



**Gendering Migration: Not for “feminists only”
– and not only in the household**

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Gendering Migration:

Not for “feminists only”—and not only in the household

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A glance at the main journals, and at recent edited volumes published in the United States on the topic of immigration and international migration reveals that basic concepts such as sex, gender, power, privilege, and sexual discrimination only rarely enter the vocabulary or research design of immigration research. This is puzzling. Gender is one of the fundamental social relations anchoring and shaping immigration patterns, and immigration is one of the most powerful forces disrupting and realigning everyday life. This conference paper draws from the introductory essay I wrote for the edited volume Gender and U.S. Immigration: Contemporary Trends (Hondagneu-Sotelo, editor, 2003), and seeks to remedy this absence by showing how gender and immigration social science research has unfolded in the United States. The paper does not focus exclusively on Mexican migration and gender, but instead, offers a panoramic view first of the trajectory of gender and migration research in the U.S., followed by short summaries of research on gender and immigration concerning a myriad of groups (Russian Jews, Salvadorans, Filipinos, etc.). Along the way, I suggest that looking for gender and analyzing gender *only* in the household blinds us to other important gender dynamics that are involved in migration.

The emergence of immigration scholarship and gender studies

During the 1980s and 1990s, the social sciences experienced major transformations, and among the most notable were two separate developments, the growth in feminist-oriented scholarship and immigration research. The establishment of Women’s Studies programs and research derived from the second wave feminist

movement, which emerged in the 1970s to advocate equality for women. Feminist research called attention to the unequal power relations between women and men in society, and illuminated and analyzed the ways in which women's and men's actions, positions and relative privileges in society are socially constructed in ways which tend to favor men. Since then, we have witnessed a shift away from the premise of a unitary notion of "women" or "men" to an increasingly accepted perspective which acknowledges how the multiplicities of masculinities and femininities are interconnected, relational and importantly, enmeshed in relations of class, race and nation. Globalization, immigration, transnationalism are significant sites for contemporary inquiries of gender.

The growth in immigration research derived not from a social movement like feminism, but from the massive increase in literal, human movement across borders during the twentieth century. Today, it is estimated that as many as 150 million people live in nations other than where they were born. Only a small portion of them have come to the United States, although many Americans believe that the whole world has descended on their country. The numbers of U.S. immigrants *have* reached unprecedented numbers—about 32.5 million by 2004—but this constitutes only about 10% of the total U.S. population, a smaller percentage than we saw earlier in the twentieth century. Immigration is certainly nothing new for the U.S.—it is, after all, foundational to the national narrative—but the resurgence of immigration during the last three decades has taken many Americans by surprise. Prompted by global restructuring and U.S. post-WWII military, political and economic involvement throughout Asia, the Caribbean and Latin America, and facilitated by the 1965 McCarran-Walter Immigration Act, which erased national origin quotas which had previously excluded Asians, U.S. immigration picked up in the 1970s and shows few signs of diminishing.

In the 1980s and 1990s, immigration to the United States from Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean increased dramatically. These contemporary immigrants are a diverse lot. Among them are refugees, and preliterate peasants as well as urbane, highly educated professionals and entrepreneurs. Although a fairly constant barrage of restrictionist, nativist, and blatantly xenophobic campaigns and legislation has raised tremendous obstacles to these newcomers, the number of legal permanent residents—those who can be legally admitted to live and work in the U.S.—has steadily increased in

the 1990s. Nearly one million immigrants are now granted legal permanent residency status each year. Immigrants and their children today constitute about one fifth of the U.S. population, and the percentages are much higher in cities such as Los Angeles, New York, and Miami, where immigrants concentrate.

Different dimensions of immigrant social life are threaded by the dynamics of gender, and this volume exposes some of the complex ways in which these threads are woven. The chapters in the book, Gender and U.S. Immigration, cover a range of topics, including the way gender informs the sexual practices and values among immigrant parents and their adolescent daughters, transnational political group participation, household divisions of labor, naturalization, and even how we define childhood. Readers of the volume will gain insight into the lives of immigrants as diverse as affluent, cosmopolitan Indian Hindu professionals, and relatively poor, undocumented, and modestly schooled manual workers from El Salvador and Mexico. All of the contributors to these chapters recognize that gender does not exist in a vacuum, but emerges together with particular matrices of race relations, nation, occupational incorporation, and socio-economic class locations, and the analyses reflect nuances of intersectionality.

