

Feminism: Concepts and Theories
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Feminism of Work and Labor - I

Feminism concepts and theories, welcome back to another week and yet another exciting set of thoughts and concepts. After Professor Kalpana's exciting lecture last week, we are now moving into the last part of this course, where we will continue to start thinking about all sorts of things together. So, as I go through this week set of notes and lecture content, I will also pull in various other things we have been talking about over the last few weeks.

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The slide features a title 'THIS WEEK' in bold black letters. Below it is a bulleted list of topics: 'Feminism and Labor; Feminism and Work', 'The intersections of class and gender', 'First and Second Wave Feminism' (with 'First and Second' circled in red), 'Right to work for women' (underlined in red), and 'The social contexts of postcolonial movements and World War II' (underlined in red). A handwritten red word 'race' is written next to the second bullet point. In the top right corner is the NPTEL logo. A video inset in the bottom right shows a woman in a patterned shirt speaking.

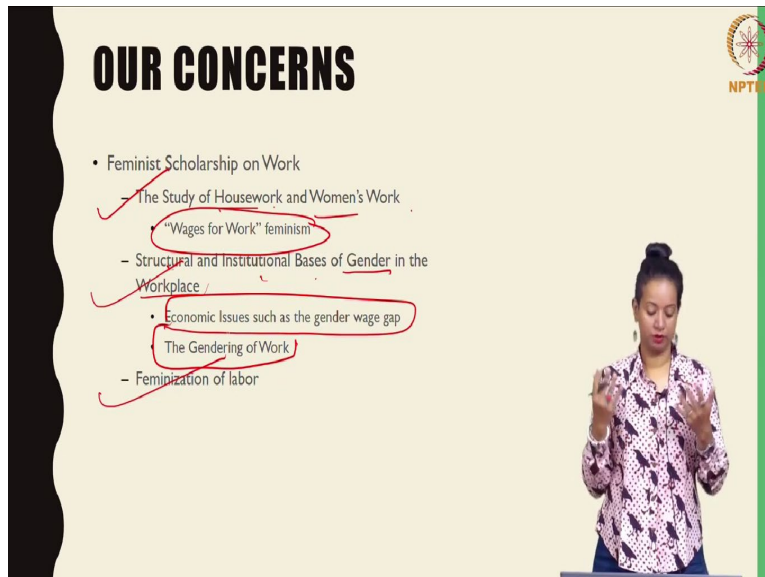
And today's theme, as the syllabus outline may have already informed you is Feminism and Labor and Feminism and Work. Now, labor and work might seem very often like things that of course, we should speak about and speak about very much in relation to some very important parts of first and second wave feminism, where we spoke about the right of women to work or to have wage labor prospects and what are the ways, in which prominent forms of feminist thought, such as Marxist feminism, thought about work in relation to the possibility of liberation for women.

If you remember, we also spoke about the intersections of class and gender; but also race, in this understanding of why women fought for the right to work. So in second wave feminism, and first wave, we were talking about how a number of African-American women said that the right to work was not a problem for them. It was the opposite. How is it that they might earn the right to leisure?

However, in today's lecture, we are also locating the right to work for women very much within the understanding of what work means to capitalism itself. And how is it that we understand work itself, not just as wage labor, but also as something that people perform on a day-to-day basis, again and again, and the ways in which it is visible or invisible – one. Two – we are talking about the ways in which such forms of work accord identity for working subjects. How are you seen based on the kinds of work that you do or if that work is not even considered as work.

If you remember, we were discussing work very much within the social context of post colonial movements and World War II. Meaning, there were new opportunities for women to work post World War II in the U. S. and in relation to postcoloniality, the ways in which the rights of women to work were located within the nationalist movement, where nations had to fashion themselves as modern. As modern enough to govern themselves and therefore, having the capacity for women in the nation state to be modern; modernity signified by work. Keep all these in mind as we then go forth to look at what are the multiple meanings of work and labor for the feminist movement and feminist theory.

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The slide features a title 'OUR CONCERNS' in bold black letters at the top left. In the top right corner, there is a circular logo with a star and the text 'NPTEL' below it. The main content is a bulleted list of topics, with several items circled in red. The list includes:

- Feminist Scholarship on Work
 - The Study of Housework and Women's Work
 - "Wages for Work" feminism
 - Structural and Institutional Bases of Gender in the Workplace
 - Economic Issues such as the gender wage gap
 - The Gendering of Work
 - Feminization of labor

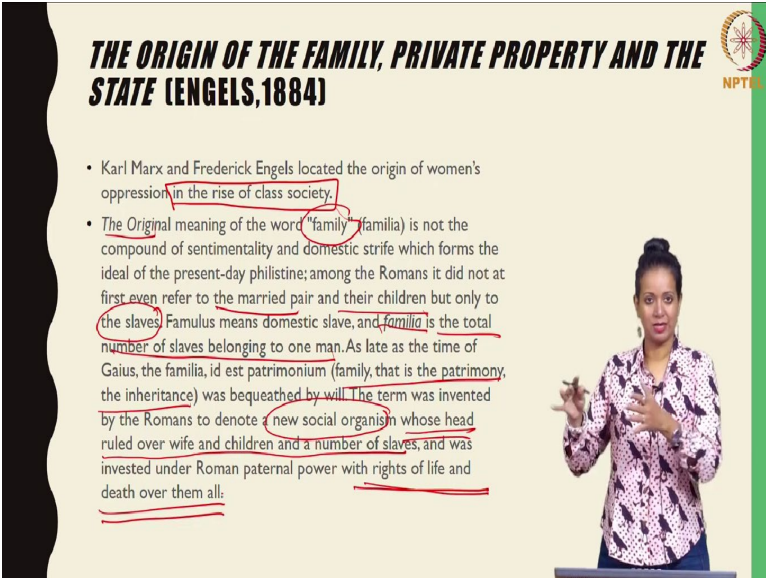
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So our concerns for today's lecture are broadly, as you see on the screen: let us start with something that is been very-very important to Marxist feminism, but also feminism as a whole. the study of housework and women's work. As ever, like in the chapter on care, we start with the most obvious. What are the kinds of work that women are seen to do, primarily, maintenance of home. And this cuts across all castes, classes and races, because in many ways, that is almost a primary assumption, no matter how successful, no matter how not successful, the primary responsibility for the inside rests on the woman, either as personal bodily responsibility, or as responsibility to outsource to other women and men lower on the hierarchy.

In this context, we are discussing a body of work called "wages for work" feminism. We move on from there to things that have been fairly well written about in feminist theory, which is the structural and institutional bases of gender in the workplace. And there is a very important reason why we say gender and not just women. We are examining gender in the workplace as a force that works in multiple ways, not just in terms of number of women in workplaces – what are the ways in which women are treated – but as economic issues, very-very specifically the gender wage gap – one: so why is it that world over you see statistical studies that constantly demonstrate how women are paid much lesser for the same job as men and this wage gap continues to this day.

And structurally, we are looking at something called the gendering of work itself. And I will explain more as we continue. Another, very-very interesting and important body of work called the feminization of labor, which has to do with the proliferation of globalization and the ways in which work has become modular and moved across the world to take in, newer and newer populations that are capable of labor, many-a-times, women and children also recalling to us the early days of the Industrial Revolution in the northern parts of the world. So broadly, let us look at all of these concerns over the course of the next hour or so.

