

Geography 474: Feminist economic geography: gender, identities and social change

Class Times: TBA, EV2-2002

Instructor: Dr Nancy Worth

Office hours: TBA

Course Description

What are the power relations that underlie the gendered division of labour? To what degree has all work under neoliberalism become women's work? How do we factor care work into the economy, whether paid or unpaid? These are some of the orienting questions for this course, where we will examine the economic through a feminist geographer's lens.

After first setting out the diverse aims of feminist economic geography, the course examines two central areas of concern—the gendered division of labour (Section 1) and care work (Section 2). The course then moves beyond gender to examine how a diverse group of embodied actors engage with the economy (Section 3). Section 4 concludes the course with feminist critiques of capitalism and responses to economic crisis. To engage with these ideas, the course combines lectures, readings, and class discussions with a range of extended material (films, art, policy documents) on LEARN.

Lecture Schedule (dates and topics are approximate and may be subject to change)

Week 1		Introducing Feminist Economic Geography
Week 2		Gender segregation and sexism in the labour market
Week 3		Interactive service work & the feminization of precarious work
Week 4		Unpaid Domestic Labour
Week 5		Paid Domestic Labour
Week 6		Children and Youth
Week 7		Disability
Week 8		Film: <i>Deux Jours, Un Nuit</i>
Week 9		Sexuality
Week 10		Race and Indigeneity
Week 11		Responses to financial crisis
Week 12		Challenging Neoliberalism and essay support session

Course Objectives

- To understand why feminist economic geography emerged within economic geography as a subfield that critiques and extends 'the economic'
- To appreciate how (unpaid) labour and social reproduction more broadly are central to the function of the economy
- To examine how embodied social differences (gender, age, sexuality, race etc) shape workers' experiences and their negotiations of economic life
- To demonstrate an awareness of key contemporary debates in feminist economic geography in North America, Europe and elsewhere
- To develop academic writing skills, applying course material to a critical writing portfolio and final essay

Readings

You will be assigned approximately two required readings per week, either journal articles or book chapters. Links will be available on the course LEARN page.

Several textbooks will also be referenced, but not used as required readings. They will be available through the library and will support your work in the course.

Texts: Aoyama, Y., Murphy, J., and Hanson, S. (2010) *Key Concepts in Economic Geography*, London: Sage

Massey, D. (1994) *Space, Place and Gender*, Cambridge: Polity Press [NB Section III]

[more forthcoming]

Assessment

Participation	Contributing to discussions	5
Student Led Seminar	Leading a seminar	10
Portfolio of Critical Writing	3 from week 1-6, Due June 9th 2 from week 7-11, Due July 14 Due second last week of term	35
Essay Outline	Due June 30 th	10
Final Essay	Due July 28 th	40

Student-led Seminar

During Weeks 5 to 11, groups will give an interactive seminar on a topic related to the weekly theme. The number and size of teams, as well as the length of seminar will be dependent on final class enrolment. Students will be asked indicate their interest in series of topics via a survey. Students will be assigned to groups accordingly by the third week of class. All team members are expected to participate equally in the preparation of the seminar. All team members will fill out a self- and peer-evaluation grid, which will be used in the overall assessment. Students' marks will be adjusted on the basis of peer evaluation. A students' mark will not increase or decrease by any more than 15% based on the peer evaluation. Additional instruction will be provided in class and via LEARN.

Your group will be responsible of organizing the format of the interactive session, providing questions to get us started, and encouraging participation of the group.

As always, you will need to do all the required reading, but for your week you and your group need to provide discussion questions, as well as interesting methods for sharing information—posters?, getting people to talk to each other—buzz groups of 3, 5, 10? You're welcome to come to my office hours to discuss your plans.

At the end of the session a 1 page lesson plan will be handed in. Detailed assessment criteria to follow.

Portfolio of Critical Writing on Course Blog:

Students are required to submit 5 separate pieces of critical writing to the course blog, available via LEARN. **Responses are due on [Mondays], before midnight.** Three responses will be due by June

9th, and two will be due by the end of term. Students will then collect all responses in a single document, and submit them, unedited, to the [course LEARN page] by [date].

