

GNDR 2061: Gender in Global Perspective: What's Available in Open Access Resources?

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Gender in Global Perspective is an exciting course to teach and attracts a diverse and engaged group of students. We focus in particular on transnational connections, collective action and human agency, and intersecting axes of social experience. In its earlier version as “Women in Global Perspective”, I used a (commercial) text that addressed these fundamentals from a “women’s rights as human rights” perspective across a wide variety of issues such as work, sexuality, health, religion, politics, development, and globalization. This text was then generously supplemented with multiple different sources (research articles, websites, documentaries, news reports, etc.—virtually all free to students) as the basis for assignments and discussion.

Once we revised our Gender Studies curriculum and shifted the focus of the course from women’s experience to gender more broadly, it has been difficult to find a similar text both addressing gender in a more comprehensive way and geared to the lower division undergraduate level. It was this task—finding a text that could serve as the “backbone” of the course to introduce and provide brief overviews of the major topical areas we cover—that guided my search for open access materials.

I focused initially on what was available specifically among OERs—materials carrying a Creative Commons (CC) license. That resulted in a very limited selection, however, and I found it useful to expand my search to other types of material available at no cost to my students, even if I might not be permitted to take from and recombine them, say, in the form of a Pressbook that I create myself and subsequently make available under its own CC license for use by others. The materials in this list, therefore, carry diverse types of copyright and are available from diverse sources. While they are all free to my students at Century College (and likely to students at many institutions of higher education)—in some cases, by virtue of the institutional subscription fees we pay—they may still require permissions for certain types of uses.

In this bibliography, I have concentrated on materials published within the last 15 years. I found few that truly fit the profile of what I was searching for, yet there are many monographs that

are germane to the topic and so I have included a selection, even if they are more narrowly focused on a specific issue or, due to the theoretical complexity and/or writing style, might be challenging for a lower division undergraduate audience. Finally, I found some additional sources that, while not texts, may be useful in building interesting assignments and complementing other course materials.

Survey Texts on Global Gender Issues

Global Perspectives on Gender

Fernandez and Nelson, Eds. (forthcoming 2020)

<https://milneopentextbooks.org/global-perspectives-on-gender/>

<http://globalperspectives.americananthro.org/>

This textbook is not yet available (slated for release late 2020), yet the table of contents makes it look very appealing for the course. It is almost more a reader than a textbook, with different chapters contributed by different authors, describing their research on a wide range of issues from masculinity and ED to quinceañeras to gender, nationalism, and Nepal’s citizenship laws. After two introductory chapters presenting key concepts and perspectives, the book is organized by geographic region, with each section preceded by an introduction to that region. One particular advantage of this format is that the range of voices is more expansive: many authors are affiliated with institutions outside the US (where the editors are) and often in the regions about which they write—especially welcome in a text of this type. I hope the book will be expanded with additional chapters in the future, as Africa, Asia (outside of South Asia), and the Middle East, among other areas, are not represented. According to one of the editors, a fellow MinnState community college faculty member, “the book is targeted mostly at 3rd and 4th year undergraduate students” but “I think much of the book will work for community college students. ... Most of the introductory chapters are quite accessible and introduce the key ideas in a way that builds on concepts previously introduced. Some of the case study chapters have more complex phrasing and more advanced conceptual framing.”

Global Women's Issues: Women in the World Today, extended version

Aragon and Miller, Eds. (2012, updated 2017)

<https://open.umn.edu/opentextbooks/textbooks/global-women-s-issues-women-in-the-world-today-extended-version>

This text is a product of the Bureau of International Information Programs, United States Department of State. Aside from its bias toward the perspective of governmental international development efforts, while it provides basic background on key issues, it is woefully out of date. The book is structured around the twelve issues of concern emanating from the 1995 Beijing Women's Conference, and frequently mentions the Millennium Development Goals (since replaced by the Sustainable Development Goals in 2015). It is also lacking in discussion of some basic theoretical frameworks central to the overarching topic—a transnational perspective highlighting the interconnectedness of North and South (beyond the work of aid organizations); the importance of an intersectional approach to understanding how gendered experience is shaped by factors such as age, ethnicity, religion, family status, disability, race, and social class (though these do receive some consideration); and frameworks like WID (Women in Development) as compared to GAD (Gender and Development) that have guided international development work germane to so many topics addressed in the text.

