Topics in Sex and Gender: Gender and Globalization

Prof. Jennifer Bair University of Colorado

Office: Ketchum 214 Department of Sociology

Office Phone: 735-2389 Fall 2009

Office Hours: Wed. 3:00-4:30 PM and by appt. Mon. 3:30-6:20 PM

jennnifer.bair@colorado.edu Location: Ketchum 33

**Course Description**

How does globalization, as an ongoing process of social and economic change, impact gendered practices, ideologies and forms of politics in different parts of the world? In what ways, is gender difference implicated in the restructuring of social and geographic space that the term globalization is thought to imply? These are the primary questions orienting this course, though our exploration of the relationship between gender and the political economy of globalization will focus primarily on women’s labor. Over twenty years ago, feminist scholars noted the correlation between global economic restructuring (the so-called New International Division of Labor) and the incorporation of women, mostly in the global South, into wage employment. We will begin by asking what kind of explanations sociologists and other social scientists offered for the “feminization” of manufacturing, and proceed to consider how our understanding of the relationship between gender and the globalization of production has changed over time. While the focus will be on gendered labor throughout, we will move from a focus on women in the global factory, to a discussion of service sector employment (including sex work), and conclude by asking how globalization is impacting transnational forms of activism and feminist organizing around labor issues.

**Course Format**

As a graduate course, the overall format of this class will be a discussion-intensive seminar. Most weeks I will begin class with remarks (sometimes 15 minutes, sometimes 45 minutes) that are intended to put a particular reading in the context of broader disciplinary debates, provide background information that supplements the particular reading, or flag a particularly challenging part of the day’s assigned text(s) for later discussion. Each week, a student (or students, depending on final course enrollment) will be preparing and sharing with the class a short, critical summary of the assigned texts to kick off our discussion (more on this below). Following this presentation, we will have a general discussion in which all questions and contributions are welcome. ***Please be advised that careful completion of the assigned texts is absolutely essential for success in this course.*** All readings except for the excerpts from the following books, which I recommend you purchase, will be available on CU Learn:

1. Salzinger, Leslie (2003 ) *Genders in Production: Making Workers in Mexico’s Global Factories*.

Berkeley: University of California Press.

1. Wright, Melissa (2006) *Disposable Women and Other Myths of Global Capitalism*. New York: Routledge.
2. Lee, Ching Kwan (1998) *Gender and the South China Miracle: Two Worlds of Factory Women*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
3. Wolf, Diane (1992) *Factory Daughters: Gender, Household Dynamics and Rural Industrialization in Java*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
4. Ong, Aihwa (1987) *Spirits of Resistance and Capitalist Discipline*. Albany: SUNP Press, chapter.
5. Parreñas, Rhacel Salazar (2001) *Servants of Globalization: Women, Migration and Domestic Work*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Here are the components of the course on which you will be graded:

*Attendance and Participation (10%)*

Students are expected to actively participate in class discussion. This may include asking questions, so please be aware that understanding everything you have read is not a pre-requisite for successful participation. If you miss a class at which a reading response is due, you may send me an electronic copy of your essay by no later than 5 PM the Wednesday after class.

*Response Papers (10% each for a total 40%)*

Five times during the course of the semester you will be asked to turn in reading responses of no more than two pages. Sometimes I will give you specific prompts or questions to answer in these essays, but basically reading responses should offer a critical summary of the text or texts assigned for the week. Typically this means you should identify the main theoretical and/or empirical research question orienting the work, provide a brief description of the main argument, and offer an assessment of the text, noting both its strengths and weaknesses. Strong responses will do more than summarize and evaluate a specific reading: You should also try to think about how the week’s readings relate to other texts we’ve read in the course. Do the assigned texts extend or contradict earlier findings? Do they take the literature in a new theoretical or methodological direction? How do the week’s readings speak to your own interests, if at all? So the goal of these response papers is to demonstrate that you are engaging the assigned texts, both in terms of their own merits and in terms of how they fit into broader debates. I will drop the lowest of the five graded response papers.

