

Feminism: Concepts and Theories
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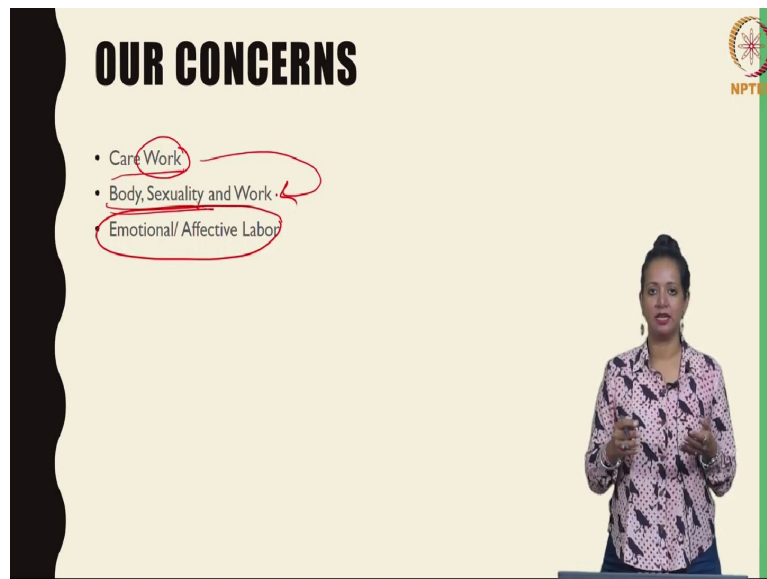
Feminism and Affective / Emotional Labor

Welcome back to Feminism Concepts and Theories. We are in week eight and this is your last lecture for the week. We ended our first lecture for the week with the concept of feminization of labor. We covered a wide gamut of issues in relation to women and labor and women and work. Just to recall, we were looking at wages for housework feminism; we were looking at the structural bases for gendering the workplace itself; and broadly, the links between globalization and the ways in which it inducts, female populations or gendered populations into the workforce itself and what are the multiple consequences of such forms of co-optation.

Today, I want to move on to another body of work in relation to the gendering of work and labor, which is in itself very interesting for a number of reasons. One, it takes forward Marxist analysis in relation to commodification, body, all of these in the direction of Post-Fordist economies where we are talking about the modularity of production systems, as we discussed earlier. But then, we are also asking the contemporary question, which is, that if we understand modern forms of work to cater primarily not to the demand for goods, but to the demand for services, meaning, there is a common sensical understanding that advanced economies no longer produce goods, material goods, a pen, a ring, a screen, instead, they produce feelings; they are responsible for making sure that people feel comfortable, cared for, seen, understood, and these will always have the highest forms of value that capitalism needs.

So in today's lecture, we are looking at these forms of labor, what are called affective or emotional labor, and trying to understand them in relation to gender as a lens. Some may argue that the entire field of affective or emotional labor is underwritten with gender, that without gender, we cannot understand the field. But let us take a look and see what you think.

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Therefore, we begin with something that we have already discussed in the chapter on Care, which is that if women are considered to have the fundamental capacity for care, as opposed to men, if female bodies are the ones that have natural capacity for care, then how do we understand the work of care and whether women should be paid accordingly for that. We move on to questions of the ways in which body and sexuality are implicated in the process of work. And we bring them all together in the complex that I just identified, called emotional or affective labor.

Now, this body of work is also important for a variety of things that it collapses. It collapses the understanding between rationality and emotionality. It collapses the understanding between an inside and an outside, between truth and falsity, between authentic feeling and inauthentic performance. It brings them together to say that actually, it is a very messy field. And it is only in such a messy field that we can begin to detect, how work has taken over our lives, how the very fact of the structure of work is what structures our daily lives. Therefore, it is but understandable that work also is structured through other kinds of societal divisions like gender, caste, class, and race and this is the critique that Rosabeth Moss Kanter was subject to when people were reading men and women of the corporation. Saying do we not understand that gender is replicated firmly in all spheres of life, in the very same fashion that we understand it in, “society.”

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THE WORK OF ARLIE HOCHSCHILD

- Human emotions are social
- The "rules of feeling" are deeply rooted in culture
- "Emotional labor" refers to the management of one's feelings and expressions based on the emotional requirements of a job
- An increase in service jobs leads to an increase in emotional labor
- "Global care chain" in Hochschild's understanding refers to "a pattern of women leaving their own families in developing countries to care for the children of well-off families."

The slide features a presenter on the right side. The text on the slide is annotated with red circles and lines, highlighting key concepts like 'Human emotions are social', 'Emotional labor', and the 'Global care chain' definition.

Therefore, let us start with a theorist, whose work is seminal to the entire field of emotional labor or affective labor, Arlie Hochschild. Hochschild began her work in relation to labor and emotion by studying the work of airline stewardess. There she was concerned with the ways in which stewardesses are taught their work, are taught that their primary work is to manage the feelings of airline passengers. Through this Hochschild gave us the understanding that human emotions are social. What does this mean? Usually we are used to thinking about emotion as a primarily personal thing. Emotions are what we feel. It is what the world evokes in us and these forms of evoking are also forms of training.

This is something that disciplines across the social sciences, including my home discipline, anthropology, firmly believe in, which is that the rules of feeling are deeply rooted in culture. What you should feel in response to what is something that is taught to you, it is modeled for you by people that you grew up with, by society, by mass media, by cultural discourse around you saying if this happens, this is what you should feel. So feeling as opposed to being internal and personal is deeply social. You already see the collapse of a particular binary.

And in Hochschild understanding, emotional labor refers to the management of one's feelings and expressions based on the emotional requirements of a job. A job is not merely about doing the work, it is also about a particular set of feelings and comportments that have to be produced

in opposition to one's own feelings and expressions. So the differentiation here is not between internal emotion and outside society, but that each realm the public and the private has appropriate rules for feeling and the rules for feeling available in the private sphere are not the same as the rules for feeling available in the public sphere. And therefore, labor has to be performed to hide one set of feelings while producing another set of feelings.