You're encouraged (but not required) to write each week, and then choose your best 5 entries (3 from the first half of term, 2 from the second)

Each piece of critical writing should be close to *500 words* in length, excluding references. The goal of these pieces of writing is for students to reflect critically on the week's readings. The purpose is NOT to give a full account of the article(s), but rather to engage with aspects of the argument being made or perspective being put forward, and develop that in depth, taking into account other readings and aspects of the course. Students thus have considerable latitude to decide on what aspects they would like to delve deeper into, but should keep in mind that this is a piece of academic writing. Thus it is not an opportunity to simply express how one feels or give one's opinion (e.g. 'this made me feel such and such'), but to develop a defensible critical argument drawing on your own critical faculties as well as the wealth of resources you have at your disposal. Please indicate a word count at the end of each of the critical reflections.

I will be posting anonymized writing to the course blog each week, and will provide general feedback. The blog format encourages you to read and post comments on other critical responses, and while I encourage you to read the work of others, demonstrating independent thought in your writing is crucial.

Anyone who would like more detailed comments is welcome to come see me in my office hours.

Key assessment criteria

- High quality pieces of work will be carefully edited and tightly written, and will demonstrate that the student has been able to develop an argument effectively and situate that argument within broader thinking on the relevant issues.
- Original, independent writing and research

Final Essay

Students are required to write one of the following essays [topics to follow], or propose another topic for my approval. The essay will count for 50% of your final mark for the course (10% for the plan, 40% for the final paper). The essay is due at [at the end of term]. The word limit is 3000 words, excluding the list of references.

Although students can and should draw on reading from the course outline, students will be expected to have read more widely than this. Please be sure that your essay develops a critical argument rather than just providing an overview or discussion of the topic. Please be sure to follow the usual conventions of good writing, and be absolutely certain that the essay is referenced properly using internal citations and Harvard style (for those who are uncertain, I am happy to provide guidelines on referencing). Students should not collaborate with anyone else in the preparation of their answers – please direct any questions to me. [Specific assessment criteria to follow]

Lecture Format

Each class is 2 hours and 50 minutes long, with a short break halfway through. Attendance will be taken.

The first half of the class will be a lecture. The second half will be a lecturer-led or student-led seminar. At the end of the session I will sum up, making connections to past/future weeks' topics and answering any questions.

Reading List

Week 1 Introducing Feminist Economic Geography

Indicative reading: Oberbauser, Ann M. (2008) 'Feminism and Economic Geography: Gendering Work and Working Gender' *A Companion to Economic Geography* London: Blackwell. pp60-76

Johnson, L (2011) Feminist Economic Geographies *The SAGE Handbook of Economic Geography* Andrew Leyshon, Roger Lee, Linda McDowell & Peter Sunley (eds) London: Sage [online]

All commentaries (2016) 'Feminism and Economic Geography: 25 years after Father and Ford' *Environment and Planning A* 40:10 pp. 2067-2099.

Part 1: Women's work and men's work?

Week 2 Gender segregation and sexism in the labour market

Valentine, G., Jackson, L and Mayblin, L. (2014) Ways of Seeing: Sexism the Forgotten Prejudice? *Gender, Place & Culture* 21:4, pp.401-414

N. Worth 'Who we are at work: millennial women, everyday inequalities and insecure work' *Gender Place & Culture* 23:9 pp1302-1314

YWCA Hamilton & Workforce Planning Hamilton (2016) *Advancing Women in the Skilled Trades* <http://www.advancewomenintrades.com/about-the-toolkit/>

Week 3 Interactive service work & the feminization of precarious work

McDowell, L. (2009). 'Warm Bodies: Doing Deference in Routine Interactive Work' *Working Bodies: Interactive Service Employment and Workplace Identities*. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell. pp191-211.

Strauss, K. and S. McGrath (2017). "Temporary migration, precarious employment and unfree labour relations: Exploring the 'continuum of exploitation' in Canada's Temporary Foreign Worker Program." *Geoforum* 78: 199-208.

Coulter, K. (2016) The Gender Wage Gap in Ontario's Retail Sector: Devaluing Women's Work and Women Workers <https://revolutionizingretail.files.wordpress.com/2012/06/the-gender-wage-gap-in-ontarios-retail-sector-devaluing-womens-work-and-women-workers.pdf>

Part 2: Care work

Week 4 Unpaid Domestic Labour

Cox, R. (2013) House/Work: Home as a Space of Work and Consumption *Geography Compass* 7:12 pp821-831.