*Weekly discussion leader (25% of final course grade)*

Beginning September 14, the discussion portion of each class meeting will be led by a student who will also prepare a 5-6 page paper on the assigned readings. These papers can be thought of as expanded versions of the reading responses described above, but they will also pose a series of questions that will open our discussion of the material. These papers will be read aloud in class, with a written copy turned into me.

*Paper (25%)*

The final paper for this course will be due Monday, December 14th at 5 PM. I will meet with each of you to discuss your paper topics, and all topics should be approved by November 1st. The goal of this assignment is for you to produce either a conference paper (the ASA deadline is in January, so this would be a handy way to get an ASA submission ready) or a manuscript that would eventually be suitable for submission to a journal. These papers may be empirical or theoretical, and should be approximately 20 pages in length.

**Syllabus**

Aug. 24: Introduction: Thinking about Gender and Work in Comparative and Global Context

Scott, Joan (1986) “Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis.” *The American Historical Review* 91(5): 1053-1075.

Mills, Mary Beth (2003) “Gender and Inequality in the Global Labor Force.” *Annual Review of Anthropology* 32: 41-62.

August 31: Gendering the New International Division of Labor

Fröbel, Folker, Jürgen Heinrichs, and Otto Kreyes (1978) “The new international division of labour.” *Social Science Information* 17(1): 123-142.

Elson, Diane and Ruth Pearson (1981) “Nimble Fingers Make Cheap Workers: An Analysis of Women’s Employment in Third World Export Manufacturing.” *Feminist Review* 7: 87-107.

Safa, Helen (1981) “Runaway Shops and Female Employment: The Search for Cheap Labor.” *Signs* 7(2): 418-433.

Film, *“The Global Assembly Line”*

Sept. 7: Labor Day, no class

Sept. 14: Gender at the Border: The First Generation of Research on the Maquilas

Fernandez-Kelly, María Patricia (1983) *For We Are Sold, I and My People: Women and Industry in Mexico’s Frontier*. Albany: SUNY Press, chapters 4-8.

Iglesias Prieto, Norma (1997) *Beautiful Flowers of the Maquiladora: Life Histories of Women Workers in Tijuana*. Austin: University of Texas Press, chapters 3-4.

Sept. 21: Back at the Border, Twenty Years On

Salzinger, Leslie (2003 ) *Genders in Production: Making Workers in Mexico’s Global Factories*.

Berkeley: University of California Press, chapters 2-6 and 9.

**Response paper #1 due**

Sept. 28: The Maquila Murders?

Nathan, Debbie (1997) “Work, Sex and Danger in Ciudad Juárez.” *NACLA Report on the Americas* 33(3): 24-30.

Wright, Melissa (2006) *Disposable Women and Other Myths of Global Capitalism*. New York: Routledge, chapters 4 and 7.

Film, *“Señorita Extraviada”*

Oct. 5: Gender in the Chinese Miracle

Lee, Ching Kwan (1998) *Gender and the South China Miracle: Two Worlds of Factory Women*. Berkeley: University of California Press, chapters 1-2, 4 and 6

Wright, Melissa (2006) *Disposable Women and Other Myths of Global Capitalism*. New York: Routledge, chapters 1-3.

**Response Paper #2 due**

October 12: Gender, State and Market in the Transition from Socialism

Ngai, Pun (2006) *Made in China: Women Factory Workers in a Global Workplace*. Durham: Duke University Press, chapters 1, 2 and 4.

Gal, Susan and Gail Kligman (2000) *The Politics of Gender after Socialism*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, chapters 1, 3 and 4.

Film, *“Mardi Gras: Made in China”*

Oct. 19: Gender and the Organization of Service Work

Otis, Eileen (2008) “Beyond the Industrial Paradigm: Market-Embedded Labor and the Gender Organization of Global Service Work in China.” *American Sociological Review* 73 (1): 15-36.

