



What does feminist economics tell us about 'development'?

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Gender

‘Who needs [Sex] when you can have [Gender]?’

Sally Baden and Anne Marie Goetz
(1997) *Feminist Review*, 56: 1, 3–25

‘Rescuing Gender from the Poverty Trap’

Cecile Jackson (1996)
World Development, 24:3, 489-504

‘Doing Gender’

Candace West and Don H. Zimmerman (1987)
Gender and Society,
1:2, 125-151

Nimble Fingers

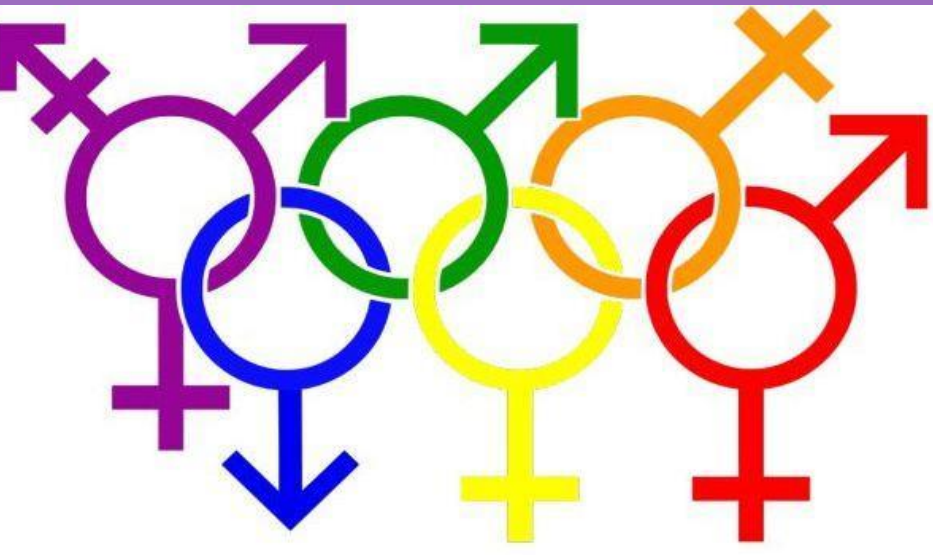
Make Cheap Workers

Ruth Pearson and Diane Elson
(1982) *Feminist Review* 7(1):87-107

Gender and Development

- 1970s Exclusion of women
 - Women in Development
- 1980s Questioning how we include women
 - Gender and Development
- End of 1980s Structural Adjustment → Feminist Economists demonstrate women bear the costs
- Mid1990s The rise of rights
 - To live free from violence as right
- 2000s MDGs to the SDGs
 - Women excluded through inclusion?
Co-option of notion of 'gender'

Gender as
intersectional



Gender
as fluid

Gender as feminist



Power and Patriarchy

- The concept of patriarchy ...is not a single or simple concept but has a whole variety of different meanings
- The set of social relations between men which, although hierarchical, establishes an interdependence and solidarity between them which allows them to dominate women (Hartmann 1981: 14)
- Patriarchy and Capitalism – chicken and egg! Intersecting systems of exploitation and benefit from each other.

FEMINISM

Feminism is the pursuit of equality between men and women. Feminists seek economic, political, social, legal and personal rights for women that are equal to those of men.

Feminist campaigns have campaigned for major societal changes such as voting rights, reproductive rights, greater political representation and fairer pay. But there is still a long way to go until men and women lead truly equal lives.



ECONOMICS

The word 'economics' comes from the Greek word 'oikonomia' meaning 'household management'. But nowadays the meaning of 'economics' has expanded to mean the production, distribution and consumption of goods and services.

When we analyse the economy we investigate the psychology of human behaviour and decision-making.



What is FEMINIST ECONOMICS?

FEMINIST ECONOMICS

Values the role of unpaid work carried out by men & women, in the home & through care work

Acknowledges that the economy depends not just on the production & distribution of goods and services, but on *co-operation & care*

Recognises that the interests of members of the same household may differ and that resources are not necessarily *shared equally*

Acknowledges that the *complexity* of human lives cannot always be quantified

Recognises that *relationships* influence how our economy functions



FEMINIST ECONOMICS

Feminist economics promotes economic equality between women and men. The activities, behaviour and decisions of men and women have a major impact on our economy. But mainstream economics has a tendency to be based on men's lives and recognises only work that is done for money.

