

SOCIOLOGY OF GENDER, WORK & LABOR

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Department of Sociology
University of California, Berkeley
Sociology 190: M 10-12
Cory 285

COURSE OVERVIEW

"Do you work?"
"No, *trabajo en casa*."

-Janice Fine, "Workers Centers and Immigrant Women."
The Sex of Class: Women Transforming American Labor

We spend our lives *working* formally for a wage, on various projects, on our relationships, and on ourselves. Work defines us—or, does it (have to)? And how much does gender "matter" at work, and in what ways does it shape the work that we do, and where and how we do it? This seminar will take a broad approach to gender, placing it into conversation with race and ethnicity, class, nation, and space, as we think through the dynamic relationship between gender and labor from a variety of situated and comparative perspectives, including the current and intensifying neoliberal moment.

When and why are certain kinds of work not considered *real* work, and where are they then located, or relegated, in governing structures of power? We will pay particular attention to whose labor "counts", thus focusing especially on workers who are often ignored, invisibilized, informalized, or excluded, thinking through their particular sets of challenges for recognition, along with the contradictions and dynamics of that process. Collectively, we will consider profound resistance efforts and international counter-movements, such as living wage ordinances, the Wages for Housework campaigns, and *Precarias a la Deriva*. How have particular historical moments shifted the intersections of gender, work, labor, and what can we learn from those struggles? In this seminar, we will think through competing ways that gender and labor are organized and understood together, examining and interrogating the processes by which these discourses—and their consequences—are created, shaped, and reproduced.

You should leave this seminar with a situated understanding of work and labor in its globalized and localized forms, recognizing how gendered processes shape the way that we understand work, and the multifaceted ways that workers resist and organize in varying political contexts, as well as roots of job discrimination, changes in the workplace, and gendered and racialized implications of the growing informal economy.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

ATTENDANCE: 5%

Quite simply, I expect you to be present both physically and mentally. Please be in touch if whatever reason this is not the case. You are allowed **ONE unexcused absence** from class; otherwise, missing class will lower your attendance grade. Absences will only be excused for unavoidable reasons, such as emergencies. Please email me if this presents a problem for any reason, or if something else is going on that we should discuss.

PARTICIPATION: 15%

Generally, the sooner you speak out in class, the easier it is for you to continue thoughtfully participating to create a generative discussion. That being said, however, I expect everyone to actively listen to your peers and utilize self-awareness and respect regarding when and how you contribute in order to create a welcoming, inclusive atmosphere for all.

WRITTEN REFLECTIONS: 25%

There are ten substantive weeks of reading. You are expected to write 1-2 (single spaced) page reflection pieces, or memos, based on **five** weeks of reading. Please upload these reflections by Friday at 12 noon in order to give other students ample time to read your thoughts, as they are to be considered material for the following Monday's seminar. In approaching these memos, be sure to analyze, question, and interrogate the texts rather than summarizing them. What do you see as important? How well does the author prove their argument(s)? What empirical data backs up the claims? What are the limitations, and what was left unexamined? Part of this exercise's goal is to enable you to thoroughly analyze and assess an article, and then move into intellectual engagement as you situate and problematize the argument. Additionally, you are welcome to use the films as texts in your memos.

WRITING WORKSHOP: 5%

We all struggle with writing—we procrastinate, we don't revise enough, we don't have a clear, central thesis, we cannot back up the claim we make, and the list goes on! The good news is that these problems are collective and we can work through them with practice and a supportive environment—we will conduct a writing workshop during class. You will learn how to read and evaluate another student's work in a constructive way, as well as practice learning how to incorporate feedback from another student in order to polish and improve your own writing. As part of this process, you will write a short reflection on your experience of the writing workshop.

FINAL RESEARCH PAPER: 50%

In addition, you must write a seminar paper that approximately 12-15 pages (double-spaced) in which you attempt to explore and answer a significant sociological question about gender, work, and labor, reimagined, that you then interrogate in your paper. What interests you as we move forward in the semester? What did we leave out, or bring light to that you wish to explore further? Papers should be based on primary sources or secondary literature, but should develop a clear, original argument supported by concrete evidence. We will conclude the seminar with a student symposium, giving you the chance will to present your findings and analysis to your fellow colleague, and to respond to their questions and feedback. All papers must include page numbers, use 12-point Times New Roman font, and have 1" margins all around. We will break down the research paper in the following manner, and discuss further details in class. Due **May 8th**!

- Paper Proposal (5%) Due February 27th
- Literature Review (10%) Due March 20th
- Annotated Outline (10%) Due April 10th
- Final Paper (25%) Due **May 8th**

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY AND HONESTY:

I expect you to turn in your own ideas, work, and thoughts, and only your own.

OFFICE HOURS:

My office hours will be held on Mondays from 12-2 PM in Café Milano, located at 2522 Bancroft, just across the street from Barrows Hall. Sign up here: <https://www.wejoinin.com/sheets/tqmx>. I am happy to arrange another time to meet if you cannot make this one; just e-mail me and we will work something out.

