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**From Feminist Clinics to Women's Healing Circles:  
Women's Bodies, Holistic Health & Healing 70s to today**

**Dr. Ayşe Dayı**

**Founder & Director, Orca Dreams: Platform for Mindful Living**

In this presentation, I will take us on a journey of women's reproductive & holistic health from 70s to today. Discussing the major findings of my dissertation research on the U.S. Women's Health Movement & its Feminist Clinics (established in 70s), to de-medicalize reproductive health care and empower women in reproductive and sexual health and rights, followed by my work on reproductive technologies, fetal personhood and women's agency and my research on neoliberal restructuring of health care and its effects on women's repro services of birth control, abortion and birth (including our latest edited book), and concluding with my recent work with (mostly international/migrant) women in women's healing circles and mindfulness/health trainings, I will explore the gains in reproductive rights & empowerment as well as the current needs and desires of women to re-connect to Sacred & Wild Feminine and heal the individual and collective wounds transmitted through generations.

**Feminism, Activism and Social Change for Gender Justice: Reflections of a Feminist  
Researcher from Turkey**

**Dr. Özden Melis Uluğ  
University of Sussex**

Feminist activism has been long studied in social sciences. However, mainstream social psychology has often ignored how, why and when collective activism for gender justice takes place in relatively challenging and less democratic contexts such as Turkey. In this talk, I will first present my research on how and why women take action in contexts like Turkey (e.g., women in the Gezi Park protests). I will discuss the antecedents of various forms of collective action among women, including online and offline. While doing so, I will briefly describe how studying collective action, especially during the Gezi Park protests, shaped my identities, activism and research. Second, I will present my research on how women in general but feminist women in particular stand in solidarity with other disadvantaged groups in Turkey. In this part, I will unpack the solidarity dynamics between feminists on the one hand and other disadvantaged groups such as LGBTQ+s and Kurds on the other. Third, I will discuss the conceptual (e.g., multiplicity of identities), methodological (e.g., lack of mixed-method studies) and contextual

challenges (e.g., insufficient emphasis on structural and political contexts) for feminist researchers in studying collective action. In addition, I will briefly discuss the practical and ethical challenges associated with researching feminist activism. I aim to conclude my talk by touching on the role of feminist social psychologists in making psychology more participatory and less hierarchical and a science that seeks to improve the positions of both advantaged and disadvantaged groups in societies.

## **Navigating the Developmental Maze: A Feminist Journey through Challenges**

**Asst. Prof. Dr. Doğa Eroğlu-Şah**

**European University of Lefke**

The methodology and framework of mainstream developmental psychology have functioned as a mechanism to relegate various inquiries to a potentially meaningless status, intentionally or unintentionally hindering discussions that challenge the core of the field. According to Broughton (1987), developmental psychology lags behind the already limited self-critical tendencies in psychology, particularly in critically evaluating the tools, methods, applications, and the generated knowledge. Morss (1995) notes the potential risk for those questioning the fundamental assumptions in developmental psychology, facing expulsion from the field and accusations of not meeting the standards of a competent developmental psychologist.

In universities, which are considered representatives of "academic freedom," a different scenario unfolds. Hierarchical institutional structures and relationships, along with both direct and implicit interventions aiming to align students and academics, are often perceived as ordinary components of educational programs. Meanwhile, all experiences in the research process seem to be detached from the research itself (topic, method, report, etc.), as if unrelated. While this may be a situation encountered in various fields, it operates within a distinctive context in the field of developmental psychology. Consequently, the knowledge produced in the field of developmental psychology undergoes a dual process of personalization and politicization.

In this presentation, I will share my journey as a researcher in the field of developmental psychology, where I sought to pursue a doctorate from a critical and feminist perspective. I will discuss the challenges I faced in the context of the institutionalized positivist paradigm. Furthermore, I will provide examples from my thesis work to illustrate the distinctive processes involved in conducting qualitative research on masculinities from a feminist perspective.

## **Grounds for Voice, Integrity and Agency: Feminist Participatory Action and Feminist Narrative Research**

**Dr. Ayçe Feride Yılmaz**

**Yıldız Technical University**

As pivotal epistemological, conceptual and methodological alternatives for gender research in psychology, this presentation will introduce feminist participatory action research and feminist narrative approach which, by undermining the preponderance of positivistic orientations, strive to generate collaborative, equitable and empowering study designs, results and applications. Underlining their prospect for destabilizing dominant academic or socio-cultural knowledge forms and practices, these approaches' inherent principles and values derived from feminist epistemologies and their resonance and embodiment in different research steps will be demonstrated. Dwelling on exemplary work, the emphasis will be on how, through the extraction and accentuation of voices, knowledges and participations of various groups and actors subjected to gender-based violence and oppression embedded in historically and culturally informed interlocked structural inequalities, such co-research partnerships hold potentials for unveiling and calling out these ominous landscapes of perpetuation, for illuminating rich subjectivities incorporating stories of survival and resistance, and for inducing individually and socially transformative outcomes and praxes.

**12.01.2024**

## **Violence and Discrimination against Women & Human Rights from a Feminist Perspective: Experiences from Turkey**

**Prof. Dr. Şahika Yüksel**

This talk will focus on post 1980's women's struggles including my witnessing and examples from the feminist movement in Turkey. Women's organizations, their campaigns, collective actions and publications initiated by different feminist women will be presented.

Contemporarily, violence against women is not only defined and stressed by feminists and scholars working on women but as an extensive public health problem, are put on the agenda by international organizations like the UN with urgent calls for efficient measures.