Distinct approaches and areas of concern, which correspond to different stages of development, have characterized the gender and immigration scholarship. While the periodization is not nearly as linear as I present it below, glancing back at these legacies will allow us to better situate the contemporary research on gender and immigration.

First Stage: Remedying the Exclusion of Women in Research

The first stage of feminist scholarship emerged in the 1970s and early 1980s, and might be labeled "women and migration." This early phase of research sought to remedy the exclusion of women subjects from immigration research, and to counter sexist as well as androcentric biases. It seems inconceivable to us today, but several very highly regarded immigration studies had relied entirely on survey or interview responses from men only, but based on this, made claims purported to be representative of the entire immigrant population. In some instances, men were asked to report for their wives and female kin. In other projects, for example, women were unproblematically assumed to automatically follow male migrants as "associational" or dependent migrants, and were

often portrayed as somehow detached or irrelevant to the labor force. These premises were usually unfounded.ⁱ The first stage of research thus set about the task of actually taking women into account. As modest as this first stage project seems to us today, it was met in many corners with casual indifference, and sometimes with blatant, vitriolic hostility.ⁱⁱ

Given the long-standing omission of women from migration studies, an important first step involved designing and writing women into the research picture. In retrospect, this stage is sometimes retrospectively seen as consisting of a simplistic “add and stir” approach, whereby women were “added” as a variable and measured with regard to, say, education and labor market participation, and then simply compared with migrant men’s patterns. This approach worked well in quantitative studies which sought to compare, say, immigrant women’s and men’s earnings. This type of approach, however, fails to acknowledge that gender is fundamentally about power. Gender informs different sets of social relations which organize immigration and social institutions (e.g., family, labor markets, etc.) in both immigrants’ place of origin and place of destination.

Other research projects of this era focused exclusively on migrant women. This prompted several problems, among them, the tendency to produce skewed “women only” portraits of immigration experiences. This approach characterized many historical monographs. Commenting on this trend inⁱⁱⁱ the introduction to an edited volume of multidisciplinary essays on immigrant women, historian Donna Gabaccia observed that “the numbers of volumes exploring immigrant women separately from men now exceeds the volumes that successfully integrate women into general accounts”.¹ Paradoxically, this approach further marginalized immigrant women into a segregated subfield, separate from major social dynamics of immigration.

Equally as problematic, as Cynthia Cranford and I have pointed out elsewhere (1999), both “add and stir” and “women only” efforts were often mired in some variant of sex role theory. In this view, women’s migration is explained with respect to “sex role constraint,” generally understood to be a set of stable, free-standing institutional practices and values, rather than as a fluid and mutable system which intersects with other social institutions. In the sex role paradigm, separate spheres of public and private

reign, and men's and women's activities are seen as complementary and functional, while the manner in which these are relational, contested and negotiated, and imbued with power, privilege and subordination is glossed over.

In retrospect, we can see that the immigrant "women only" and "add and stir" approach limits our understanding of how gender as a social system shapes immigration processes for all immigrants, men and women. Only women, not migrant men, are marked as "gendered," and institutions with which they interact—family, education, and employment, etc.—are presumed to be gender neutral. The preoccupation with writing women into migration research and theory stifled theorizing about the ways in which constructions of femininities and masculinities organize migration and migration outcomes

A different and exciting body of feminist migration research appeared in the early-to-mid 1980s, and although not centered on U.S.-bound migration, it has left a significant impact on the field. It focused on the recruitment of poor, young, mostly unmarried women from peasant or agrarian backgrounds for wage work in the new export processing plants owned by multinational firms in the Caribbean, along the U.S.-Mexico border and Asia. These studies alerted us to the linkages between deindustrialization in the U.S. and emergence of new "feminized" global assembly line. Case studies from around the globe explored the relationship between young women workers' migration, the shifting gender and generational dynamics in their family relations, and their incorporation into new regimes of production and consumption.^{iv}

In a key article published in a 1984 special issue on "Women and Migration" in the International Migration Review, Saskia Sassen posited a relationship between internal rural-urban migration of young women to work in export manufacturing and agriculture in the Third World, and the increasing labor migration of women from these countries to the United States. Both types of female migrations, Sassen suggests, are driven by the same dynamics of corporate globalization: the intensification of profit and the reliance on low-wage work performed by disenfranchised Third World women. This moment marks a significant switch from "women only" and "sex role constraints" individualistic approach to one which looks more broadly at how gender is incorporated into corporate globalization strategies.

