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Toward a Vision of Sexual and Economic Justice
Thought Paper

Sexual and Economic Justice Preparatory Questions

1. From your activist and/or academic position, what are the most pressing concerns surrounding the intersection of economic and sexual justice? With respect to which concrete issues does that intersection appear most relevant?

More and more economic policies that impact negatively on the right and ability for women to self determine and actualise are being elaborated. Most of these present the supper power, USA as the ideal model of economy and good governance. We have seen this glaringly in the past eight years where the economic super power suddenly cuts down funding for population and development agencies as a result of the re-activation of the gag rule causing these agencies to cut down on the support they gave developing countries to carry out intervention programmes addressing sexual and reproductive rights needs. This stance influenced the pattern of negotiations and the weak outcome documents that were obtained from the review processes marking 5 and 10 years of the implementation of the IPD POA, FWCW PFA blackmailing feminist and women's human rights activists not to negotiate strong language on sexual and reproductive rights for the fear of re-opening the consensus documents. He same staunt was played by the economic model during the review of the MDGs (the World Summit) where a lot of background work had gone into enriching the MDGs with a section on sexual rights.

Similarly, was the PEPFAR policy that stipulated conditions for funding for HIV/AIDS programming that are discriminatory to certain groups of people, especially those whose sexualities do not conform to the heteronormative models. This policy also shifted attention away from primary prevention that had developed from ABC methods of prevention to a more holistic behavioural change communication to abstinence only messages and management interventions which address only a selected population in a selected phase of their lives - women who attend antenatal clinic. In Nigeria, this is less than 50% of pregnant women.

The same economic models suggested poverty eradication without taking into account the diversity in the different nation states to which they sold the model. These have not yielded positive results apart from strengthening the socio-economic apparatus that has further impoverished women and perpetuated their low status. In my context this plays out in many ways including the inability of women to seek healthcare services without the permission of their husbands, women lacking a say on the sexual behaviour of their male partners even where

this puts them at risk of contracting the HIV, lack of power to decide for themselves when and who to marry, seeking help to end domestic violence, etc.

In response to the economic model has been a wave of fundamentalisms which repress women's sexual rights especially as an element of holiness and effectiveness. In Nigeria for instance, we woke up into the new millennium, 2000, with 12 out of 26 states in northern Nigeria declaring a much broader shari'a law than there was in the penal code. This led to the sentencing of women to death by stoning or flogging (100 lashes of the cane in a public place) for alleged adultery while the male partner was not found guilty.

These have further pushed women behind in participation in development efforts further subjugating them to the patriarchal system.

The intersections lie in the self determination of women, the right to personal integrity and bodily integrity.

2. What are the possibilities for collaboration between and among social movements with respect to global economic and sexual justice?

Recently, the need to build bridges across movements has been articulated in the erotic justice discourse. This is because rights are inalienable. Social movements can therefore collaborate to conduct advocacy, shape policies and set pace in designing intervention projects that address and or respond to real needs bordering on erotic justice. Those who specialize in trade can articulate sexual rights needs and link them to the economic issues being discussed, making policy makers aware of the intersections, the adverse impact of globalization as it is today, the benefits of making erotic justice a key determinant of policy intervention projects. For instance, sexual rights activists and those interested in economics can participate in HIV dialogues, and the latter can be part of World Trade dialogues, etc.

3. How do we think through sexual justice in intersectional form – attentive to structurally produced differences of gender, race, class, and able to produce the political responses these differences require?

We can think through this by ensuring that every discourse is participatory bringing into the process allies we ordinarily would have left out and ensuring that marginalized voices and invisible are brought on board and that their participation is fully recognized. We need to open up more to one another and listen to one another and identify areas of collaboration in those spaces.

4. What are the obstacles, both in political activism and conceptual representations, to responding effectively to sexual and economic injustice? What keeps activists and scholars from approaching sexual and economic justice as co-constitutive?

Most of us are products of socialisation that has segmented us and boxed up the parts that make us separately. This mode of socialization has defined and given meaning to each segment that makes the individual, determining what value each part of us has as individuals and as groups. The institutions that socialize us have determined what about us should be celebrated, what parts should be criminalized, what part of us should be trivialised. The erotic part of us has been denied as taboo, shame, insignificant, and this has played a role in how we approach sexual and economic justice as co-constitutive. Economy has been seen as “dough”, key to survival, while “orgasms” are luxury, entertainment, and in some groups, criminal. That is the politics of power/desire and pleasure.

5. What initiatives can we invoke that consider sex work from the interlinked perspectives of sexual and economic justice, and how can these help us re-think the broader debate between global markets and intimacies, love and sex?

We can hold inter-sectional dialogues. These fora will provide the space for activist, and other stakeholders from all the sectors, including manufacturers of sex toys and aids, the pornographic industry, sex workers, economists, etc, to dialogue from the various perspectives and also make linkages and tease out intersections between global economy and erotic justice.

6. How is the intersection between sexual and economic injustice shaped by war and militarization?
 - a) A lot of resources are diverted for armaments that could have been used to secure the sexual rights and health of a people
 - b) There is a lot of sexual violence during conflicts and is in most instances an additional weapon of war

These further impoverish the people and create more avenue for sexual rights violations, and it is a vicious cycle.

7. HIV/AIDS scholarship and activism is another privileged site within which to interrogate the connections between sexual and economic justice, structural inequality and intimate desire. What are the possibilities in *this* arena for forging a model of global justice in its full, sexual and economic, complexity? What are the limitations?

There is a lot of funding for HIV/AIDS programming and bi-annual international conferences on AIDS. This is an opportunity to bring activists from diverse sectors to discuss this. The HIV/AIDS situation itself provides an opportunity to study these intersections because the commonest mode of transmission is through sexual activity. Now, the mode of prevention and management have great economic implications as seen in the production and marketing of condoms, micro-biocides, ant-retroviral drugs, the rights implication in sexual

behaviour and choices, including cosmetics, and services such as surgeries (trans-sexuals).

8. What scale is helpful to you as you approach these questions? The national? The global? The regional? The local? The South-South? Something else? To whom do you look for responses that will secure sexual and economic justice? The state? Transnational social movements? Bretton Woods institutions? Civil society organizations?

All levels are helpful in approaching the question. Since we are regarding an issue that requires a multi-sectoral approach, so do I view the intervention. The colloquium is therefore a commendable start, the global level, then we can expand by taking the discourse or follow up strategisation to other levels, just the way the horrid global policies come from the global level and filter down to the local with their ugly impact on the population at the local level. We can structure the response that same way.

Responses can be found from all the options listed above, as each responds as is within their power. It is the synergy from the responses that will yield a positive impact in the changes we seek to secure erotic and economic justice.

9. Finally, how do we develop effective rhetorics and practices of resistance in the present context, and how do we reimagine global justice as involving both sexual and economic components?

We need to reconfigure sexual rights as all encompassing and as inalienable with other human rights. We need to dialogue and commit to principles of equality, integrity, diversity, autonomy and choice. We need to re-position ourselves as activists in this context and project the voices of all affected without marginalization of the needs of sexual minorities, victims of sexual abuse, people living with HIV/AIDS and persons with disabilities. We need to identify those spaces we wish to carry out our interventions and have a systematic strategy of intervention for action.

Radhika Balakrishnan

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Thought Paper

Sexual and Economic Justice Preparatory Questions Radhika Balakrishnan

I would like to answer some of these questions by drawing from an article I wrote some years ago called “Capitalism and Sexuality: Free to Choose?” in Good Sex Feminist Perspectives from World Religions edited by Jung, Hunt and Balakrishnan. Rutgers University Press. I find the questions that were provided to prepare this brief note were in many ways the ones I was trying to address in the article.

As capitalism increasingly penetrates all areas of life and livelihood, becoming a more firmly integrated global economy than before, what are the consequences for women’s lives? I am particularly interested in untangling the effects of capitalism on women’s agency, autonomy and sense of self. Capitalism emphasizes individual responsibility and mediates self-determinations in and autonomy through market relationships. As a consequence, capitalism undermines old scripts that assigned self-determination to some and denied to others on the bases of race, cast, gender and property. Capitalism was aptly characterized by Marx as a system that “overthrows the narrow parochialism of earlier society, destroys traditions, and disrupts personal dependence in favor of impersonal connection of the ‘cash nexus’”. Although class, race gender and ownership of assets other than one’s own labor power do continue to intersect with capitalism, affecting the nature and extent of autonomy, capitalism has engendered new forms of autonomy for some groups, including some groups of women. The expansion of market forces is transforming the structure of social relations within which many women live and is producing new structures. I am interested in exploring some of the contradictory ways changes brought about by capitalism affect women’s lives.

Capitalism has changed gender relationships in ways that have increased women’s assertion of autonomy and at the same time exploited women as sexually objectified commodities. This increase in autonomy and sexual exploitation has triggered criticisms of the Westernization of society by the religious right in a number of Third World contexts. I believe that *Westernization* is a key term in these critiques because it facilitates what appears to be an anti-imperialist and nationalist resistance to some of the advances of transnational capitalism, even as it permits the religious right to focus many of its anxieties and agendas on resisting local changes in women’s social status. I think that many of these criticisms of Westernization are influenced more by changes in women’s status, choices, and ways of life than by the growth of transnational capitalism itself. The religious right’s critique of capitalism as Westernization makes a feminist counter critique imperative, since feminists do not necessarily share the view that these changes are entirely negative. Feminists need to pay attention to the ways in which capitalism’s effect on women are simultaneously liberatory and exploitative.

Such a feminist counter critique of capitalism and its effect on women is also likely to differentiate itself from certain radical critiques of transnational capitalism. While these radical critiques do not share the religious right's explicit opposition to changes in women's social relationships, they share a certain dogmatism that includes a negative interpretation of transnational capitalism. As a result, these "radical critiques" also fail to attend to and praise some of the more "liberatory" effects of capitalism on the lives of several groups of women. A feminist counter critique can, I believe, challenge part of the radical critique by calling attentions to the mix of liberating and exploitative effects that contemporary capitalism has on the lives, choices, and agency of some groups of Third World women.

The growth of transnational capitalism has been accompanied by a religious ideology that not only shapes our world but promises secular salvations in the form of increased production and consumption. It promises increase wealth for a nation, and improvement in the standard of living of its citizens. A sense of one's own value, as well as the value of others, increasingly depends on the market's monetized valuation of one's labor and its products. In addition, people who live in the shadow of capitalist market relations find that "it is not always easy to know when decisions come from within and when they do not, when people want what they want and when they only think that they want or are interested in what actually they only believe they should want or be interested in." These seemingly contradictory notions of autonomy and self-esteem connected to market relationships are key to the ways capitalism transforms gender relations.