A feminist economics perspective recognises the paid and unpaid work of both men and women.



MAINSTREAM ECONOMICS

Has a tendency to prize *money, machines & men*

Measures paid work in *Gross Domestic Product* (GDP), but fails to count the contribution of unpaid work

Builds its picture of the economy as consisting of people motivated by *self-interest & material goods*

Assumes that the influences on people's decisions can be objectively quantified & tends to build economic theories that depend on *mathematical models*

Fails to recognise *non-market activities* as important to the economy

Mainstream (Malestream) Economics

- Economics is too centred around men
Economy understood as GDP and value comes from (male) waged labour

Unpaid care work is essential to a well-functioning economy but not counted

- ‘Rational’ Economic Man

Earns, operates via markets, use of \$ on self
And women? Experiences not included

- Social provisioning

Challenge notions of ‘work’ and ‘production’
how we value different sorts of activity

Feminist Economics

- Is distinctly different
- Highlight unequal gender relations as a structural characteristic of any economy
- From a political perspective, feminist economics is an economics that focuses on what is needed to produce a gender equal society
- Based on assumption that gender equality is intrinsically good

BUT

- Often gender 'sold' as equality for efficiency

Gender in mainstream economics

- World Bank research highlighted how societies that discriminate by gender tend to experience less rapid economic growth

If African countries had closed the gender gap in schooling between 1960 and 1992 as quickly as East Asia did, this would have produced close to a doubling of per capita income growth in the region

- Gender disparities produce economically inefficient outcomes

Increases in household income are associated with reduced child mortality risks, the marginal impact is almost 20 times as large if the income is in the hands of the mother rather than the father (WBGDG 2003).

What and how we know what we (mainstream) know

70% of the World's poor are Women - Beijing 1995

The incidence of poverty is greater among women than men ('poverty has a female face')

The incidence of poverty among women relative to men is growing over time

The rising relative incidence of poverty among women is linked with increases in female household headship ('poorest of the poor')

If the right questions are asked, conventional poverty research tools can provide most of the gender-related answers. World Bank PRSP Sourcebook (circa 2000)

It's Gender Jim...but not as feminists know it: The production of 'gendered' knowledge

- Gendered policy is being informed by non-gender focussed research often produced by non-gendered researchers, by design, it can at best highlight gender inequalities, but can do little to promote gender equality
- Sex disaggregation becomes doing gender (it isn't!)
- Instrumentalist gender research is produced from and produces instrumentalist gender policy.

Feminist Institutionalism

- Institutional gender norms shape what research is funded and by whom
- Development funders such as DFID and UN, WB fund research, and produce and consume knowledge, they become the experts
- Gender trapped in closed circuit

Bradshaw, Linneker, Sanders-McDonagh (2015, 2018)

What gender studies teaches us

Income Poverty \neq Poverty

- ‘..the fact women are disproportionately affected by poverty is neither due primarily to lower incomes nor finds its sole expression in them’ (Rodenberg, 2004:5)
- ‘Poverty is more than an insufficient level of income or consumption. It is a multidimensional phenomenon... One of the dimensions of poverty is time, a finite resource, and its unbalanced use for various activities’ (ECLAC, 2016:17)
- Asset, Time, Power poverty may be more important in determining women’s wellbeing

Feminist economics teaches us Female heads \neq poorest

- Poorest of the poor been contested as long as has been stated
- In MHHs, household not poor but 'secondary poverty', men withholding up to 50% of income, means women are poor. Augmented by shift from men as 'chief breadwinner' to 'chief spender'
- FHHS may be 'enabling spaces' for women, offering greater agency, and reduced violence
- Presence of young dependent children may be a more important predictor of poverty than sex of head

(Liu et al, 2017; Medeiros and Costa, 2006 on Latin America)

Gender inequality and relative well being

What do we (not) know

- 1995 Fourth Women's World Conference in Beijing, women were '70% of the world's poor, and rising'
- 2015 UN Women accept that 'the much cited "factoid" that 70% of the world's poor are women is now widely regarded as improbable' (UN Women, 2015:307, 92n)
- 20 years to realise that 'it is unknown how many of those living in poverty are women and girls' (UN Women, 2015:45, Box 1.4)

We don't know but ...UN Progress of the World's Women on what we know

- Among the key findings are that women of 'prime working age' (20-59 years) are more likely than their male peers to be represented in the poorest quintile of households
- What UN Women denominate as 'female only households' (FOHs), are also suggested to be more likely to be in this poorest quintile.
- This then does little to trouble conventional wisdoms pertaining to global feminised poverty, and links to female household headship