Second Stage: From "Women and Migration" to "Gender and Migration"

A distinctive second phase of research emerged in the late 1980s and early 1990s, displacing an exclusive focus on women with recognition of gender as a set of social practices shaping and shaped by immigration. Prompted in part by the disruption of the universal category "women" in feminist scholarship, by heightened awareness of the intersectionality of race, class and gender relations, by the observation that men possess, display and enact a variety of masculinities, and by the recognition of the fluidity of gender relations, this research focused on two aspects: the gendering of migration patterns *and* on the way migration reconfigures new systems of gender inequality for women and men.

Among this crop of gender and migration studies are Sherri Grasmuck and Patricia Pessar's study of Dominican migration to New York City, much of which is reported in the book Between Two Islands: Dominican International Migration (University of California Press 1991), Nazli Kibria's Family Tighrope: The Changing Lives of Vietnamese Americans (Princeton University Press, 1993), and my own research on Mexican undocumented migration to California, reported in Gendered Transitions: Mexican Experiences of Immigration (1994). All of these studies take as their launching point a critique of "household strategies," a model explicitly and implicitly used by many migration studies of that period. The critiques put forth in these three books, informed and driven by feminist insights, particularly those from Third World contexts, counter the image of a unitary household undivided by gender and generational hierarchies of power, authority and resources.^v Families and immigrant social networks, these studies underscore, are highly gendered institutions. In this body of research, gender relations are seen through a lens which highlights conflict, the result of a strong feminist lens on the look out for evidence of patriarchy and male domination *and* methodological reliance on interviews and ethnography. These methods, as both Prema Kurien and Patricia Pessar note in their essays in this volume,

tend to throw into relief gender conflicts and negotiations which might appear to be uncontested when survey methods are used.

The second stage research is also notable for drawing attention to the ways in which men's lives are constrained and enabled by gender, and also the ways in which immigrant gender relations become more egalitarian through the processes of migration. This constitutes the "migration and emancipation" studies which Pessar soberly reassesses in chapter three of Gender and U.S. Immigration (2003). Equally as problematic as some of the problems which Pessar points to is the extent to which these empowerment studies were anchored by the idea that immigrant women's wages and jobs necessarily lead to gender equality in families and households. Several of the essays in the Gender and U.S. Immigration book (Menjívar, Kurien, Espiritu) continue this focus on the family-work nexus, but they bring considerably more sophistication and attention to other dimensions besides wages and family.

Identifying and naming distinctively gendered orientations to settlement—that is, how immigrant women and men feel about staying in the United States, and how these preferences derive from alterations to immigrant gender relations—is another accomplishment of second stage research. Immigrant women's enhanced social status (won variously through jobs, social network resources or new interactions with social institutions) often goes hand in hand with immigrant men's loss of public and domestic status. In the United States, immigrant men may for the first time in their lives occupy subordinate positions in class, racial and citizenship hierarchies. This prompts many of them to express nostalgia and longings to return to their country of origin. Several of the essays in the Gender and U.S. Immigration volume use this analysis of gendered settlement outcomes and orientations to explain new terrain, such as gendered arenas as diverse as naturalization strategies (Gilbertson and Singer), participation in transnational political associations (Goldring), and family-work intersections among Jewish immigrants from different nation-states (Gold).

One of the weaknesses of the way many of the second stage research projects were conducted is the implication that gender resides almost exclusively in meso-level social institutions, such as family, households, community institutions or social networks. In retrospect, this meso-focused approach seems myopic and faulty, and my own work

exemplifies this oversight. In Gendered Transitions, I underlined the extent to which Mexican migration is gendered by focusing on family relations and networks. The book argues that while the origins of undocumented Mexican migration lie in the political and economic transformations within the United States and Mexico, and importantly, in the linkages established between the two countries, it is gender operating at the family and community levels which shapes distinctively gendered patterns of migration. In some families, for example, daughters and wives may not be accorded permission or family resources with which to migrate, but they sometimes find ways to circumvent or alter these “patriarchal constraints.”

