

GENDER AND QUALITY OF LIFE



Gender Study Group One Day Conference:

Friday 17th January 2014, University of Lincoln, UK

<http://bsagenderstudygroup.wordpress.com/>

Keynotes:

Professor Ellen Annandale, University of York
and

James Morton, Scottish Transgender Alliance
Manager Equality Network

What constitutes a good life has captured the minds of thinkers across time and cultures. In Aristotle's terminology, *eudaimonia*, people were called upon to realize their full potential in order to achieve a "good life." Kant's approach was to understand the good life through rational thought. Others have seen the good life in terms of utility of resources and economics and individual desires, whilst some have sought to understand quality of life through affect and experience. The contemporary focus on quality of life is often conceptualized as social indicators, such as longevity, crime or human rights policies or through the measurement of medical and health outcomes. These diverse approaches perhaps are most consistently found in the health and social care tools that measure disease specific quality of life outcomes. Gender and feminist accounts have hardly scratched the surface on this contested ground. Whilst gender differences are understood as providing indicators about the variations in quality of life evaluations, gender and feminist work has rarely considered the 'who,' 'what' 'how' and 'why' in quality of life debates. For instance, who are selected in the evaluation process, what theoretical concepts are used and how are quality of life tools constructed, how do they work, why are these tools used and for whose benefit? How do we assess individuals' and groups' perceptions of their positions in life in the context of wider culture and value systems in which people live and in relation to their goals, expectations, social standards and political concerns? How can we combine these conceptual, philosophical and methodological differences to understand a comprehensive view of gender and quality of life. This to some extent returns us somewhat to more philosophical questions and tempts us to broaden the scope of quality of life evaluations, which encompasses broader socio-cultural and psychosocial factors that may affect someone's evaluation of what quality of life means.

This conference will examine issues in relation to gender and quality of life: How do current feminisms speak to quality of life issues? How do grass roots gender and feminist politics respond to quality of life concerns? How can feminism constructively interact with quality of life debates? How are *local and global systems* implicated in our fascination to evaluate quality of life outcomes? What are the similarities and differences – the uniting and dividing features - of national and international quality of life themes? How does *culture* contribute to the debates about quality of life? How can feminist and gender scholarship account for embodied diversities in relation to quality of life? How does feminism contribute to the debates on quality of life themes in the 21st Century?

We seek papers that will address themes concerning (but not limited to):

Sites of activism Political agendas and political and healthcare economies

Feminisms at local, global, spaces and places

Intersections of class, race, ethnicity, faith, age, gender, sexuality and embodiment

Leisure and work

Agency and affect

Methodological and analytical inclusions and exclusions

Trans* and Queer Feminisms

Representation, media and new technologies

Please send your 300 word abstracts to Zowie Davy zdavy@lincoln.ac.uk by 18th November 2013, Registration deadline 17th December 2013 at 17:00.

BSA Gender Study Group in collaboration with Community and Health Research Group (CaHRU),
University of Lincoln

BSA Members £45 Non-BSA Members £55