Women enter into capitalist relationships both producers and as consumers, and both roles affect women's agency, sense of self, and sexuality. The way in which I use the term sexuality is fairly broad. I refer by it not only to women's choices over sexual relationships and sexual activity in the narrow sense, but also to ways in which women experience them selves as constellations of desires and powers. Some of the powers I have in mind are the powers of producing within a market economy, powers connected to the control of wages and of conditions of work, and power to renegotiate roles in the family and the every day micro-pleasures they enjoy in these roles as a part of the production process. Some of the desires I have in mind are consumer desire for products, whereby women begin to experience themselves as entitled to these desires and to the products meant to satisfy them. I would also like to consider women's desire for sexual knowledge and opportunities that shape their self-identities as sexual subjects free from certain kinds of surveillance and constriction. In short, I am interested in the ways in which women's roles as both workers in the production process and as consumers can positively affect their own sense of self and relationship to others.

1. I find that the issues of economic justice and sexual justice are intrinsically intertwined. The way we need to address these questions is to be honest in our understanding of each and be able to form a nuanced approach that understands the complex relationship and contradictory ways these two and inseparable forms of justice can be achieved. The reasons why these issues are often not brought to the same place is that both in activism and in the academy we work in separate

- worlds that do not structurally come together. They are separated because of departmental issues or because of funding issues. The obstacle that stem from either institutional culture, or funding priorities need to be addressed by making clear and significant the need to engage in this work.
2. I can personally say that when I was working at a foundation some years ago in the reproductive health program it was very difficult for me to be able to work on economic justice issues sine they were seen as being in a different program area. In the academy, being an economist means working on economic issues and though there is a growing voice in the feminist economics movement most of the people are marginalized in the field. I also feel that women's studies programs have with a few exceptions focused on economic issues as central to its agenda. In terms again of the academy there are not many journals that will publish work that deal with both concerns.
 3. The growth of the religious right in the world is shaped by war militarism and a response to western hegemonic forces in the world. All over the world women's sexuality is becoming the focus of an anti imperialist movement. Women's agency as I explained earlier has become the litmus test on both sides of the war on terror. The invasion of Afghanistan was a clear example.
 4. The sale of approach has to be at the global scale that can then be analyzed at national and local levels. I don't think that unless we understand the nature of the global shaping and reshaping of ideologies can we understand the local results.
 5. My recent work on using human rights has been very much focused on the State but depending on what country you are talking about we have to understand the ability of the state to govern given the power of international financial institutions and other non state actors, such as the religious right, corporations etc.
 6. I think that that this conversation that we are to begin is a great step to being able to bring these issues to the forefront.

Suzanne Bergeron

Toward a Vision of Sexual and Economic Justice
Thought Paper

Moving Off the Straight Path in Economic Development Policy

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As a feminist economist who works on gender and development issues, I find that one key constraint to integrating economic and sexual justice is the way that development and international aid initiatives work to normalize gender and sexual identities. Political economy accounts of development often ignore the entrenched nature of heteronormativity in their thinking, in which reproductive heterosexuality is seen as the only functional form of sex (Kleitzi 2000). Because of this, the diversity of economic and affective relations that do not fit the functional model is rendered imperceptible in nearly all discussions of poverty alleviation, social inclusion, and economic rights. While the prioritization of HIV/AIDS has created some space for adding sexuality to the equation in economic development, this has been limited by the general confinement of discussions to HIV/AIDS health concerns (Gosine 2005). The result is a continued lack of explicit attention to sexuality in the mainstream of economic development thought as well as those alternative frameworks which draw inspiration from feminist, anti-poverty, and ecological movements. For instance, recognition of non-normative genders and sexualities is absent from even the most sophisticated feminist economic approaches that take differences of class, race, ethnicity and nationality among women into account. Thus in order to challenge the heteronormative aspects of economic development theory and practice, it is important to explore how and why such framings persist in order to adequately re-frame economic development to move beyond these limits.

There is also a need to recognize and challenge the ways that development policies are implicated in the production and transformation of normative heterosexualities themselves, particularly in regard to how western teleological visions of sexuality have dominated development discourse (Pigg and Adams 2005). The attempt to transform multiple and diverse affective arrangements in the global South into a mythical norm of the stabilized, westernized and "modern" heterosexual family has long been a hallmark of development policy, and forms of resistance to these efforts are often reconstructed as elements of pathology or tradition that need to be contained (Ferguson 1999). While some aspects of the norm have shifted over time - for instance, agrarian reform efforts in the 1970s attempted to institutionalize a male breadwinner/female housewife model, while current gender and development initiatives push for women's rights in the context of equitable marriage - the goal of recreating a mythical western norm of heterosexual relations nonetheless remains relatively untouched.

This issue is a pressing one, as normative models remain central to international development programs, and form the conceptual core of an expanding array of anti-poverty and gender equity initiatives. For example, current feminist attempts to address the negative effects of neoliberal

structural adjustment policies on women in poor households have challenged the mainstream tendency to naturalize the gender division of labor and devalue non-market caring labor. In this effort, feminist economists have been particularly effective in their call for equity strategies that take into account the gendered effects of restructuring on the well-being of women and men in terms of tensions between paid and unpaid work, access to resources, and power relations within the household. This move toward denaturalizing the household has the potential to open up space for imagining and supporting a diversity of economic and affective arrangements. However, because most feminist economists and policy makers deploy an understanding of sexual difference as determined through a “heterosexual matrix” (Butler 1990) of complementary roles, they have reverted to a presentation of heterosexual partnering as the sole form of family life (Bergeron 2007). For example, women-headed households, which make up a large share of the population in many developing countries, often disappear from view in feminist economic development frameworks (Lind and Share 2003). And when women-headed households are taken into account, it is generally through a set of heteronormative assumptions that can only see them “broken” or “headless” because the male is perceived to be missing (Paulson 2006).

These assumptions about sexual arrangements in households have been widely translated into gender equity policy strategies that reinforce prescribed family norms. For example, recent World Bank gender and development initiatives such as PROFAM in Argentina, *Generosidad* in Mexico, and PROGENIAL in Ecuador have given priority to projects aimed at reorganizing behaviors within the heterosexual family in order to create modern equitable partnerships between men and women. While the progressive potential of these calls for equitable partnerships has yet to be realized, these policies as they are currently conceived are questionable from both a sexual and an economic justice perspective. They aim at keeping couples intact rather than supporting women’s self-sufficiency, attempt to fix local arrangements into a mythical western norm of heterosexuality, fail to resolve the work/ care tensions of the many poor households that do not fit these gender and sexual norms, and underwrite neoliberal efforts to privatize caring labor (Bedford 2007).

The discursive power of this approach to understanding care work in development circles is such that even sexual rights advocates have begun to deploy it in making their connections between sexual and economic justice. For example, South Africa’s Equality Project has called for an expanded definition of the normative household through gay marriage by arguing that this will encourage “family involvement in poverty alleviation” through “mutual assistance” in poor gay and lesbian families, assistance that could substitute for dwindling state-funded support for care work (Oswin 2007). While gay marriage is in itself an important sexual right, and without a doubt can offer improved economic well-being to some homonormative constituencies, there are still a lot of poor people, including those who live outside of the prescribed norms, who will be ill-served by this approach to poverty alleviation.

All of this suggests that simply adding non-normative sexualities to existing economic development theories and policies may cause us to fall short of the goal of achieving sexual and economic justice. Therefore one of the many areas that warrant attention in moving toward this goal lies in challenging and transforming hetero and gender-normative political economy frameworks. We need to contend with colonized economic imaginations in order to redefine

sexual identities outside reproduction and the family. We also need to reconceptualize current normative approaches to sexuality in economic development that recapitulate western hegemony. For instance, the colonial tenor of economic development discourse, in which the US and Europe serve as the supposed source of modernity for both opposite and same-sex sexuality, supports the flawed assumption that the importation of western norms is the key to expanding these rights to the developing world. For example, teleological approaches in development circles (borrowing from some movements for sexual rights) presume that the importation of a western model of “out-gayness” is the hallmark of same-sex liberation. This not only implies, incorrectly, that modernization is the key to sexual rights in the global South; it also renders those whose identities and lives do not correspond to labels such as “gay” imperceptible (and thus underserved) in international aid programs (Wright 2006).

The project of challenging and reconceptualizing economic development discourses of sexuality, then, needs to draw upon growing body of research which shows how development policy and globalization transform affective relations and sexual identities in varied and complex ways (e.g. Wilson 2004; Rebhun 1999). It might also build upon the language of diverse economy developed by Gibson-Graham (1996, 2006) to constitute an economic landscape that is represented by a myriad of contingent forms of economic and effective difference. For example, using the case of caring labor described above, current economic justice arguments in development generally can’t think beyond two types of households – the traditional exploitative heterosexual one where caring labor is not shared, and the modern, progressive heterosexual one where it is shared. In contrast, an approach that denaturalizes the household and imagines a diversity of arrangements from the start would not conceal or pathologize the many ways in which caring labor might be practiced. Thus it could open space for kinship and care to broaden its meaning to include same-sex desire, transgender, and homosocial relations among others (Roseneil 2004). By expanding Gibson-Graham’s language of diverse economy to take sexual heterogeneity into account, we might do with economic structures such as the household what Judith Butler and other queer theorists have done with heterosexuality and the binary gender categories that are in its support, and begin to read for “difference rather than dominance” (Gibson-Graham 2006). This conceptual work, I believe, can go far to move economic development thinking off the straight path, and therefore is an important part of the project of integrating sexual and economic justice in international development practice.

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Jon Binnie

Toward a Vision of Sexual and Economic Justice
Thought Paper

‘Envisioning Economic and Sexual Justice Spatially’

Think-piece for colloquium on *Towards a Vision of Economic and Sexual Justice*,
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Q1. ‘From your activist and/or academic position, what are the most pressing concerns surrounding the intersection of economic and sexual justice? With respect to which concrete issues does that intersection appear most relevant?’

How can we square sexual justice with economic justice? How can we integrate a concern for sexual and economic justice in our work when they so often appear incompatible or unrelated in academic discussions? Material concerns often appear highly marginal within sexual politics, as Richard Goldstein in his polemic against the Gay Right has contentiously and provocatively claimed ‘poverty is the only dirty secret left in our community’ (2002: 19). More surprisingly, this marginality of the economic has often been reproduced in academic research on the transnational politics of sexuality as Geeta Patel (2006: 25) has argued: ‘Too often the literature on transnational sexualities portrays sexuality as being constituted outside capital, outside political economies, outside transnational or global finance’.