The problem with this perspective is that not only families and communities are gendered, but so are other institutions, including both informal and programmatic labor recruitment efforts, as Terry Repak (1995) has emphasized. We live in a society where occupational sex segregation stubbornly prevails in the labor force, and consequently, this shapes labor demand and migration. This is particularly urgent today, as immigrant women from around the world migrate to many post-industrial societies for work as nurses, nannies, cleaners and sex workers. Particular types of societies create particularly gendered labor demands. This is an important issue to consider, but work and employment were generally only considered by second stage researchers in so far as women’s earnings or job schedules affect gender relations in families and households. Just because we can “see” gender most saliently in face-to-face institutions such as families and households does not mean that it is not critical to the constitution of other institutions and processes.

In our haste to analyze how everyday relationships and institutions enable or constrain migration, other arenas received short shrift. Among these are the gendered and racialized nature of labor markets in the nations of origin and destination, and ways these are conditioned by globalization, cultural change and economic restructuring. Similarly, the privileging of men, marriage and normative heterosexuality in immigration legislation has scarcely received scholarly attention. Racial formation, Michael Omi and Howard Winant’s (1994) conceptualization of how race relations are simultaneously shaped by historical and social processes *and* built into social institutions has invigorated

race relations research. Similarly, we may begin to think of this next stage of research as gender formation.

To reiterate, a primary weakness of the second stage research is that it allocated too much attention to the level of family and household, suggesting that gender is somehow enclosed within the domestic arena. Consequently, many other important arenas and institutions--jobs, work places, and labor demand, notions of citizenship and changing immigration policy, public opinion, immigration and refugee policies, state agencies, sites of consumption, media, and the Border Patrol, to name a few--were ignored by feminist research and appeared then as though they were devoid of gender.

Third Stage: Gender as a Constitutive Element of Migration

The third stage of feminist scholarship in immigration research is now emerging, and here the emphasis is on looking at gender as a key, constitutive element of immigration. In this current phase, research is beginning to look at the extent to which gender permeates a variety of practices, identities and institutions implicated in immigration. Here, patterns of labor incorporation, globalization, religious practice and values, ethnic enclave businesses, citizenship, sexuality and ethnic identity are interrogated in ways that reveal how gender is incorporated into a myriad of daily operations and institutional political and economic structures. As the collection of essays show, gender organizes a number of immigrant practices, beliefs and institutions.

While most of the gender-inflected research continues to be produced by female scholars, men, as the chapters in this volume by Tyner and Gold show, are making important contributions as well. Among the studies looking at community political mobilization by immigrants is research conducted by Michael Jones-Correa. Focusing on Latino immigrant political identity and practice in New York City, and building on the research of earlier feminist inquiries which suggests that as immigrant men lose status in the United States, they shift their orientations to their home countries and to the project of return migration, Jones-Correa (1998) reveals that immigrant women are more likely to participate in community organizations which interface with U.S. institutions than are immigrant men. Looking at the other side of this coin, researcher Luin Goldring (this volume) has studied the recently emergent and now quite powerful transnational Mexican

hometown associations, organizations formed by Mexican immigrants in the United States which typically raise funds in the U.S. to assist with community development projects "back home." These can be read, Goldring persuasively suggests, as efforts which allow immigrant men to claim social status denied to them in the new society. In these transmigrant organizations, which span nation-state borders, men find a privileged arena of action, enhancing their gender status. Women participate in these associations as beauty pageant contestants or as men's helpers, and although they remain absent from active leadership or decision-making participation in the transnational associations, they practice what Goldring calls "substantive social citizenship" in community organizations in the United States.

Gender and Employment

The study of work continues to occupy a good deal of space in immigration studies—work, is after all, the primary reason immigrants come to the U.S.—and in the Gender and U.S. Immigration book, several of chapters tackle familiar questions of gender and employment. They do so, however, with an eclectic bag of approaches. Using insights from political geography, James Tyner analyzes Filipino international migration to the United States. The Philippine government channels the movement of Filipino women and men to multiple sites around the world. Filipinos, Tyner informs us, now go to a whopping 130 countries, *and nearly all of these flows reveal a distinctive sex composition*. Filipino men have been recruited primarily for construction jobs in the Middle East ("men's jobs") while Filipina women have been routed into "women's" jobs as nurses and domestic workers throughout Asia, the Middle East, Europe, Canada and the United States.

What remains particularly striking is that post-1965 U.S.-bound Filipino migration appears to be, comparatively speaking, an anomaly. It occurs outside the institutionalized labor contract system, it consists primarily of skilled technicians and nurses rather than manual laborers, and it includes women *and* men, unlike many of the other more sex-segregated Filipino migration flows. The United States does not solicit sex-segregated Filipino migration, due to the diversity of U.S. labor demand and due to

the liberalization of immigration policies, which have emphasized since 1965 family reunification and skilled professional status as criteria for legal permanent residence.