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THE ORIGIN OF THE FAMILY, PRIVATE PROPERTY AND THE STATE (ENGELS, 1884)

- Karl Marx and Frederick Engels located the origin of women's oppression in the rise of class society.
- The Original meaning of the word "family" (familia) is not the compound of sentimentality and domestic strife which forms the ideal of the present-day philistine; among the Romans it did not at first even refer to the married pair and their children but only to the slaves. Famulus means domestic slave, and familia is the total number of slaves belonging to one man. As late as the time of Gaius, the familia, id est patrimonium (family, that is the patrimony, the inheritance) was bequeathed by will. The term was invented by the Romans to denote a new social organism whose head ruled over wife and children and a number of slaves, and was invested under Roman paternal power with rights of life and death over them all.

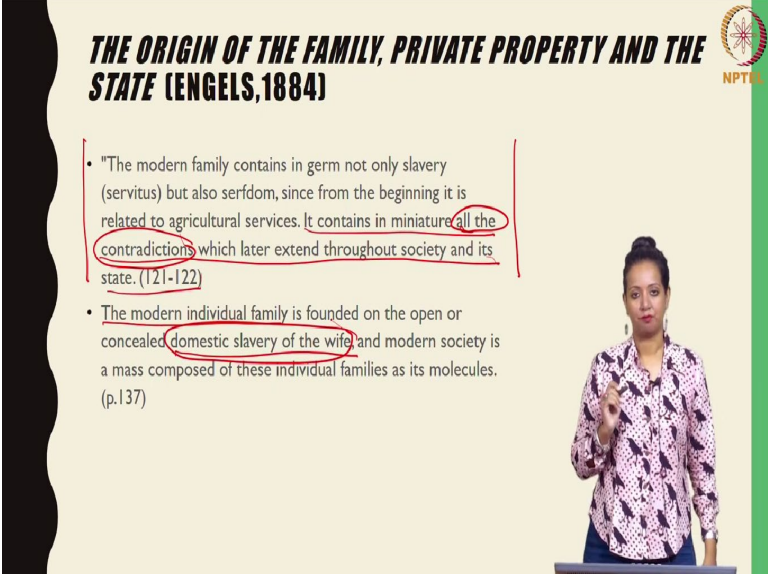
Let us start with Marxism itself and one of the few texts that takes into account the labor of women. Now remember, in many ways, *The Origin of the Family Private Property and the State* is accorded to Engels, but it is a joint work with Marx, based on their conversations and notes. And this is the one important text in Marxism or Marxist theory that pays attention to women's positions vis-à-vis the family. So, read a small part of this with me and see how is it that you are able to make sense of what Marxist analysis considers to be the root of women's oppression and no surprises they locate it in the rise of class society. So, let us read from a little set of excerpts to tell you what I am talking about.

The original meaning of the word family, familia, is not the compound of sentimentality and domestic strife, which forms the ideal of the present day Philistine. Among the Romans, it did not at first even refer to the married pair and their children, but only to the slaves. *Famulus*

means domestic slave and *Familia* is the total number of slaves belonging to one man. As late as the time of Gaius, the *familia*, family that is the patrimony, the inheritance was bequeathed by will. The term was invented by the Romans to denote a new social organism whose head ruled over wife and children and a number of slaves, and was invested under Roman paternal power, with rights of life and death over them all.

Pause for a second, and notice here that we are not claiming any sort of direct relationality between family as we know it in Roman times, and the ways that it exists today. To be able to understand things through etymology, is not to make direct connections. But to ask, how is it that we have moved from there to now and do we see any forms of continuity that we should excavate? Otherwise, why do we still use the term, family. Let us start with the original it means only the slaves. Total number of slaves belonging to one man and very important, a new social organism whose head in other words, patriarchy, ruled over wife and children and a number of slaves and this is most important of all, rights of life and death over them all. Think about that for a second and we are going somewhere with this, I promise you.

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THE ORIGIN OF THE FAMILY, PRIVATE PROPERTY AND THE STATE (ENGELS, 1884)

- "The modern family contains in germ not only slavery (servitus) but also serfdom, since from the beginning it is related to agricultural services. It contains in miniature all the contradictions which later extend throughout society and its state. (121-122)
- The modern individual family is founded on the open or concealed domestic slavery of the wife and modern society is a mass composed of these individual families as its molecules. (p.137)

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“The modern family contains in germ not only slavery,” and this is something that Engels is arguing so feel free to disagree, “...but also serfdom, since from the beginning it is related to agricultural services.” The slaves are your labor that work for you and produce what you need in order to survive. It contains in miniature, all the contradictions which later extend throughout

society and its state.” Think for a moment at the number of times that the state wrecks action, in the name of the family, in the name of the preservation of the family, be it in relation to divorce law, be it in relation to custody battles, be in relation to legislation over sexuality – all of this is done in the name of the family – and therefore, Engels argues that it contains in miniature, all the contradictions, which later extend throughout society and its state. And these contradictions are a great method to be able to understand how society functions in spite and despite of itself. The contradiction is that a family is supposed to be a man ruling like a ruler, over wife, children, slaves. No slaves anymore, thank goodness and one hopes! But, how is it that we still continue to see the same mode of action by the patriarch in relation to wife and children? Hark back to bell hooks and the ways in which she speaks about feminist parenting, violence in the family, forms of power that children learn early.

Is it possible that we make a connection? Is it possible that we are able to make a connection between her analysis and Engels reading of the modern family? The text goes on further to say “[t]he modern individual family is founded on the open or concealed domestic slavery of the wife and modern society is a mass composed of these individual families as molecules. Engels is arguing for an agglomerated understanding of society, where the contradictions are already present in this tiny unit called family. Family upon family upon family build society, so of course, we have a society rife with contradictions. For our lecture, we are interested in these contradictions vis-à-vis the domestic slavery of the wife.

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The slide features a title at the top: "CALIBAN AND THE WITCH; SILVIA FEDERICI (2004)". Below the title is a list of bullet points:

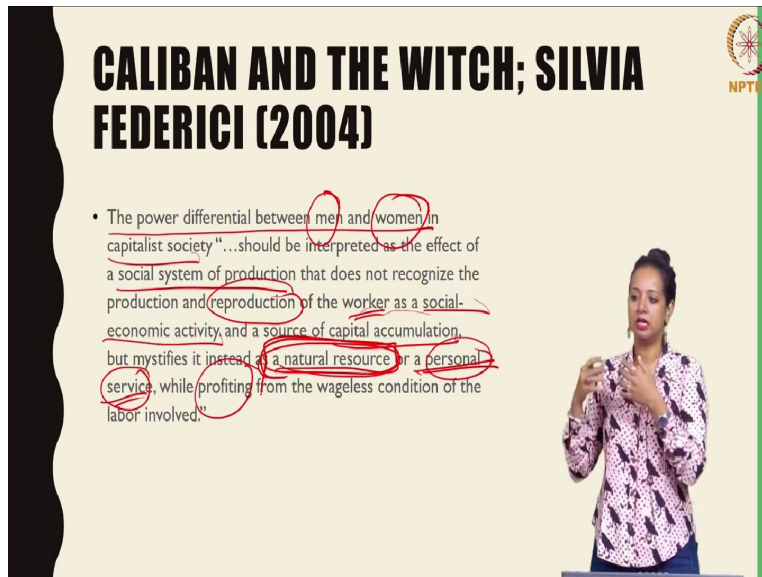
- The exploitation of women in capitalist society
 - Sexual division of labor
 - Women's unpaid work
- It examined "...the reorganization of housework, family life, child-raising, sexuality, male-female relations, and the relation between production and reproduction in 16th and 17th-century Europe"

On the right side of the slide, there is a small video inset showing a woman in a patterned shirt speaking. The NPTEL logo is visible in the top right corner of the slide.