Think for example about the ways in which that standard power laden differential, the interview works, where you have interviewers who are asked to constantly intimidate, to look stern to behave as if they are not going to let you through the gates. Those feelings have to be produced outwardly in order for the interviewee to be able to respond to them. The interviewee on the contrary, depending on the kind of job that one is interviewing for, must produce the feeling of either humility or overconfidence. You must behave in a way that communicates to the outside world, your interiority, your inner emotions.


However, there need not be a consonance between your inner emotions and your outside behavior of feeling, your outside performance of feeling. And this is not to say that the outside behavior is false. It is what they say, if you want to feel happy smile first and you will feel happy. It is not this differentiation between true inner feeling that is masked for outside feeling. It is a way in which you are taught to feel in outside space. And in Hochschild's understanding, this always involves labor. To a certain extent Hochschild is arguing that there is an inauthenticity there, that there is a violence being wreaked upon the bodies of those who have to hide those feelings

But latter work in emotional labor argues against it, to say that it is actually a little bit more messy. It is not that the person is not fully feeling those things. It just means that people have to absorb a highly differentiated spectrum of rules in relation to feeling. As I mentioned earlier, emotional labor, affective labor arise very much in the context of an increase in service jobs, in the Post-Fordist service economy. For example, the term that Hochschild gives us called the Global care chain, where she is referring to "a pattern of women leaving their own families in developing countries to care for the children of well-off families." All sorts of things are encompassed in this example.

For instance, one of the things here is very much care work as part of the service economy and care work as being afforded by well-off families. But who is it that is performing this care work? Women leaving their own families in developing countries, meaning a particular pattern that we would identify as the feminization of labor in order to pursue such care work, where they have to produce maternal feelings, which are not false for other people's children, while also nursing the loss of time available for one's own children. However, what you are gaining money, mobility, class mobility are things that you think are far more important for your own children. And therefore, you perform this work and this is what Hochschild is referring to as the global care chain.


This and other forms of work in which the primary good or service produced is good feeling in others, comfort, being taken care of, are the purview of emotional or affective labor. However, this is not to suggest that all theory across this theorization is uniform. For example, you have Hochschild's early understanding that such labor is a travesty; it is a problem; it alienates who from authentic feeling, as opposed to current work in affective labor, which very much suggests that one is formed through these kinds of work. One is inevitably within these structures and there is no capacity to differentiate between what one actually feels and what one has been taught to feel.

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THE MANAGED HEART – ARLIE HOCHSCHILD

One day at Delta's Stewardess Training Center an instructor scanned the twenty-five faces readied for her annual Self-Awareness Class set up by the company in tandem with a refresher course in emergency procedures required by the Federal Aviation Administration. She began: "This is a class on thought processes, actions, and feelings. I believe in it. I have to believe in it, or I couldn't get up here in front of you and be enthusiastic." What she meant was this: "Being a sincere person, I couldn't say one thing to you and believe in another. Take the fact of my sincerity and enthusiasm as testimony to the value of the techniques of emotion management that I'm going to talk about."



Let me read to you a little bit from *The Managed Heart*, which is what I was referring to as Hochschild study of airline stewardesses. “One day at Delta Stewardess Training Center, an instructor scanned the 25 faces readied for her annual self-awareness class, set up by the company in tandem with the refresher course and emergency procedures required by the Federal Aviation Administration.” Look at what has been put together. Self Awareness Class along with Federal Aviation Administration required emergency procedures, one is a set of processes, another is a set of feelings.

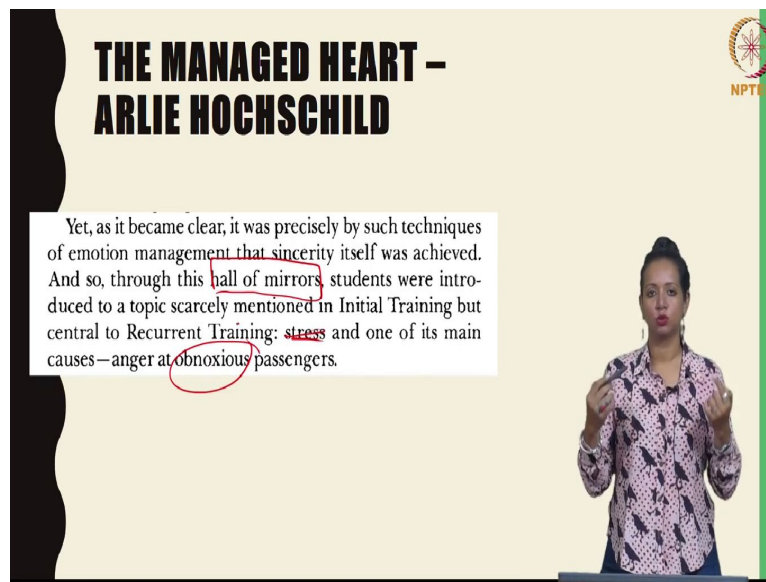
“She began, this is a class on thought processes, actions and feelings. I believe in it, I have to believe in it, or I could not get up here in front of you and be enthusiastic.” And here you have captured the conundrum of this work. When I am offering this class, when I am teaching it, I not only have to perform the words, I have to feel what I am saying. I have to understand the thoughts and ideas and concepts behind things like feminization of labor. I have to be authentic in my own understanding of theory, in order to teach it effectively. And who is to say one is true or false.

“What she meant was this, being a sincere person I could not say one thing to you and believe in another. Take the fact of my sincerity and enthusiasm as testimony to the value of the techniques of emotion management that I am going to talk about.” And this is very-very smart because the instructor is clearly setting up stage, she is telling people that I am such an emotionally authentic together person that of course, you have to believe what I say, in relation to emotion management.

I want to pause here for a second to talk to you about why this is so resonant with us in the current day. Think for example, about signboards all around wherever you may live, that speak about personality development or personality management, which translates to interview techniques or capacity to speak fluently or the ability to appear confident all encompassed under the term personality. So I can guarantee you there are 2,000 odd people registered for this course. But instead, if I suggested or floated a course that said, communication for gender, I would definitely get many, many thousands upwards. There is clearly a demand and a tacit understanding of the fact that public appearance of emotions are important for material

consequences, for the capacity to receive jobs, to make money, to be seen as successful in the world.