As each chapter of the text has multiple sections and contributors, a great range of voices are present, many from outside the US and Europe. Hillary Clinton writes the preface, followed by an interview with Ambassador Melanne Verbeke. The best of the “Profile” and “Project” sections describe work at the grassroots and community levels, such as the piece on COMUCAP in Honduras in Chapter 1, highlighting the links between economic independence and women's increased status in the family, resulting in a reduction in domestic violence. The “Additional Resources” sections at the ends of each chapter often have the most interesting information (in the form of URLs), though the most recent of these are usually 2016. It is unfortunate that when the text was updated in 2017, some new material was added but old information was not refreshed and brought up to date.

Gender Relations in Global Perspective: Essential Readings

Cook, Nancy, Canadian Scholar's Press, Inc., 2007 (EBSCO eBook Academic Collection, AN 207828, unlimited copies)

In its introduction, this text geared toward undergraduates does a good job of unpacking the term “gender” and setting the stage for how it shapes the practices, identities, and social institutions that are dealt with in its various chapters. It also explains the meaning of “intersectionality”. It is unfortunate, however, that this same attention is not paid to the term “feminist”, given the politicization of the term in wider public discourse and its taken-for-

granted use here both as a noun and to modify things like “research” and “theoretical frameworks” that a novice to the discipline might have trouble deciphering. The readings are well-chosen, however, and chapters such as Hamilton’s on feminist theories (Chapter 5) are particularly accessible. Many of the chapters, even while taking on a global perspective, do so in relation to issues in Canadian society specifically; many classic readings will be familiar to US readers. While there is much of interest in this collection, with good coverage of the issues and introductions to each section, it is unfortunate that this text and (even more so) many of its component selections seem dated given more recent developments in both the US (or North America at large) and globally.

The Women, Gender and Development Reader

Visvanathan, Duggan, Wiegersma, and Nisonoff, Eds., Zed Books, 2011 (EBSCO eBook Academic Collection, AN 388917, unlimited copies)

This is the second edition of this text, and I would eagerly await its updating in a third edition. The writing is engaging and aimed at an appropriate undergraduate level, and the scope is impressive—the issues cover “development” in a very broad sense, and include topics ranging from health, microfinance, work, WID/GAD, to care, political ecology, fatherhood, climate change, and peace-making. With a few supplements, this could potentially be a main text for the course. Even though the publication date is listed as 2011, many of the component chapters unfortunately reflect material significantly more dated.

Global Gender Issues in the New Millennium

Runyan and Peterson, 4th ed., Routledge, 2014 (EBSCO eBook Academic Collection, AN 679932, unlimited copies)

Though it would be an oversimplification to say that this text is “just” about gender and politics, the focus is very much on national and international politics and governance. The authors provide a strong introduction to the idea of gender as a lens and a tool of analysis, with writing that is engaging and accessible. While plenty has happened on the world stage since 2014, the authors’ language on and inclusion of transgender and non-normative gender identifications, race, and topical coverage of the issues give the book a fairly up-to-date feel.

Main issues covered include globalization, security, militarization, peacemaking, political economy, and social movements. Within these, however, the authors touch on labor, immigration, the informal economy, development, the family, gendered and domestic violence, and more. And while the focus of the authors is often at the macro level or in the aggregate, supplemental material could easily balance a discussion of the topics and contextualize it with

more local, micro-level examples. Each chapter has three ideas for research and discussion provided at the back of the book; a list of web and video resources is also included.

Texts and Monographs on Specific Topics Related to Global Gender Issues

In addition to works from university presses, this section includes a number of monographs from Routledge, a publisher with an increasing number of open access titles available through CC licensing (while most are licensed as CC-No Derivatives, each chapter has its own abstract and can be downloaded individually). Given the theoretical sophistication as well as the more focused topics, none of them would likely be suitable as a central text for the course. Depending on specific needs, however, individual chapters might be useful, as the topics are compelling and could serve to fill out and complement another text. Access the Routledge monographs individually using the links provided, or search for others at www.taylorfrancis.com (using the checkbox on the left “show content I have access to” will give you results with open access titles).