UNIVERSAL ACCESS:

If you have a documented need for special accommodations in class or on assignments, I am happy to work out these arrangements with you—please discuss this with me as soon as possible. Additionally, parents, student athletes, and anyone else whose commitments might affect their ability to attend class or complete assignments on time should also speak with me about possible conflicts ahead of time.

COURSE SCHEDULE AND READINGS

JANUARY 23 INTRODUCTION: WHO WORKS? DEFINITIONS AND CATEGORIES

Course overview and logistics.

Recommended Texts:

Terkel, Studs. 1974. *Working: People Talk About What They Do All Day and How They Feel About What They Do*. Pantheon Press.

Bowe, John, Marisa Bowe, and Sabin Streeter. 2001. *Gig: Americans Talk About Their Jobs*. Three Rivers Press. Selections.

JANUARY 30 THEORETICAL ORIENTATION

Glenn, Evelyn Nakano. 1992. "From Servitude to Service Work: Historical Continuities in the Racial Division of Paid Reproductive Labor." *Signs* 18:1, 1992:1-43.

Duffy, Mignon. 2007. "Doing the Dirty Work Gender, Race, and Reproductive Labor in Historical Perspective." *Gender and Society*.

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

Recommended: Vicki Smith, "Braverman's Legacy: The Labor Process Tradition at 20," *Work and Occupations* 21(4), 1994:403-421.

FEBRUARY 6 SERVICE WITH A SMILE? CONSTRUCTING GENDER, BODY & WORK

Kang, Miliann. 2003. "The Managed Hand: The Commercialization of Bodies and Emotions on Korean-Immigrant-Owned Nail Salons." *Gender and Society* 17(6): 820-839.

Henson, Kevin, and Jackie Rogers. 2001. "Why Marcia You've Changed!" Male Clerical Temporary Workers Doing Masculinity in a Feminized Occupation. *Gender and Society*.

Villarreal, Ana T. 2010. "The Bus Owner, the Bus Driver, and His Lover: Gendered Class Struggle in the Service Work Triangle." *Work and Occupations* 37(3): 272-294.

Recommended: Hall, Elaine J. 1993. "Waitering/Waitressing: Engendering the Work of Table Servers." *Gender and Society* 7(3): 329-346.

FEBRUARY 13 DOMESTIC WORK, RACE, AND THE U.S. HOUSEHOLD

Dill, Bonnie Thornton. 1994. *Across the Boundaries of Race and Class: An Exploration of Work and Family Among Black Female Domestic Servants*. New York: Garland. Selections.

Romero, Mary. 2012. *The Maid's Daughter*. Selections.

Nadasen, Premilla. 2015. *Household Workers Unite: The Untold Story of African American Women Who Built a Movement*. Boston, MA: Beacon Press. Selections.

Tronto, Joan. 2002. "The 'Nanny' Question in Feminism." *Hypatia* 17(2): 34-51.

FEBRUARY 20: NO CLASS—ACADEMIC AND ADMINISTRATIVE HOLIDAY

FEBRUARY 27 DOMESTIC WORK, RACE, AND THE GLOBAL HOUSEHOLD

*Screening of Anna Muylaert's 2015 film, "The Second Mother" ("Que Horas Ela Volta?"), on a middle-class Brazilian household, its domestic worker, and her daughter

Ray, Raka. 2000. "Masculinity, Femininity and Servitude: Domestic Workers in Calcutta in the Late Twentieth Century" *Feminist Studies* 26(3).

Casanova, Erynn Masi de. 2013. "Embodied Inequality: The Experience of Domestic Work in Urban Ecuador." *Gender and Society* 27(4):561–585.

Parreñas, Rhacel Salazar. 2015[2001]. *Servants of Globalization: Women, Migration, and Domestic Work*. Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press. Selections; new chapter on masculinity.

Recommended: Carrillo, Teresa. 2014. "Translation and Transnationalization of Domestic Service." In *Translocalities/Translocalidades: Feminist Politics of Translation in the Latin/a Americas*, edited by Sonia E. Alvarez, et al. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

*Paper Proposal (5%) Due February 27th

MARCH 6 [RE]PRODUCTIVE WORK? SEX WORK, STIGMA, & SOLIDARITY

Sanders, Teela, Maggie O'Neill, and Jane Pitcher. 2012. "The Sociology of Sex Work." In *Prostitution: Sex Work, Policy, and Politics*. Sage Publications.

Vijayakumar, Gowri, Chacko, Shubha, and Panchanadeswaran, Subadra. 2015. "As Human Beings and as Workers": Sex Worker Unionization in Bangalore, India." *Global Labour Journal*.

Berg, Heather. 2014. "Working for Love, Loving for Work: Discourses of Labor in Feminist Sex-Work Activism." *Feminist Studies* 40(3): 693-721.