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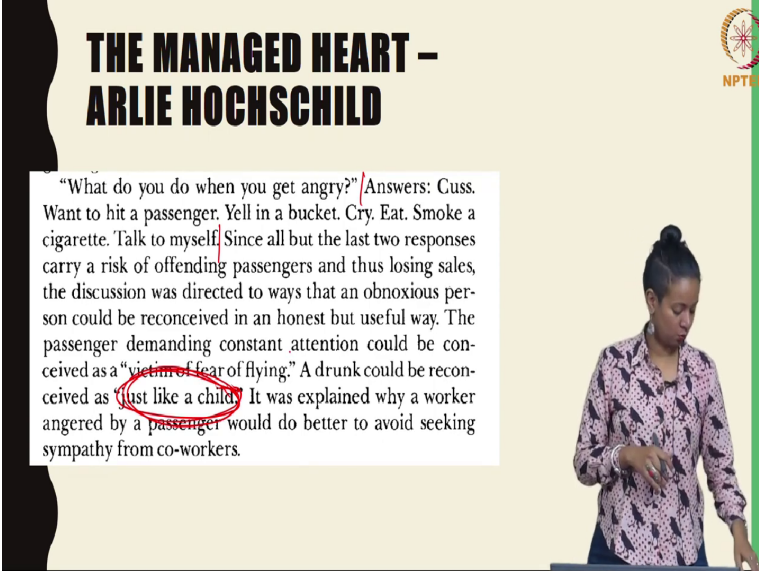


She continues “[y]et, as it became clear, it was precisely by such techniques of emotion management, that sincerity itself was achieved.” Hochschild turns the lens around, she says, Well, she speaks about why is it that one should believe in emotion management, it is because the instructor says that she is a sincere person. She believes in it, it is a truth. But on the contrary, it is only by managing her own emotions that she is able to be sincere. “And so through this hall of mirrors, which is a great metaphor for what is happening here, students were introduced to a topics scarcely mentioned in initial training, but central to recurrent training. Stress, and one of its main causes – anger at obnoxious passengers.

Now, for anybody who is traveled in public space, this is a fairly common phenomenon. You know that in many instances in public space people feel free to act in an obnoxious fashion and will only respond to any kind of authoritarian figure. With the airline stewardess, there is a problem here because one stewardesses are female, female authority is not taken too kindly in most instances. Two, in an airline space customers are expecting service and in the time that Hochschild is writing about airline travel is even more exclusive. There is a way in which passengers think that because they paid the money, they have the right to do whatever they please. The primary responsibility of stewardesses in this account is to manage customer feelings

is to make sure that they are not feeling bad, or feeling left out, or feeling insulted. You have to placate them. You have to allay their concerns, you have to manage their anxieties, whether or not they are behaving in an obnoxious fashion. And such allying, such placating can only be done if the stewardess first manages, her own feelings, first stems her own anger at the situation and tells herself that no, no, this job is about making sure my passenger feels good. Remember the adage about the customer is always right. There is a way in which it becomes such a mantra that it evokes this capacity to forget oneself in the service of somebody else's set of feelings. Sound familiar? Much like what women have been talking about for decades? Service work in this instance, replicates the seeming fundamental nature of women's work in the world.

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**THE MANAGED HEART –
ARLIE HOCHSCHILD**

“What do you do when you get angry?” Answers: Cuss. Want to hit a passenger. Yell in a bucket. Cry. Eat. Smoke a cigarette. Talk to myself. Since all but the last two responses carry a risk of offending passengers and thus losing sales, the discussion was directed to ways that an obnoxious person could be reconceived in an honest but useful way. The passenger demanding constant attention could be conceived as a “victim of fear of flying.” A drunk could be reconceived as “just like a child.” It was explained why a worker angered by a passenger would do better to avoid seeking sympathy from co-workers.

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A woman in a patterned shirt is standing at a podium, looking down at a book or paper.

Hochschild continues, “[w]hat do you do when you get angry? Answers:” and this is the workshop remember, this is part of the training program. The answers come “[c]uss. Want to hit a passenger. Yell in a bucket. Cry. Eat. Smoke a cigarette. Talk to myself. Since all but the last two responses carry a risk of offending passengers and thus, losing sales. The discussion was directed to ways that an obnoxious person could be reconceived in an honest but useful way. The passenger demanding constant attention could be conceived as a victim of fear of flying. A drunk could be reconceived as just like a child. It was explained why a worker angered by a passenger would do better to avoid seeking sympathy from coworkers.” This passage is an act of genius, because look at what is happening in this instance, if you continue following our argument about

women's work and about care, there is a direct sentence in here. A drunk is just like a child, except for the important, important contention that a drunk man flying on a plane is not a child.

Therefore, this kind of reconceptualization is necessary for managing the stewardesses state of mind, state of emotions. She has to also re-conceptualize her own emotions as empathetic, as understanding, as caring, just like a mother for someone who is just like a child, and this is not something that is demanded of her personally, but is demanded of her as a stewardess performing the job of care.

From this work, Hochschild then moves on in the present day to something that she is been pursuing since then, the idea of the self itself that is constantly in need of care by multiple people offering such forms of emotional / affective labor.

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THE OUTSOURCED SELF: INTIMATE LIFE IN MARKET TIMES - ARLIE HOCHSCHILD

- It used to take a village, but these days it takes a full-service mall, much of it in cyberspace. Finding a mate, planning a wedding, potty-training a child, or being a better father—once intuitive, ordinary tasks involving family, friends, and neighbors—now require the services of paid experts, trainers, and a plethora of coaches, such as Internet dating coach Evan Katz, aka e-Cyrano, or Family360, which teaches executives to "invest time and attention in 'high leverage' family activities."



The slide also includes a photograph of Arlie Hochschild on the right side. A red circle is drawn around the text "services of paid experts, trainers, and a plethora of coaches" in the quote.