Using these analyses, feminists like Silvia Federici produce texts that speak about the exploitation of women in capitalist society based on both the sexual division of labor and women's unpaid work. It examined and we are talking about her wonderful text, *Caliban and The Witch*, where you are looking at the reorganization of housework, family life, child raising sexuality, male-female relations, and the relation between production and reproduction in 16th and 17th-century Europe. And there is a reason why this is important, because Marxist feminists are looking at the reorganization of forms of gender in relation to forms of production. They are arguing that we can do a similar form of analysis, as Engels did with the Roman understanding of the family to try and understand why gender relations function the way that they do in relation to the organization of family in 16th and 17th-century Europe.

What might be sexual division of labor and women's unpaid work in this scenario? Sexual division of labor is very, very simple. Men do certain kinds of work, women do certain kinds of work, and these are almost common-sensical in popular understanding. Men do heavyweight work, women do much lesser kind of work. CEOs of companies are always male. All these sorts of seemingly common-sensical understandings are propagated throughout society and are encompassed in the term "sexual division of labor."

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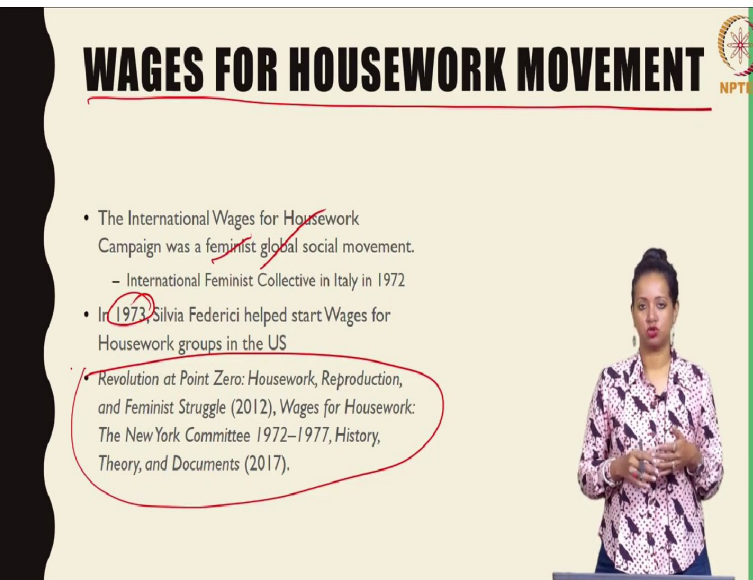
The slide features a title in bold black text: "CALIBAN AND THE WITCH; SILVIA FEDERICI (2004)". Below the title is a quote from her work, with several words circled in red: "The power differential between men and women in capitalist society" should be interpreted as the effect of a social system of production that does not recognize the production and reproduction of the worker as a social-economic activity, and a source of capital accumulation, but mystifies it instead as a natural resource or a personal service, while profiting from the wageless condition of the labor involved." To the right of the text is a small video inset showing a woman in a patterned shirt speaking. The NPTEL logo is in the top right corner.

Let me read to you another excerpt from Caliban and The Witch to try and tell you what she means: “The power differential between men and women in capitalist society... should be interpreted as the effect of a social system of production that does not recognize the production and reproduction of the worker as a social-economic activity and a source of capital accumulation, but mystifies it instead, as a natural resource or personal service while profiting from the wageless condition of the labor involved.”

This is Federici’s primary concern. How do you understand differences between men and women in terms of power differentials and argues that the social system of production which speaks about production in the abstract of goods, services, what have you, but does not recognize the labor involved in the very reproduction of the worker itself. You only speak about such reproduction in terms of capitalist wages as the wages that are just enough for the worker to reproduce himself. But between the payment of those wages, and the worker showing up to work again, lies a whole slew of laboring activities primarily performed by women, the keeping of the house, cooking of food, maintenance of the workers’ body. These are all things that women are supposed to take care of because the body of the worker is mystified as a natural resource. Workers work, the body just shows up not asking the question of what happens between the end of work one day and the beginning of work the next day. This is a personal service, even as profits from the wageless condition of the labor involved accrue back to capitalism. And because

the worker works and is recognized in terms of wages, while the women, who maintain the bodies of the worker do not get seen as workers, there is no wage involved. They are merely the accessory that is mystified as a natural resource as the family as the right of society to have love and a loving space and a space of maintenance. That is something that women must provide because they are naturally attuned towards such provision.

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The slide features a title "WAGES FOR HOUSEWORK MOVEMENT" in bold black letters at the top left. To the right of the title is a small circular logo with a sun-like symbol and the text "NPTEL" below it. The main content consists of a bulleted list on the left side of the slide. The first bullet point is "The International Wages for Housework Campaign was a feminist global social movement." with a red checkmark next to "feminist". Below it is a sub-bullet: "- International Feminist Collective in Italy in 1972". The second bullet point is "In 1973, Silvia Federici helped start Wages for Housework groups in the US" with a red circle around "1973". The third bullet point is "Revolution at Point Zero: Housework, Reproduction, and Feminist Struggle (2012), Wages for Housework: The New York Committee 1972-1977, History, Theory, and Documents (2017)." with a red circle around the entire text. On the right side of the slide, there is a video inset showing a woman with dark hair, wearing a patterned blouse, standing and speaking.

- The International Wages for Housework Campaign was a feminist global social movement.
 - International Feminist Collective in Italy in 1972
- In 1973, Silvia Federici helped start Wages for Housework groups in the US
- Revolution at Point Zero: Housework, Reproduction, and Feminist Struggle (2012), Wages for Housework: The New York Committee 1972-1977, History, Theory, and Documents (2017).

Federici was one of the founders and this is very important as a prelude to *Caliban and the Witch*, for the “wages for housework movement.” The International wages for housework campaign was a feminist global social movement and began with the activities of the International Feminist Collective in Italy in 1972. In 1973, Federici helped to start the wages for housework groups in the U.S., where women got together to discuss the possibility that housework should be considered as wage labor. Women should be paid for the work they do at home and the work that contributes to the reproduction of this worker. Many of you might have opposition to this understanding. If you do not, that is great. But in case you do, perhaps it is important to lay out the terms of this argument.

One, are women paid for housework, not in terms of salary slips and regular wages, but they are maintained by their spouses or by the family members or by the patriarch by the father, what have you. Whoever is the designated public-earning member is responsible for their maintenance, and many a time portrayed as a hapless soul who is working away in drudgery in

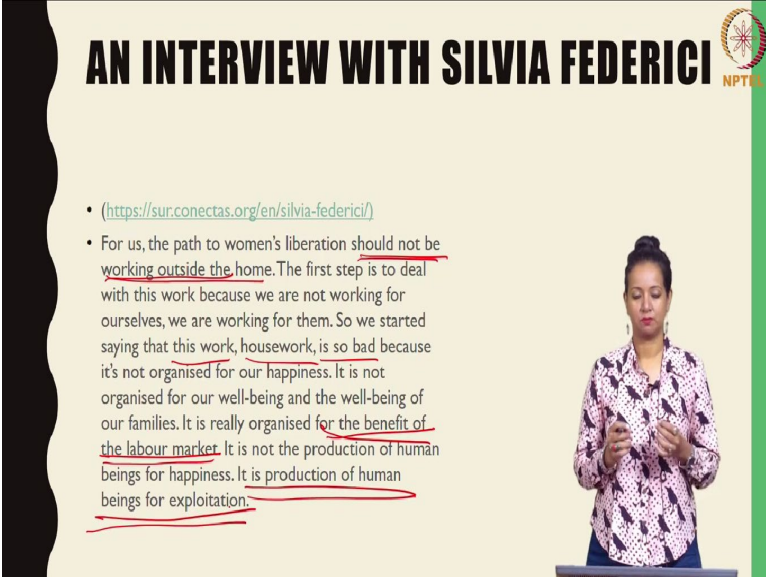
order to keep this woman in comfort. One is portrayed as somebody who is dutiful, the patriarch, the one who knows that he has no choice and I am using *he* because it is primarily a he, who has no choice but to maintain the family. Whereas the women are always portrayed as leeches who are sucking the men dry.

