

THE WOMEN, GENDER AND DEVELOPMENT READER

second edition

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And the advent of the plough usually entails a radical shift in sex roles in agriculture; men take over the ploughing even in regions where the hoeing had formerly been women's work.

Loss of status under European rule (Chapter 3)

The responsibility of the Europeans European settlers, colonial administrators and technical advisers are largely responsible for the deterioration in the status of women in the agricultural sectors of developing countries. It was they who neglected the female agricultural labour force when they helped to introduce modern commercial agriculture to the overseas world and promoted the productivity of male labour.

As a result of the attitudes of the extension services, the gap between labour productivity of men and women continues to widen. Men are taught to apply modern methods in the cultivation of a given crop, while women continue to use the traditional methods in the cultivation of the same crop, thus getting much less out of their efforts than the men. The inevitable result is that women are discouraged from participating in agriculture, and are glad to abandon cultivation whenever the increase in their husband's income makes it possible.

It is the men who do the modern things. They handle industrial inputs while women perform the degrading manual jobs; men often have the task of spreading fertilizer in the fields, while women spread manure; men ride the bicycle and drive the lorry, while women carry head loads, as did their grandmothers. In short, men represent modern farming in the village, women represent the old drudgery.

5 | The invisible heart: care and the global economy

Nancy Folbre

Studies of globalization and its impact on people focus on incomes, employment, education and other opportunities. Less visible, and often neglected, is the impact on care and caring labour – the task of providing for dependants, for children, the sick, the elderly and all the rest of us. Human development is nourished not only by expanding incomes, schooling, health, empowerment and a clean environment but also by care. Care, sometimes referred to as social reproduction, is also essential for economic sustainability.

Globalization is putting a squeeze on care and caring labour. Changes in the way that men and women use their time put a squeeze on the time available for care. The fiscal pressures on the state put a resource squeeze on public spending on care services. And the wage gap between the tradable and non-tradable sectors puts an incentive squeeze on the supply of care services in the market. Gender is a major factor in all these impacts, because women the world over carry the main responsibility for these activities, and most of the burden.

Human development, capabilities and care

The role of care in the formation of human capabilities and in human development is fundamental. Without genuine care and nurturing, children cannot develop capabilities and adults have a hard time maintaining or expanding theirs. But the supply of care is not merely an input into human development. It is also an output, an intangible yet essential capability – a factor of human well-being. A clear manifestation of this is the positive effect of social support and social relationships on life expectancy. The difference that care makes for child health and survival is also well documented.

In almost all societies the gender division of labour hands the responsibility for caring labour to women, much of it without remuneration – in the family or as voluntary activity in the community. The hours are long and the work physically hard – fetching water and fuel – especially in rural areas of developing countries. These inequalities in burden are an important part of the obstacles women face in their life choices and opportunities. Women also make up a disproportionate share of workers in domestic service and in professions such as childcare, teaching, therapy and nursing.

Globalization and care

Economic analysis of care offers three insights into the impact of globalization on human development:

- Women's increased participation in the labour force and shifts in economic structures are transforming the ways care services are provided. Needs once provided almost exclusively by unpaid family labour are now being purchased from the market or provided by the state.
- Increases in the scope and speed of transactions are increasing the size of markets, which are becoming disconnected from local communities.
- Perhaps most important, the expansion of markets tends to penalize altruism and care. Both individuals and institutions have been free-riding on the caring labour that mainly women provide.
- Globalization is dominated by the expansion of markets and rewards profitability and efficiency. While economic growth reflects increasing private and public incomes, human development needs people to provide goods and services that fall outside the market – such as care and other unpaid services. The traditional restrictions on women's activities once guaranteed that women would specialize in providing care. Globalization's shifts in employment patterns have promoted and to some extent enforced the participation of women in wage employment. Nonetheless, women in most countries continue to carry the 'double burden' of care services – ending up exhausted.

Care and market rewards

The market gives almost no rewards for care. Much of it is unpaid – most of it provided by women, some by men. The market also penalizes individuals who spend time in these activities, which take time away from investing in skills for paid work or from doing paid work. Care services are also provided in the market, usually under-remunerated.

And global economic competition has tended to reinforce these trends, as the wage gap increases between the tradable and non-tradable sectors. Care produces goods with social externalities – widespread benefits for those who do not pay for them. It creates human and social capital – the next generation, workers with human and social skills who can be relied on, who are good citizens. But mothers cannot demand a fee from employers who hire their children. This care will be under-produced and overexploited unless non-market institutions ensure that everyone shares the burden of providing it.

[Ed.: This chapter is an excerpt from Chapter 3 of the 1999 *Human Development Report*. The complete report can be downloaded from hdr.undp.org/en/reports/global/hdr1999/.]

6 | Feminist political ecology

Gender and Environment Series Editorial Committee (GESEC)¹

Introduction

Feminist Political Ecology (FPE) is an interdisciplinary academic field and a critical framework to challenge uneven power relations in everyday ecologies. It is based on a strong but not exclusive focus on gender and an assumption of intersectionality and interrelationality. FPE continues to engender debates on political and economic development, agricultural transformations, technologies and environmental change. It highlights the importance of gendered knowledges, rights and politics in the analysis of environmental issues and addresses ecologically based political struggles at the intersection of multiple levels from individual to global.

A brief positioning of the FPE approach

Framed in the context of debates over ecofeminism (Shiva 1988) and socialist feminism (Warren 1987), FPE emerged as a viable third analytical position in the 1990s. Critical meetings and debates that framed FPE were positioned within critiques of sustainable development. While political ecology provided a strong and useful critique of corporate and state-driven sustainable development in the 1990s, FPE advanced a series of feminist critiques and innovations (Rocheleau et al. 1996). It built on the work on women, environment and development (WED) (Harcourt 1993; Braidotti et al. 1994), feminist environmentalism (Agarwal 1986), post-structuralist and social movement literature (Alvarez et al. 1998) and post-colonial writings on environment, post-development, science, gender and culture (Sundberg 2004).

FPE draws on all these approaches, to critique rampant and accelerating processes of modernization. These include privatization of land, water and forests; eviction of rural communities; and state and corporate projects of social, environmental and production engineering under the umbrella of development. The FPE approach recognizes gender differences in interests, knowledges, abilities and labour, based not in biology but in socialization and everyday experience of socially constructed spaces, work and social life. It joins theory, politics and practice by working from case studies, with a focus on complex interlinkages among gender, environment, culture and economy 'in place'.