So in her most recent work, one of her most recent works, *The Outsourced Self: Intimate Life in Market Times*, she says, “[i]t used to take a village, but these days it takes a full service mall, much of it in cyberspace. Finding a mate, planning a wedding, potty training a child, being a better father. Once intuitive, ordinary tasks involving family, friends, and neighbors now require the services of paid experts, trainers, and a plethora of coaches, such as internet dating coach Evan Katz, also known as a e-Cyrano, or Family360, which teaches executives to invest time and attention in high leverage family activities.”

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THE MANAGED HEART – ARLIE HOCHSCHILD

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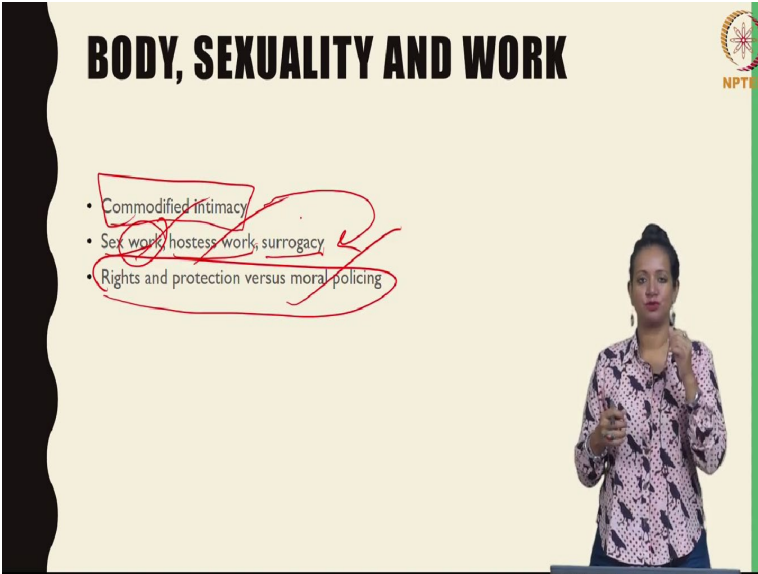
Look at the tragic turn of events. We have gone from teaching stewardesses, how to reconceptualize people in need of their good feelings to the outsourced self. People, much like the obnoxious passenger, who no longer know how to do anything for themselves and need services from everybody else, who do not have the capacity to manage self or feeling and instead have the money to hire somebody else to do so.

So internet dating coach, for example, to navigate the high stress, active dating, of meeting other people that you want to see whether you want to have a romantic relationship with, you need

mediation, you need somebody to tell you how to act. You need somebody to coach you in how to feel. Again, you need someone to teach you how to be an emotional person. And this to Hochschild is very-very interesting, no doubt, but it seems almost tragic that we are leading this life where the self has been outsourced. Stay with that for a minute and see how you feel about it. Whether this is the truth of the situation? Is this something that is particular to the global north? Is this how we think about the global south, that at least we are not where they are, we know how to feel.

We have family, community, family friends, neighbors, like Hochschild is telling us are we then the pastoral community that is able to take care of each other and does not need these services? I am not sure anymore, because in many ways, we are looking at a similar set of services being available across the globe, providing precisely these kinds of things that Hochschild is talking about. And in this book, as much as in *The Managed Heart*, that is a trenchant critique of the ways in which capitalism has commodified everything. And in this commodification, we locate the work of the theorists of affective and intimate or emotional labor.

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The slide features a title 'BODY, SEXUALITY AND WORK' in bold black text at the top left. In the top right corner is the NPTEL logo. Below the title, there is a list of three bullet points: 'Commodified intimacy', 'Sex work, hostess work, surrogacy', and 'Rights and protection versus moral policing'. The first two bullet points are circled in red, and a red arrow points from the second circle to the third. A woman in a patterned shirt is standing on the right side of the slide, gesturing with her hands.

- Commodified intimacy
- Sex work, hostess work, surrogacy
- Rights and protection versus moral policing

The charge here is that all intimacy has been commodified. And I think, I found my most interesting example in things that were about people willing to offer hugs at an hourly rate, people willing to cuddle for the price of a night something. And this is not sexual work, which we will talk about in a bit. This is merely being hired to offer bodily comfort, which is so rarely

available apparently in a globalized, fragmented world, that you have to pay someone to do it. They used to be a website a long time ago on findingfriends dot com, where it is not possible to meet people in person and try and see if you want to have friendships, but to find ways to do it through a website, and dating websites, of course, are merely an extension of the ways in which “arranged marriages” have always been popular in the subcontinent.

Very clear differences though, because with arranged marriage or matrimony sites, there is a clear understanding of a contract, whereas with dating sites, there is an understanding of exchange of emotion, of compatibility, of some modicum of individuality, individual emotion and intimacy, rife with problems but positioning themselves fully differently. From such an understanding of commodified intimacy also come the plethora of debates around things like sex work, hostess, work, and surrogacy, or the renting out of wombs to bear other women’s children.

We briefly talked about this in relation to surrogacy, Amrita Pandey’s article, where we spoke about how to make a perfect surrogate mother. How is it that those forms of training are about forms of care, to care so much, but not enough beyond a point and how surrogate mothers resist that kind of discourse. And here, the debates are very much about rights and protection of these forms of work as work. If you remember, our theme for the week is about work versus the moral policing that comes with a common understanding that all sex work is exploitative. And we will go over these debates in just a little bit.

Let me just tell you, however, that broadly the terrain is distributed between sex positive feminists who say that there is no reason to think about all forms of sex work, hostess work, etcetera, as uniformly exploitative; as wreaked upon the bodies of those who really do not want to participate in this form work, maybe there are ways in which to understand choice and agency, even on such a seemingly unidimensional terrain, as against those who speak about sex work in the same vein as trafficking, which is an entirely different set of questions altogether. This is not to say that there aren’t overlaps, but the kinds of moral policing against sex work also borrow from the understanding that sexuality commodified by women is fundamentally immoral. And those who identify as sex positive feminists say that well, women should have the right to control over their bodies, to do with it what they wish. And sex work is merely one of the ways in which to understand such wielding of choice over the female body.