The intersection of economic and sexual justice is highly relevant within media and academic discourses around the pink economy that have constructed lesbians and gay men as an affluent niche market in late capitalism. Guy Hocquenghem (1993: 93) has argued that: ‘the anti-capitalist movement can often be pro-family, and indeed anti-homosexual’. Erotophobia and homophobia on the Left is widespread. It may be less explicit and more understated nowadays but it has not gone away completely. This legacy has meant that some political economic accounts of gay male consumption and the pink economy have been problematic and even harmful. For instance we see David Evans’ highly voyeuristic depiction of what he terms the ‘virilisation’ of gay male consumption with a particular emphasis on the paraphernalia associated with leather and sadomasochism contained within his pioneering book on the material basis of sexual citizenship (Evans, 1993). Despite these concerns about the way erotics and sexual politics have been integrated within some political economic analyses, there are studies in which economics and sexuality are integrated more productively. Lee Badgett has powerfully critiqued dominant discourses about the pink economy - debunking myths of gay and lesbian affluence, arguing that: ‘the real economic difference [of lesbians, bisexuals and gay men] comes from the harmful effects of employment discrimination against lesbian, gay and bisexual people’ (1997: 70). Others have argued that the myth of lesbian and gay affluence is dangerous in playing into the hands of the Right as Hardisty and Gluckman (1997:218) have noted: ‘Recently, a new stereotype has crept into the antihomosexual literature of the right. In addition to being portrayed as immoral, disease-ridden child molesters, gay men and lesbians are now described as superwealthy, highly-educated free spenders’.

Stereotypes of affluence therefore fuel notions that gay rights are ‘special’ or additional rights, and that lesbians and gay men are a privileged minority in no need of legal protection against discrimination on the basis of homophobia.

Q8. ‘What scale is helpful to you as you approach these questions? The national? The global? The regional? The local? The South-South? Something else? To whom do you look for responses that will secure sexual and economic justice? The state? Transnational social movements? Bretton Woods institutions? Civil society organizations?’

This question invites discussion of the spatial in relationship to the intersection between economic and sexual justice. Given the considerable spatially uneven nature of economic and sexual practices we need to consider *spatial justice* in relation to economic and sexual justice. Reflecting on the spatial politics of social justice, Don Mitchell (in Brown et al, 2007: 9) has stated that: ‘I can never decide if the fact that everything has to take place *somewhere* is so obvious as to be banal or quite profound’. Recognition of the significance of space and place within everyday life means that space should not be merely seen as the backdrop, or canvas across which economic/sexual practices take place, but rather that such practices are constituted in and through space. Space is not simply a passive container. For instance consider the notion that the city is a generator of eroticism as Henning Bech argues: ‘The city is not merely a stage on which a re-existing, preconstructed sexuality is displayed and acted out; it is a space where sexuality is generated. What is it about the city that stimulates? Surely that altogether special blend of closeness and distance, crowd and flickering, surface and gaze, freedom and danger’ (1997, page 118). The dramatic growth of research on queer globalization and transnational sexual politics in recent years has brought questions of spatial scale to the fore within issues of sexual and economic justice. Here it is important to emphasise as many geographers and others have argued, that scales are not absolute factual taken-for-granted entities – nested containers like Russian dolls, existing in a clear relation to one another. Rather, we need to recognise that the construction and production of scale is a dynamic political process. For instance consider how within conservative nationalist discourses, non-normative sexualities have been constructed as non-local threats to the national scale of governance. In research on queer globalization and transnational sexualities some scales have been privileged (e.g. the global, neighbourhood); while others have been neglected (the national, regional, small cities). Some writers are now arguing that we need to go beyond scalar thinking – and focus instead on networks – examining the connections between nodes within transnational (and other) networks. This draws attention to the flows and links between transnational actors in different locations.

The spatial politics of economic and sexual justice can be thought through in the work of Richard Florida – specifically his highly influential book *The Rise of the Creative Class*. Florida’s ideas around the *creative class* have become important in urban policy agendas associated with city development and regeneration strategies. Florida argues that economically successful and entrepreneurial cities in the US are those that contain concentrations of bohemians, gays and immigrants. Rather problematically he

argues that: ‘to some extent, homosexuality represents the last frontier of diversity in our society, and thus a place that welcomes the gay community welcomes all kinds of people’ (2002: 256). There also problems with his notion of creativity in relation to class, locating it within the middle class, ignoring vernacular, working class forms of creativity. Florida’s argument suggests that cities shown to be open to gays are also open to innovation and supportive of entrepreneurialism.

There can be tensions between the erotic and strategies for city promotion to attract international lesbian and gay tourism. In a study based on Manchester, Howard Hughes (2002) has argued that the branding and marketing of the city’s gay village nationally and internationally is having potentially deleterious consequences on the space itself leading to a loss of ownership and a ‘de-gaying’ of the space. He also notes criticism of these marketing campaigns for ‘promoting sex’ and giving a poor impression of the city.

Discourses around gay entrepreneurialism and the marketing of gay tourist destinations produce distinctions between legitimate and illegitimate sexual subjectivities. A distinction between affluent, entrepreneurial, professional gays of the creative and tourist economy and those who are the ‘queer unwanted’ – whose lifestyles are less respectable and do fit the narratives of urban regeneration strategies. Stephen Tomsen’s (2006) research on homophobia in New South Wales in Australia has drawn attention to the law’s distinction between ‘innocent’ and ‘guilty’ victims of homophobic attacks around notions of respectability. Tomsen shows how spatial ordering was significant to the drawing of these distinctions between ‘innocent’ and ‘guilty’ victims of homophobic attacks. He argues that the formation of respectable, gentrified gay and lesbian spaces has helped to reinforce distinctions between proper and improper homosexualities. Thomsen wants us to recognise the negative consequences associated with the de-sexing of lesbian and gay cultural identities associated with the development of respectable gentrified spaces. This has meant that the people who use spaces for public sex have become further marginalised as improper and have become the guilty victims of homophobic attacks. In articulating a vision for economic and sexual justice we need to recognise the significance of the erotic and sex itself in articulating distinctions between those whose bodies are seen to matter, and those who are seen as without value. Moreover an awareness of the scaling of economic and sexual practices can help us recognise the limits of visions of economic and sexual justice that are rooted in fixed scales such as the local or the national.

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Ann Cammett

Toward a Vision of Sexual and Economic Justice
Thought Paper

Toward a Vision of Sexual and Economic Justice
Thought Paper
November 29-30, 2007

“Challenging Mass Incarceration and the Gendered Rule of Law”**Ann Cammett**

Advocates for economic rights and those fighting for sexual justice are beginning to coalesce to examine and address the concerns of people whose lives are at the intersection of those communities – namely low-income queer people. Typically anti-poverty activists ignore issues related to sexual rights, while mainstream LGBTQ groups spend little capital on matters most critical to those living on the margins.¹ For a variety of reasons, these advocates ought to take a closer look at the impact of mass incarceration and police state repression which serves to further marginalize both communities, but can also provide fertile ground for organizing and reconciliation between them.

In the United States the prison state looms large; and is not far removed from the lives of much of the population. In 2006 there were 2.2 million people living directly under the auspices of the criminal justice system, and that number grows daily. This dubious distinction renders the U.S. the world’s number one jailer, both in total number of prisoners and in prisoners per capita.² This is not a coincidence, but rather a trend thirty years in the making. While it is tempting to link the increased use of incarceration to an increase in crime over time such a claim is not supported by the facts.³ Violent crime has not increased commensurate with the rise in the prison population. However, punitive lawmaking has proliferated pursuant to “tough-on-crime” policies. Consequently, the prison system has devolved into a warehouse for generations of poor people trapped by the so-called “war on drugs,” mandatory minimum sentences, poor or no health care, mental illness, and aggressive policing of their communities which puts them at risk of increased criminal justice involvement.

What’s poor got to do with it?

No broad examination of economic justice for low-income people can proceed without confronting this prison crisis. It is well known that incarceration, operating now at an unprecedented level, is a direct expression of capitalism in its most crass iteration. What has come to be broadly referred to as the “prison industrial complex” references the fact that the prison boom is not a reflection of increased criminal activity, but rather the manifestation of a complex web of economic interests that has made prison construction a cornerstone of economic development in the 1980s and 1990s.⁴ Corporate wealth from prison construction skyrocketed, along with the various industries required to effect the administration and servicing of this system. The people inside the prisons can be said to provide a source of raw material, both for the production of goods by prison labor (enriching those profiteering from their misery), but also for the consumption of basic goods required by the burgeoning population of inmates themselves.⁵ The fact that the overwhelming majority of incarcerated people are poor makes this system *possible*,

owing to their lack of political currency. The fact that two-thirds of them are people of color makes it *acceptable* as a political matter, due to the pernicious persistence of racism in America.

The growing incarceration of poor communities, particularly people of color, has been an emerging concern over the last two decades. The recognition that siphoning off enormous human resources from the communities that need them most has been the touchstone of resistance to the expansion of the prison system. As an economic issue, this concept has recently been expressed by concerns over the dilution of political power due to felony disenfranchisement, but also as the redistribution of wealth inherent in the reapportionment of tax dollars to rural communities based on the census practice of counting of prisoners where they are incarcerated as opposed to their neighborhoods of origin.⁶ This analysis is useful in understanding the macro issues associated with nationwide redistribution of public money. But this must also be read in conjunction with the difficulties inherent in managing the “collateral consequences” of criminal convictions faced by all poor people released from prison. These are barriers such as restricted access to employment, housing, public benefits and many of life’s necessities which invariably create an environment upon reentry which is inhospitable to their successful “reintegration.”⁷ Under the conceptual rubric of the prison industrial complex, this is the point. The recidivism rate for those exiting the prison system hovers around 66 percent within three years of release – a cycle that creates a stream of continuous fodder for the prison industry.

LGBTQ communities

Contemporary gay rights organizations have focused on a limited number of narrowly defined strategies as the ticket to liberation; namely marriage equality and the passage of hate crimes legislation.⁸ These strategies have consumed enormous resources without a deep cost-benefit analysis of the results of those approaches (owing to the perceived benefits gained by those whose class and race privilege might insulate them from the effects of discrimination). But the ubiquitous presence of LGBTQ people living in the criminal justice system begs a further examination of the issue.

LGBTQ people bear the brunt of the prison system in many ways. Research shows that prisoners who are gay, lesbian or transgendered – or perceived to be – are at a higher risk for abuse in prison.⁹ Gay men, and particularly transwomen, are singled out for repeated sexual abuse within a dehumanizing system that relies on power and control to maintain order within its walls. Lesbian women, or women who transgress gender boundaries, are singled out for sexual abuse and mistreatment in the form of coercive repression. It is not surprising that lesbian women account for a disproportionate number of political prisoners, as they embody the nexus between sexual liberation and political repression by the state.¹⁰ In this way prison itself is a gendered institution – an expression of state power with a mandate to maintain heteronormativity within the walls and in the culture at large. Many “traditional” gay rights organizations have not sufficiently addressed the issue of LGBT prisoners for other reasons, apart from a primary focus on perceived middle class priorities. As a political matter it is hard to gain currency on the national stage featuring the concerns of prisoners – a reviled group with little political capital.