Asian immigrant women have recorded the highest labor force participation rates among women in the United States, and Yen Le Espiritu addresses the familiar question of how this has affected gender relations in immigrant families. Her starting premise is that occupational and socio-economic heterogeneity, together with racial subordination, determine outcomes. Espiritu situates her analysis in a triadic taxonomy of Asian immigrant occupational structure: salaried professionals, self-employed entrepreneurs, and wage laborers. Through an exhaustive review of the literature, Espiritu finds that each occupational group exhibits distinctive gender dynamics. Among Asian immigrant professionals, there seems to be evidence that immigrant women's occupational status as professionals is more transferable to the U.S. than is men's. In fact, in some instances women's job status as professionals has allowed them to petition for their husbands and families to legally immigrate to the U.S. The men are thus dependent on their wives to obtain legal permanent residency status. These resources--legal status and professional job status--seem to translate into more equality in the home for these women. The situation is very different for Asian immigrant women who may be equally as class privileged, but who remain locked in family businesses, where they may work in isolation and remain mired in dependency. Espiritu's work reminds of us of the importance of nuanced analyses of class and occupation.

Asking similar questions about a diverse group of Salvadoran and Guatemalan immigrant women in California, Cecilia Menjivar observes that California's urban and suburban labor markets tend to favor Central American women over men. Central American women find jobs faster, work more hours, and appear to earn, on average, more than their Central American male partners do in California. Yet contrary to what we might expect using a relative resources gauge, this apparent labor market advantage does not automatically or uniformly lead to more egalitarian relations in the family. In fact, women's employment advantage may inflame rather than quell family tensions and household inequalities.

Going beyond simple wage differentials to pursue her analysis, Menjivar finds that cultural-ethnic legacies and ideals about gender and family, marriage patterns, and

the sex-segregated venues of employment shape gender outcomes. The approach in previous studies has usually treated gender relations in the home country as monolithic, but Menjivar's acknowledges important distinctions, in this case between mestizo and indigenous cultures. Not content to simply acknowledge employment, Menjivar considers how the context of employment shapes new gender ideals and practices. While many of the Central American women, for example, work in private domestic work and bring home new ideals of husbands and wives sharing cooking and child rearing, the men tend to work with other Latino men and find support for maintaining their old ways of life. New ideals of companionate marriage and household divisions of labor may emerge together.^{vi}

In the final chapter in this section of the book, sociologist Steve Gold engages the literature on gendered settlement preferences. He emphasizes the importance of considering immigrants' status, and employment opportunities in the United States with what they might conceivably return to in their countries of origin. He compares two groups of white, middle class, well-educated immigrants: Israeli Jewish and Russian Jewish immigrants. While both groups are fairly secular, their religious-ethnic identity as Jews remains an important one to them. Here, the intersection of nation, gender, and ethnicity is key, as Russian Jews had their religious and cultural identities suppressed and disparaged in the former USSR, while the Israeli Jews' ethnic identities were openly celebrated as key to the nation of Israel. When they come to the United States, Israeli Jewish men find that they are no longer integral to the nation, but they seem willing to accept a demoted ethnic status in return for enhanced economic opportunities in the U.S. By contrast, Israeli Jewish women often wish to return because they miss access to women's networks and the stronger welfare state resources. What these immigrant women and men left back home proves to be crucial in their assessments of life in the United States.

Engendering Racial and Ethnic Identities

Most of the recent immigration research has focused on immigrant groups that are socio-economically disadvantaged, those who have entered as labor migrants or political refugees. Consequently, we know little about gender relations among highly educated

professional and entrepreneurial immigrants who came to the United States in significant numbers in the 1970s and 1980s. The scholarship of Prema Kurien fills this lacunae and underlines the mutually constitutive features of ethnicity, religion and gender among Hindu Indian immigrant professionals in Southern California.