Illegal Migration and Gender in a Global and Historical Perspective

Schrover, van der Leun, Lucassen, and Quispel, Eds., Amsterdam University Press, 2008

<https://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt46mwss>

This edited volume contains many interesting articles on the topic of illegal migration. While it would not be able to serve as a backbone text for the course, given the significance of the topic, a chapter such as chapter 4, “Gendered borders: The case of ‘illegal’ migration from Iraq, the Horn of Africa and the former Soviet Union to the Netherlands” could be a useful complement. Following an introduction unpacking terms such as “smuggling,” “trafficking,” and the status of movement across borders given changing legal and sociohistorical conditions, the chapter provides important understanding of the experiences of individual women through in-depth interviews.

Downwardly Global: Women, Work, and Citizenship in the Pakistani Diaspora

Lalaie Ameeriar, Duke University Press, 2017

<https://muse.jhu.edu/book/64055>

This study examines the transnational labor migration of Pakistani women to Toronto. Despite being trained professionals in fields including engineering, law, medicine, and education, they

experience high levels of unemployment and poverty. Rather than addressing this downward mobility as the result of bureaucratic failures, in practice their unemployment is treated as a problem of culture and racialized bodily difference. In Toronto, a city that prides itself on multicultural inclusion, women are subjected to two distinct cultural contexts revealing that integration in Canada represents not the erasure of all differences, but the celebration of some differences and the eradication of others. (adapted from source)

Again, this would be a monograph which might serve as a supplement in part or in whole, rather than as a central text for the course.

Negotiating Gender Equity in the Global South: The Politics of Domestic Violence Policy

Edited by Nazneen, Hickey, and Sifaki, Routledge, 2019

<https://www.taylorfrancis.com/books/e/9781351245623>

The book investigates the conditions under which countries in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia have adopted legislation against domestic violence, which remains widespread in many developing countries. The book demonstrates that women's presence in formal politics and policy spaces does not fully explain the pace in adopting and implementing domestic violence law. Underlying drivers of change within broader domains of power also include the role of clientelistic politics and informal processes of bargaining, coalition-building, and persuasion; the discursive framing of gender-equitable ideas; and how transnational norms influence women's political inclusion and gender-inclusive policy outcomes. The comparative approach across Uganda, Rwanda, South Africa, Ghana, India, and Bangladesh demonstrates how advancing gender equality varies by political context and according to the interests surrounding a particular issue. (adapted from source)

Entangled Mobilities in the Transnational Salsa Circuit: The Esperanto of the Body, Gender and Ethnicity

By Joanna Menet, Routledge, 2020

<https://www.taylorfrancis.com/books/9781003002697>

With attention to the transnational dance world of salsa, this book explores the circulation of people, imaginaries, dance movements, conventions and affects from a transnational perspective. Through interviews and ethnographic, multi-sited research in several European cities and Havana, the author draws on the notion of "entangled mobilities" to show how the

intimate gendered and ethnicised moves on the dance floor relate to the cross-border mobility of salsa dance professionals and their students. (from source)

Chapter 3, for example, “Negotiating Salsa’s ‘Latinness’”, explores the transnational, ethnic, and gendered relations of professional salsa dance teachers and their students in both Europe and Cuba. Cuban teachers in Europe, seen perhaps as more “authentic”, are nonetheless portrayed as “poor teachers” and “unprofessional” if they don’t adopt the didactic, systematic pedagogy expected by their European students. European teachers without “authenticating” cultural connections assert that “anyone can gain technical prowess” to legitimate themselves in their profession. In Cuba, Europeans who come for “salsa tourism” and imagine “authentic encounters” are confronted with the economic disparities between their elite tourist status and the lesser means of their instructors. Thus, when the professional dancers request dinner and a fee to accompany the tourists to dance parties, the heteronormative relations of the salsa world become inverted as women are expected to pay for their male dance partners and a “cultural experience” becomes an economic transaction.