McDowell, L. (1999) 'Home, Place & Identity' *Gender, Identity, and Place: Understanding Feminist Geographies* Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press. pp71-95

Week 5 Paid Domestic Labour

Pratt, G. (2012) 'Enterprising women, failing children: Living with the contradictions of (neo)liberalism' *Families Apart: Migrating Mothers and the Conflicts of Labor and Love* Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press. pp1-40.

Lam, T. and B. S. A. Yeoh (2016). "Migrant mothers, left-behind fathers: the negotiation of gender subjectivities in Indonesia and the Philippines." *Gender, Place & Culture*: 1-14.

Yea, S. (2015) Rethinking Remittances through Emotion: Filipina Migrant Labourers in Singapore and Transnational Families Undone *Transnational Labour Migration, Remittances and the Changing Family in Asia* Palgrave Macmillan pp 257-282.

Part 3: Beyond the 'rational economic actor'—embodied workers

Week 6 Children and Youth

Katz, C. (2004). 'Children's Work and Play' in *Growing Up Global: Economic Restructuring and Children's Everyday Lives*. Minneapolis: Minnesota University Press. pp 59-108

Willis, Paul (1981) 'Labour power, culture, class and institution' in *Learning to Labor: How Working Class Kids Get Working Class Jobs* New York: Columbia University Press pp 89-116

McDowell, L. (2007). Respect, deference, respectability and place: what is the place with/for working class boys. *Geoforum*, 38, 276-286.

Week 7 Disability

Wilton, R. and Evans, J. (2016), Social enterprises as spaces of encounter for mental health consumers. *Area*, 48: 236–243.

Dyck, I. (1999). Body troubles: Women, the workplace and negotiations of disabled identity. In R. Butler & H. Parr (Eds.), *Mind and Body Spaces: Geographies of Illness, Impairment and Disability*. London: Routledge. pp. 119-137

Chouinard, V. and Grant, A. (1995), On not being even anywhere near 'the project': ways of putting ourselves in the picture. *Antipode*, 27: 137–166.

Week 8 FILM *Deux jours, une nuit* (2014)

Baum, C. (2015). "A Working-Class Tale of Embodiment and Belonging: Two Days, One Night." *New Labor Forum* 24(3): 102-104.

Watkins, R. (2016) "Turning the Social Contract Inside Out: Neoliberal Governance and Human Capital in Two Days, One Night" paper presented at the *Annual Meeting of The Western Political Science Association*. Available:

https://wpsa.research.pdx.edu/papers/docs/Governance%20and%20Human%20Capital%20in%20D1N_Watkins.pdf

Waite, L. (2009). "A Place and Space for a Critical Geography of Precarity?" *Geography Compass* 3(1): 412-433.

Week 9 Sexuality

Lewis, NM (2012) Gay in a 'government town': the settlement and regulation of gay-identified men in Ottawa, Canada *Gender, Place & Culture* 19:3 pp 291-312.

Di Felicianantonio, C and Brown, G.P. (2015) Introduction: The Sexual Politics of Austerity. *ACME: An International Journal for Critical Geographies*, [S.l.], v. 14, n. 4, p. 965-974 Available at: <<http://ojs.unbc.ca/index.php/acme/article/view/1259/1109>>.

Brown GP (2015) Marriage and the Spare Bedroom. Exploring the sexual politics of austerity in Britain. *ACME: An international e-journal for critical geographies*, 14 (4), pp. 975-988

Week 10 Race & Indigeneity

Bonds, A. (2013) Racing Economic Geography: The Place of Race in Economic Geography *Geography Compass* 7:6 398-411

Mills, S.E. (2011) White and Aboriginal women workers' perceptions of diversity management practices in a multinational forest company *Labour/Le Travail* 67: 45-76.

Schurr, C. (2016) 'From biopolitics to bioeconomies: The ART of (re-)producing white futures in Mexico's surrogacy market' *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* [online early]

Section 4: Experiencing austerity & challenging capitalism

Week 11 Responses to financial crisis

Hall, SM (2016) 'Everyday Family Experiences of the Financial Crisis: Getting By in the Recent Economic Recession' *Journal of Economic Geography*. 16, 2, pp305-330

Gibson-Graham, J. K., et al. (2013). 'Take back work' *Take Back the Economy: An Ethical Guide for Transforming Our Communities*. Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press. pp17-48.

Week 12 Challenging Neoliberalism and essay support session

The Killburn Manifesto <https://www.lwbooks.co.uk/soundings/kilburn-manifesto> We will divide the book between us, with a collective presentation/discussion