Think about these portrayals as also part of such mystification. Because if you notice and this is proven in studies across the world, women never stop working, their work starts much before the man's work day and continue through the day, even post public retirement of their spouses. There is no break, there are no paid holidays, there are no benefits, anything that accrues to them is due to love, duty, possibility. But in most situations, there is no clear understanding of what they deserve. It is always in flux, always in negotiation and must always be asked for, from the public earning member.

While most people might think it is not such a big deal, it is between the spouse and the family. It is between, ... it is about internal relations, but there is something consistently wrong about the fact that women have internalized this dynamic for years. So many women think about themselves as, "housewives." And a housewife is a term that does not necessarily have the same cultural capital as a working woman. Now working women have other kinds of problems. They are asked as to how they taking care of the family because it is their primary duty.

But housewives and working women are always pitted against one another, one as naturally filial, naturally loving towards the family and the other as capricious, greedy one that prizes public work and success above the family, so you can never win. And the wages for housework movement sought to solve this bind, sought to say in many ways everything is work. So should not work in the house be paid similar to work everywhere else. And out of this, came various texts by Federici such as *Revolution at Point Zero*, *Housework*, *Reproduction and Feminist Struggle*, *Wages for Housework: The New York Committee 1972 – 1977*, *History, Theory and Documents*. So this was a well documented, consistent, continuous struggle that still finds resonance in the world currently as we know it.

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AN INTERVIEW WITH SILVIA FEDERICI NPTEL

- (<https://sur.conectas.org/en/silvia-federici/>)
- For us, the path to women's liberation should not be working outside the home. The first step is to deal with this work because we are not working for ourselves, we are working for them. So we started saying that this work, housework, is so bad because it's not organised for our happiness. It is not organised for our well-being and the well-being of our families. It is really organised for the benefit of the labour market. It is not the production of human beings for happiness. It is production of human beings for exploitation.

The slide features a video inset on the right showing Silvia Federici, a woman with dark hair tied back, wearing a patterned blouse, speaking. The slide has a black wavy border on the left and a green vertical bar on the right.

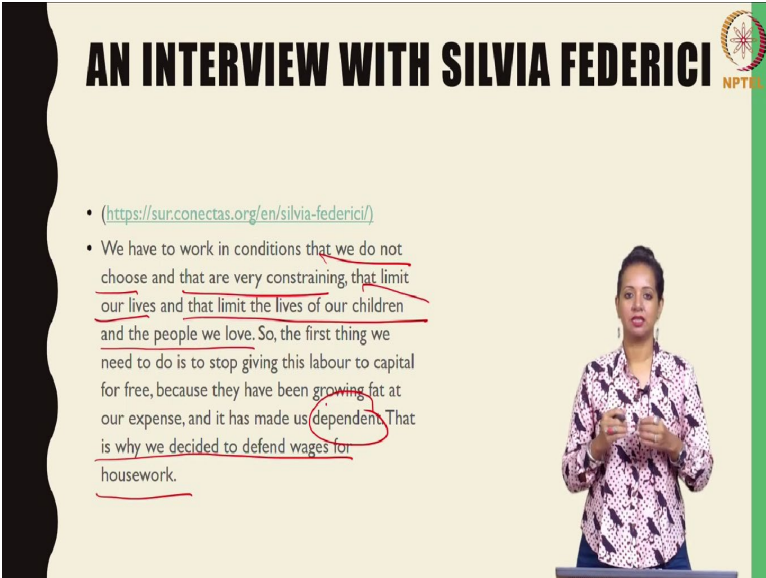
And in an interview, Federici clarifies what she understands to be the question in relation to women's liberation. The link is at the top of the slide for anybody who wants to read the entire interview. But let me read to you from some part it. Federici says, for us, “The path to women's liberation should not be working outside the home.” He or she is challenging one of the fundamental tenets of Marxist feminism itself, but not doing away with the idea of financial independence for women. She is saying, instead, let us start thinking about everything as work. It is not that the right to work should be the right to work outside the home.

Here you are solving this double bind, where many women said “we have been working all the time outside the home, actually we would like some time out and to be able to tend to our homes.” She says, should not be working outside the home. “The first step to deal with this work because we are not working for ourselves, we are working for them. So we started saying that this work, housework is so bad because it is not organized for our happiness. It is not organized for our well being and the well being of our families. It is really organized for the benefit of the labor market. It is not the production of human beings for happiness. It is the production of human beings for exploitation.”

Pay attention here, here she is really moving the sphere of analysis from this idea of should women focus on the family or focus on the work. Instead she is saying, let us look at the nature

of housework itself. Is housework about happiness, it is spoken about as that. But often, many women will tell you enough and more including domestic help, who are paid in an informal labor market for this work. The work is drudgery. It is repetitive. It has to happen again and again and again and it numbs you. In many ways, the work is not organized for happiness. It is organized for the benefit of the labor market; to make sure that all earning members of the family are hale and hearty and can show up to work the next morning and of showing up for work in a good Marxist analysis, Federici says it is the production of human beings for exploitation.

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AN INTERVIEW WITH SILVIA FEDERICI NPTEL

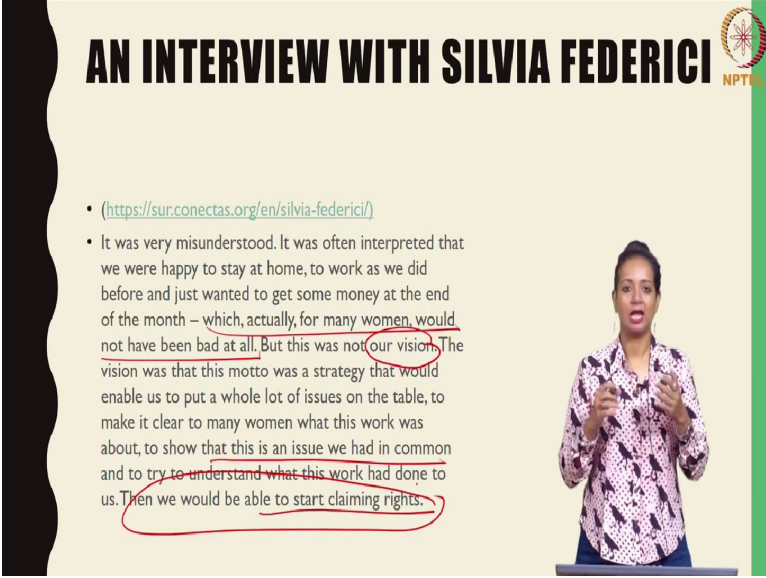
- (<https://sur.conectas.org/en/silvia-federici/>)
- We have to work in conditions that we do not choose and that are very constraining, that limit our lives and that limit the lives of our children and the people we love. So, the first thing we need to do is to stop giving this labour to capital for free, because they have been growing fat at our expense, and it has made us dependent. That is why we decided to defend wages for housework.