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WHY FEMINISTS SHOULD RETHINK RIGHTS – HILARY KINNELL

Sex as a commodity

One of the topics covered in this seminar series was the question of whether it is ever acceptable for sexual activity to be ascribed monetary value. We discussed payment for reproductive labour, and I heard no argument that convinced me that sexual labour could or should be excluded from the area of contract or employment rights. If it is acceptable to rent out one's womb, and if it is appropriate to define the rights of the parties involved through contract, I cannot see any reason why one should not be allowed to rent out one's vagina, or any other part of one's body or aspect of one's personality.

However, I think it is somehow easier to regard womb rental as less intimately connected with a woman's essential being than vagina rental, because it is assumed that surrogacy does not involve sexual pleasure either for the surrogate or for the biological father. Objections to sex work seem to focus on the unacceptability of sexual pleasure being commodified, as if human beings' capacity for sexual pleasure was so special and important, it should never be tarnished by the exchange of money. I find this odd. We accept the commodification of water and food, without which no human life would be possible, why not sex?



So let me read to you a little bit from Hilary Kinnell's article titled Why Feminists Should Rethink Rights. Please do pay attention to many of the terms that Kinnell is talking about because it does cover a wide terrain in trying to understand the complexities of sex work as a profession, as a choice, as a contingency, as something that could be exploitative and what are the ways in which rights or justice should be organized in relation to this. Sex as a commodity. "One of the topics covered in the seminar series was the question of whether it is ever acceptable for sexual activity to be ascribed monetary value. We discussed payment for reproductive labor and I heard no argument that convinced me that sexual labor could or should be excluded from the area of contract or employment rights." Here, Kinnell is going to the heart of the problem, because if we are okay, speaking about payment for reproductive labor, such as in surrogacy where women are making the choice to how do I simplify this, rent out their wombs, sexual labor should not be excluded from that area or employment rights.

"It is acceptable to rent out one's womb and if it is appropriate to define the rights of the parties involved through contract I cannot see any reason why one should not be allowed to rent out one's vagina or any other part of one's body or aspect of one's personality." There is a problem at the heart of saying that one should rent out things because there of course, we are agreeing with the complete commodification of everything, including our bodies, our feelings, etcetera. But Kinnell is suggesting that that critique should be placed elsewhere. Given that women are

participating in this system, what is more important to secure at this point of time? Should we say that capitalism commodifies everything we need to therefore overthrow it and have a new system? Should we say women are exploited, rescue them right now? Or should we concentrate on something far more important, which is how is it that society can allow them to perform their own work, that has been chosen in particular sets of circumstances, without risk, without fear, without harm without danger. This is a question that is asked for all forms of labor. What is it that the employer needs to provide for the work to be carried out sans scare, without thinking about the things that will assail you, should you go to the place of work or context of work and be in danger?

“However, I think it is somehow easier to regard womb rental as less intimately connected with a woman’s essential being than vagina rental. Because it is assumed that surrogacy does not involve sexual pleasure, either for the surrogate or for the biological father.” This is a very interesting way to pose the difference. Kinnell is asking, why is it easier to think about womb rental because it can be circumscribed within other structures of understanding. It can be seen as noble. It can be seen as something women are doing, despite the fact that it is not pleasurable, which means it must have nobility inscribed in it. In other words, surrogacy is something that can reproduce the understanding of motherhood itself as both fundamental to women and sisterhood as something that abets this kind of motherhood. Objections to sex work seem to focus on the unacceptability of sexual pleasure being commodified, as if human beings’ capacity for sexual pleasure was so special and important, it should never be tarnished by the exchange of money. As something that is so fundamental to intimacy, that it must not be commodified and specifically, not by women themselves.

Kinnell says, “I find this odd, we accept the commodification of water and food without which no human life would be possible. Why not sex?” At the heart of it, this is a question that is undeniable. If we accept things that have been commodified, such as water and food in the absence of which we would die, why not sex?

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WHY FEMINISTS SHOULD RETHINK RIGHTS – HILARY KINNELL

Overt commodification of sexuality goes on all the time in advertising, the entertainment industry, and in societies where dowries are still an important element in marriage; it also goes on covertly within monogamous relationships, where one partner expects to be rewarded for allowing the other partner to have sex. These factors may explain why this country, and many others, does not outlaw the exchange of sex for money or other material benefits³, despite the draconian prohibitions on many aspects of commercial sex.

It is also interesting that the new International Union of Sex Workers has a similar understanding of "sex work" as radical feminism: in the IUSW, strippers, pole-dancers and those providing telephone sex define themselves as sex workers, occupations entirely within the law.⁴ Now that the IUSW has successfully allied itself to the labour movement, demanding recognition of labour rights in these legal areas of the sex industry, the illogicality of not recognising the same rights for those working in brothels becomes very obvious.

do not argue that this commodification of the body or persona is "ideal", just that, since it happens, it is better to define and defend the rights of those involved.



NPTCL

“Overt commodification of sexuality goes on all the time in advertising the entertainment industry and in societies that dowries are still an important element in marriage. It also goes on covertly within monogamous relationships, where one partner expects to be rewarded for allowing the other partner to have sex. These factors may explain why this country and she means the UK and many others does not outlaw the exchange of sex for money or other material benefits, despite the draconian prohibitions on many aspects of commercial sex.”