(Re)feminisation

ECLAC, 2014



Feminisation of Poverty Index by Geographical Zone 1990-2013							
	Year	Feminisation of Poverty Index					
		Extreme Poor (aged 20-59)			General Poor (aged 20-59)		
		National	Urban	Rural	National	Urban	Rural
Latin America (simple average)	1990	...	117.3	107.6	...
	1994	...	117.6	109.4	...
	1997	115.0	119.5	113.0	108.7	111.5	108.7
	1999	112.9	118.2	108.1	108.1	109.9	106.5
	2002	109.7	116.0	109.5	107.1	109.3	107.5
	2005	112.9	119.9	112.8	109.7	111.8	109.8
	2008	118.0	126.2	118.0	112.0	113.9	112.5
	2010	116.9	125.5	112.5	113.5	116.5	110.7
	2012	120.6	128.8	119.8	117.3	119.7	115.2
	2013	120.9	129.4	114.6	116.9	119.8	112.8

Source: ECLAC (2014) statistical annex table 11, based on special tabulations from national household living standard surveys, using respective absolute poverty lines.

- Proportion of women compared to men in poor households has increased
→ from 108.7 women for every 100 men in 1997, to 117.3 women for every 100 men in 2012

- Upward recent trend in income-based FoP has occurred in context of DECLINING poverty rates for region as a whole (44.8% of LA pop under poverty line in 1997, compared with only 32.7% in 2012)

Gender Poverty Index (GPI)
= $A / B = P_f / P_m$

where

$A = \Sigma$ (females in poor households) / Σ (males in poor households)

$B = \Sigma$ (females in all households) / Σ (males in all households)

The GPI expressed as the number of poor women per 100 poor men and standardises for more women than men in the population.

Non/de-feminisation

Medeiros and Costa, 2006

Countries	Total poverty trends	Feminization of poverty, according to hypothesis	
		Men - Women	Male - Female headed HH
Argentina (92/01)	increased	no (except for P2)*	yes
Bolivia (99/02)	stable	no	no (except for females without children)***
Brazil (83/03)	decreased	no	no
Chile (90/00)	decreased	no	no (except for P0 of females with children)*
Colombia (95/99)	increased	no	no
Costa Rica (90/01)	decreased	no	no (except for female with children)**
Mexico (92/02)	decreased	no (except for P1)*	yes
Venezuela (95/00)	increased	no	no

Source: Authors' calculations based on the respective national household surveys.

* The difference between variations in $P(\alpha)$ is less than 0.01.

** The difference between variations in $P(\alpha)$ reaches at most 0.05.

*** The difference between variations in $P(\alpha)$ reaches at most 0.10.

Note: 'no' stands for a rejection of the feminization of poverty hypothesis and 'yes' for the opposite.

Rejects the idea of a systematic trend towards the feminisation of poverty, Medeiros' and Costa's research at this time indicated that in Latin America the presence of young children was more likely to place households at greater risk of poverty than female household headship. $(FoP = (P_f - P_m) t < (P_f - P_m) t_1)$ where P is the poverty rate ratio (eg $P_f = F \text{ poor} / F \text{ all}$ or $FHH \text{ poor} / FHH \text{ all}$)

But what does the data actually tell us?

Table 4 - Comparison of Gendered Poverty Results Over Time in Selected Latin American Countries

Sources: Adapted from data in Medeiros and Costa (2006: Annex Table A-1), and in ECLAC (2014: Statistical Annex Table 11), based on special tabulations from national household living standard surveys.

Note: * time periods differ.