She continues, “[w]e have to work in conditions that we do not choose that are very constraining, that limit our lives and that limit the lives of our children and the people we love. So, the first thing we need to do is to stop giving this labor to capital for free because they have been growing fat at our expense and it has made us dependent. That is why we decided to defend wages for housework. And think about the number of implications that such a set of thoughts may have. Very often, many of us have heard this from women in our own lives as to feeling trapped in the home.

Feeling like this is this space of capturing something that women cannot escape from, of homes as a space of violence that they cannot leave because there is no financial independence and there is dependency. And Federici is suggesting nothing hugely dramatic at this point, like collapsing the family. Instead, she is saying in many ways as a first step, let us stop giving this wage to

capital for free. If this is the only system that we have, let us make them pay for it. Let us no longer ratify this understanding of the mystification of domestic labor as something that is due to the family, as something that is the right of the family because of reasons of love.

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AN INTERVIEW WITH SILVIA FEDERICI 

- (<https://sur.conectas.org/en/silvia-federici/>)
- It was very misunderstood. It was often interpreted that we were happy to stay at home, to work as we did before and just wanted to get some money at the end of the month – which, actually, for many women, would not have been bad at all. But this was not our vision. The vision was that this motto was a strategy that would enable us to put a whole lot of issues on the table, to make it clear to many women what this work was about, to show that this is an issue we had in common and to try to understand what this work had done to us. Then we would be able to start claiming rights.

She goes on to address one of the misunderstandings around wages for housework. “It was very misunderstood. It was often interpreted that we were happy to stay at home, to work as we did before, and just wanted to get some money at the end of the month,” which if you ask me by itself is also not a bad thing.

The number of times, I know of housewives who have waited to be given money by their spouses to be allotted budgets, questioned on the ways in which they spend money, doubted as to the ways in which they are not saving for the family, asked to give up their own comforts or desires at the cost of things for the family. The ways in which self sacrifice is demanded of housewives and they are not allowed to be “selfish or greedy or self absorbed” because in many ways the earning member is a different person. And only he, the patriarch has the rights to decide what to do with the money. So it is no longer right over life and death. But in many ways in a long chain of consequences, it is.


And Federici agrees, she says “for many women that would not have been bad at all.” However, this is not the vision of wages for housework. “The vision was that this motto was a strategy that

would enable us to put a whole lot of issues on the table...” It was only a starting point. It was a foot in the door, “to make it clear to many women, what this work was about, to show that this is an issue we had in common, and to try to understand what this work had done to us. Then we would be able to start claiming rights.”


Think about this in a two-pronged fashion. One, that this is about consciousness-raising, how is it that we can gather a sisterhood that together can claim rights? This is not a strategic argument, it actually is something about what is it that all women share in common? Even if you do not have the responsibility for housework, you do have the responsibility of making sure it gets done. Even if you do not do it yourself, you will be asked how is it that you manage? And therefore, this was an issue we had in common, and to try to understand what this work had done to us. And you just ask a few questions of most women and ask them how much they enjoy housework. And you do it again and again and again year after year after year and at some point of time, women cease to care. It is sort of like you can begin by saying that of course, I love this work and I love keeping a great home and it is very pleasurable. But after a point of time it becomes almost a force of habit and does not necessarily produce the possibility for multiple subjectivities. That becomes a part of identity whether one likes it or not. And Federici said this would allow women to start claiming rights. Once you produce an analysis of how housework is unpaid waged..., produce an analysis of how housework is unpaid labor and only benefits capitalists.

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AN INTERVIEW WITH SILVIA FEDERICI



- (<https://sur.conectas.org/en/silvia-federici/>)
- It didn't even have to be the wage. We began saying: "We work in our home. We're paying rent on our houses. The home is a workplace and we pay rent for it." Wages for Housework was really a way to transform our relationship with capital and our relationship with men and to say that we refused to relate to capital and to the state through men, via the mediation of men. And we refused the idea that as women, as houseworkers, we could not fight in our own name. We said that we could engage in an autonomous struggle of our own, beginning from our own exploitation.
- We refused to continue being the support workers or the support troops for the struggles that men were engaging in.



She continues, “[i]t didn’t even have to be the wage. We began saying, “we work in our homes, we are paying rent on our houses. The home is the workplace, we pay rent for it,” a very simple transformation of terms and conditions and concepts. “Wages for housework was really a way to transform our relationship with capital and our relationship with men, and to say that we refused to relate to capital and to the state through men, via the mediation of men,” so-so important. “And we refused the idea that as women as house workers, we could not fight in our own name. We said that we could engage in an autonomous struggle of our own beginning from our own exploitation.”

We could speak in our own voices. We did not need other kinds of issues that men put forth in our name. We wanted to transform our relationship with capital to say that we are not merely side actors as the men battle on the front lines. We are part and parcel of the work of capitalism. Without us, it would collapse.

“We refused to continue being the support workers or the support troops for the struggles that men were engaging in.” So, this was pretty much in the name of wages for housework, a call to battle lines; a call to say that women have always been at the forefront of these battles; they just have not been recognized; they just have not been legible. And therefore, Federici said, that it was important for women to transform their relationship with capital, both in relation to subjectivity, and in relation to struggle.

And wages for housework feminism is an important point to consider, because in many ways it puts the idea of women in work as always already existent, not something that was then tacked on to women because World War II made the possibilities available. It took the idea of work and expanded it to try and see the ways in which women have always been workers and what kind of possibilities arise from such **an odd ways (31.00-03)**. That is briefly wages for housework feminism and encourage you to go and take a look at it if this is of interest.

From here, I want to move on to a second set of concerns, which is about the structural basis of gender in the workplace. Here we are moving squarely into the realm of things that second wave and first wave feminism fought for, which is the right to work. And of course, the right to work is liberating; it is empowering; but then after that, it produces its own set of struggles, its own set of constraints that have been gathered under a large body of literature, some of which we will go through right now.

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The slide features the title "STRUCTURAL AND INSTITUTIONAL BASES OF GENDER IN THE WORKPLACE" in bold black text at the top. To the right of the title is the NPTEL logo. Below the title is a bulleted list of four items: "An economic approach to work-related issues", "Gender-based wage inequality", "The gender-segregation of occupations and jobs", and "Affirmative action and pay equity". The second and fourth items are circled in red. A woman in a patterned shirt is standing on the right side of the slide, gesturing with her hands.