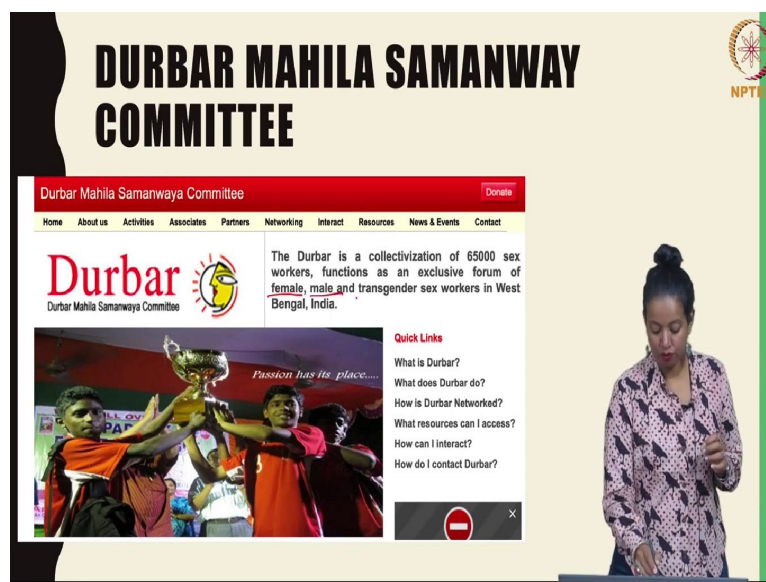
Now, this is important to remember, “does not outlaw the exchange of sex” and this varies across countries. Some countries do not criminalize sex work, but they do criminalize solicitation or looking for sexual relationships in exchange for money or offering them in exchange for money. Usually solicitation by women, not by customers looking for sex workers; despite the draconian prohibitions on many aspects of commercial sex.

“It is also interesting that the new International Union of Sex Workers has a similar understanding of sex work as radical feminism. In the IUSW strippers, pole dancers and those providing telephone sex, define themselves as sex workers, occupations entirely within the law.” The quest here is to move sex work from its moral connotations of sexuality given freely when actually it is a realm of the interior or authenticity or authentic human relations to the market, and to not just say it is a product of the market, but to say that it needs protection and rights.

“Now that the IUSW has successfully allied itself to the labor movement, demanding recognition of labor rights in these legal areas of the sex industry, the illogicality of not recognizing the same rights for those working in brothels becomes very obvious.” Here Kinnell is rightfully pointing out the continuity between strippers, pole dancers, telephone sex, and brothels, or sex workers.

“I do not argue that this commodification of the body or persona is ideal. Just that since it happens, it is better to define and defend the rights of those involved,” and this is at the heart of an understanding of feminism in relation to labor as rights-bearing citizens in need of protection of those rights. Offering sex work does not strip women of their rights of agency, choice, and protection from violence. And it is very important that the law secure for them, those very things. In relation to this, I also want to bring attention to an organization that is doing a very-very successful job of bringing together sex workers to plead for their rights in similar contexts.

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This is the website of the Durbar Mahila Samanwaya Committee, a collectivization of 65,000 sex workers as an exclusive forum of female, male, and transgender sex workers in West Bengal, India.

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DURBAR MAHILA SAMANWAY COMMITTEE

Durbar since its inception articulated three interconnected principles which are known as 3R e., Respect, Reliance and Recognition.

- Respect and dignity to sex work and towards sex workers
- Reliance on the knowledge and wisdom of the community of sex workers.
- Recognition of sex work as an occupation and preserve and protect their occupational and human rights.

Since its inception, the organization has articulated three interconnected principles which are known as three R's, respect, reliance and recognition. Respect and dignity to sex work and towards sex workers, reliance on the knowledge and wisdom of the community of sex workers, recognition of sex work as an occupation, and preserve and protect their occupational and human rights: there are occupational rights and human rights.

Here, also pay attention to the second point reliance on the knowledge and wisdom of the community of sex workers. Often those interested in the rights of sex workers think that the outside world knows what is right for them, does not really take into account sex workers themselves speaking about their lives and instead suggests that workers do not know what is good for them. They have entered this profession despite themselves or because they are in difficult situations and it's the work of feminists to rescue them. The committee is precisely arguing against such forms of rescue, and instead asking that there be reliance on the knowledge and wisdom of the community itself.

I want to read to you a little bit from their manifesto, just a couple of pages so you know what I am talking about in this instance. And this is from the sex workers manifesto, as released by the Samanway Committee.

“A new specter seems to be haunting society or maybe those phantom creatures who have been kept in the shades for ages are taking on human form. And that is why there is so much fear. For the last few years, the sex workers movement has made us confront many fundamental questions about social structures and relations, interlinkages between class gender and sexuality, about politico-moral ethics. We think an intrinsic component of our movement is to go on searching for the answers to these questions and raise newer ones. What is the sex workers movement all about? We came together as a collective community through our active involvement as health workers, the peer educators in an STD, HIV intervention program, which has been running in Sonagachi, one of the oldest and largest red light areas of Calcutta since 1992. The program provided the initial space for building mutual support, facilitating reflection and initiating collective action among us sex workers.

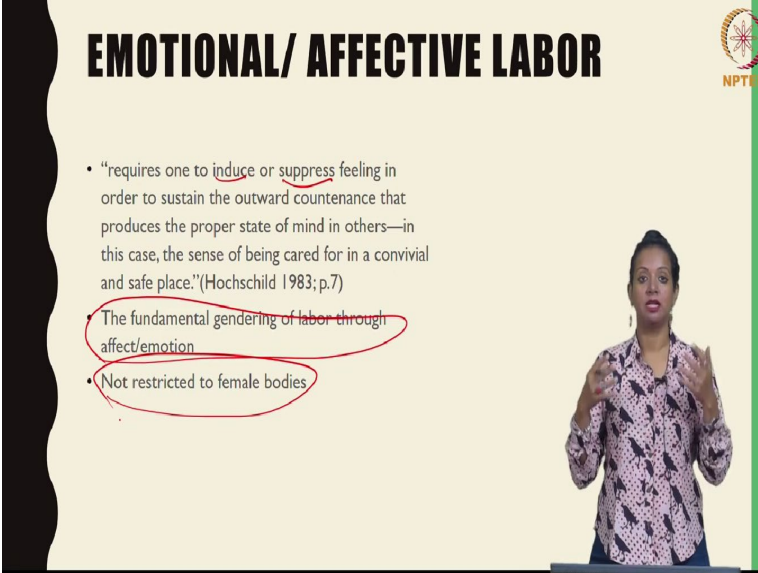
Very early in the life of the Sonagachi project, we with the empathetic support of those who had started the project clearly recognized that even to realize the very basic project objectives of controlling transmission of HIV and STD among sex workers and our partners, it was crucial to view us in our totality, as complete persons with a range of emotional and material needs, living within a concrete and specific social, political, and ideological context, which determines the quality of our lives and our health and not see us merely in terms of our sexual behavior.”

