



GENDER, DIVERSITY & INTERSECTIONALITY RESEARCH CENTRE

Autumn Newsletter 2024

🍂 Grab a cup of tea and dive into the RHEA Newsletter for a cosy break this Autumn. 🍂

Read along to see what we've been up to!

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EDITOR'S CHOICE

"No punishment is enough for monsters" & Feminist Democratic Design"

This autumn, we have a double Editor's Choice for you, consisting of a Q&A with

Jihane Sliti and a teaser for an article by Karen Celis and Sarah Childs.

Below you will find a preview: for the full Editor's Choice, [visit our website!](#)

"No punishment is enough for monsters" with Jihane Sliti

In your recent article, news-media play an important role in shaping public opinion on (potential) returnees, by providing a platform for and incorporating vindictive rhetoric practices.

Can and should we hold these media accountable because they are reproducing narratives that violate, amongst others, democratic principles and human rights?

Media do indeed play an important role in shaping public opinion, and with that comes a great responsibility for the stories they choose to tell. When media outlets lean into narratives that perpetuate harmful stereotypes or undermine core democratic principles and human rights, I believe accountability becomes not only possible but also necessary. That said, this accountability must be carefully balanced with the protection of press freedom, which is a cornerstone of any democratic society. It's not about censorship, but about fostering a media environment that prioritizes informing the public over fueling emotional responses.

Want to know what recommendations Jihane Sliti has for countering harmful narratives?

[Continue reading on our website!](#)

Reference: Lechkar, I., & Sliti, J. (2024). "No punishment is enough for monsters": vindictiveness as an important political emotion in dealing with Belgian (potential) returnee men. Critical Studies on Terrorism, 1–23. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17539153.2024.2416762>

Teaser: Feminist Democratic Design

Feminist Democratic Design (FDD): Why do we need it, What is it and How

does it work?

Despite what the mainstream narrative may suggest, political representation has not been "solved" by the mere presence of women in politics. In their piece *Feminist Democratic Design and the Redress of Intersectional Representational Problematics*, Karen Celis and Sarah Childs' analysis makes this painfully obvious.

Democratic representation is not a level playing field. Nothing new under the sun, you might think, we have known this to be the case for quite some time now. But what to do about it?

Karen Celis and Sarah Childs propose to engage in Feminist Democratic Design (FDD). FDD reconceptualizes Saward's Democratic Design (DD) project of identifying practices that solve systemic incomplete democratization through a feminist lens.

Want to know more?

[Continue reading on our website](#)

Reference: Celis, K., & Childs, S. (2024). Feminist Democratic Design and the Redress of Intersectional Representational Problematics. Politics & Gender, 1–6. doi:10.1017/S1743923X24000242

HIGHLIGHT: TEN YEARS MAGEDI & WALKER SYMPOSIUM





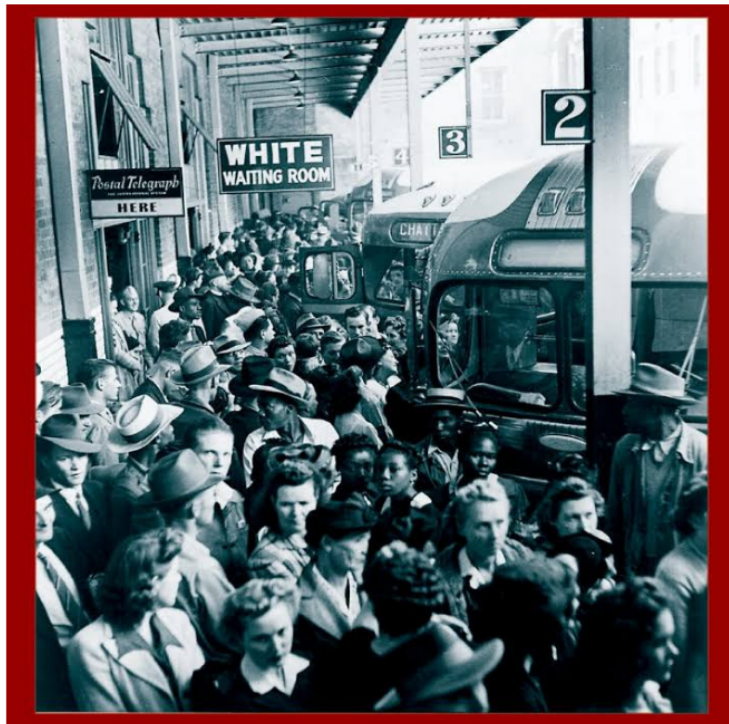
Ten Years Master in Gender and Diversity (MaGeDi)