It is only when we understand the class dimensions of homophobia that it becomes clear why the criminal “injustice” system is a queer issue. The primary issue around

incarceration that mainstream LGBTQ groups have addressed stems from the consequence of homelessness experienced by gay youth. A recent report by the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force entitled, “Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Youth: An Epidemic of Homelessness,”¹¹ details the ubiquitous presence of homelessness among LGBTQ youth. It is estimated that in some cities in the US up to 40 percent of homeless youth are gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgendered. This condition is a direct result of the hardships associated with coming out as LGBTQ youth. Familial conflict is a significant factor that leads to homelessness and out-of-home care, and this dislocation contributes to substance abuse and mental health challenges faced by these young people which often go unmet. Physical assaults upon disclosure within the home, and at school, can lead to young people to believe that they are safer on the streets, where they often rely on survival through the sex trade and are often re-victimized by law enforcement. As a result they are made vulnerable to being swept up by the juvenile and later criminal justice systems.¹² Moreover, the disengagement from family resources and criminal justice involvement will have serious repercussions for their economic prospects throughout their lives.

Possibilities for Exploration and Collaboration

A comprehensive analysis of how incarceration and police state intervention impacts the lives of the various communities of interest –those living in poverty, people of color, and the LGBTQ community– presents an enormous opportunity to collaborate on strategies for liberation by incorporating a mandate to challenge to the expansion of the police state in all of its forms, whether it presents as mass incarceration or police harassment.

The experience of activists in the movement to confront domestic violence is instructive in identifying some of the critical problems with single-issue advocacy (when it lacks a broader analysis of the state’s involvement). An ongoing critique of the DV movement by women of color focuses on the reliance of law enforcement as a primary tool in addressing the widespread problem of gender violence. This issue was of particular concern to women who came from communities that experienced police presence as a potential threat, rather than as an ally in their quest for safety.¹³ Ultimately though, this impacts all women who become engaged with the police state during the process of resolving their complicated struggles with intimate partner violence. This dilemma initially took the form of mandatory arrest policies, which caused some women to seek *less* intervention for fear that they too would be swept into the criminal process as co-perpetrators. More recently, “no drop” policies, now common in many jurisdictions, shifted control of the DV cases from women engaged in *civil* proceedings to prosecutors who decided whether to pursue *criminal* cases even when women were not, for a variety of reasons, disposed to prosecute them. On balance, this represented a shift of control from the woman herself to the police state, an act that reinforces patriarchal oppression – ironically a hallmark of domestic violence.

Likewise, with various “hate crimes” legislation supported by an array of erstwhile progressive organizations, the focus on enhanced criminal penalties is a shortsighted approach to dealing the question of violence directed at LGBTQ communities. There is, to date, no real evidence these laws curtail violence. Instead these proposed laws contribute to an expansion of the prison state with little more than “feel good” results co-opted by politicians presenting themselves as allies. Since they have not shown to be deterrence to crime against these communities, they do nothing to address the underlying homophobia that acts as a cancer within our culture. This begs the question: do we need

more punishment or less violence? Both of these examples – compulsory criminal prosecutions in DV cases and hate crimes legislation – demonstrate the potential to have police state become the *primary* focus in solving problems of violence, while choking out the creative development other methods, such as public education and alternative dispute resolution strategies. For our ultimate survival, we must begin to emphasize and develop approaches that lead to healthier, more involved, and more proactive communities. Grassroots organizations like Queers for Economic Justice; the Sylvia Rivera Law Project; Critical Resistance; Justice Now; the Trans/Gender, Variant, and Intersex Justice Project (TGIJP); and the Trans/Gender Variant in Prison Project (TIP) have taken the lead in educating our respective justice communities on the importance of integrating criminal justice, queer, and poverty issues, as well as shifting focus to incorporate the power of organizing and other advocacy strategies.

¹ See Queers for Economic Justice, *Mission Statement* at <http://qej.tripod.com/qej2/id1.html>.

² Bureau of Justice Statistics, *Prisoners in 2005* (2006), available at <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/pub/pdf/p05.pdf>. The population of individuals in US prisons rose by 2.7% in 2005; over 7 million people were either in jail, on probation, or on parole by the end of last year, with 2.2 million of them in prison.

³ Marc Mauer, *Thinking About Prison and Its Impact in the Twenty-First Century*, 27 Ohio N.U.L. Rev. 29 (2000).

⁴ See Wikipedia, “Prison Industrial Complex” at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Prison-industrial_complex.

⁵ Angela Y. Davis, *Are Prisons Obsolete?* Seven Stories Press (2003).

⁶ Patricia Allard and Kirsten D. Levingston, Brennan Center for Justice, *Accuracy Counts: Incarcerated People and the Census 2* (2004), available at http://www.brennancenter.org/dynamic/subpages/RV4_AccuracyCounts.pdf.

⁷ Ann Cammett, *Expanding Collateral Sanctions: The Hidden Costs of Child Support Enforcement Against Incarcerated Parents*, 13 Georgetown Journal on Poverty Law & Policy 313 (2006).

⁸ See ACLU website at <http://www.aclu.org/lgbt/gen/29605prs20070503.html>.

⁹ Human Rights Watch, *No Escape: Male Rape in U.S. Prisons* (2001). See also *All Too Familiar: Sexual Abuse of Women in U.S. State Prisons* (1996).

¹⁰ *Out of Control: Lesbian Committee to Support Women Political Prisoners* at <http://www.prisonactivist.org/ooc/>.

¹¹ See National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, *Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Youth: An Epidemic of Homelessness* (2007).

¹² See Amnesty International USA, *Stonewalled: Police Abuse and Misconduct Against Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender People in the U.S.*, (2005).

¹³ Anannya Bhattacharjee, American Friend Service Committee, *Whose Safety? Women of Color and the Violence of Law Enforcement* (2001).

Davina Cooper

Toward a Vision of Sexual and Economic Justice
Thought Paper

SEXUAL AND ECONOMIC JUSTICE WORKSHOP**QUESTION: WHAT OPPORTUNITIES DO ALTERNATIVE SOCIAL SITES OFFER FOR EXPLORING THE CHALLENGES AND POSSIBILITIES FOR SEXUAL AND ECONOMIC JUSTICE?**

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My comments here are based on a research project I have been pursuing for the past six years, exploring alternative social spaces – what I call “everyday utopias”. These are spaces, material and imagined, which seek not only to *realise* a more just, equal or democratic mode of operation but to prefigure or inhabit it in the here and now. Unlike communes or intentional communities, these spaces and networks do not depend on people quitting mainstream life, but rather are articulated to the mainstream in multiple ways. While some everyday utopias are discrete places, others exist as networks or mobile and multiplying sites. I should say I call them “utopias” to *reflect* their social and political aspiration – realised to varying degrees – not because I see the spaces as necessarily just or as reflecting my own political ideals.

The spheres of life and particular case-studies I have undertaken (largely in Britain) relate to utopias of practice, system, belonging and change. The two I will focus on here as most relevant to the workshop are: exchange (Local Exchange Trading Systems) and sex (Toronto Women’s Bathhouse). The other four sites, which more indirectly inform my analysis here are: public speech (Speakers’ Corner), religion (progressive Jewish community organisations), politics (LGBT local governmental partnerships), and education (AS Neill’s Summerhill School). The notes below draw on my field research and interviews as well as a wider theoretical, conceptual and empirical literature.

LETS exist internationally, since the 1980s, as small-scale, localised networks of trade, labour and exchange in which people (and sometimes firms or public bodies) access goods and services through payment in local currency (by means of a cheque). The key economic characteristics of LETS are that people can go into debit (“commitment”) without incurring interest, and financial markets and investment don’t exist; balances are transparent and available to all members to view, and thresholds, ceilings and rates for hourly work may be imposed by the scheme or determined through negotiation between members; in the main, while payments are not fully equalised, rates are less unequal than in mainstream economies.

Toronto Women’s Bathhouse was established in 1998 in Toronto as a periodic bathhouse event for women and transpeople interested in casual sex. TWB is striking both for its explicit approach to creating a pro-sex, “raunchy” environment, and for its educative and pastoral attitude towards participants. So, attendees can receive from volunteers a range of free services – from sexual massage and counselling to lap-dancing and G-spot orgasms; they are also encouraged to learn how to provide such services to others.

What I am interested in exploring here is the relationship between the practices and structures of these spaces, on the one hand, and wider sexual and economic inequalities, on the other. In short, do these spaces primarily reflect mainstream inequalities, do they counter them, do they practically counter some but not others, and do they proffer or institutionalise alternatives? In addressing these questions, my focus is on what is *done*; while this includes internal and external arguments, rationalisations and other forms of public speech, I am not principally interested in these spaces as campaigning spaces *per se* but rather as materialising at the level of social form, the values and principles they advocate.

Addressing these questions goes beyond the problematic of change within micro-sites to wider issues, namely:

- a] what potential, if any, do such sites have to shape or imprint upon mainstream life and wider social relations, and what policies, practices and structures (“internal” and “external”) impede their having wider effects; and
- b] what do everyday utopias tell us about structures of inequality (and norms of justice) more generally, at least in countries, such as the UK.

Some strands of the project have been published as articles and in my book, *Challenging Diversity* (2004). However, the relationship between everyday utopias and inequality is at a preliminary stage. Below are some of the issues I am considering which seem to most closely intersect the themes of this colloquium.

1. The spaces I am exploring are interestingly ambivalent and diverse in the extent to which they recognise or respond to “external”, institutionalised inequalities. I do not want to suggest that people’s wider sexual or economic positioning is irrelevant to their experience of everyday utopias – far from it. But I am also interested in how these sites sometimes bracket, sometimes negotiate, wider forms of inequality, offering different conceptions of justice and power. This is illustrated by LETS which is concerned both with wider socio-economic inequalities (it is seen by some as an economic development tool) as well as with the form and infrastructure of production (its enjoyability), consumption (its sustainability), and exchange (its neighbourliness).
2. The Toronto Women’s Bathhouse also decentres sexuality as a hierarchical set of identities based on orientation – even as it recognises wider inequalities of gender, disability and race. It is open to women (and transpeople) of any sexual identity and embraces sexuality as a mode of expression, exploration, interpersonal connection, adventure, confidence-building, and self-fulfilment. Thus the work performed by the sexual within the space is different, and sexual justice is more likely to be read along the lines of “the good, active sexual life” than as equal treatment between different sexual identities or orientations.
3. Intersectionality also works in varying and different ways when inequality is not read through a group identity model. So, at the Toronto Women’s Bathhouse, the economic is the condition for having a sexual event (ie, its economic viability), provides the means for communicating sexual interests and desire (as clothing, sex toys), and, it is argued by some, provides its

aesthetic/ ethos (Nash and Bain (2007) suggest TWB's sexual ethos is based on eroticising working-class lesbian sexuality). In the case of LETS, by contrast, the sexual is bracketed away from economic exchange (as a thing that cannot be traded), and as irrelevant to LETS (to the extent sex constitutes a form of personal, intra-household activity) since LETS is concerned with *inter*-household activity. At the same time, some people join LETS to find romantic/ sexual partners, and attraction may be a basis for deciding who to trade with. More generally, the marked aversion within LETS to linking sex to economic relations says something significant about the relationship between the two.