This is radical for a whole set of reasons. At the heart of it, the committee is recognizing that sex work is controversial in society, because it challenges basic assumptions about the relationship between body, sexuality, gender, and society. And even if their project was very specifically rooted in developmental objectives in controlling HIV and AIDS, they could see how the objectives would not be fulfilled unless sex workers were seen as humans, in very-very particular contexts, with a whole range of needs, where sex work was work, it was behavioral within a context, it was not the totality of their subjectivities.

Now, this is not to do away with the work that they performed and the ways in which it mattered to them. But to say that that is not the sum totality of who we are and therefore, our needs have to be understood in relation to the fact that we are humans performing sex work and not merely prostitutes. So this is only just a broad sort of sweep about the ways or the multiple ways in

which to understand care work, emotional work, affective labor. And I want to bring us towards the end of this lecture into a kind of summary.

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EMOTIONAL/ AFFECTIVE LABOR

- "requires one to induce or suppress feeling in order to sustain the outward countenance that produces the proper state of mind in others—in this case, the sense of being cared for in a convivial and safe place." (Hochschild 1983; p.7)
- The fundamental gendering of labor through affect/emotion
- Not restricted to female bodies

The slide features a yellow background with a black wavy border on the left. A presenter, a woman with dark hair wearing a patterned shirt, stands on the right side of the slide. The NPTEL logo is in the top right corner. Red circles are drawn around the text 'The fundamental gendering of labor through affect/emotion' and 'Not restricted to female bodies'.

Emotional or affective labor in Hochschild's understanding requires one, either to induce or suppress feeling, in order to sustain the outward countenance that produces the proper state of mind in others. So, one has to manage one's feelings in order to produce other feelings. In this case the sense of being cared for in the convivial and safe place there is a fundamental gendering of labor through affect and emotion. And this is easy, emotional is considered the realm of women. Emotionality is the realm of women and control over these emotions needs to be performed in order to secure work. In that, it is not restricted to female bodies, there are ways in which any kind of worker who is asked to do this is being fundamentally gendered and placed in a kind of dominant/subservient scenario in relation to the customer who is primarily considered in a masculine vein even though the customer might be a woman.

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Guest Editors' Introduction Intimate Industries: Restructuring (Im)Material Labor in Asia

Rhacel Salazar Parreñas, Hung Cam Thai, Rachel Silvey


positions: east asia cultures critique, Volume 24, Number 1, February 2016, pp. 1-15 (Article)

Published by Duke University Press




I want to read to you a little bit from the introductory essay to a special issue on Intimate Industries in this relation. And we will wrap up with that.

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Intimate industries produce, enable, promote, and market some relational connections while disrupting or rearranging other, previously existing social relations. For instance, the industries that help maintain or create an idealized family formation or domestic lifestyle for the consumers of intimate labor often rely upon the separation of the migrant who performs such intimate labor from her family and community of origin.⁵ The articles collected here examine such trade-offs and their complex meanings and implications for the workers themselves. The authors explore these social

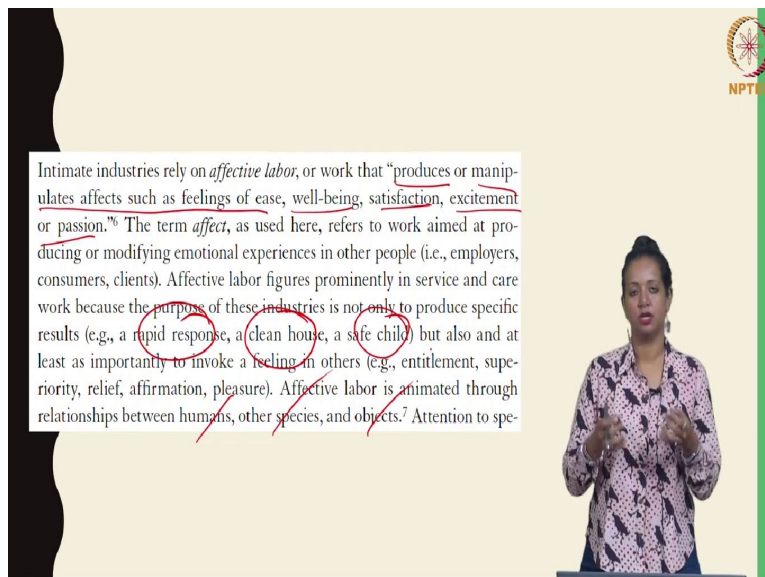


Intimate industries produce, enable, promote, and market some relational connections while disrupting or rearranging other previously existing social relations. Remember what Hochschild was talking about that there are ways in which people have to be coached to do things that were

otherwise done by family, neighbors and friends. This is the disruption or rearrangement. For instance, the industries that help maintain or create an idealized family formation or domestic lifestyle for the consumers of intimate labor often rely upon the separation of the migrant, who performs such intimate labor from her family and community of origin. So often families themselves people with two jobs, do not have time to care for children, and the work is performed by the nanny, often a foreign origin, especially in the global north.

And the articles collected here and this we are speaking about the articles in the special issue, examine such trade-offs, and their complex meanings and implications for the workers themselves. And this is important. Even in this instance, nannies will tell you that they have true and deep feelings for their wards, that they are able to produce in themselves the kind of mothering that is demanded of them, knowing fully well that they have to leave them some day. Yet this does not stop them.