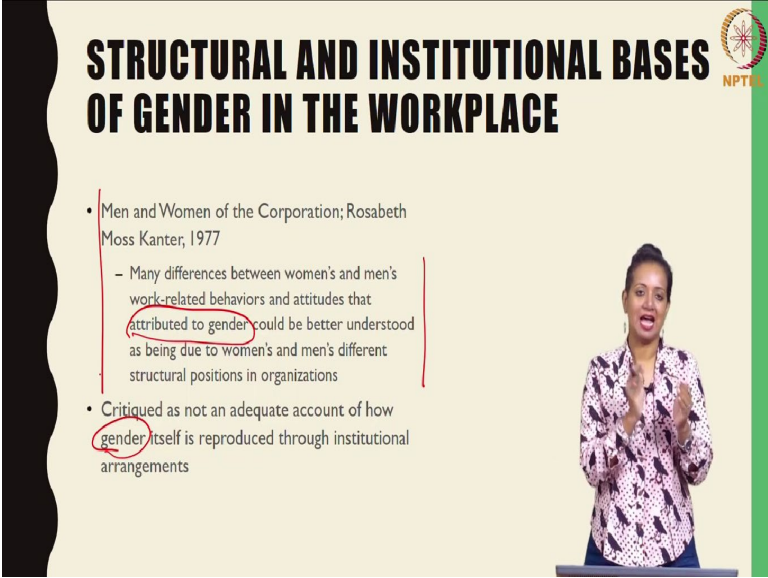
In relation to a structural and institutional understanding of gender in the workplace, many scholars have looked at an economic approach, very-very simply, what are women paid for the same job? If they are not paid the same, why is it that they are not? We are looking at a phenomenon called gender-based wage inequality. Two, this is something that we already came across in our discussion on care. The gender segregation of occupations and jobs: who gets to do what work and we spoke about it if you remember in relation to vertical as well as horizontal segregation. The kinds of jobs itself, what are the ways in which different industries are given to different sets of genders and within an industry, how is it that the lower rungs are occupied by women and as you go higher, you find lesser and lesser women, glass ceiling, concrete ceiling bedpan ceiling, if you remember. And the role of affirmative action and pay equity became very important to feminist struggles at that point of time. An affirmative action has all sorts of proponents and detractors but affirmative action in relation to gender has been particularly pushed back against in the last decade or so.

To say that why is it that women want equality and then they want reservation? What difference does that make in terms of the points of view? Are they really feminists? If they want equality, why would they want reservation? Let me pull these answers together starting from our discussion of equality to our discussion of gender and workplace. Affirmative action is important for two important reasons. There are ways in which the right to work does not automatically

change cultural understandings of gender and appropriateness of work. So there are certain jobs for which women will just not be considered. There are ways in which female bodies are not considered appropriate, for large sets of professions and the reasons given are usually what they call commonsensical.

Affirmative action allows for the possibility that women are given a chance that there are ways in which they can get a foot in the door and it becomes far more possible for women to be present and thereby learn the job; thereby learn what it takes to be able to do that work. It gives them buffer time to be able to establish that these commonsensical notions are not so commonsensical, one. Two, in many ways, you need the presence of women, you need physical bodies in all sorts of professions, for us to understand the repercussions for workplaces that are uni-gendered, what are the ways in which office buildings are created for male bodies? What are the ways in which processes of work are produced keeping in mind only the male body, late hours, coffee breaks, smoking breaks, transportation to and fro from work, toilets for women in the workplace, along with men, toilets for women in the workplace along with toilets for men, things that seemingly should have been solved a long time ago, but have not been. And therefore, affirmative action allows us to be able to address all of these on a holistic basis. To say that first bring the women, change will follow only if you have female bodies or bodies of people who are different than men in workplaces, only then can we have the possibility of true egalitarianism. And of course, pay equity itself as something that ought to be legislated that can only be brought about as a set of rules before people begin to understand that pay inequity is unfair.

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The slide features a title at the top: "STRUCTURAL AND INSTITUTIONAL BASES OF GENDER IN THE WORKPLACE". In the top right corner, there is a logo for NPTEL. The main content is a bulleted list on the left side, and a presenter is visible on the right side of the slide.

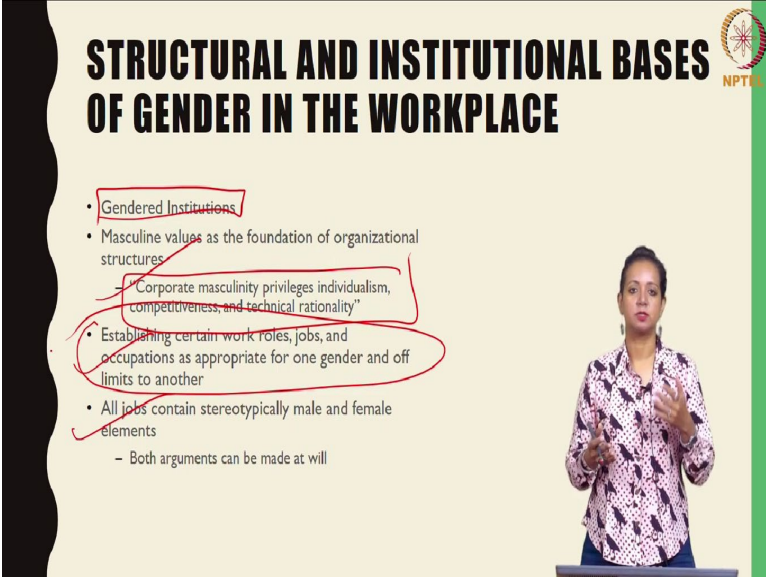
- Men and Women of the Corporation; Rosabeth Moss Kanter, 1977
 - Many differences between women's and men's work-related behaviors and attitudes that attributed to gender could be better understood as being due to women's and men's different structural positions in organizations
- Critiqued as not an adequate account of how gender itself is reproduced through institutional arrangements

One of the earliest works looking at this was Rosabeth Moss Kanter's *Men and Women of the Corporation* of 1977. Moss Kanter argued that many differences between women's and men's work-related behaviors and attitudes that attributed to gender could be better understood as being due to women's and men's different structural positions in organizations. By itself, the argument is not bad. In many ways, Moss Kanter was arguing that there are stereotypes, about how men and women work in corporations. Men will take decisions, women dilly dally, men can be assertive and aggressive, women hold back. Women are caring and gentle. Men cannot take into account various factors, multitasking, the usual stereotypes. And she argued that these differences are not gender related; they are related to the ways in which women and men are located in different structures in the organization itself. What are the ways in which structures allow for men to assume more power and women to assume less power?

However, what she did not pay attention to is to the ways in which gender itself is reproduced through institutional arrangements. How is it that differences in the ways in which corporation as a structure organizes gender itself leads to gender? Very-very simple. Think about the ways in which meetings are organized towards end of day or the ways in which certain forms of socialization are requisite for corporate mobility and the ways in which gender itself is reproduced because women cannot take part in those due to family obligations and those that do are not considered women enough. And this analysis is not present in Moss Kanter's *Men and*

Women of the corporation. However, it still continues to be an important book, because it brought to our understanding, the fact of the corporation itself as a social unit.

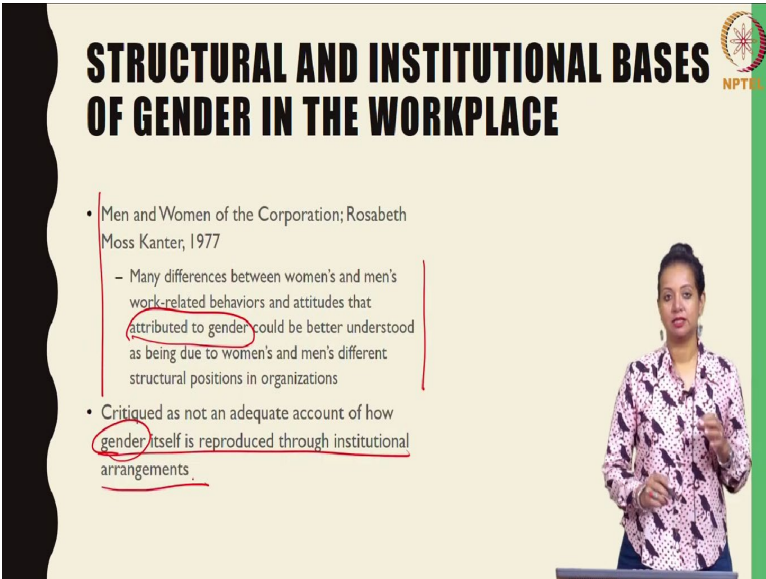
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STRUCTURAL AND INSTITUTIONAL BASES OF GENDER IN THE WORKPLACE

- Gendered Institutions
- Masculine values as the foundation of organizational structures
 - Corporate masculinity privileges individualism, competitiveness, and technical rationality
- Establishing certain work roles, jobs, and occupations as appropriate for one gender and off limits to another
- All jobs contain stereotypically male and female elements
 - Both arguments can be made at will

The slide features a presenter on the right side, a black wavy border on the left, and the NPTEL logo in the top right corner.



