

Abstracts

The Political Economy of Sex

Claudia von Werlhof: Notes on the Relation between Sexuality and Economy

Abstract: Claudia von Werlhof's article aims to provide a theoretical and research framework related to the broader wave of Social Reproduction Theory (SRT). This approach does not treat the sphere of sexuality and the economy as separate and autonomous domains, but interprets sexuality as part of social reproduction, as one of the preconditions for production and thus for the economy. Thus it synthesizes a macroeconomic approach to the study of the „economic base” and a microsociological approach to the study of sexuality.

Keywords: social reproduction, sexuality, gender, marxism

Gergely Csányi: Political Aconomy of the Sexual Revolution: „Vaginal Orgasm,” Porn, and Homophobia in the Modern World-System

In this paper, I question widespread views in social sciences and of the liberal intellectual elite, according to which modern sexual relations are characterised by a liberation from heteronormativity, patriarchal relations, premodern traditions, and class exclusivity. I argue that the modern capitalist world-system adapts, in various ways, the sexual potential of the human body, and incorporates sexual relations into its own hierarchical system of action. From this aspect, the most important segment of the social process called sexual revolution is the inclusion of the sexual potential of the human body into the market extended by Fordist production. Moreover, the oppositions of different ideologies of sexuality are not oppositions of premodern residues and modernity, but the expressions of systemic contradictions of the modern world-system.

Keywords: sex, orgasm, homophobia, porn, historical materialism, world-systems theory

Anikó Gregor, Gergely Csányi and Fanni Dés: "Pest is Worth a Body": The Hungarian Porn Industry in the Long Nineties as a Patriarchal form of Reintegration into the World Economy

Abstract: In our study, we seek answers to two main questions. First, which antecedents and circumstances influenced the development of the Hungarian porn industry in the "long nineties", i.e. in the years before the change of the regime, and in the following ten-twelve years. Second, how this process formed a part of Hungary's economic and cultural reintegration into the capitalist world economy since the 1970s. The findings of the research are based on the processing of three types of empirical source material (contemporary press reports; semi-structured interviews with industry or industry insights; autobiographical books of former industry actors) and on an integrative re-reading the sociological, historical and political economy literature of the field. In a World-Systems Theory frame, we examine the domestic and international operating mechanisms of the porn industry consisting of sex magazine publishing and pornographic film production. In the state-socialist era, Hungary had one of the most liberal social and economic policies in the region, and has the most advanced infrastructure. These conditions facilitated the inflow of international (mainly Austrian and German) porn capital during the change of regime. In line with economic liberalism, under state socialism, the rules and guidelines of the advertising industry changed and advertising with a sexualized female body become common practice. The social-economic crisis at the time of the regime change made masses of disadvantaged women vulnerable to the rising porn industry. At the same time, in the mainstream public discourses, porn was considered as an indicator of liberal democracy and a legitimate business enterprise, and in the absence of a significant counter-discourse, most contributors to this discourse gave justification for its industrial operation.

Keywords: porn industry, change of the regime, moral geopolitics, gender relations

Emília Barna and Noémi Katona: The Hungarian Sex Camera Industry. Digital Technology, Platform Capitalism, and the Normalisation of the Sex Industry

Abstract: In our paper we analyse the emergence and functioning of the sex camera industry, focusing on the central role of platform companies and the labour of those working in the industry. Through the example of Hungary, based on interview research conducted with people working in the industry, we look at how the sex industry, and within that, the sex camera industry, has changed with digitalisation in the global economy, and how the platform companies that are at the centre of this transformation operate – among them, LiveJasmin, founded in Hungary. We look at how Hungary's semi-peripheral position within the capitalist world system determines the working conditions and possibilities of local workers in the global industry. In our analysis, we therefore explore the global inequalities of platform capitalism and digital labour from the perspective of Hungarian, semi-peripheral actors. In addition, we show what role sex camera platforms such as LiveJasmin have played in the normalisation of the sex industry.

Keywords: sex industry, sex camera industry, platform capitalism, digital labour, streaming, global commodity chain, gender relations

Abstract: In my paper, I analyze the narratives of violence and trauma of women who already quit the prostitution industry and who are still selling sex in the context of temporal, spatial and emotional closeness and distance to their experiences in the industry. The narratives of the two groups differ significantly regarding their experiences, the violence committed against them, the trauma experienced and the nature of the prostitution industry. I parallel the differences in the narratives with the nature of the trauma and with the temporal, spatial and emotional distance from the prostitution industry which is inseparable from the phenomenon of violence against women. Through the differences in the narratives of these women, I examine how it becomes legitimate at the societal level that women in general – but economically vulnerable women even more likely – are exposed to patriarchal violence systematically and without consequences in the prostitution industry embedded in the capitalist world system. My further aim is to make the women's invisible experiences of violence and traumas caused by violence visible in line with feminist empiricism.

Keywords: prostitution, prostitution industry, trauma, violence against women, patriarchy, capitalist world-system

Women in Science

Izolda Takács: Women in Science. The Interrelation of the Content of Gender Identity and Sexist Beliefs in the Careers of Academic Women in Hungary

Abstract: While many women in Hungarian society completely reject all manifestations of everyday sexism and take collective action to change it, others agree with most of the gender stereotypes, which can be an indirect obstacle on the areas overrepresented by men. My study examines the attitude of the female members of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences towards the question of „What does it mean to be a woman?“, what is their relationship to their own social group in terms of characteristics, qualities, interests and values? How does the essentializing discourse appear in their own career? My study also poses whether the exceptions (female academics) lead to a further strengthening of traditional perceptions and norms, or conversely, whether the transformation of the former closed system (male majority) has started in Hungary. Along this, how do the members of a seemingly more homogeneous group of women differ and how do they form different types regarding gender identity?