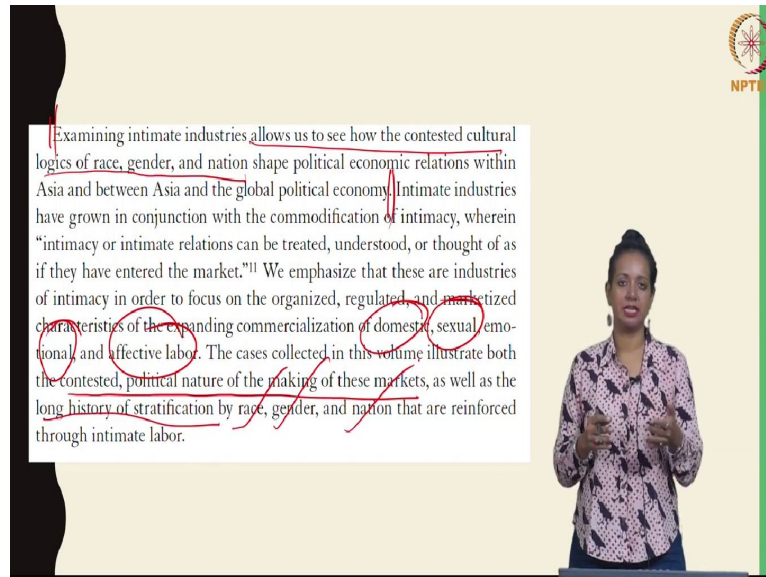
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Intimate industries rely on affective labor or work that produces or manipulates affects such as feelings of ease, well-being, satisfaction, excitement or passion. The term affect as used here refers to work aimed at reducing or modifying emotional experiences in other people. Affective labor figures prominently in service and care work because the purpose of these industries is not only to produce specific results, a safe child, a clean house, a rapid response, like in customer care, but also, and at least as importantly to invoke a feeling in others: entitlement, superiority,

relief, affirmation, pleasures. Affective labor is animated through relationships between humans, other species and objects. In other words, there is no realm that is left untouched by affective labor.

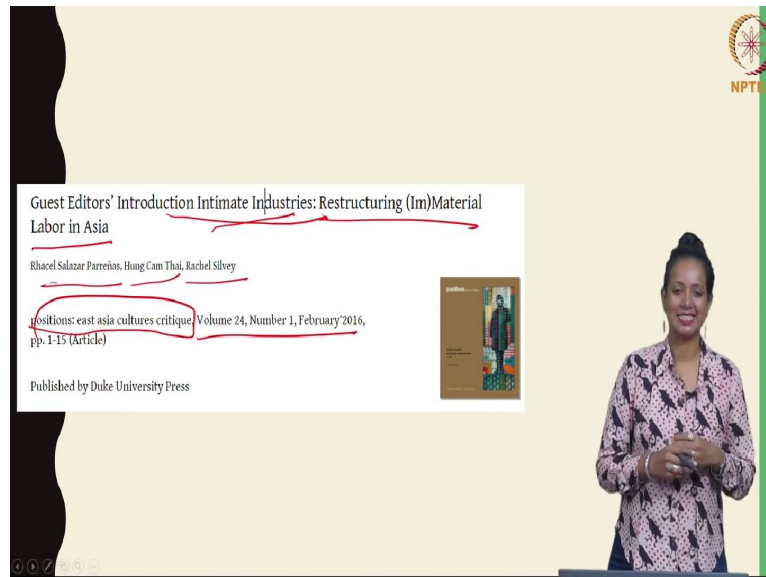
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The editors go on to clarify their goals or interests in examining intimate industries, allows us to see how the contested cultural logics of race, gender and nation shape political economic relations within Asia and between Asia and the global political economy. So now we are locating a new form of feminization of labor in relation to affect and care. Intimate industries have grown in conjunction with the commodification of intimacy, wherein intimacy or intimate relations can be treated, understood or thought of as if they had entered the market.

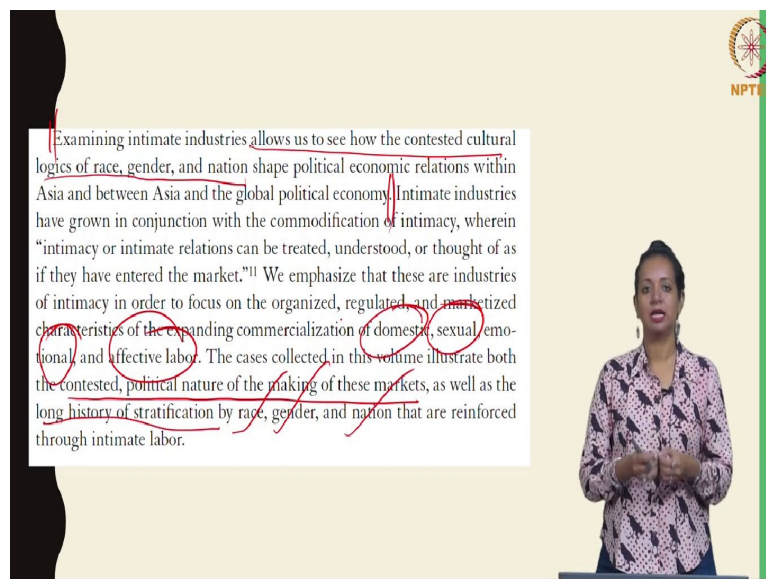
We emphasize that these are industries of intimacy in order to focus on the organized, regulated, and marketized characteristics of the expanding commercialization of domestic, sexual, emotional, and affective labor. The contested political nature of the making of these markets, as well as the long history of stratification, by race, gender and nation that are reinforced through intimate labor. Again, remember, there is always a need to look at these in an intersectional fashion. Certain logics of race, class, caste will be reproduced even in relation to an affective and intimate labor that is important for us to see.

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For those interested, this is intimate industries, restructuring immaterial labor in Asia, Salazar Parreñas, Hung Thai, Rachel Silvey in positions east Asia cultures critique Volume 24, 2016.

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With that we come to the end of our discussions for this week. We have covered a whole swath of questions, like I said wages for housework, feminization of labor, structural basis of gender, affective emotional labor, sex work. Think about these as laying out for you the landscape of

feminism in relation to labor or work, like I said before, this is not all encompassing. These are not all the categories that one can examine. And there are many things that have been left out. But broadly, this does give you a way to think about labor and work in relation to feminism and the feminist movement. Next week, another new set of concepts, interests and possibilities. Until then...