STRUCTURAL AND INSTITUTIONAL BASES OF GENDER IN THE WORKPLACE

- Men and Women of the Corporation; Rosabeth Moss Kanter, 1977
 - Many differences between women's and men's work-related behaviors and attitudes that attributed to gender could be better understood as being due to women's and men's different structural positions in organizations
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This brought forth literature on broadly what we understand to be gendered institutions, where masculine values are the foundation of organizational structures themselves. Going back to our contention, that gender itself is reproduced through institutional arrangements. Corporate masculinity privileges individualism, competitiveness, and technical rationality. Try and connect this to what we understood to be, the contention of equality feminism that spoke about the need

for incorporation of women's values into the public sphere, as important in themselves and not as foils to corporate individualism. Here, we see that the corporation itself produces masculinity as the norm, leading of course to other kinds of stereotypes of women in the corporation, those that are considered strong or strong contenders are those that are masculine; are those that give up femininity or feminist values of a particular kind of understanding of women in the service of appearing as strong as a man; of being emotionless; of not letting feelings get in the way; of prizing corporation over family, over being workaholics, all of these sorts of things. And literature also looked at establishing certain work rules, jobs and occupations as appropriate for one gender and off limits to another.

Number of works argued that all jobs contain male and female elements you can portray them one way or the other, therefore, producing this understanding of a job being masculine or feminine. Let us take up an example or two to see what that means. Think about the ways in which the position of the manager is about being strong, assertive, leading your team: masculine values of being caring, nurturing, fostering teamwork, allowing the team to take credit, stepping back to allow them to take ownership: female values. Depending on the situation, you can argue one or the other and this is what literatures said that the act of establishing certain things as appropriate and inappropriate, is arbitrary and must be countered through critical analysis.

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STRUCTURAL AND INSTITUTIONAL BASES OF GENDER IN THE WORKPLACE

- Feminine tasks performed by male bodies and vice-versa
 - Waitering versus Waitressing
 - Airhostess versus Steward
- Bureaucracy as a metaphor for the dominance of men over women
- The relationship between male workers and female support staff - The Secretary

The slide features a video inset of a woman in a patterned shirt speaking. The text on the slide is annotated with red circles and lines, highlighting specific terms and relationships.

For example, of the ways in which words work in relation to sub gendering of jobs. Waitering versus Waitressing, which is the one that has more social currency, and Airhostess versus Steward, which is the one that is considered to have more possibility, more respect, more authority. female body - male body, female body - male body. In relation to this, also think about the ways in which certain professions, when taken over by male bodies in the public sphere, garner so much more in terms of economic possibilities, most well-earning chefs of the world are male, even as cooking is considered a woman's domain inside the home. So the private, public binary also comes into play.

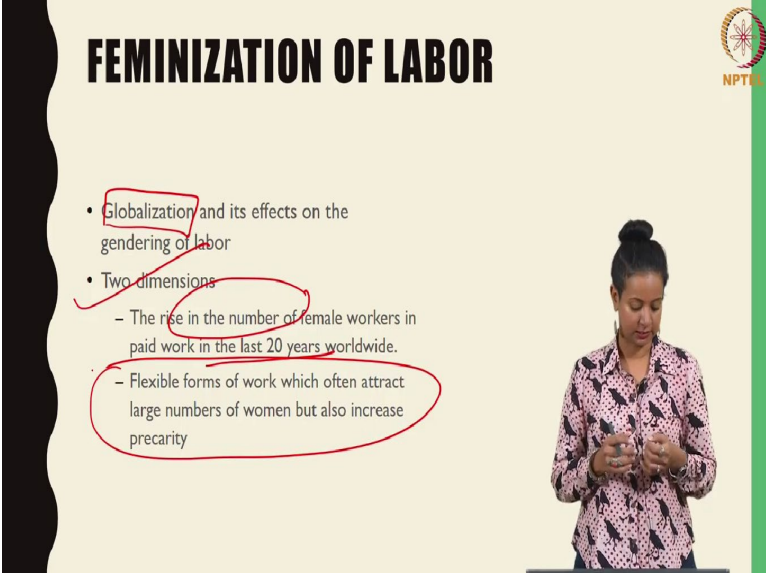
Then next set of literatures in relation to the gendering of the workplace was about bureaucracy as a metaphor for the dominance of men over women. Now, this might be a little bit to wrap your heads around, so let me pause there. What does that mean? What is bureaucracy? What is our overarching understanding of the bureaucrat or bureaucracy, somebody who is unbending, somebody who will not give up on the rules because somebody is pleading that they have urgent needs, somebody that keeps that status quo going, somebody that will not be deterred from making sure that things work as well as they always did. And you begin to see how this can easily translate into the dominance of men over women. Think about all the bureaucracies that are most familiar to you, all the organs of the state that have a reputation for bringing people to their knees in relation to rules, regulations, and systems.

And lastly, literatures in relation to the gendering of work, also looked at the relationship between male workers and female support staff, almost replicating Engels', original family. The ways in which all support staff, administrative, scribes, stenographers and that mythical figure, The Secretary are always about female support stuff that know the needs of their male bosses, even before the bosses know it themselves.

Think about films like *The Devil Wears Prada*, where your mythical figure of the fashion director played by Meryl Streep is somebody who is just like a male boss and drives everybody around her, female support staff, into near manic depressive states, because that is what she demands of them. As a way of training them to be good workers. And this figure of the secretary has been mythologized across popular cultures of the world as being a particular kind of feminized woman, who is both sexualized, as well as caring. In other words, the entire gamut of

what we consider feminine bodies. And literatures have analyzed this as reproducing very-very strongly for us the idea that certain jobs are male, certain jobs are female, there will always be an unequal hierarchy between the two.

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The slide features a title 'FEMINIZATION OF LABOR' in bold black text at the top left. To the right of the title is the NPTEL logo. Below the title is a bulleted list of points. The first point is 'Globalization and its effects on the gendering of labor'. The second point is 'Two dimensions', which is followed by two sub-points: '- The rise in the number of female workers in paid work in the last 20 years worldwide.' and '- Flexible forms of work which often attract large numbers of women but also increase precarity'. A woman in a patterned shirt is visible in the background on the right side of the slide.

- Globalization and its effects on the gendering of labor
- Two dimensions
 - The rise in the number of female workers in paid work in the last 20 years worldwide.
 - Flexible forms of work which often attract large numbers of women but also increase precarity

The last set of concerns that I would like to address today has to do with something that has been called in literature, “the feminization of labor.” And “feminization” has very much to do with the ways in which paid work for women has increased worldwide in the wake of globalization mainly in the last 20 years. So we are moving on from our previous discussion of fundamental gendering in the workplace, to looking at the world itself as an arena for work, where it is organized by gender. There are two dimensions to this, as ever, and we are talking about a basic rise in number, how is it that globalization has abetted increasing numbers of women entering the workforce. Along with this, what are the ways in which we are speaking about particular forms of work that is available to these women and how is it that we can conduct a gender analysis of these kinds of concerns.