Glocal Pharma: International Brands and the Imagination of Local Masculinity

By Ericka Johnson, Ebba Sjögren, Cecilia Åsberg, Routledge, 2016

<https://www.taylorfrancis.com/books/9781315585185>

An exploration of how global pharmaceutical products are localized - of what happens when they become ‘glocal’ - this book examines the tensions that exist between a global pharmaceutical market and the locally bounded discourses and regulations encountered as markets are created for new drugs in particular contexts. Employing the case study of the emergence, representation and regulation of Viagra in the Swedish market, *Glocal Pharma* offers analyses of commercial material, medical discourses and legal documents to show how a Swedish, Viagra-consuming subject has been constructed in relation to the drug and how Viagra is imagined in relation to the Swedish man.

Engaging with debates about pharmaceuticalization, the authors consider the ways in which new identities are created around drugs, the redefinition of health problems as sites of pharmaceutical treatment and changes in practices of governance to reflect the entrance of pharmaceuticals to the market. With attention to ‘local’ contexts, it reveals elements in the nexus of pharmaceuticalization that are receptive to cultural elements as new products become embedded in local markets. (from source)

Gender and the Genocide in Rwanda: Women as Rescuers and Perpetrators

Sara E. Brown, Routledge, 2017

<https://www.taylorfrancis.com/books/9781315173078>

This book examines the mobilization, role, and trajectory of women rescuers and perpetrators during the 1994 genocide in Rwanda. While much has been written about the victimization of women during the 1994 genocide in Rwanda, very little has been said about women who rescued targeted victims or perpetrated crimes against humanity. This book explores and analyzes the role played by women who exercised agency as rescuers and as perpetrators during the genocide in Rwanda. As women, they took actions and decisions within the context of a deeply entrenched patriarchal system that limited their choices. ...Comparing and contrasting how women rescuers and perpetrators were mobilized, the actions they undertook, and their post-genocide trajectories, and concluding with a broader discussion of the long-term impact of ignoring these women, this book develops a more nuanced and holistic view of women's agency and the genocide in Rwanda. (adapted from source)

The chapter on Rescuers, for example, is gripping in its detail on the actions of women who took in and hid others, faced off with militias who came searching for Tutsis house to house, and breastfed abandoned infants along with their own babies—all under imminent threat of their own murder and rape and that of individuals under their protection. The social and cultural context within which the women acted, and factors that provided resources allowing them to succeed in thwarting even greater trauma and saving lives, included their roles as women in the family and community and local knowledge, along with customs, geography, and religious beliefs.

Wellbeing of Transnational Muslim Families: Marriage, Law and Gender

Edited By Marja Tiilikainen, Mulki Al-Sharmani, Sanna Mustasaari, Routledge, 2019

<https://www.taylorfrancis.com/books/e/9781315231976>

This book examines the needs, aspirations, strategies, and challenges of transnational Muslim migrants in Europe with regard to family practices such as marriage, divorce, and parenting. Critically re-conceptualizing 'wellbeing' and unpacking its multiple dimensions in the context of Muslim families, it investigates how migrants make sense of and draw on different norms, laws, and regimes of knowledge as they navigate different aspects of family relations and life in a transnational social space. With attention to issues such as registration of marriage, civil versus religious marriage, spousal roles and rights, polygamy, parenting, child wellbeing, and everyday security, the authors offer national and comparative case studies of Muslim families from different parts of the world, covering different family bonds and relations, within both extended and nuclear families. Based on empirical research in the Nordic region and further

afield, this volume affords a more complete understanding of the practices of transnational migrant families, as well as the processes through which family relations and rights are negotiated between family members and with state institutions and laws, whilst contributing to the growing literature on migrant wellbeing. (adapted from source)

Empowering Adolescent Girls in Developing Countries: Gender Justice and Norm Change

Edited By Caroline Harper, Nicola Jones, Anita Ghimire, Rachel Marcus, Grace Kyomuhendo Bantebya, Routledge, 2018

<https://www.taylorfrancis.com/books/e/9781315180250>

Adolescence is a pivotal time in a girl's life. The development of educational, physical, psychosocial, familial, political and economic capabilities enable girls to reach their full potential and contribute to the wellbeing of their families and society. However, progress is still significantly constrained by discriminatory gender norms and the related attitudes and practices which restrict girls' horizons, restrain their ambition and, if unfettered, allow exploitation and abuse.