Recommended: Oselin, Sharon S. 2014. *Leaving Prostitution: Getting Out and Staying Out of Sex Work*. New York: New York University Press.

MARCH 13 WORK AND LACK OF REGULATION: DEINDUSTRIALIZATION

Weinbaum, Eve. 2004. *To Move a Mountain: Fighting the Global Economy in Appalachia*. New York: New Press. Selections. *In-class Skype conversation with the author.

Cowie, Jefferson. 1999. *Capital Moves: RCA's Seventy-Year Quest for Cheap Labor*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press. Selections.

Precarias a la deriva. 1. 2002. Adrift Through the Circuits of Feminized Precarious Work. *Feminist Review: Labour Migrations: Women on the Move*, 77: 57-161 (Selections).

2. 2006. "Una huelga de mucho cuidado"/ A Very Careful Strike: Four Hypotheses." *The Commoner*, No. 11.

MARCH 20 IM/MIGRATION, GLOBALIZATION, & INEQUALITY

*Screening of Stephen Frears' 2002 film, "Dirty Pretty Things" on the intersecting lives of three immigrant workers in London

Chang, Grace. 2000. *Disposable Domestic: Immigrant Women Workers in the Global Economy*. Boston, MA: South End Press. "Foreword" (by Mimi Abramovitz) and "Introduction."

Purser, Gretchen. 2007. "The Dignity of Job-Seeking Men: Boundary Work among Immigrant Day Laborers." *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography* 1-23.

Cortés, Luba. 2016. "My Undocumented Mom, America's Housekeeper." *The New York Times*. June 23. <http://www.nytimes.com/2016/06/24/opinion/my-undocumented-mom-america-housekeeper.html>

Recommended: Radhakrishnan, Smitha, and Cinzia Solari. 2015. "Empowered Women, Failed Patriarchs: Neoliberalism and Global Gender Anxieties." *Sociology Compass*.

*Literature Review (10%) Due March 20th

MARCH 27-MARCH 31: NO CLASS—SPRING BREAK!

APRIL 3 ORGANIZING INFORMALITY AND PRECARIETY

Broxmeyer, Jeffrey, and Erin Michaels. 2014. "Faith, Community, and Labor: Challenges and Opportunities in the New York City Living Wage Campaign."

Mayer, Stéphanie, and Yanick Noiseux. 2015. "Organizing at Walmart: Lessons from Quebec's Women." *Global Labor Journal* 6(1).

DeMoro, Rose Ann. 2015. "[How to Shatter the Glass Ceiling: Elect Bernie Sanders.](#)" *The Huffington Post*.

Agarwala, Rina. 2013. *Informal Labor, Formal Politics, and Dignified Discontent in India*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Selections.

Recommended: Fantone, Laura. 2007. "Precarious Changes: Gender and Generational Politics in Contemporary Italy." *Feminist Review* 87(1):5–20.

April 10 GENDERED RIGHTS, RECOGNITION, & REGULATION

Boris, Eileen, and Premilla Nadasen. 2008. "Domestic Workers Organize!" *WorkingUSA: The Journal of Labor and Society*. 11: 41-437.

Chun, Jennifer Jihye. 2016. "Building Political Agency and Movement Leadership: The Grassroots Organizing Model of Asian Immigrant Women Advocates." *Citizenship Studies*.

King, Martha. 2014. "Protecting and Representing Workers in the New Gig Economy: The Case of the Freelancers Union." In *New Labor in New York: Precarious Workers and the Future of the Labor Movement* by Ruth Milkman and Ed Ott.

Recommended Texts:

Maich, Katherine and Gowri Vijayakumar. Forthcoming, August 2017. "Politicizing Gender: Feminist Movements." In *The Social Life of Gender*, edited by Jennifer Carlson, Abigail Andrews, and Raka Ray. London: Sage Press.

Sandoval, Salvador A. M. 2007. "Alternative Forms of Working-Class Organization and the Mobilization of Informal Sector Workers in Brazil in the Era of Neoliberalism." *International Labor and Working-Class History* 72:18-41.

*Annotated Outline (10%) Due April 10th

April 17 WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE? WITHOUT WORK, POSTWORK, & THE FUTURE OF WORK

McCallum, Jamie. 2015. Short film to be viewed in class.

Weeks, Kathi. 2011. "Working Demands: From Wages for Housework to Basic Income." In *Feminism, Marxism, Antiwork Politics, and Postwork Imaginaries*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Wajcman, Judy. 2015. "Doing Domestic Time." In *Pressed for Time: The Acceleration of Life in Digital Capitalism*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Kim, Tammy. 2015. "Organizing the Unorganizable." *Dissent*, 62(2): 59-64.

Recommended Texts: Irene Weipert, Irene, and Jonas Wolff. 2016. "Unemployed Movements in the Global South: The cases of Argentina and Tunisia." Working Paper Series.

April 24 STUDENT SYMPOSIUM

FINAL PAPERS DUE ON MONDAY, MAY 8TH!