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SP.601J / 17.006J / 17.007J / 24.237J Feminist Theory
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Discussion 12: International Economics and Politics

- What does globalization mean?
- How do we define the theory? How does it work?
- What are the different methods of analysis we have encountered so far in the course?

Refer to the handout distributed, "Global Feminism – Theories and Methods," and Cynthia Enloe's book, The Curious Feminist:

- Does Enloe use political jargon?
- Why would women in a lesser-developed nation be suspicious of those in a developed nation? Can the women be said to be in competition with one another?
- Do women control dialogue?
- How, according to Enloe, are Korean girls molded into "dutiful daughters"? How is this model similar to/how does it differ from other nations?
- How do you mobilize women?
- How do women "not know" what is going on in governments, militaries around the world?
- What are the different "obstacles of accountability" (234)? How do they apply?
- What are the varieties of women's roles within the obstacles?

Refer to Amartya Sen's article, "More than 100 Million Women are Missing":

- What is he trying to do in discussing "missing" women?
- What is his main thesis?
- What are the things that will allow women to be more autonomous and less likely to "disappear" in a society?
- Will the daughters of working mothers be considered more valuable in society?
- If a daughter is married, living outside the home, is she "useless" to her parents?
- If a woman "gets out" of the house, does she have more leverage? If so, why?
- Does this article assume that by moving women into the workforce, a nation is more like the west as opposed to the east?
- Is demography a neutral subject? Or is it gender specific?
- Why is gender demography so staggering when one considers biological norms and real life statistics?

Refer to Leela Gandhi's article, "Post colonialism and Feminism":

- What did you take away from this article?
- Who makes up the quartet of actors that affect relationships in colonized regions?
- What different types of relationships are formed? How are femininity and masculinity at stake?

- How are notions of colonial masculinity internalized?
- How is the masculinity of native men affected by different relationships?
- Why did the US seek to liberate women in Afghanistan? What were they “liberated” from? Are Afghani women currently liberated?
- How do colonial men try to compensate for differences between them and the male colonizers?

Refer to Ann Stoler’s article, “Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power”:

- Is sexuality a main factor affecting the colonizer and the colonized?
- Do you feel confident looking at a problem, dissecting it and discovering how it is and is not gender neutral?

Film viewed in class, “Global Assembly Line”:

- What do you think of the film?
- How was this film made? How did the directors manage to get the footage, the interviews?
- Were the interview questions neutral? How so?
- How did the filming/editing techniques affect the film as a whole?
- Did the directors know what they wanted to argue?
- How does this film illustrate how companies that outsource and naturalize their practices?
- How do American managers justify sub-contracting?
- Do you agree with the naturalization argument: women are more dexterous and docile, therefore better suited for assembly line work?
- Does this film depict Young’s five types of oppression? How?
- Do you think that the sub-contractors US counterparts know of the human rights violations occurring in factories?
- Do the young women hired learn skills? Do these skills contribute to their daily lives outside the factory? If so, how?
- How are family dynamics affected by a mother/sister/daughter’s work in the factories?
- Does this film focus on the male role in the factories? If not, why?
- Are the men unemployed?
- What are the health implications for workers suffering from toxin inhalation and “scoping”?
- Can these young women “take the abuse,” as one manager claims? Is this fair?
- How does the idea of intersectionality come into play when one considers a woman’s life inside and outside of the factory?
- Do the American companies deceive themselves in order to feel better about the various human rights abuses suffered by women in sub-contractor factories?
- What do the managers compare the factory conditions and military interventions to? Situations in other lesser-developed nations, or global human rights standards?
- How do companies disassociate themselves from military action during strikes? Does this divert responsibility? If so, how?
- How do businesses compartmentalize issues?
- How can we create global standards to which all nations must comply? Is this possible?
- Is there worker accountability?
- Is there worker solidarity?
- Do the factories trivialize the women’s physical needs? Why?

- Are these women better off with a factory job or without one? What are the alternatives for these women?
- Do these women have more or less power with a factory job?
- Do these jobs give rural women more mobility and independence?
- What kind of worker consciousness evolves in the factories?
- How does nationalism affect sub-contractors?
- Do factory jobs stabilize political unrest and the economy in lesser-developed nations?
- How does everybody comply with American outsourcing?
- What is the most effective way to protest? Is one most effective as a consumer of the product, or as a worker making the product?