4. To the extent inequalities are recognised as occurring within these everyday utopic sites, how does their presence here relate to their wider societal organisation? In some cases, there may be a deliberate convergence (for instance, in the case of homophobic speech at Speakers' Corner), but exclusion or distinction also arise *despite* organisers (and even participants') explicit intentions. Desire, humour, and the dynamics of community formation can contribute to lines of exclusion and marginality, as can the articulation of interests. So, at Toronto Women's Bathhouse, despite the organising committee's explicit prohibition of transphobia, several attendees thought trans participants would find it harder to attract casual bathhouse partners. Likewise, in LETS schemes, norms and interests in comfort, security, ease of travel, and prior acquaintance or friendship caused members to veer towards trading with others that socially resembled them rather than following the logic of complementarity and trading with socially different others.
5. But I don't want to suggest that social inequalities only come from the "outside". I am also interested in the part the social structure (and dynamics) of an everyday utopia play in *producing* inequality. And the extent to which these spaces produce (or perform) inequalities in distinctive ways as a result of the co-constitutive relationship between the space's social structure (and dynamics), and the inequality in question.
6. More normatively, I want to ask, in considering these different everyday utopias, what balance is (sought to be) struck between redistributing economic and sexual power more fairly, and changing what economic and sexual justice consists of. For instance, one way of thinking about LETS is to see them as offering people, with less wealth, opportunities to access goods and services they otherwise could not (redistribution). But LETS can also be understood as posing an alternative form of economic justice through, for instance, reconstituting economic temporality (as slower paced, relaxed, satisfying, attentive, less alienated, sustainable etc.).
7. Likewise, if sexual justice is not simply about remedying inequalities or asymmetries of power, does sexual justice mean the pursuit of a richer, more adventurous, more "caring" sexuality? And what relationship does sexual justice have to the question of sexual "needs"; does justice depend on identifying something as a "need"? Can achieving greater sexual pleasure constitute justice if pleasure is defined as non-necessary?

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Lisa Duggan
Toward a Vision of Sexual and Economic Justice
Thought Paper

**Barnard Center for Research on Women
Sexual and Economic Justice Conference**

Preparatory Questions

As both a professor of gender and sexuality studies at NYU, and a long time feminist queer activist, I'm one of four co-editors of an anthology in progress: *A New Queer Agenda: A Practical Guide for How to Turn the Gay Rights Movement Into A Progressive Fight for Social Justice (and Succeed!)*. The collection will include essays and interviews by activists associated with Queers for Economic Justice, a New York City based organization focused on the intersection of sexual and economic justice. The primary goal of the book is to challenge and displace the economically and socially conservative agendas of the U.S. national "gay rights" organizations with a transformed vision of what issues are most pressing for most queer folks. Rather than inclusion in the institutions of marriage and the military, we are arguing for attention to homelessness, health care, retirement, dis/ability, sex work, immigration, HIV/AIDS, and the direction of left, feminist,

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anti-racist and queer politics in a global frame. The book proposal is attached to this document.

QEJ is a local organization, as are most of the left/progressive social justice organizations attending to issues of sexuality, race and class in the U.S. today. The challenge for all of us is how to build networks across borders, beyond the frame of the nation state. Solid local organizing can form the basis for broader associations that might challenge the "national" organizations driving the "gay rights" agenda of most national and many international organizations.

Right now, "gay rights" rhetoric is being deployed in anti-Muslim politics across Europe and North America. Proponents of conservative forms of sexual citizenship compare "progressive" European nation states (including the U.S. and Israel) to "backward" Islamic and/or Arab nation states and migrant or refugee populations. Adding on to Laura Bush feminism, the reactionary implications of this move are especially dangerous right now, especially in relation to growing U.S. aggression toward Iran. The relationship between sexual and economic justice could not be clearer than it is within this context. Anti-imperialist and anti-corporate globalization politics must intersect with issues of gender, racial and sexual justice in

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order to be effective against the rhetoric of progressive modernity vs. reactionary tradition that is being mobilized **as** advocacy for gender and sexual justice.

At the same time, the presumably feminist international politics of anti-trafficking promote repressive state action across the globe. Anti-trafficking activists aspire further to international legal action to suppress sex work. Activists for economic and sexual justice, who support the organization and support of local and migrant sex workers also desperately need expanded and new forms of networked association to effectively counter the repressive agenda of anti-trafficking "feminists."

One of the difficulties for generating new forms of association are the constraints of the NGO, non-profit corporation form—a form that produces "staff" and "volunteers," and sets limits on the ways funds may be raised and spent. From within our academic and activist locations, the need to think through ways to innovate organizationally and financially, on multiple geographical scales, seems especially pressing now.

Right now, we have no choice but to act at the intersections of sexual and economic justice—the question is **how** we will do so. Reactionary political forces are rapidly

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forging new links between neocolonial projects and "modern" sexual politics, and between law-and-order state repression of marginal and dissenting populations and the pursuit of sexual justice. The barriers to an intersectional politics of sexual and economic justice exist only on the left. How will we build upon the connections we have now, represented at this conference, and find new forms and means to expand our analyses, our organizations, and our resources?

Mary Margaret Fonow

Toward a Vision of Sexual and Economic Justice
Thought Paper

**Sexuality, Globalization, and Labor Activism, Mary Margaret Fonow
Barnard College, November 29-30, 2007**

As a political environment, globalization has reconfigured the opportunities for politics and the repertoire for collective action available to social movements.¹ What constraints and opportunities does globalization pose for gay labor activists concerned with questions of economic and social justice? My way of exploring this question is to focus attention on how gay activists are capturing the resources, networks, and discourses of the international labor movement to mobilize for labor rights and economic justice in a global economy. Much like women and other marginalized workers who are underrepresented in “the House of Labor,” GLBT workers are using self-organizing as a strategy to build political spaces within unions from which they can make claims for representation and participation. It is also from these spaces that alliances with activists from other social movements, from grass-roots organizations, and from civil society concerned with similar issues are forged.

To illustrate how we might conceptualize the gay-labor alliance at the transnational level, I will use as my example the joint efforts of two large Global Union Federations, Public Service International (PSI) and Education International (EI), to confront homophobia and discrimination against gay teachers and public service workers. These organizations are reconceptualising traditional labor issues to include GLBT issues and creating equity structures that seek to enhance the participation and representation of gay workers in the leadership and life of the union.²

Globalization and Labor Internationalism

Labor internationalism has roots in the 19th century when the idea that workers in different parts of the world might have common interests led to the establishment of international federated labour bodies, mostly headquartered in Europe, whose missions included building international support and solidarity for workers and their struggles for labor rights. These organizations have expanded to every region of the world and have grown in size, scope, and political influence. Today there are ten different global union federations representing millions of workers in almost every country in the world. The two that have been most receptive to gay activism have been female-dominated, feminist-influenced public sector federations with well developed equity programs and structures in place.³ The Public Service International, founded in 1907, is comprised of 650 affiliated trade unions in 150 countries representing 20 million public sector workers in government, health and social care, municipal and community services and public utilities. The Education International is comprised of 348 affiliated organizations in 169 counties representing 30 million teachers and education workers from pre-school through university. Both

Federations have broadened the scope of their mission to include basic questions of equity, justice and free access to public services and education. EI states on its website “We promote democracy, sustainable development, fair trade, basic social services and health and safety.” PSI and EI maintain permanent standing within international organizations concerned about labor standards, practices and rights. These include the ILO and various UN sub-organizations, employer organizations, and the newer financial institutions like the WTO. In the case of violations of human and trade union rights, joint action with human rights groups and consumer rights organizations can make protest more effective. Joining forces with activists from women’s, environmental and social-work associations contribute to achievements not possible without a cooperative approach.⁴

International Gay Labor Activism

The emergence of a gay labor activism at the international level is the outcome of several decades of queer organizing within national unions in Canada, U.S., Australia, South Africa, Britain, Germany, etc. and many of these struggles have been documented by others.⁵ In addition there has been a proliferation of political spaces (real and virtual) where transnational activists from a variety of movements--gay, human rights, feminists, labor, global justice--can meet to exchange information and strategies for change. These spaces include various UN Forums, international labor conferences, the World Social Forum, the gay games, etc. Increasingly, campaigns for labor rights are organized and funded not by the unions alone, but with support from churches, foundations and universities. Labor conferences and periodicals focus more on non-contract issues such as worker empowerment, organizing, union democracy, and feminism.⁶ The international Gay Games are now scheduled in conjunction with an international World Workers’ Out Conference. The Sydney conference drew 1700 participants from 113 countries. Conference declarations and action plans stress the political necessity of global campaigns to tackle the appalling working conditions of those who “live in countries that still execute their homosexual citizens” (Workers Online 2002, p. 139). Such transnational networks have the capacity to be effective when they draw on trade union resources to create forums and spaces for lesbian, gay and transgendered workers.

It was prior to the 2004 World Social Forum in Porto Alegre (Brazil) that gay activists from PSI and EI sponsored a joint forum on sexual diversity. It is common for organizations and movements to hold pre-Social Forum events to articulate their role in the larger WSF and in the movement for global justice. The purpose of the forum on sexual diversity was to develop a set of proposals for action on the rights for GLBT workers that would be presented to PSI and EI. Their declaration on GLBT labor rights was framed as human rights. The declaration recognized the diversity of the GLBT communities and lifestyles and asserted that the workplace must be a space free of discrimination of any kind and urged that trade unions take the lead in eliminating discrimination. It also acknowledged that equal rights for GLBT workers would be strengthened if they were successfully integrated into broader campaigns for labor rights at national,

regional and international levels. The Declaration expressed the concern “that the rights of sexual minorities are not explicitly recognized in most international and national standards and instruments; and that therefore discrimination and inequity based on sexual orientation and gender identity continue to persist at different levels. These include employment; access to public services; criminal and civil law; failure to recognize legally atypical personal relations such as same sex partnerships and de facto couples; lack of support for GLBT young workers and the specific needs of transgender people”

In only three short years the action plan adopted at the WSF was accomplished. The plan called for establishing a sexual diversity network between PSI and EI that would facilitate the sharing of resources and coordinate national and international campaigns for GLBT labor and social rights; linking web pages to provide a regular supply of news and updates about the work of the national networks; participation in the Montreal World Workers’ Out Conference, and holding an international forum on sexual diversity prior to the PSI World Congress in 2007.⁷

We know that globalization has a differential impact on countries, on regions, on households, and on different groups of workers whose gender, race, nationality, sexual orientation, education, etc. have structured their location in the labor market in very different ways. Globalization creates difference, fragmentation, and competition, which makes the construction of solidarity and collective action more challenging. To be successful social movements will need an understanding of the proliferation of differences and the opportunities and constraints these differences pose for organizing and for creating a transnational response to globalization. Sexuality is only one dimension of difference and must be understood in relation to other categories of difference, in relation to scale and geographic location, and in relation to historical context.