Hindu Indian immigrants generally live in suburban locations, and many of them have formed new Hindu religious associations. Kurien assesses gender relations among these groups, but not content to confine her analysis to the household or family level, she also assesses gender in these newly invented Hindu congregations, and in larger pan-Indian immigrant organizations. At the level of family and congregations, Kurien finds that the Indian immigrant women make tremendous strides toward equality; husbands do more housework than they did in India, and in the congregations, women actively reshape the culture in ways that reflects their own enhanced status. These forward strides, however, are reduced to backward steps in the large pan-Indian organizations, where men occupy the leadership positions, and under racist and assimilationist pressures, seek to present a model-minority countenance to Americans. At this level, the women may find themselves placed in more retrograde positions than they did in India. Kurien reminds us that in the reconfiguration of gender relations, diverse levels of analysis and ethnicity are intertwined with distinct outcomes.

Nancy Lopez moves down the generational scale to consider the educational and occupational outcomes for second generation Caribbean young adults. Research activity on the new second generation has boomed into a new cottage industry, and the concept of “segmented assimilation,” introduced by Alejandro Portes and Min Zhou (1993) emphasizes that there is no singular outcome. Many scholars have recently grappled with the finding that across the board, immigrant girls, like girls in general, are obtaining higher levels of education than their brothers. Several commentators have suggested these outcomes reflect “gendered pathways”.^{vii} The idea here is that patriarchal notions that girls require greater protection, and greater constraints on spatial mobility and curfews in order to maintain virtue, virginity and reputation meshes with educational systems which reward compliance and obedience, traits associated with femininity. Meanwhile, immigrant parents often give boys freer reign and for immigrant boys of

color, experiences of racism may fuel a masculinist “oppositional culture” where street values, rather than school values, predominate.^{viii}

In her essay, Nancy Lopez identifies distinctively gendered experiences with racism, particularly in the world of work. Rather than identifying oppositional culture as the key culprit of poor educational outcomes among young second generation youth, she examines everyday experiences with racism in mostly sex-segregated occupations. Brilliantly reversing the traditional school-work trajectory, she shows that employment experiences, inflected by race and gender, wind up either motivating or de-motivating students to pursue higher education. For some Caribbean second generation youth, particularly the young men phenotypically identified as black, the consequences are particularly harsh and they are thus most likely to suffer second generation decline. Young women are not spared some of the most insidious forms of racial exclusion and stereotyping; indeed, they endure grotesque sexist and racist comments made directly to them in their jobs. But the office jobs where they are likely to be incorporated offer them greater opportunities and financial returns to education. Hence, they are more motivated to pursue education beyond high school. The consequences of racial oppression and employment thus appear to most severely disadvantage and demoralize young men, particularly those perceived as black.

In the subsequent chapter, Maura Toro-Morn and Marixsa Alicea also focus on young adults through their interview research with the children and grandchildren of Puerto Ricans who have come to Chicago and New York City. Puerto Ricans are not classic immigrants, as their nation and culture have been formally colonized by the United States since 1898. The labor migration of Puerto Ricans to the U.S. mainland occurs in this context, and inspired by cultural studies, Toro-Morn and Alicea explore how Puerto Ricans born and raised in the U.S. see themselves in relation to Puerto Rico. When the authors asked these young Puerto Ricans, born and raised in the U.S., how they imagine “home,” the responses indicated that their learned notions of home have deeply shaped gender and identities. Puerto Rican parents disciplined their children in the U.S. by constantly invoking the idea that Puerto Rico is fixed, static, pristine cultural space, one with different rules for boys and girls. For adolescent girls, adhering to this notion of authenticity accentuates gender oppression.

Gender, Generation and Migration

Many new immigrants perceive the United States to be a dangerous and undesirable place to raise a family, one where their children will be exposed to drugs, violence, excessive consumerism, and social norms which contest parental authority. The innovative chapters in this section focus on generational relations between immigrant parents and their children, examining how parents and their children negotiate new social challenges with cultural integrity. This section includes one chapter on gendered and changing notions of childhood in transnational contexts, and two others which explore, respectively, how two deeply Catholic immigrant groups, Mexican and Filipino immigrants, approach sexuality—which some of them perceived as a intensified “danger”—among their adolescent daughters. Sexuality is fundamental to structuring gender inequality, but the gender and migration literature, with few exceptions, has shied away from this topic.

