commission on the Status of Women (CSW 64)*, New York
- Smith N (2016) Toward a queer political economy of crisis. In: Hozic A, True J (eds) *Scandalous economics: gender and the politics of financial crises*. Oxford University Press, New York, pp 231–247
- Sutherland J, Feltey K (2017) Here's looking at her: an intersection analysis of women, power and feminism in film. *J Gend Stud* 26(6):618–631
- Taylor A (2023) *The age of insecurity: coming together as things fall apart*. In: *CBC Massey lectures*. Anasi Press
- Tiernan A, O'Conner P (2020) Perspectives on power over and power to: how women experience power in a mining community in Zimbabwe. *J Polit Power* 13(1):86–105
- Tornhill S (2019) *The business of women's empowerment: corporate gender politics in the Global South*. In: Smith N, Roberts A, Elias J (eds) *Global political economic of gender and sexuality*. Rowman & Littlefield International, London
- UNRISD (2022) *Crises of inequality: shifting power for a new eco-social contract*. UNRISD. <https://cdn.unrisd.org/assets/library/reports/2022/full-report-crises-of-inequality-2022.pdf>
- WBG (2020) *Crises collide: women and COVID-19*. Women's Budget Group (UK)
- World Bank (2024) *Women, business and the law index 2024*. World Bank, Washington DC

Springer Nature or its licensor (e.g. a society or other partner) holds exclusive rights to this article under a publishing agreement with the author(s) or other rightsholder(s); author self-archiving of the accepted manuscript version of this article is solely governed by the terms of such publishing agreement and applicable law.