

Three Articles on Globalization & Women

Global Woman by Barbara Ehrenreich & Arlie Hochschild

“The lifestyles of the First World are made possible by a global transfer of the services associated with a wife’s traditional role—child care, homemaking, and sex—from poor countries to rich ones.... Today, while still relying on Third World countries for agricultural and industrial labor, the wealthy countries also seek to extract something harder to measure and quantify, something that can look very much like love.... It is if the wealthy parts of the world are running short on precious emotional and sexual resources and have had to turn to poorer regions for fresh supplies.”

This phenomenon isn’t just the result of “synergy of needs among women.” It also is the result of a underdeveloped welfare state and the male-female housework gap. “So, strictly speaking, the presence of immigrant nannies does not enable affluent women to enter the workforce; it enables affluent *men* to continue avoiding the second shift.”

America’s Dirty Work: Migrant Maids and Modern-Day Slavery by Joy Zarembka

Zarembka focuses on foreign domestic workers who endure slave-like conditions in the United States. They are socially isolated and may be deported if they complain about abusive treatment.

By contrast, *au pair* programs aimed at young European women provide much social support.

The Globetrotting Sneaker by Cynthia Enloe

Enloe focuses on shoe companies like Nike and Reebok as examples of American corporations that exploit women in other countries.

Shoe companies place factories in countries with low wages and governments that place limits on unionization. Most of the people who actually make the shoes are women.

Companies pit women from different countries against one another. If factory workers in one country are successful in organizing for better working conditions, production is moved to another country.

The best countries for manufacturing are those with authoritarian governments that don’t allow independent unions.

Companies often justify their ridiculously low wages by claiming they are better than local standards, even if local standards result in malnutrition.