In the first essay, Gloria Gonzalez-Lopez uses sociological insights and her background working as a family therapist to explore the content of what Mexican immigrant mothers teach their daughters about virginity and sexuality in Los Angeles. Contrary to what she had expected to find in her interviews with twenty women from Mexico City and twenty from the rural state of Jalisco, Mexico, Mexican immigrant women do not blindly follow the Catholic Church’s well-known, sexually repressive teachings, which mandate premarital sexual abstinence and virginity for their daughters. More important in informing their views than Catholicism, which the Mexican immigrant women tended to see as separate from their private lives, were their immigration experiences and the regional cultures from which they originate. Mexican immigrant women from cosmopolitan, urban Mexico City were more open to teaching their daughters about birth control and sexual intimacy than were immigrant women from the heart of rural Jalisco, a western state widely known in Mexico for its unremitting masculinist culture of *charros* (rodeo cowboys), tequila and the bride kidnapping. The regional patriarchies, or “*machismos regionales*” which prevail in these two locales are not, however, the only influences informing Mexican immigrant women’s sexual values and practices. Mexican mothers want their daughters to remain virgins only to the extent

to which it may enhance their daughters' life opportunities; they soon realize that virginity has less salient currency in Los Angeles than it did in Mexico.

The following chapter, by Yen Le Espiritu also focuses on the regulation of young women's sexuality. Based on interviews conducted with Filipino American parents and children, she finds that Filipino immigrant parents do impose strong expectations and restrictions on their adolescent daughters' sexuality and dating practices. They do so, she argues, not acting out of some scripted cultural legacy, but rather in reaction to the experience of colonialism, Americanization of their nation, and their experience of racism in the United States. "Racialized immigrants," Espiritu argues, "claim through gender the power denied them through racism." Policing their daughters bodies and restricting their spatial mobility is one of the few venues through which racially subordinated groups can reconstruct white Americans as inferior and themselves as superior. Espiritu shows that immigrant parents do this not by invoking the simplistic madonna/whore dichotomy, but rather by invoking notions of cultural-ethnic and national authenticity. Filipinas, the parents tell their daughters, do not act with the sexual freedom and autonomy of white American girls. This exacts a deep emotional cost on the daughters, for whom sexual transgressions or even modest outings with friends signify not only gender and generational contestations, but larger betrayals of race, nation and culture.

The final chapter in this section of the book, based on team research in multiple immigrant communities conducted by Barrie Thorne, Marjorie Faulstich Orellana, Wan Shun Eva Lam, and Anna Chee, moves further down the age ladder to where scholars of contemporary immigration have never tread. In this path-breaking work, the authors examine immigrant children—more correctly constructions of childhood—in various transnational contexts, analyzing how culture, age and gender mesh together. The field research for this chapter examines the diverse experiences of Central American and Korean children who mostly reside in Los Angeles' Pico Union and Korea Town neighborhoods, and Cantonese, Laotian, and Yemeni children in Oakland. I say "mostly reside" because many of these children travel back to their home countries, some to be disciplined, others to learn the home culture, and others to simply visit relatives. Even

those children who are not physically moving across nation-states and cultures may be exposed to very radically different social fields.

Thorne and her colleagues underline for us that basic concepts such as “growing up” and “raising children” imply movement to adulthood, and a set of practices which must be done *to* children to transform them into adults. What happens, they ask, when parents are raising children in transnational contexts and must negotiate conflicting ideals? There are no uniform patterns, but two central guiding principles, sure to inspire and frame future research, are offered: 1) Legal constructions of childhood and adulthood vary, and transnational families must negotiate these; and 2) Gendered constructions of boyhood and girlhood vary within transnational sites. As the authors note, some immigrant parents have expectations (adult-like responsibilities, including work in family businesses or caring for younger siblings) which conflict with American late-20th century notions of childhood, which tend to emphasize sentimentality, play and educational development. These too are gendered.

Gender, Citizenship and the Transnational

Transnationalism, which emphasizes the ongoing attachments that immigrants maintain with people and institutions in their places of origin, has seriously challenged conventional ideas about immigrants and immigration. Rather than viewing immigration as a linear, one-way process which requires new immigrants to sever all connections with the old country, scholars inspired by transnational approaches examine how people stay connected and often form a cohesive community across nation-state borders. This final section of the book brings together four chapters which consider the place of gender in transnational practices and institutions.

In the first chapter, Sarah Mahler draws on years of research in Salvadoran immigrant communities in suburban Long Island to ask questions about how a particular rural area of El Salvador has been affected by out-migration and the creation of new transnational communities. Gender relations are malleable to all kinds of processes, and Mahler shows how local, national and transnational processes intersect to shape immigrant social networks and gender ideals for children and youth. At the other end of the generational spectrum, Mahler investigates the relatively new and quintessentially

transnational occupation of cross-border couriers. These are self-employed entrepreneurs who travel back and forth across international borders to deliver remittances (the largest source of foreign exchange for El Salvador), letters, parcels and appliances. While the work is risky, older women are preferred in this occupation because they are seen as trustworthy and capable of easing people's worries. In this instance, conceptions of womanhood that harken to Victorian ideals of women's moral superiority seem to give women an edge.