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FEMINIZATION OF LABOR

- Neoliberal economic globalization
- Post-Fordist modes of production
- Flexibility
- Greater quest for cheap labor
- Part-time, temporal, casual and home-based work
- Offers women flexibility
- Women become a strategic pool of labor

Let us start with globalization itself and what are the particular ways in which we understand globalization to have effects on gendering and work. We are talking very specifically about what is called neoliberal economic globalization and Post-Fordist modes of production. Just to break it down, very-very simply, Post-Fordist modes have to do with changes in manufacturing processes, where we are looking at how unlike earlier systems of production, which is where Marxist theory gets its impetus, Post-Fordist modes have to do with modular systems of production, where you break down products and services into their component parts, each of which can be manufactured across the world in different locations, leading therefore, to a rising investment and commitment to flexibility.

Now, flexibility by itself may suggest good things, it may suggest that these are ways in which capital can move unfettered across the world, can have possibilities, consequences available to larger populations, the trickle-down effect so to speak and therefore, how could this be a bad thing. However, as ever, we are also interested in the ways in which such globalization produces very-very particular possibilities, they are not endless, like there is of globalization would suggest, there is a greater quest for cheap labor or what is called wage arbitrage, meaning capital trawls the world for increasingly cheaper kinds of labor, in order to be able to make larger amounts of profit.

So we are expanding and extending the primary understanding of Marx's forms of analysis, which is that the goal of capitalism is to increase profit at the cost of labor and in this kind of move across the world for cheaper forms of labor, you are also cutting down wages because the argument is that in these nations, you can find part-time, temporary, casual, and home-based workers to be able to produce modular kinds of work. This while offering women flexibility because they can work from home they can take charge of their personal lives as well as earn money for themselves. Even as they become a strategic pool of labor, also confines them to these possibilities that offer lesser wages, lesser possibilities, and more disciplinary structures, as we will see a few slides down.

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FEMINIZATION OF LABOR

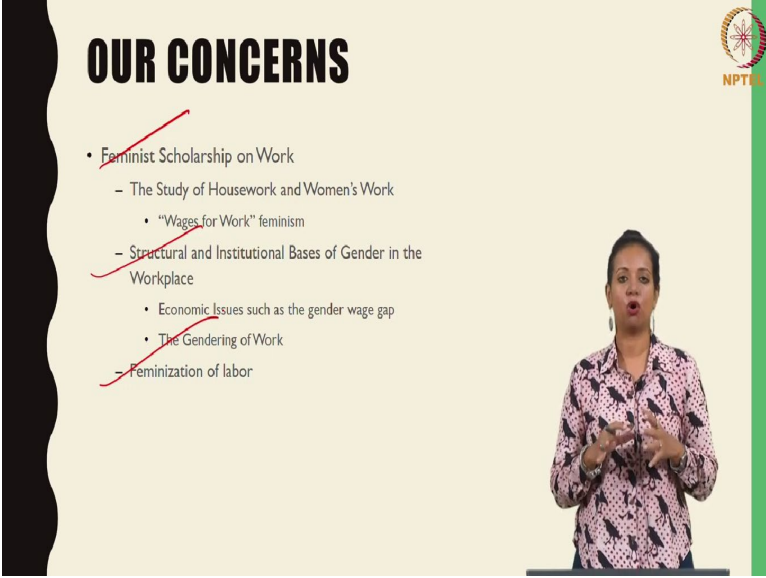
- Easy entry and exit
- Considered to be culturally, economically and politically malleable
- Poor labor standards and conditions especially in free-trade zones
- Gender norms and stereotypes that lead women to internalize their low status
 - Less labor and political unrest
 - Stimulates investment

What are the characteristics of such forms of labor? Easy entry and exit, because there are a larger number of workers, willing to do this work and you do not need many skills to be able to do it. It looks for populations considered culturally, economically, and politically malleable. What does that mean? It means that in many ways, they are looking at workers, not humans. They are looking at the ways in which labor will not be susceptible to unionization to political unrest to any forms of mobilization in demanding better working conditions and better wages.

And such a scenario is supposed to offer nation states better possibilities, because the better the conditions of flexible labor, the more capital investments the nation state will retain. Most of these are characterized, no surprises, by poor labor standards and conditions, especially in areas

that we all know now, as free trade zones, places where taxes are lower, conditions are lower, there is a relaxation of legal standards in relation to labor conditions and protection. And these are supposed to abet the free movement of capital.

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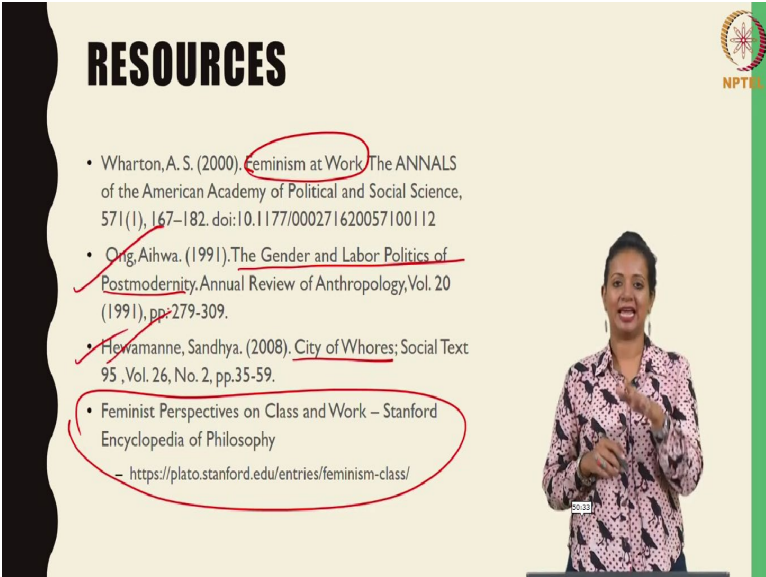
OUR CONCERNS

- Feminist Scholarship on Work
 - The Study of Housework and Women's Work
 - "Wages for Work" feminism
 - Structural and Institutional Bases of Gender in the Workplace
 - Economic Issues such as the gender wage gap
 - The Gendering of Work
 - Feminization of labor

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So broadly in this lecture, we have covered feminist scholarship on work, wages for work, feminism, structural and institutional bases of gender in the workplace, and lastly, feminization of labor. Now, these are not all encompassing.

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RESOURCES

- Wharton, A. S. (2000). Feminism at Work. The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, 571(1), 167-182. doi:10.1177/000271620057100112
- Ong, Aihwa. (1991). The Gender and Labor Politics of Postmodernity. Annual Review of Anthropology, Vol. 20 (1991), pp.279-309.
- Hewamanne, Sandhya. (2008). City of Whores; Social Text 95, Vol. 26, No. 2, pp.35-59.
- Feminist Perspectives on Class and Work – Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy
 - <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/feminism-class/>

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Here are a couple of resources if people want to read further, but they are very-very important and interesting for those who want to go further on and understanding how work and gender are closely related. So we are looking at a review article on feminism at work by A. S. Wharton. I will also read to you briefly from *The Gender and Labor Politics of Postmodernity* to try and understand the characteristics of labor in developing nations. Also, expand upon that least we form a unit dimensional understanding of labor as always exploited, we are looking at some Sandhya Hewamanne, *City of Whores* and a broader understanding of *Feminist Perspectives of Class and Work* is available at this link. So let me pause here briefly and continue to read from Ong and Hewamanne, before we end today's session.