Hanser, Amy (2005) “The Gendered Rice Bowl: The Sexual Politics of Service Work in Urban China.” *Gender and Society* 19: 581-600.

**Response paper #3 due**

Oct. 26: What is high-tech anyway? Gender and the Globalization of IT Work

Freeman, Carla (1993) “Designing Women: Corporate Discipline and Barbados' Off-Shore Pink Collar Sector.” Cultural Anthropology. Vol. 8 (2):169-186.

Patel Reena (2006) “Working the Night Shift: Gender and the Global Economy. “ *ACME* 5(1): 9-27.

Adam, A., H. Richardson, M. Griffiths and K. Moore (2008), ‘Gendered Futures? Women, the ICT

Workplace and Stories of the Future’, *Gender, Work and Organization* 15(5): 523-542.

November 2: The Gendered Political Economy Approach

Wolf, Diane (1992) *Factory Daughters: Gender, Household Dynamics and Rural Industrialization in Java*. Berkeley: University of California Press, chapters 3, 5 and 8-9.

Caraway, Teri (2007) *Assembling Women: The Feminization of Global Manufacturing*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, chapters 1, 2 and 4.

 Nov 9: Spirits of Resistance in Field and Factory

Ong, Aihwa (1987) *Spirits of Resistance and Capitalist Discipline*. Albany: SUNP Press, chapter 1, 5 and 7-9.

Dolan, Catherine (2002) “Gender and Witchcraft in Agrarian Transition: The Case of Kenyan Horticulture.” *Development and Change* 33(4): 659-81. 

**Response Paper #4 due**

Nov. 16: Migration and Domestic Work

Chin, Christine (1997) “Walls of silence and late twentieth century representations of the foreign female

domestic worker: the case of Filipina and Indonesian female servants in Malaysia.” *International Migration Review* 31: 353–385.

Parreñas, Rhacel Salazar (2001) *Servants of Globalization: Women, Migration and Domestic Work*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, chapters 3-6.

November 30: Sex Work and Tourism in the Global Economy

[Kempadoo, Kamala](http://csaweb113v.csa.com/ids70/p_search_form.php?field=au&query=kempadoo+kamala&log=literal&SID=v69obnp95dcin7sieuf23cujn0) (2001) “Freelancers, Temporary Wives, and Beach-Boys: Researching Sex Work in the Caribbean.” *Feminist Review* 67: 39-62.

Gregory, Steven (2006) *The Devil Behind the Mirror: Globalization and Politics in the Dominican Republic*. Berkeley: University of California Press, chapter 4.

Cabezas, Amalia L. (2004) “Between Love and Money: Sex, Tourism, and Citizenship in Cuba and the Dominican Republic.” *Signs* 29 (4): 987-1015.

Outshoorn, Joyce (2005) “The Political Debates on Prostitution and Trafficking of Women.” *Social Politics* 12 (1): 141-155.

Dec. 7: Does the Globalization of Gendered Labor Require a Global Feminist Response?

Mohanty, Chandra Talpade. (1986) “Under Western Eyes: Feminist Scholarship and Colonial Discourses.” In *Third World Women and the Politics of Feminism*, eds. Mohanty, Russo and Torres. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Mohnanty, Chandra Talpade (2001) “Under Western Eyes Revisited’: Feminist Solidarity through Anticapitalist Struggles.” *Signs* 28(2): 499-535.

Nagar, Richa (2002) “Footloose researchers, ‘traveling’ theories, and the politics of transnational feminist praxis.” *Gender, Place and Culture* 9: 179–186.

Brooks, Ethel (2007) Unraveling the Garment Industry: Transnational Organizing and Women’s Work. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, chapters 3 and 5.

**Response Paper #5 due**

**Final Papers due December 14th at 5 PM**