Ties and loyalties to the "old country" are an enduring feature of immigration, but immigrant women and men may express these loyalties in different ways. Immigrants from countries such as the Dominican Republic, Colombia and Mexico have formed thousands of hometown associations in the United States. These are social and civic clubs which allow migrants living in the United States to sponsor parties, engage in collective fundraising for public works projects in their town of origin, and sometimes, to influence political campaigns in the country of origin. Based on an examination of Mexican Hometown Associations from Zacatecas, Mexico in Los Angeles, California, Luin Goldring discovers that it is primarily men who prevail in all of the leadership positions. In a provocative and compellingly rendered argument, Goldring argues that the Mexican Hometown Associations constitute a unique site for a "masculine gendered project," one which allows Mexican immigrant men—particularly those with sufficient resources--to recoup the status and privilege they lost through migration.

In the final chapter, Greta Gilbertson and Audrey Singer interrogate a little researched but key legal passage for many immigrants, naturalization. The pursuit of U.S. citizenship intensified among many Latino immigrant groups during the highly xenophobic climate of the 1990s. Contrary to the image of naturalization as the ultimate form of assimilation, many immigrants in California were simply scared into becoming U.S. citizens by California's 1994 passage of Proposition 187—which promised to deny public health care and public education to the children of undocumented immigrants. While that proposition ultimately proved unconstitutional, it opened the doors to far more draconian federal legislation. The 1996 Illegal Immigrant Refugee and Immigration Responsibility Act (IIRIRA--a complex piece of legislation dubbed the most draconian immigration law passed in late twentieth century United States--severely disenfranchised

legal permanent residents, and was signed into effect the same year as the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act. In their chapter, Gilbertson and Singer explore how Dominican immigrant women and men responded to these pressures. Sensitive to life course stages, they provide a close-up examination of multiple orientations in one Dominican transnational family that spans five generations and 65 members. Some of the men, they find, see acquisition of U.S. citizenship as a way to advance their return to the Dominican Republic, thereby uncoupling intention of residency and state citizenship, while many of the women pursue naturalization to further the project of settlement and connection with their children and grandchildren.

All of the chapters in this book clearly move far beyond “add and stir” or “immigrant women only” approaches. They also stretch us well-beyond the earlier “empowerment studies,” which tended to couch gender changes in “either-or” terms, and they direct the analysis beyond household and family to consider other institutions. The list of new themes interrogated in this book—from transnational hometown associations, responses to immigration laws, childhood and sexuality—show that there is a vast frontier begging for analysis of gender and immigration. No one can predict what life will be like in the twenty-first century, but both the dimensions of U.S.-bound immigration and the rapid-fire changes and contestations over what is deemed appropriate for women and men suggest that there is no shortage of material for students and scholars of gender and immigration.

ⁱ The idea that women are necessarily migrant followers is informed largely by the history of the guest worker programs in Europe, and the Bracero contract labor program in the United States. Women’s agency was assumed to be absent. In both instances, the

intention was to recruit male immigrant labor for a finite, temporary period of time, but instead, ties of permanent family settlement emerged after women kin migrated.

ⁱⁱ As modest as this first stage project seems to us today, some commentators responded with blatant, vitriolic hostility. British Anthropologist Anthony Leeds (1976), for example, opined that "the category of 'women' seems to me a rhetorical one, not one which has (or can be proved to have) generic scientific utility" and he decried this focus as "individualistic, reductionist, and motivational." Leeds argued that focusing on migrant women would deflect scholarly attention away from structural processes of capitalist labor exploitation. That in itself is telling, as it encodes the assumption that women do not act in economic or structural contexts, and that women are somehow cloistered and sheltered from capitalist institutions.

^{iv} See Arizpe and Aranda, 1981; Fernandez-Kelly, 1983; Wolf 1992.

^{vi} The rise of new ideals of companionate marriage and marital intimacy among Mexican immigrants has been documented by Jennifer Hirsch (2000).

^{vii} Waldinger and Perlmann 1998:12.

^{viii} Waters 1999; Foner 2000.

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