¹ See *Coalitions across Borders: Transnational Protest and the Neoliberal Order*, eds. Joe Brandy & Jackie Smith, Lanham, Rowman & Littlefield, 2005; *Transnational Protest & Global Activism*, eds. Donatella Della Porta & Sidney Tarrow, Lanham, MD, Roman & Littlefield, 2005, Valentine Moghadam, *Globalizing Women” Transnational Feminist Networks*, Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2005.

² Franzway and Fonow, *Making Feminist Politics: Transnational Alliances between Women and Labor*, under contract with the University of Illinois Press argues that union feminists are bringing qualities of the women’s movement into the traditional trade union movement-not only to make their claims about union gender politics, but also to develop strategies that revitalize the labor movement itself. Gay labor activists use some of the same strategies employed by feminist to expand the scope and range of labor to incorporate attention to sexuality. Cultivating links between movements is key component of union renewal. The strength of gay labor activism is tied to the gay rights movement and to the women’s movement.

³ For the value of self-organizing see the special *Industrial Relations Journal*, 37, 4, 2006.

⁴ PSI web site is at <http://www.world-psi.org/> and EI web site at <http://www.ei-ie.org/en/index.php>

⁵ See *Labouring for Rights: Unions and Sexual Diversity across Nation*, Gerald Hunt, ed., Philadelphia: Temple, 1999; *Out at Work: Building a Gay-Labor Alliance*, Kitty Krupat and Patrick McCreery, eds., Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1999.

⁶ See Kidder, Thalia. "Networks in Transnational Labor Organizing", in *Restructuring World Politics: Transnational Social Movements, Networks and Norms*, Khagram, S., J. Riker, and K. Sikkink, eds, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2002.

⁷ These unions are struggling with new ways to think about family issues. Under globalization private life merges with the public, and it becomes harder and harder to distinguish among work, family, and intimate spheres. This has important implications for labor politics, and it is essential for labor to understand the sexual politics of everyday life including family, intimate relations, social reproduction, sexuality, and self-care. Union feminists are calling on labor to move far beyond nominal support for policies that help women balance work and family and to challenge the fundamental relations of power based on gender in every sphere of life. Responding to the challenge will be difficult for labor. Some men who have been subject to the economic dislocations of globalization often experience these dislocations as a threat to their masculinity rather than a basis for labor militancy. As a consequence they are vulnerable to political discourses and movements that call for a return to traditional "family values." It is unproductive to use political frames that center on the "working family," as a way to co-opt the conservative discursive hold on "family values," because it does not take into account the sexual politics of intimate life or kinship or recognize the great variation in family structures and gender relations that are part and parcel of globalization. Progressive organizations that make a simple appeal to "working families"--without recognizing the complexity of families, e.g., that some members of families are exploited outside of families or are at risk within them, trapped in authoritarian, exploitative, or violent living arrangements--will not be able to mobilize a viable progressive labor movement (Duggan L., "Crossing the line: The Brandon Tina case and the social psychology of working class resentment", in *New Labor Forum*, vol. 12, No. 3, pp. 37-44 2005, 38). Cognitively such language evokes the patriarchal family based on traditional gender roles and leaves little room for labor to address the real needs of many workers who live their lives within alternative families including single-headed households, multigenerational households, gay and lesbian households, co-habiting adults, single households, childless couples, and unrelated adults sharing domestic responsibilities.

Claudia Hinojosa

Toward a Vision of Sexual and Economic Justice
Thought Paper

CHALLENGING AN OLD (AND FALSE) DILEMMA: ECONOMIC (AND SEXUAL) JUSTICE REVISITED

Claudia Hinojosa

As we seek to articulate a vision that leads to a deeper understanding of the connections between economic and sexual rights, we need to address what keeps both activists and scholars from approaching both realms as co-constitutive. While exploring the obstacles to responding effectively to sexual and economic injustice, both in political activism and conceptual representations, we face the challenge of reconfiguring our basic assumptions around justice.

In the time of a well funded and escalating global conservatism, I strongly believe that social movements rely mostly on the force of ideas and on their ability to advance them in the court of public opinion. In this context, I would like to address here some of the challenges that, in my view, a social movement for economic and sexual justice would have to meet in order to articulate a new conceptual horizon towards this vision.

An initial key challenge I see is the need for a political vocabulary and an ethical framework to discuss sexuality from a social justice perspective.

It is an indisputable reality that medical language and thinking continue to define the social and legal debates around sexuality and continue pervading all expressions of public opinion, while naturalizing compulsory heterosexuality.

The naturalization of sexuality as the heterosexual model has been, on the one hand, an obstacle to locate historically and deconstruct certain sexual practices based on inequity and coercion. On the other hand, this depoliticization process has split off the debates on sexuality from the social justice and human rights agendas. Furthermore, some of the acts of torture and violations of bodily integrity perpetrated by a number of medical treatments in the name of sexual normalization are often perceived as “beneficial” for those who “suffer” the disorder, and not as human rights violations.

What I would like to suggest is that the recognition of sexual rights as human rights will demand transcending the limits of the medical “scientific” model, to look at the ethical dimensions of human sexual experience.

This ethical perspective on sexuality is hardly achievable if we continue to define human sexual experience exclusively as biology, and not as a contested ethical domain; if sexuality is viewed solely as nature, and not as culture.

The absence of an ethical perspective on the conditions in which sexual activity takes place is clearly reflected by what we could describe as some legal aberrations. We know, for example, that marital rape continues to be legal in many cultural and political contexts, while loving relationships between men, for example, even in consensual and responsible arrangements, are punishable, in certain political contexts, even with death.

In face of a legal system that has codified mechanically sexual acts by identifying through which parts of the body and between which persons they take place, Jeffrey Weeks proposed already in 1986 to rather consider the context and the meanings that the relationship has for those individuals involved in it, assigning freedom of choice a crucial role.

Ultimately, the goal of a social struggle for sexual rights can be envisioned as the possibility of fostering new practices based on human rights principles and as the aspiration of endowing human sexual experience with new meanings. Beyond the challenge of putting an end to the impunity enjoyed by persistent power abuse in the exercise of sexuality, lies the challenge of moving from the language of denounce exclusively to the language of possibilities.

And yet, it is impossible to underestimate that our point of departure is a dominant sexual culture in which all sexual practices, particularly if they are pleasurable or not linked to reproduction are *guilty, unless proven innocent*.

The development of a new ethical framework in this regard could possibly layout the vision of a political culture in which we can revisit sexuality as a practice of freedom, as a legitimate domain for the for the search of pleasure or a loving form of communication based on equality, responsibility and choice.

A new understanding of sexuality from this perspective could possibly be also the gateway to more effective strategies to counter an international right wing that has made opposition to sexual rights one of the main points of its agenda, while it imposes its monopoly over ethical claims. It can only be ironical that at a moment in time when the traditional nuclear family has been publicly associated to serious moral problems, such as domestic violence, child abuse or marital rape - exposed and challenged by the women's movement, while systematically ignored and denied by conservative ideologies- it is the right wing voices that have been self proclaimed the guardians of "family values".

Another task I envisage towards a vision of economic and sexual justice as co-constitutive is challenging the false dilemma between the social justice agenda and the sexual rights agenda.

The social movements that have brought to public debate the regulation of sexuality, along with its control and exclusion mechanisms, have struggled for a

very long time with political and conceptual dynamics that have persistently split off the issue from the social justice and human rights agendas.

In exploring the obstacles that the issue of sexuality has faced to be incorporated to the economic justice debates, we need to recall that the discussions around Development throughout the second half of the 20th century were dominated by the false dichotomy (resulting from the dynamics of Cold War) between civil and political rights, and economic, social and cultural rights.

In the context of the alleged conflict between civil and political liberties and the satisfaction of economic needs, the international system dedicated the past few decades to promote Development. Meanwhile the economic situation of the so-called “developing world” continued to deteriorate considerably.

As much as economic disparities keep growing, we often witness also the strengthening of the false dilemma between the efforts to end poverty and the struggles for sexual justice, the former generally seen as the agenda of the “truly pressing” issues, and the latter as a frivolous concern, in face of a situation of extreme economic injustice.

This misperception around sexuality has not only distorted the understanding of numerous social realities. It has also permeated the funders’ criteria regarding what are considered relevant projects for their Development and Human Rights programs.

In order to fully incorporate the notion of sexual rights to the economic justice agenda, it is imperative to rethink and document the connections between sexual exclusion and poverty. Much documentation work is needed, for example, to assess the cost of the silent migration of LGBT people from several rural areas in search for the distance from their communities and for the anonymous lifestyles big cities offer. The lack of housing opportunities and the denial of health rights for same-sex partnerships. The lack of job opportunities when one’s personal life is not properly concealed. The need to leave school in search of the financial independence that often precedes sexual independence.

Also, in the context of globalization and increased –and “feminized”- poverty, a sexual rights agenda would need to address the linkages between economic exclusion and the lack of access to sexual autonomy, in a prevailing social setting that “locks” women through marriage into an entire system that limits their sexual options by the promise of material support and the status of respectability, in exchange for sexual constraint. The social assumptions of compulsory heterosexuality have normalized the economic subordination of women. And the linkages between economic dependence and vulnerability to sexual violence are nowadays a well-documented social reality.

In order to articulate the demand for sexual rights as a crucial aspect of the struggles for economic justice we certainly need to articulate a new vision of justice. I envisage the need both for a vision of economic justice that doesn't remain blind to sexual injustice and its economic consequences, and a more integral struggle for sexual rights, sharply aware of the economic enabling conditions to achieve sexual justice.

Towards this vision, the renewal of the international debates on the meanings of Development seems an invaluable conceptual resource.

As we know, Amartya Sen, one of the most eloquent exponents of the new theories of Development, has challenged not only the notion of « economic growth », but also the very premise that such growth can be attained without striving for social inclusion, freedom and equality.

Furthermore, Sen states that Development can no longer be anything other than a process of expanding the actual freedoms that may be enjoyed by individuals, as much as economic growth reflected in indicators is no more than a **means** to expand the opportunities and freedoms enjoyed by the human beings that build societies.

I see in this new understanding of Development a powerful vision in the process of advancing the struggle for sexual rights as an integral and indivisible aspect of a larger struggle for social and economic justice.

