

**PO230 States and Markets: An Introduction to International Political Economy
Seminar Week 7. Feminism and IPE**

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Is gender inequality a key feature of capitalist development?

“Trade liberalisation is associated with increases in women’s labour force participation worldwide, with complicated gender effects” (Peterson 2006, 510). **What are these effects? How is liberal trade beneficial or detrimental to women? Is globalisation good for women?** (Question from Juanita Elia’s lecture)

“The apparently ‘universalist’ tradition of IPE is in fact built on *masculine* norms, and results in problematic silencing of unequal gender power relations (Steans 1999, NPE).” **What does this mean? Can you give any examples to illustrate how IPE is built on masculine norms and what are the consequences of being blind to gender?**

How can women be made empirically visible?

“But adding women to existing paradigms also raises deeper questions by exposing how the conceptual structures themselves presuppose masculine experience and perspective. For example, women/femininity cannot simply be ‘added’ to constructions that are constituted as masculine: reason, economic man, breadwinner, the public sphere. Either women as feminine cannot be added (that is, women must become like men) or the constructions themselves are transformed (namely, adding women as feminine alters their masculine premise and changes their meaning). In this sense, the exclusions are not accidental or coincidental but required for the analytical consistency of reigning paradigms.” (Peterson 2006, 502)

What is:

Informal economy?

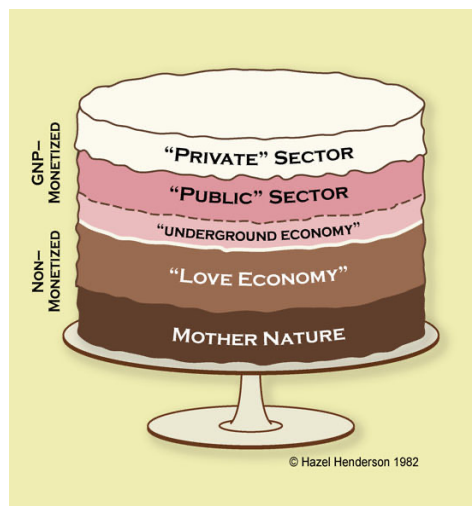
Precarious work?

Social reproduction? (see Elias and Rai 2018 article Feminist everyday political economy: Space, time, and violence)

Structural violence?

<https://i-peel.org/homepage/housework/>

“*Informalisation* tends to be polarised between a small, highly skilled group able to take advantage of and prosper from deregulation and flexibilisation, and the majority of the world’s workers who participate less out of choice than necessity due to worsening conditions in the formal economy. Among those with less choice women are the majority, as informal work constitutes a survival strategy for sustaining households. Insecure and risky work in domestic services and the sex industry are often the primary options. This reflects not only dire economic needs, but also masculinist thinking that identifies domestic labour as women’s work and objectifies female bodies as sources of pleasure for men. Masculinist institutions collude in promoting economic policies (tourism as a development plan, remittances as a foreign currency source) that ‘push’ women into *precarious informal work*.”



How does a gendered IPE account differ from e.g. liberal or Marxist IPE?

“It is crucial to recognize that the neoclassical paradigm does not allow women and other marginalized groups (eg: citizens of “third world” countries) to behave as rational agents for it is rooted in such Victorian ideology. The very logic and rhetoric of neoclassical economics built upon Pareto optimality (the allocation of resources in the economy is such that no one can be made better off without making somebody else worse off) is one that necessitates sexist and imperialist assumptions that legitimize hierarchy.”

(From: <https://feminisminindia.com/2017/11/13/feminist-economics-essay/>)

How can we understand the following statement and do we agree with this view of history?

"Gerda Lerner, Professor of History at the University of Wisconsin, argues that women's reproductive power was the first, private property amassed by men, and that domination over women provided the model for men's enslavement of other men" (M Waring in [Counting for Nothing](#))

What/who else is not part of “The Economy”?

“Women earn the majority of undergraduate degrees across all subjects in the United States, but in 2016 only 35% of economic majors were women. This is the same percentage as the early 1980s.” **Why do you think this imbalance exists?**

Name female economists or political economists?