Country	Year	Medeiros & Costa (2006)				Result	ECLAC (2014)		Agree?	
		Incidence		Difference	Ratio		Year	Poor		Result
		Male	Female	Pf-Pm	GPI			GPI		
Argentina	1992	0.26	0.25	-0.01	96.2		1992	106.9		
	2001	0.41	0.39	-0.02	95.1	De-feminization	2001	106.8	De-feminization Yes	
Bolivia	1999	0.40	0.41	0.01	102.5		1999	105.2		
	2002	0.40	0.40	0.00	100.0	De-feminization	2002	104.8	De-feminization Yes	
Brazil*	1983	0.54	0.54	0.00	100.0		1990	105.4		
	2003	0.40	0.40	0.00	100.0	Neutral	2003	104.6	De-feminization No	
Chile	1990	0.53	0.55	0.02	103.8		1990	107.4		
	2000	0.40	0.40	0.00	100.0	De-feminization	2000	109.1	Feminization No	
Colombia*	1995	0.34	0.34	0.00	100.0		1994	104.1		
	1999	0.40	0.40	0.00	100.0	Neutral	1999	105.0	Feminization No	
Costa Rica	1990	0.51	0.52	0.01	102.0		1990	118.2		
	2001	0.39	0.41	0.02	105.1	Feminization	2001	125.3	Feminization Yes	
Mexico	1992	0.45	0.45	0.00	100.0		1992	99.8		
	2002	0.40	0.40	0.00	100.0	Neutral	2002	107.3	Feminization No	
Venezuela*	1995	0.37	0.39	0.02	105.4		1994	117.0		
	2000	0.39	0.41	0.02	105.1	Neutral	2000	111.3	De-feminization No	

Want to know more about what we don't know?

- Bradshaw, Sarah; Chant, Sylvia and Linneker, Brian (2018) 'Gender, Poverty and Anti-Poverty Policy in Latin America: Cautions and Concerns in a Context of Multiple Feminisations and 'Patriarchal Pushback'', forthcoming in Julie Cupples, Marcela Palomino-Schalsa and Manuel Prieto (eds) The Routledge Handbook of Latin American Development London: Routledge.
- Bradshaw, Sarah; Chant, Sylvia and Linneker, Brian (2018) Challenges and Changes in Gendered Poverty: The Feminization, De-feminization and Re-feminization of Poverty in Latin America, Feminist Economics.
- Bradshaw, Sarah; Sylvia Chant and Brian Linneker (2017) Knowing Gendered Poverty in the Global South: A Protracted Path to Progress?, Spazio Filosofico, Issue 20: 2. <http://www.spaziofilosofico.it/numero-20-poverty/6990/known-gendered-poverty-in-the-global-south-a-protracted-path-to-progress/>.
- Bradshaw, Sarah; Chant, Sylvia and Linneker, Brian (2017) 'Gender and Poverty: What We Know, Don't Know, and Need to Know For Agenda 2030, Gender, Place and Culture, Published online 13 November, 24:12, 1667 - 1688 <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/0966369X.2017.1395821>
- Sarah Bradshaw, Sylvia Chant and Brian Linneker (2017) Myths and Mystifications Around Gendered Poverty: Current Conceptual and Policy Concerns, CROP Poverty Brief, 39, University of Bergen and International Social Science Council - ISSC, December 2017. <http://www.crop.org/CROPNewsEvents/Myths-and-mystifications-around-gendered-poverty-Ccurrent-conceptual-and-policy-concerns.aspx>

Why don't we know more?

- Reliance on aggregate household incomes/ consumption (or per capita calculations)
- FHHs as 'proxy' for all women in gendered poverty comparisons
- No robust or harmonised internationally-comparative database on gendered poverty
- Dearth of panel data, especially over long-term
- Lack of expertise or lack of political will?
- Cost too high or women not high up agenda?
- Don't want data to get in way of assumptions?

Policy assumptions

- FHHs socially non-normative, but policy normative
- As poorest of the poor give a focus to the gendered poverty 'problem'
- 'Can circumvent majority of women and men's 'bad' behaviour (Chant 2003)
- Implicit acceptance of male bad behaviour through policy focus on 'good' women to deliver well-being to children / household
- Women at the service of the policy agenda (Molyneux 2006) = Instrumentalist gender policy

Some 'feminisations' in recent decades

- Feminisation of policy – especially social and anti-poverty policies, family law, human rights
- Feminisation of educational attainment (including higher education)
- Feminisation of employment/labour markets
- Feminisation of politics and protest (formal and informal)
- Feminisation of populations (esp urban)
- Feminisation of household headship (self-reported and actual)
- Feminisation of responsibility and/or obligation (Chant, 2007)
- Feminisation of violence (femicide)

Feminisation of poverty alleviation

- Conditional Cash Transfer programmes (CCTs)
 - *Progres-a-Oportunidades*, Mexico
 - *Bolsa Familia*, Brazil
 - *Red de proteccion social*, Nicaragua
 - Also in Colombia, Honduras, Dominican Republic, and Ecuador
- Reduce poverty now and in the future through cash transfers to women on the condition that they attend workshops, do community work and ensure children reach health and education targets

Feminisation of responsibility

- Policy focus → expansion of the responsibilities of women as conditions → obligation to 'participate'
- Based on 'natural' attributes of women → reinforce don't challenge gender norms
- Make women more time poor as added to existing responsibilities
- Resources not necessarily valued equally to 'earned' (male) income - does not improve power poverty
- Resources are (and expected to be) used for children and household – does not reduce women's asset poverty

How do these poverty alleviation programmes relate to poverty trends?

