

Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Equality and  
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Special Issue: The women's march and Trump  
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### **Editorial: The Women's March and Trump**

Kate Sang, Intercultural Research Centre, Heriot-Watt University,  
Edinburgh, EH14 4AS [k.sang@hw.ac.uk](mailto:k.sang@hw.ac.uk)

Christopher Lyon, Centre for Environmental Change and Human  
Resilience, University of Dundee, DD1 4HN [c.lyon@dundee.ac.uk](mailto:c.lyon@dundee.ac.uk)

The Women's March on 21 January 2017 was conceived and initiated in the time between the US election result of 8 November 2016 and the 20 January presidential inauguration of Donald Trump. US-centred, it also saw global impact with over 600 marches in dozens of countries. Estimates of participation number as high as 4.5 million people. Trump, his close advisors and cabinet are regarded by many commentators to reflect a new far-right or illiberal leadership previously unknown in the US, with potentially radical national and international effects. The cabinet is currently the least diverse in terms of 'race' and gender of recent times, and has rapidly instituted a growing list of measures targeting marginalised groups such as The Global Gag Rule, the removal of the Affordable Care Act and bans on refugees from predominately Muslim countries.

In response to the Women's March we proposed a special issue which would consider the march and Trump from a variety of perspectives. Our first rapid response resulted in our largest ever pool of submissions, from full research papers, reflective pieces and blog posts/photo essays. We were delighted with the response from authors who cover a range of disciplines, and also come from outside traditional academia. Here we

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consider the first volume of papers from the Women's March & Trump special issue.

Ali reflects on the symbols used in the Women's March and their salience for different groups of women, in particular, Muslim women. Drawing on the concept of 'double-otherness', Ali locates the problematic positioning of Muslim women in the broader socio-political contexts faced by doubly marginalised groups. Assiter reflects on the concept of Universalism. Challenged in recent years, as a relic of the Enlightenment, Assiter suggests it is time for a rethink on the usefulness of Universalism. Further, Assiter points to the need for those of us who can resist without immediate risk to our freedom and physical well-being, to continue resisting. Indeed, being able to do so relies on a liberal state which has a commitment to some form of universal human rights.

Cohan's piece takes an innovative approach of drawing on a number of pre-published blog posts and more recent personal reflection. Cohan provides a useful perspective on the difficulties attending marches, including the effects of crowd sizes and also fears for safety in areas of the USA where there is ready access to firearms. Instead Cohan offers us a way to protest, think and resist through feminist writing, whether 'academic' publications or blogs.

Humm tells us of her experiences at the London Women's March, including some photos from the day. Through Humm's reflections we feel a sense of optimism for the the future of the Women's March and continued protest and resistance. Drawing on women thinkers past and present, we



see the Women's March as the next stage on the path of women's resistance to oppression.

McGivney and colleagues explore information literacy and its role in fake news. By drawing on a range of sources which individuals are able to assess, we can see that there is no one single path to truth. McGivney and colleagues point to the difficulties students can experience when navigating and accessing research. By supporting students to find and assess information, we can support not only their scholarly work, but also how they approach the information they receive in the media.

Murphy's blog present a perspective of women's protests and political action, viewing the Women's March as the most recent in a long history of activism. Murphy shows us the power in humour and wit in taking the oppressor's power and language and turning it into an insider joke for the marginalised. Long live Pat Pussy Power!

Haffner and coauthors ask us to consider the politics of shame, and the pressure from some of The Resistance to 'eviscerate' opponents. They debate who the target of such evisceration is (or should be). Is it the individual who presents a view, or the ideology behind the view. Given the efforts from 'the left' to deconstruct the language of 'the right', Haffner et al wonder why similar efforts are not made to break down and understand the language used by 'the left'. The authors ask us to consider how we facilitate the rehabilitation of those we disagree with, if we allow it all.

Uncapher offers us a personal reflection of the Women's March. Speaking from the Rust Belt of the US, Uncapher expresses a deeply held

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desire to persist in the resistance. Uncapher asks us to consider whether the time has come to re-enact the actions we have seen before, within a context where words have lost (or changed) their meanings.

The papers in Volume 1 of this special issue are informative, thoughtful, provocative and moving. As editors we were impressed not only with the volume of submissions to the special issue, but the quality and passion of the work. While there are more papers to come in the second volume, we end this editorial with a quote from one of the contributions:

‘We must continue to resist until resistance is no longer necessary’  
(Uncapher, 2017).

Kate and Christopher

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