Empowering Adolescent Girls in Developing Countries explores the detrimental impact of discriminatory gender norms on adolescent girls' lives across very different contexts. Grounded in four years of in-depth research in Ethiopia, Nepal, Uganda and Viet Nam, the book adopts a holistic approach, recognising the inter-related nature of capabilities and the importance of local context. By exploring the theory of gendered norm change, contextualising and examining socialisation processes, the book identifies the patriarchal vested interests in power, authority and moral privilege, which combine in attempts to restrict and control girls' lives.

Throughout the book, *Empowering Adolescent Girls in Developing Countries* demonstrates how efforts to develop more egalitarian gender norms can enable disadvantaged adolescent girls to change the course of their lives and contribute to societal change. (from source)

Women, Agency, and the State in Guinea: Silent Politics

Carole Ammann, Routledge, 2020

<https://www.taylorfrancis.com/books/9780429199547>

This book examines how women in Guinea articulate themselves politically within and outside institutional politics. It documents the everyday practices that local female actors adopt to deal with the continuous economic, political, and social insecurities that emerge in times of political transformations. Carole Ammann argues that women's political articulations in Muslim Guinea

do not primarily take place within women's associations or institutional politics such as political parties; but instead women's silent forms of politics manifest in their daily agency, that is, when they make a living, study, marry, meet friends, raise their children, and do household chores. The book also analyses the relationship between the female population and the local authorities, and discusses when and why women's claim making enjoys legitimacy in the eyes of other men and women, as well as representatives of 'traditional' authorities and the local government. (from source)

Other Useful Resources

The Gender and Women's Studies Collection at UW Madison

<https://www.oercommons.org/courses/the-gender-and-women-s-studies-collection>

<https://search.library.wisc.edu/digital/AGenderStudies> (direct link)

Think "archive" rather than online text: this collection has links to primary documents--largely early 20th century women's advice and fashion publications, as well as a rich collection of thousands of images covering artifacts of women's intimate daily life and gender-based advocacy and politics in the US and abroad. This repository could be a great resource for specific assignments: let your students loose in the image collection to curate their own image groupings; dissect visual representations; apply course concepts to analyze primary documents.

Global Cultures, 1980-Now

Smarthistory

<https://smarthistory.org>

This is an amazing collection of art history essays organized by theme and spanning nation, time period, artistic movement, culture, and more. Essays include images, video, and other resources to enrich understanding of the material. Potentially most relevant to this course would be essays in the category "Global Cultures 1980-Now", such as Young's discussion of "Shirin Neshat, *Rebellious Silence, Women of Allah* series" or Jiménez's "Pepón Osorio, *En la barbería no se llora (No Crying Allowed in the Barbershop)*".

MIT Open Courseware

https://oasis.geneseo.edu/basic_search.php?search_query=Gender+global

MIT Open Courseware is essentially extensive syllabi—they include assignments and readings in detail—often with links. Unfortunately, while the “courseware” is open, the readings linked within are not necessarily so. Many readings do have direct links and can be accessed for free; others have direct links to “Buy at Amazon”. Nonetheless, I include the course below as one of the more recent and relevant available at this writing. It may be worth checking back to see if their collection has been expanded. Depending on your desire to build out your course and find resources on certain topics or expand inclusivity to additional regions or countries, you might find something useful and accessible at no cost to your students.

Globalization: The Good, the Bad and the In-Between

Listed as WGS 145 (among others), Professors Resnick and Terrones, Fall 2016

<https://ocw.mit.edu/courses/literature/21l-020j-globalization-the-good-the-bad-and-the-in-between-fall-2016/>

This course has a lot of interesting readings and as it is cross-listed with Women and Gender Studies, is infused with attention to gender and a critical perspective. Potential openly accessible readings include Randa Jarrar’s “You Are a 14-Year-Old Arab Chick Who Just Moved to Texas” and Charlotte Alter’s “Why Latin American Women Can't Follow the Zika Advice to Avoid Pregnancy.”