- *Oportunidades* in Mexico, and *Bolsa Familia* in Brazil widest and most universal coverage of all the CCTs → might be expected to have had an impact on national level data
- In Mexico the priority was building human capital, while the main objective in Brazil was transferring resources to poor households.
- From our data analysis, over time there appears to have been a feminization of income poverty in Mexico, compared to a de-feminization in Brazil.
- This suggests measures that target resources at women with the aim of building human capital of children, does not seem to benefit women in any way, not even through improving their income poverty.

Targeting women is not doing gender

- Fostering 'altruistic' women circumvents challenging men's 'bad' behaviour, delivers resources for the collective good, and constructs what it means to be a 'good' mother (including environment and CCA..)
- Engendering development for efficiency not equality
- Instrumentalist gender poverty

Women at the service of the poverty agenda
(Molyneux 2006)

Feminisation of responsibility and obligation (Chant 2008)

Doing Gender – Doing gendered rights

Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights

Right to decide timing, spacing, number of children

- Right to say no
- Right to enjoy sexual relations
- Right to sexual expression
- Right to decide over own body – abortion

Sexual rights most contested of all 'rights'

Violence Against Women and Girls

- 1 in 3 women at some time in their lives

Violence is -
physical/threat of physical, emotional/ mental, sexual



It's Gender Jim....

Rio+20 outcome document - *'Sexual and reproductive health and the promotion and protection of all human rights in this context'*

MDG Summit's review - *The right to sexual and reproductive health.*

The HLP - *Ensuring sexual and reproductive health and rights*

Sustainable Development Goals
Ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights



....But not as we feminists know it...

A feminist feminization concern: Femicide

- Estimates suggest that over half the countries with very high femicide rates at a world scale are in Latin America (Widmer and Pavesi, 2016).
- Mexico is ranked sixth globally for crimes against women (Waiselfisz, 2015), and husbands, boyfriends, or family members are implicated in at least 60 percent of femicides (UN Women, 2013).
- In 2015 **seven** women on average in Mexico were killed **each day** as a result of GBV, 15 times higher than the world mean

Drivers of femicides

- High generalised violence (legacy)
- Link between urbanisation and inequality
- Urban men may be responding ‘collectively’ to their perceived loss of power through ever more aggressive and public displays of violence (Wilding, 2010).
- Women’s ‘gains’ → crisis of masculinity’?
 - ‘Patriarchy in action’ v ‘Patriarchy in crisis’
(Kandiyoti 2013)
- Supernormal patriarchy (Bradshaw et al 2017)
- Patriarchal ‘pushback’... but against what?
Perception of, or real gains by women?

Development as favouring women or as feminized?

- Current development model has brought economic growth and declining poverty rates (via women)
- Gender inequality continues to exist, including in income poverty but current measures do not allow us to see where, who, and how, let alone why
- Asset and time poverty now being measured
- Power poverty the real issue – how to measure? Is there the will to measure?
- Female heads an important minority and do suffer specific inequalities but neither poorest of poor nor representative of all women, nor powerless
- Non-normative actions of women challenge existing power relations and need to be ‘normalised’ (extension of existing roles) or neutralised (violence)

Gender roles and relations in transition?

- Women's roles have transitioned to include income generation, formal politics etc
- Gendered wellbeing sees transition between poverty types – trade off income/time poverty, power/ asset poverty
- Gender relations more static - voice, mobility, and autonomy remain non-normative characteristics for women
- Lived gendered inequalities of power remain normalised, including violence
- Violence transitioning from individual/intimate to collective/social? To more extreme/femicide

Development in transition

- If development has benefitted from gender inequalities and from exploiting existing gendered roles and identities how can we 'transition' to a development model that benefits those experiencing gendered inequalities of power?
 - We need to know – differences between women as well as between women and men
 - Intersecting inequalities need to be treated as equal importance and considered together to avoid mere trade-offs is all that occurs
 - We need to make gender equality a goal not a means to achieve other goals
 - That means tackling power and patriarchy