On the 20th of November, we came together to celebrate the 10 year anniversary of the Master Gender and Diversity (MaGeDi). After a workshop on guiding internships for mentors from the workfield, we got together for the highlight of the evening: a key-note by Gloria Wekker. She delivered an extraordinary talk called ***Still crazy after all those years. Revisiting Gender and Diversity***. From the ongoing colonial structures in academia, over the fear that still exists within genderstudies to include race into the discussion, to neoliberal doctrine and co-optation mystifying power relations and opportunities for change: Gloria Wekker does not shy away from thorny issues.

Afterwards, we were joined by Dounia Bourabain, Sophie Withaecx, Marieke van den Brinck and David Paternotte for a panel discussion. Moderated by Julie Carlier, the conversation touched upon the importance of the MaGeDi for academia, but also for broader society, its interdisciplinary and the panel members' wishes for the future of the programme.

Finally, Rhea-director Gily Coene took to the stage for the closing remarks. We ended the evening in style with a reception to informally discuss the proceedings of the evening over drinks.

Many thanks to all the wonderful speakers, who, in the grand setting of the Paleis der Academiën, contributed to this stimulating evening!



Walker Symposium:

Walker Symposium: Picking Up Moral Understandings

On the 18th of September, the Alliance Research Group ECSO organized a symposium on Margaret Urban Walker's book *Moral Understandings*.

25 years after its publication, this landmark publication in feminist ethics continues to inspire many in the field. In the spirit of that resonance, ten scholars revisited Walker's book through influenced perspectives on care-ethics, the notion of "transparency testing" and using *Moral Understandings* as a framework for empirical studies.

Among them were our very own [Olivia Lastra](#) and, in tandem, [Dirk Lafaut](#) and [Michiel De Proost](#), with presentations respectively titled "The Cost of Courage" and "Rethinking justification and transparency seeking in moral life".

Afterwards, we were joined by Margaret Urban Walker herself, who gave some comments on the presented work and following discussion.

A day to remember!

RHEA ON THE MOVE



RHEA on the move to... Cape Town

From October 21 - 25 [Danielle Fernandes](#) (PhD, 2nd on the right) attended the Sexual Violence Research Initiative (SVRI) Forum 2024 in Cape Town. This key event brings together academics, policymakers, practitioners, and activists to address sexual and gender-based violence through arts, activism, and research. Danielle delivered an oral presentation titled "Playing for Prevention: Insights from the Co-creation of a Serious Board Game for Sexual Violence Prevention.". In this presentation she discussed the ins and outs of co-creating a board game for bystander training, explaining how she translated bystander theory into game mechanics to develop an effective intervention.

Danielle attended the conference supported by grants from the FWO and the Anne-Marie Depoorter Award from the University of Ghent.



RHEA on the move to... Gent

Together with the artistic feminist collective [Pardon!](#), [Erinn De Waele](#) (PhD) co-created the "Kwier Kaart", an unfoldable map of Gent through the eyes of queer youths. It's now on display at the exhibition Jong en Queer sinds de sixties at the AMSAB-ISG in Gent, where a historical overview of queer youth organizations in Belgium has been created.