I plan to provide examples of studies of The Turkish Medical Association, Women's Health Division and Turkish Psychiatric Association, organizations that I closely know and professionally worked with, in which traditional patriarchal medicine's outlook towards women are criticized and women's daily gender-based struggles in every area of life are illuminated. Women sensitive feminist therapy approaches differing from the mainstream by their focus on women's experiences, patriarchal power imbalances and their goal of empowerment will be introduced in addition to LGBTI+ affirmative therapies along with setbacks encountered by practitioners. In brief, the constant efforts of Turkish feminist women to move from bystander to upstander positions will be presented.

## **Feminist Psychotherapies in Addressing Violence Against Women**

**Leyla Soydiñ, M.A., M.Sc.**

**Purple Roof Women's Shelter Foundation**

The mainstream theoretical framework in the realm of mental health has historically been built upon male norms and experiences until feminist interventions challenged it. This construction has often rendered women's experiences invisible, excluded, and at times distorted, shaping the gender politics of psychological well-being. However, particularly since the 1970s, the global influence of the second-wave feminist movement has revealed the gendered aspects of theory in the field of psychology, especially psychological trauma, leading to a perspective that transforms theoretical and practical approaches by critiquing methods that reference patriarchal norms.

Feminist psychology theorists have connected the experiences of women to the field of mental health by exposing, reshaping, conceptualizing, and transforming their experiences of womanhood which is strongly related with women's violence experiences. They have also advocated for innovative and transformative perspectives in therapeutic practices and public policies (Worell, 2000). Although feminist therapy cannot be considered a single therapeutic approach, it is an approach that can be applied alongside many schools and practices. The question of whether any therapy can be considered a feminist practice is answered by examining whether the therapy supports feminist models of change and addresses the impact of societal factors and patriarchy on psychological well-being (Brown, 2010).

Feminist therapy plays a crucial role in psychological support work and solidarity with women who have experienced violence because the source of violence against women lies in gender inequality. The approach brought by feminist therapy is critical for empowerment and

healing processes in the journey of women away from violence or its effects. Discussing violence in this context provides space for women to make sense of the violence they have experienced and talk about feelings such as guilt, helplessness, shame, and hope for change in the perpetrator. Another crucial aspect of feminist therapy is the non-hierarchical nature of the relationship between the client and therapist that is built on a foundation of solidarity. Moreover, sharing various information with women about the social resources weakened by systematic violence is an important intervention method.

In traditional therapy practices today, it is observed that mainstream practices that do not consider the social context of individual experiences and approaches that reproduce gender roles particularly hinder individuals' healing processes in trauma studies. Therefore, applying psychological support studies with a feminist approach and practices opens a way for women to be empowered, establishes a non-hierarchical solidarity relationship with them, and organizes social transformation through all these personal practices.

## **Feminist Perspectives on Trauma and Mental Health in the Context of Gender-based Violence**

Busra Yalcinoz-Ucan, PhD

Postdoctoral Research Fellow

Department of Media and Social Sciences

University of Stavanger

This presentation will reflect on my professional and personal development, experiences, and insights as a feminist clinical psychologist and researcher from Turkey, living and working abroad for the last seven years. I will start by focusing on how my interest in feminism and feminist psychology/psychotherapy perspectives have surfaced during my graduate education in a psychoanalytically oriented clinical psychology program. This mainly involves my journey of searching for gender-informed perspectives and practices in psychoanalytic psychotherapy, particularly when it comes to the issues around gender oppression and violence against women. What follows will include my reflections on feminist psychology approaches that I mainly use in my research and clinical practice, particularly intersectional feminism, concerning their inspiring influence on my understanding of mental health, trauma, social and gender inequalities and injustices, and gender-based violence. I will discuss the ways in which I utilize feminist intersectionality in conceptualizing women's decision-making and safety-seeking strategies in violent relationships, as well as their post-separation experiences. These reflections will include a contextualized analysis of the sociocultural and structural embeddedness of women's individual

and relational histories of being exposed to and escaping male partner violence, as well as the critical importance of women's social positions in determining their experiences of decision-making and resilience. I will also share findings from my current research, where I've studied online disclosures of gender-based violence as a feminist advocacy and an informal justice-seeking practice. In this presentation, I will also provide examples from my clinical practice regarding how I employ feminist psychotherapy principles in combination with a contemporary psychoanalytic framework. I will discuss these examples based on an understanding of trauma, healing, and mental health informed by feminist intersectionality and social justice frameworks.

### **Reflections on a relational psychoanalytical decade**

Yudit Namer

University of Twente

This contribution is planned as a reflection on navigating therapeutic, academic and political spaces as a feminist and relational psychoanalytic psychotherapist across geographies. Feminist and relational psychoanalytical thought – specifically Jessica Benjamin's understanding of the *third* – has shaped my personal and professional life in a multitude of ways. In this contribution, I will focus on the personal and political possibilities of creating antidotes to complimentary twoness and taking the stance of the moral third a) in the classroom, by co-determining class rules and boundaries with the students, by precisely adhering to the external boundaries such as start and finish times and weekly rhythms so that the students could focus on their reflections and learning processes, by being genuinely curious about students' viewpoints and lived experiences, and by holding difficult affective states such as shame and guilt so that a genuine meeting and recognition of minds can take place, b) in the research field, by going beyond the dynamic of the knower and the known, and by directing our attention to the violations of the right to (mental) health and the cascading nature of mental health consequences, and c) in advocacy, by insisting that dignity be restored when the right to mental health is appropriated.