

Gender, Work and Organization  
Call for Papers for a Special Issue on:

**Emotional, aesthetic and sexualized labour:  
Theoretical directions and challenges**

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It is now over fifteen years since Bolton (2000) observed how the concept of emotional labour has been stretched beyond its conceptual limits. In recent years, a number of key contributions to the literature has expanded its conceptual repertoire, with typologies of emotional (Bolton, 2004) and sexualized labour (Warhurst and Nickson, 2009) being advocated, and concepts such as ‘emotional and aesthetic capital’ (Williams and Connell, 2010), ‘intimate labour’ (Hancock et al, 2015) and ‘emotionally dirty work’ (McMurray and Ward, 2014) being introduced. Yet with a few notable exceptions (see Chugh and Hancock, 2009; Pullen and Simpson, 2009; Knights and Thanem, 2005), much of this analysis continues to draw on relatively well-established theoretical resources such as labour process theory and organisational sociology.

There have been many valuable, empirical studies that have applied the concepts of emotional, aesthetic and sexualised labour, considering how these relate to different sorts of workplaces and occupations, and how they can provide insight into the expanding fields of, for example, service work, ‘body work’ and ‘immaterial labour’. However, the purpose of this call for papers is to develop *new theoretical directions* and approaches to the analysis of emotional, aesthetic and sexualised labour. With this in mind, submissions that draw on cross- or trans-disciplinary perspectives are particularly welcomed.

As special issue editors we are looking to include contributions from different theoretical approaches, including, but not limited to, socio-material analysis or ANT; phenomenology; post-colonial thinking; queer theory, or posthuman or more-than-human relations that push the boundaries of current discussions and debates. Papers that draw on or develop the cross-fertilization of concepts or perspectives from other disciplines, such as feminist theory and philosophy; performance and theatre studies; historical and geographical analyses; media and cultural studies; arts and the humanities would be particularly welcome.

Since the term ‘emotional labour’ was developed, the fields of organisation studies and the sociology of work have themselves developed considerably, providing rich source material from which to develop new theoretical insight. For example, there has been more attention paid to the socio-material aspects of organisational life. Emotional, aesthetic and sexualised labour are often performed through and in close relation to ‘objects’, whilst at the same time these forms of labour often constitute the organisational ‘subject’ as themselves objectified.

New technologies, mobile working – the ‘electronic envelope’ (Felstead, et al) all impact on the performance and experience of emotion, aesthetics and sexuality at work. Social media, with its new forms of communication and community, its challenges to temporality and co-presence lead us to re-consider what emotion, sexuality and aesthetics means at work. There

have been significantly gendered effects to the use of social media technologies, recognised in both everyday culture and academic work (e.g. Bates, 2014). The nature of sexualised and sexist ‘trolling’, for example, has added a new dimension in which women have had to find ways to negotiate how their work and identity is gendered – for example, how Mary Beard has responded both to her detractors as individuals and made these visible. However, these technologies have also allowed different possibilities for resistance and voice against particular forms of gendering.

Another new area of work suggests a recognition that we can achieve a different knowledge, politics and ethics of organisation if we consider them not simply from a human and humanistic perspective, but engage with the relations of the post-human or the more-than-human world. What might this mean for our conceptualisation of emotional, aesthetic and sexualised labour?

Further, there has been an awareness that the spaces of organisations are neither empty, neutral or neutered, but that the social production of space (Lefevbre 1991) is integral to emotion, aesthetics and sexualisation. Workers are themselves produced by the spaces they work within, as well as co-producing them. Bolton (2005: 133) draws attention to the different sorts of emotional spaces that overlap within organisations: spaces for being human; spaces for community; spaces for gift exchange (caring); spaces for a bit of a laugh; spaces for the maintenance and creation of identity (where I feel I can be myself); spaces for resistance; spaces of violation. We would welcome contributions to this special issue that explore these themes further, connecting them to the empirical, conceptual or theoretical analysis of emotion, aesthetics and sexuality.

Contributors are asked to consider the ways in which research into the gendered nature of emotional, aesthetic and sexualized labour and its organization might develop new theoretical insights for the future, with this special issue seeking to provide an important and innovative reference point. With this in mind, possible contributions might include (but will not be limited to) papers drawing on, developing or originating from, any of the following:

- Socio-materiality or actor network theory
- Phenomenology
- Embodiment and corporeality
- Feminist theory and philosophy
- Performance and theatre studies
- Historical and geographical analyses
- Post-colonial perspectives
- Media and cultural studies
- Arts and the humanities
- Queer theory
- Disability studies
- Post-human and more-than-human relations

Submission guidelines: The deadline for submissions is 16<sup>th</sup> December 2017. Papers must be submitted electronically to: <http://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/gwo>. Papers should be no more than 7000 words, excluding references, and will be blind reviewed following the journal’s standard review process. Manuscripts should be prepared according to GWO submission guidelines - [http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/journal/10.1111/\(ISSN\)1468-0432](http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/journal/10.1111/(ISSN)1468-0432)

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