The Kwier Kaart was created with the support of Ghent European Youth Capital, Amsab-ISG and Fonds Suzan Daniel.

UPCOMING

Brown Bag Seminar

17/12: Catherina Atahigwa (11:00)
20/01: FWO PhD Proposals Session (12:00)
24/02: Laura Lingeti & Paula Lange (12:00)



REGISTER:
RHEA@VUB.BE



17/12:
RAADZAAL RC

Rhea Brown Bag Seminar

Have your cake and eat it too, by bringing your lunch to the new series of Rhea Brown Bag Seminar!

17/12: Catherine Atahigwa presents

Navigating Gender and Power: A Qualitative Analysis of Fertility Decision-Making in Rubirizi District, Southwestern Uganda by Catherine Atahigwa

20/01: FWO PhD Proposals Session

Erinn De Waele: *Queer homemaking in Brussels: Navigating intersecting homemaking challenges and alternative practices*

Lula Maris: *The Hero at a Crossroads: narrative, resistance and intersectionality (working title)*

February 24th: Laura Lingeti & Paula Lange

Laura Lingeti presents *POWER: A Pilot Study of Wellbeing and Resilience-Enhancing Training for Gender-Diverse Persons in BCR*

Paula Lange, visiting PhD Fellow (title TBC)

Hour: 12:00 - 14:00 **Language:** EN **Location:** Raadzaal RC

Registration: all members welcome, mail us at rhea@vub.be

2024 - 2025



FRAMES OF RESISTANCE



Film Screening Series

www.crosstalks.net

Fatima Mernissi Commemoration 2024: Frames of Resistance -

Jocelyn Saab

On 3/12/2024, the Fatima Mernissi Chair, Crosstalks VUB, CINEMA RITCS, United Screens for Palestine and the VUB Palestine Solidarity Network invite you to join us for a screening of three short films by Jocelyne Saab.

19:00 - Welcome by Wouter Hessels (Film historian RITCS) and Iman Lechkar (Chairholder VUB Chair Fatima Mernissi)

19:10 - Introduction by Mohanad Yaqubi (filmmaker, involved in the restoration of Jocelyne Saab's films)

19:30 - Screening of Jocelyne Saab's Short Films

Les Femmes palestiniennes (1974)

Les Enfants de la Guerre (1976)

Le Bateau de l'Exil (1982)

20:30 - Conversation with Omar Jabary Salamanca, a political scientist specializing in Palestine, archiving, and documenting colonial violence, Hadil Alramli, a Palestinian-Belgian producer, journalist, filmmaker, and researcher in art and social sciences and Flora Woudstra Hablé, coordinator Cinema RITCS.

Get your tickets

BIRMM Critical Approaches to Race Seminar

From September to June, BIRMM (Brussels Interdisciplinary Research centre on Migration and Minorities) organizes the Critical Approaches to Race Seminar.

Up next: **12/12** Doing diversity in health(care), doing race? with Alana Helberg-Proctor (at ULB)

Language: EN **Registration:** mail to birmm@vub.be **More info:** [BIRMM](#)

MUST-READS

[Interview](#) by Scivil with Danielle Fernandes on City Confessions: a boardgame against harassment

[Podcast episode](#) with Dr. Dirk Lafaut on his paper *Autonomy Without Borders? Understanding the Impact of Undocumented Residence Status on Healthcare Relationships in Belgium* (FABGab is the podcast of the International Journal of Feminist Approaches to Bio-Ethics)

[Article](#) in 'Medical Anthropology' by Dr. Dirk LAFAUT *Ethical and Epistemological Implications of Conducting Ethnographic Fieldwork as a Researcher-cum-Clinician in Brussels, Belgium*

[Coming Soon](#): Book Chapter by Serena D'Agostino *#RomaLivesMatter, too. Romani Anti-Racist Activism in Europe: from (De)politicization towards a Critical Turn*



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RESEARCH CENTRE

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