Josephine Ho

Toward a Vision of Sexual and Economic Justice
Thought Paper

Sexual and Economic Justice Preparatory Questions

1. From your activist and/or academic position, what are the most pressing concerns surrounding the intersection of economic and sexual justice? With respect to which concrete issues does that intersection appear most relevant?
2. What are the possibilities for collaboration between and among social movements with respect to global economic and sexual justice?
3. How do we think through sexual justice in intersectional form – attentive to structurally produced differences of gender, race, class, and able to produce the political responses these differences require?
4. What are the obstacles, both in political activism and conceptual representations, to responding effectively to sexual and economic injustice? What keeps activists and scholars from approaching sexual and economic justice as co-constitutive?
5. What initiatives can we invoke that consider sex work from the interlinked perspectives of sexual and economic justice, and how can these help us re-think the broader debate between global markets and intimacies, love and sex?
6. How is the intersection between sexual and economic injustice shaped by war and militarization?
7. HIV/AIDS scholarship and activism is another privileged site within which to interrogate the connections between sexual and economic justice, structural inequality and intimate desire. What are the possibilities in this arena for forging a model of global justice in its full, sexual and economic, complexity? What are the limitations?
8. What scale is helpful to you as you approach these questions? The national? The global? The regional? The local? The North-South? Something else? To whom do you look for responses that will secure sexual and economic justice? The state? Transnational social movements? Bretton Woods institutions? Civil society organizations?
9. Finally, how do we develop effective rhetorics and practices of resistance in the present context, and how do we reimagine global justice as involving both sexual and economic components?

The condition under discussion in the west has been variedly described as reflecting a shift from politics of redistribution (quest for economic justice) to politics of recognition (quest for identity-based justice), or as “a decoupling of cultural politics from social politics.” Economic justice and sexual justice are then conceived as two types of social movements and two maybe equally worthwhile goals that need to be articulated, for the reason of expanding and radicalizing democracy (following thinkers such as Laclau and Mouff). As the eventuality of the shift or decoupling gets further

consolidated through discussions including this one, it may tend to obscure the social and historical processes in different national contexts that constitute/condition people's sense of economic justice and sexual justice, as well as produce different ramifications and configurations for the evolving intersection between movements that work for economic and sexual justice. In other words, while we mull over the possibilities of linkage, we may need to step back in the first place and take a closer look at the two sides that we are trying to link.

I would like to focus on two different points here. The first one has to do with the specificity of the contexts in which the desired articulation is to take place; the second one has to do with the realities of the late modernity that we inhabit, which has created an unusual situation for social movements and their articulation.

I. Economic Justice and Sexual Justice in Context

To begin with, the concept of economic justice itself may be somewhat difficult to emerge or access in the context of many so-called "new democracies" previously recruited into and thus pervaded by the Cold-War scheme and mentality, where leftist thinking had been consistently considered dangerous and vigilantly targeted for criminalization. As a result, "justice"--as a frame of thought that involves a structural, progressive vision of an alternative social order--is rarely applied to economic matters in such national contexts. Instead, individual diligence or hard work, salvaged from agriculture-based work ethic and now advocated as proud national spirit in response to a globalizing world economy, has been augmented as the only fitting guarantee of economic gain. (In a context where heightened intensity of work has become commonplace, the image of prostitution as merely "lying down to earn profits" stands as a formidable obstacle to the decriminalization of sex work.) In recent years, policies described as realizing the welfare state or social democracy constitute the closest thing to the concept of economic justice in such states, but the measures were introduced more as ballot-winning strategies than real efforts at reaching just redistribution. The half-hearted gesture ends up impoverishing whatever liberal heritage that is still available, while making socialist thinking all the more superfluous now that the state has purportedly mitigated the impact of misfortunes with piecemeal relief plans or isolated benefit policies. The changing mode of production from large industries to outsourcing subcontractors further weakens organized labor, making it imperative to court media attention in order to publicize the plight of labor under globalization. Struggles for economic justice, as a result, often have to resort to discourses of universal claims such as "human rights" or "equal rights" (merely adding "labor" in front of them) in order to be at least presentable and palatably recognizable by the general public in such nation-states. Under such circumstances, any discussion of economic justice will have to first overcome the pervasive but limiting horizon of social welfare.

The unique formation of under-nourished progressive thought in the new democracies may make itself negligible for the state, yet the fragility of the new regimes in maintaining political legitimacy and their urgency to consolidate political rule in the meantime often leave the door wide open for conservative (mostly Christian) NGOs, ready on hand with their socially regidifying agenda to help strengthen the state's power

and rule in exchange for funding and expanded political influence. It has already been observed that Christian NGOs in such nation-states, commonly considered representing a definite minority position, have become increasingly outspoken and quite adept in mobilizing prejudice-ridden tradition and commonsense to criticize gay marriage, sex education, media reports of sex nonconformity, etc. But unlike Christian NGOs in the west that usually stand for WASP values, Christian NGOs in the new democracies skillfully present themselves as speaking for the weak and vulnerable, i.e., children and women, and have successfully claimed moral high ground. They, with the help from like-minded international organizations, vigorously demand the state to enforce laws against sex work in the name of tighter regulation against the trafficking of women. NGO/IGO initiatives have also been urging states to put up at record speed new local legislations and global protocols in regard to sex-related information and contact, while global consensus on issues such as pornography and pedophilia and human trafficking is already fairly well-constructed along conservative lines. *(No, we cannot look to the state, or Bretton Woods institutions, or the civil society organizations for responses to secure sexual and economic justice. More often than not, they are the perpetrators or at least the accessories of such injustices.)* Many such NGOs have turned themselves into part of the state apparatus in the new form of politics called “governance,” by either helping to justify new legal institutions or to monitor enforcement of state regulation. Most of such aggressive maneuver can be seen in part as an active response to the sex revolution and the sex rights movements that have been budding under the same universal claims of human rights and equal rights in many of these nations since the 1990s. While many existing sex rights movements maintain a cautious distance from those high-profiled issues marked for global extinction, it is undeniable that the fall-out of this constructed sex phobia leaves few untouched, as the new sexual deployment of moral panics fans up stigma and shame for any sexual nonconformity (easily commutable to criminality). Incidentally, the target of conservative NGOs is rarely movements for economic justice, but almost always movements for sexual justice.

Significantly, the rise of moral vigilantism in this day and age of multiculturalism embodies a conservative response to the crisis of reproduction faced by capitalism on the global scale, as increasing heterogeneity, expressed most visibly as fast-growing differences in sex- and body-related values for the young, is accelerated by globalization to the degree that traditional channels of social reproduction, the family and relations between generations, are profoundly disturbed. As recent developments in moral vigilantism rush to deal with these outgrowths in the new democracies through both legislation and litigation, and as yellow journalism and the tabloidization of media accelerate and magnify the stigma/scandal of gender/sexual non-conformity, economic buoyancy is becoming increasingly precarious for the sexually adventurous. New legislations and litigations that criminalize internet messages of sexual invitation or negotiation under the charge of dissemination of obscenity or inciting sexual transaction, for example, leave a trail of scared and silenced young internet users; while the vice police who crash gay home parties or nudist camps leave crushed and shamed many souls who could no longer lead regular lives but must live as intimidated citizens who will henceforth shy away from nonconformity, not to mention acts of civil disobedience or social activism. In such a morally charged “exclusive society,” neither economic nor sexual dissidence needs to be handled through the iron fist of the state; dissidence and

activism can be most efficiently preempted through the threat of sexual stigma and shame, deeply entrenched now as fear.

Most unfortunately, while many of the new subcultures and cultural commodities and practices being circulated by globalization are characterized by the conservative NGOs as harmful to children and women and thus constitute cause for moral crusades (marginal sexualities included), the traditional left converges in seeing such outgrowths as capitalism's latest scheme in ideological domination/exploitation and thus becomes strange bed-fellows with the moral crusaders.

II. Contingent/Surrogate Identities in Action

The odd alliance between the traditional left and the religious right may be an important obstacle to the connection being envisioned in this discussion, yet the realities of social movements in the new democracies demonstrate that the linkage between movements for economic justice and those for sexual justice is already multiple and complicated, often facilitated by the same late modernity that is said to have greatly weakened social activism. Let me raise two examples here.

I have already pointed out that when it comes to social movements in the new democracies, particular interests often need to be expressed in universal claims (human rights, civil rights, citizenship) so as to win greater appeal in the ballot- or election-oriented new democracies. Universal claims may attract surrogate subjects who originally come from some particular identity but for the moment sojourn (a certain word in Chinese means surrogate and sojourn at the same time) in a movement that has either wider appeal or enjoys popular attention. Universal claims may also prove to be not enough one day as lesbians who used to work within the women's movement move on to organize their own movement when lesbian issues seem to be of more urgency. All in all, the convergence of terms forges an opportunity for various causes to be understood and imagined within the same framework, and, to a certain extent, also enriches the meaning of the terms as various subject groups (e.g. lesbians) inject their own concerns and interests into the discussion (e.g. feminism). As things stand now in the new democracies, and despite criticisms of the limitations of liberal rights discourse, "citizens," much like women in the feminist discourse and workers in the Marxist discourse, now provide the broadest inclusive term that could serve to unify varied subjects and movements in the new democracies undergoing restructuring by the ever-expanding process of globalization. In a sense, all have become surrogate citizens—from women seeking more political involvement and power, to alien labors seeking equal pay and citizenship, to imported brides seeking residency and job opportunities, to laid-off workers seeking compensation or reemployment, to gays and lesbians seeking basic civil rights, to porn-readers and S/Mers seeking freedom of information and expression, etc.—all are employing the same legitimizing discourse of human rights and equal rights, and the appropriation of similar terms offers a natural linkage through which different social movements could envision the alignment of their claims.

If sharing a common resource of progressive discourse somewhat facilitates the linkage among various struggling social movements, the overlapping formation of the

movements' constituencies effects further occasions of collaboration. For movements are always born in overlapping historical processes and it is impractical to imagine them as completely distinct from one another. Labor organizers find themselves faced with uprising illiterate lower-class prostitutes and could not help but become organizers for the new sex worker's movement; a transwoman activist now joins labor movement gatherings because her recent experience demonstrates that employment obstacles for trans are becoming blatant; an environment movement organizer now befriends the sex liberation movement because the former's recent adoption of "Rather Nude Than Nuke" skit is arousing social controversy and needs legitimating discourses from the latter. These are all true examples that have helped create a complex web of inter-penetration and mutual learning among social movements in the new democracies, and they are further accelerated by the fact that what used to be the anchors of life that dictate individual lives and form movements—identities, careers, marriages, families, religious beliefs, theories, nation-state identity—are fast becoming contingencies being reshaped and worked over by evolving late modernity. As a result, a butch lesbian may turn toward the new transgender movement and ponder chest removal surgery, but nothing more. The seeming fluidity of identity is, after all, not a concept, but the reality of historical development as everything else is changing or uncertain. As identities proliferates with the rise and fall of issues churned up by globalization, even structural contradictions are increasingly and continuously displaced or replaced by other newly emerged contradictions. Basic freedom of expression, once considered a quintessential human rights issue in the new democracies, is now championed most ardently by sexual minorities such as S/Mers as their cultural heritage is increasingly subjected to newly-legislated conservative scrutiny. These may be said to be merely functional and circumstantial connections, but I am not so sure that's all there is.