Keywords: academic women, scholar women, gender identity, GIM, multiple identities approach, gender stereotype

The Crisis of Official Statistics in the Age of Data Revolution

Zsolt Németh: The Crisis of Official Statistics in the Age of Data Revolution

Abstract: Data revolution is bringing along a social and economic transformation of hitherto unknown speed and depth. The present and future of official statistics during these fundamental changes is predicated upon its capacity to fulfil its mission and obligations to capture social, economic and environmental trends with trustworthy reliable and high quality statistical information. Novel challenges arose in the wake of increasing predicaments surrounding the rule of law (that had sustained official statistics for a long historical time period), the practice of big tech firms in data collecting and analysis, social media with its post-truth, conspiracy theories, and fakes news outlets, as well as the rise of identity politics and the transformation of political and communication environments. The study discusses the critical readings of surveillance capitalism and its manipulative techniques as well as the responses from various institutions of official statistics (primarily Eurostat) which reflect an acute awareness of the threats. Data assets that carry the new social and economic reality of data revolution are the exclusive private property of tech companies. These data are social facts to which official statistics has no access. It cannot improve its classifications, categories and concepts to capture the new social reality making its representations of reality more and more opaque, obscure, discrediting itself in the long run. Official statistics is also not to be blamed as its crisis is caused by irreversible changes beyond its reach. One solution would be if it could access the data embodying the new social reality of data revolution in a legally secured, regulated and transparent manner.

Keywords: data revolution, official statistics, crisis, social facts, surveillance capitalism

Believing Without Moralising

Bulcsu Bognár and Zoltán Kmety: Believing without Moralising: Secularised Religiousness in Hungary

Abstract: This article explores the features of religiousness as it is supported by governmental policies in Hungary. The research interprets the values held by social actors in terms of their relationship to violations of norms that are sanctioned and those that are not sanctioned by the state. The analyses of our representative sample revealed a type of secularised

religiousness in more than one dimension. The value orientations of religious people in Hungary appear to be aligned with secular society. The main trend seems to be that the moral judgements of religious people do not differ from those of the people who consider themselves not religious or atheist. Religious people in Hungary no longer find guidance in their religious tradition – which is regarded as obsolete in today’s secularised public discourse – but are oriented by the values of the secularised world, inevitably drifting away from their Christian roots. Differences between religious and not religious people appear only in certain position statements relating to homosexuals.

Keywords: sociology of religion, sociology of values, value system, secularization, traditionalism, religiosity

The Social Construction of Old Age

Flóra Zsinka: Old Age: Social Construction and Personal Narratives

Abstract: In welfare societies, the growing number of the elderly is being constructed as a problem through dominant discourses on the economic and social effects of population ageing. The study first looks at the processes and factors that, intertwined with the ideology problematizing the demographic change, contribute to the creation of a social construction of old age that presents the elderly as a homogenized group that uses up the resources produced by the active population and is in need of care and nourishment. It covers in detail the phenomenon defined by certain authors as apocalyptic demography and the role of medicalization. Ideas that infantilize the elderly, and position them as people relying on others and being in a vulnerable situation, symbolically deprive older people of their full adult status and create unequal relationships between age groups. Power relations thus created are interpreted by using Bourdieu’s concept of symbolic violence. The paper then seeks to present the diversity of life situations in old age using the method of narrative biographical analysis. Contrary to the logic of perceiving old age as a homogenized category and alienating it from the rest of the life course, the study argues that experiencing the late life stage can vary greatly from person to person depending on their individual life path.

Keywords: old age, apocalyptic demography, medicalization, symbolic violence, qualitative research

Reviews

Dávid Kollár: The Chemistry of the Protestant Ethics

Abstract: The aim of this paper is to highlight a single, albeit decisive, momentum of the new translation of Weber's work, to present a possible interpretation of the argument presented by Weber, which, I argue, captures fundamental implications for social science thinking. In line with this, I proceed as follows: first, I briefly outline the argument of *Protestant ethics* and then I present, through the concept of affinity, how it can be incorporated into one of the defining discourses of current social science approaches.

Keywords: Protestant ethics, spirit of capitalism, chemistry, affinity, complexity

Diána Barta: The Reconciliation of Science and Action

Abstract: Ágoston Fáber's book is the first comprehensive monography on Pierre Bourdieu in Hungarian. The book follows the scientific career of the French sociologist presenting his elaborated theoretical and methodological approach. He reviews the critical points of Bourdieu's life-work and takes a side in the „two-Bourdieu” debate. Fáber's book consistently presents the evolution of Bourdieu's academic work uniting his researches and political activism.

Keywords: habitus, field theory, agent, practice-theory, activism

Ferenc Tallár: András Lányi: Introduction to Ecophilosophy

Abstract: In my reading, Lányi turns the abstract relation of humans and nature into the relations of humans to each other, this way the catastrophe-report of the “ecocide” turns into a system-criticism in order to envision the possibility of meaningful life. One could say that, in Lányi's work, ecophilosophy transforms into an “ecology focused” social philosophy (practically, into a politics of ecology). The review aims to critically reconstruct the logic of this ecological politics.

Keywords: review, ecophilosophy, Lányi András, green movements