The idea of contingent/surrogate identities may be simply understood on two levels of meaning: 1. particular interest subjects locating themselves in the general category of "citizens" and use universal human rights discourse as their basis of resistance, 2. as new issues emerge, certain members of movements move from one movement to another, situating themselves in relation to new formations of resistance and thus building up new networks of relationships and alliances. This is not to downplay real difficulties in building alliances among social movements, where various relations, different values, unsettled disagreements, and petrified beliefs have sedimented into distances and indifference. The fact of matter is, differences among various women's groups or among lesbian and gay groups may be just as deep and wide as those between the quest for economic justice and that for sexual justice. But as history has it, new issues and new identities and new contradictions are always surfacing, and their development awaits nurturing. That is why when the prostitutes' rights movement rose in Taiwan in 1997, it was such a wake-up call for feminists, gay activists, and labor organizers. For in that one moment, all three movements saw how they need and must work together in order to respond to the emerging sex workers, and the continued collaboration in activism for the sex worker's cause has proven to be mutually educational and transforming for all. Globalization-induced migration of population (ranging from state-recruited construction labor to domestic help demanded by middle-class households, to women crossing borders illegally in search of better income in sex work) is now developing into another learning opportunity for existing social movements.

Perhaps, instead of looking backward toward theory or history for clues to the inherent connections between economic justice and sexual justice, we should be looking forward toward new issues and new subjects that are hard to characterize into existing categories but are there to challenge our basic conception and imagination.

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Toward a Vision of Sexual and Economic Justice
Thought Paper

Thought paper for Barnard College colloquium “Towards a Vision of Economic and Sexual Justice.”

November 25, 2007

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On Sexual-Economic Relations

The most pressing concern for me as an academic/activist is the liberation of sexual-economic relations in “the Third World” – especially the Caribbean - from oppressive laws and policies, conservative moralities, negative beliefs, stigma, prejudice, and violence. In other words, of concern is to unearth these relations from their current criminalized and stigmatized status’ and to have them recognized and accepted in dominant discourse as a part of everyday social life. By sexual-economic relations I refer not just to sex work, but especially to that which is defined in the Caribbean and African countries as “transactional sex” - activities that involve a deliberate exchange of sex, often by young women, for some form of “betterment” – material goods, clothes/fashion, education/school fees, accommodation, meals, social status. The urgency here is that sexual-economic relations have long histories in regions such as the Caribbean, seem to be widespread and on the rise, have important consequences for social and economic relations as well as for public health, yet are ignored or discriminated against in political, academic and activist discourses.

In order to do justice to sexual-economic relations, I propose that we need a fundamental transformation of understandings of sexuality. Important to such work is the interrogation of underlying assumptions and cultural meanings of sexuality. For example, in light of the pervasiveness of transactional sex in Caribbean societies, we can ask whether a notion of sexuality as separate from the ways in which we feed, clothe and house ourselves, is useful for apprehending contemporary social relations and identities. Or should we be open to the idea that sexuality is, in some instances, always-and-already “contaminated” by economic needs, wants and conditions?

If sexuality is an unstable category, and we allow that sexuality may at times be saturated with the economic, sexual praxis that involves economic dimensions need not signify degradation or alienation but can instead be viewed as part of a range of expressions of sexuality. Sexual relationships inspired by economic interests might then be considered equal to those that are inspired by physical desires or ideas of love, and conceptualized as equally valid and legitimate. In other words, I am suggesting that we need a close examination of the ways in which contemporary forms of sexual-economic praxis produces alternative conceptions of sexuality, and an engagement with the ways in which this discourse challenges and changes existing notions of sexuality. And if we are to follow this line of reasoning, some struggles for sexual justice would appear as struggles for economic justice.

Moreover, thinking through struggles of sexual-economic justice in this intersectional way may mean attending to other matters that may not appear immediately as “sexuality” issues. One clear example of this lies in the phenomenon of “the Caribbean beach boy” or

“Rental” who sexually and otherwise services female and male tourists, and whose relationships with the tourists, while gendered and economic, are overdetermined by racialized constructions, fantasies and desires. We are forced then to engage with processes of racialized globalization, (neo)colonialisms and new imperialisms that continue to position “black” and “brown” peoples and the “Third World” as sites for western or EuroAmerican political and cultural domination, maldevelopment and hyperexploitation. The challenge, then, is not just to ask questions about how race, gender, sexuality and economics are linked or inscribed in the social but, rather, to develop conceptual tools for capturing complex sexual expressions, and to build struggles with these new conceptualizations.

Obstacles to responding effectively to the notion of sexual economic justice are ideological, political, legal, academic, social – and complicated!

One major obstacle is that there are a number of double-standards in operation.

For example: prostitution and other types of sexual-economic relationships are on the one hand quite widely accepted as something poor women in the Caribbean engage in “to make do”: as a survival strategy under patriarchal capitalism. On the other hand, this behaviour is coded in most laws and policies as illegal, and women are heavily policed, judged and discriminated against if seen to be engaged in sexual-economic relationships.

With regards to racialized sexual-economic relationships, we find on the one hand that the (white) global north and global metropolises are held up as the epitome of development, their populations welcomed to poorer areas of the world as tourists for the economic benefits they bring, and that race is strategically deployed to lure tourists to the

countries. On the other hand, young black and brown men and women who engage in sexual economic relations with tourists are disparaged – as “low-lives” “traitors” to the community or ethnic group, “MSM” or “whores” etc, - and believed to sully the national and regional reputation.

A second obstacle surrounds the subject of sexuality itself, both at social and academic levels. On the social, it is often shrouded in double-entendre, secrecy and shame. In many families it is still taboo to talk about sex with girls, and the idea of sexual-economic relations evokes a social response about impropriety that is heavily influenced by conservative or fundamentalist religious beliefs. This obstacle easily wends its way from the social into academic work and research, politics, or HIV/AIDS and social activism. At the academic, level, sexuality theories draw strength primarily from GLBT social identity movements and studies in the global north from the second half of the twentieth century. “Sexuality studies” then has traditionally paid little attention to the economic, other than occasionally as an issue of class location of sexual identity groups. Sex work and other forms of sexual-economic practices have barely been taken up or recognized within this field, leaving huge gaps and silences in the academy that are replicated in political and activist domains.

A third major obstacle is the uneven global economic development that sustains racial and gendered imbalances of power, and ultimately supports the gross exploitation of sexual-economic relationships through industries such as tourism.

Initiatives that could be invoked/supported in the struggles for sexual-economic justice could involve:

- i) campaigns to remove laws that criminalize and oppress sexual-economic expressions, including laws against prostitution and homosexuality;
- ii) the production of academic and cultural work that expose the double-standards, development of more knowledge about transactional sex, and support for the appreciation of the messy connections between sexuality and the economy;
- iii) the creation of safe, sustainable income-generating alternatives for poor young women and men to participate in the global economy that may include, but does not place a premium on sexuality;
- iv) opposition to limited or conservative views of sexuality that may be articulated through the Church, schools, the media, and the academy;

In such areas of the world as the Caribbean and Africa, HIV/AIDS activism is one of the main areas for developing this agenda, as it is through the lens of the epidemic that sexual praxis is made visible. And it is here that we are seeing some of the greatest strides in addressing sexual-economic relations (i.e. through sex worker rights health campaigns). There are several constraints and complications here, which require attention (and would need to be taken up in another paper).

For such a struggle to be effective we would need to start from the local, taking a “bottom-up approach”, starting at the level of community in the global South with women’s, sex worker, and “all-sexuals” organizations, drawing upon knowledge and actions of feminist academic communities and labour unions, and building upwards to

influence national politics and agendas as well as regional and transnational policies (with and through UN agencies and feminist INGOs).

Building resistance to sexual-economic injustice in the present context requires much patience, and involves small-steps. We need to continue to collaborate with people outside of the academy, particularly through involvements with communities and individuals at the local level, building good communication strategies and using appropriate technology and media (i.e. not everyone is internet connected).

Global sexual-economic justice ultimately needs a redistribution of wealth, so that people are not economically pressured or forced into relationships with others – for sexual, racial, or gendered reasons – as well as alternative systems of production and consumption, the decriminalization and destigmatization of prostitution and homosexuality, an acceptance of sexual labour as a legitimate form of work, and greater appreciation of sexual difference and diversity.

Irene León

Toward a Vision of Sexual and Economic Justice
Thought Paper

**Sexual and Economic Justice
Preparatory Questions**

Irene León

1. What are the possibilities for collaboration between and among social movements with respect to global economic and sexual justice?

Over the past few years, the social movements have taken distinct positions over sexual diversity, especially regarding sexual orientation¹. As a result of proposals by the South/South LGBT Dialogue, the World Assembly of Social Movements has included in recent years clear pronouncements in its Declaration and mobilisation plans. The 2006 call was worded as follows: “We affirm our respect for sexual diversity and the autonomy of individuals. We respect each person’s right to freely make decisions about their body and sexuality. We reject any form of discrimination related to personal choice and we call for support of the mobilization on June 28 for the full recognition of sexual diversity.”²

The World Social Forum³ and the Americas Social Forum⁴ also included these principles in its equality policies, thus incorporating diversities and gender as central hubs, as a means of broaching of a number of inherent problems in its main proposal: to think and build “another possible world”, as well as for dealing with a group of related issues concerning resistances to globalisation. As the la widest worldwide initiative in history, plural interaction between different intellectual and activist movements concerned with sexual diversity issues with a great diversity of sectors, has led to an unprecedented opening-up and coming together of inter-sectional visions and initiatives.

On the other hand, the feminist as well and the LGBT movements, often focusing on the past regarding very specific issues, have been developing and/or making visible a great diversity of initiatives and demands with multiple proposals in this new century. The most notable example is the Women's Global Charter for Humanity, part of the World March of Women, which includes the most crucial issues for women and the world. These issues relating to sexual justice are present and are part of the broad vision of change regarding peace, economic justice, poverty, etc.

In the same way, as part of the wide ranging dynamics concerning LGBT participation and content, networks and movements have initiated and developed proposals that converge with those of the model of change⁵. For example, the LGBT South/South Dialogue is part

¹ Leon Irene (Ed.), *La Otra América en Debate*, Aportes del Foro Social Américas, Foro Social Américas, Ecuador 2006, 494 p.

² http://www.movimientos.org/fsm2006/show_text.php3?key=6428

³ www.fsm.org.br

⁴ www.forosocialamericas.org www.forosocialamericas.org/index.phtml.en

⁵ Leon Irene, Mtetwa Phumi, *Globalization: LGBT Alternatives*, LGBT South-South Dialogue, Ecuador 2003, 97 pgs

of collective processes such as the Web Community of Social Movements⁶ (made up by the small peasant/small farmers', urban, women's, antiracist, etc., movements) is a member of the WSF International Council, and is an active member of the World Assembly of Social Movements. The political confluence leads to a joint, progressive appropriation of sexual rights proposals.

Dozens of regional and local initiatives are a reflection of this rich process of inter-action embarked on by the social movements on a world scale. But it should also be noted that the most important theoretical and political proposals emerging, such as de-globalisation, alter-globalisation, among others, are based on visions of inclusion, which pose daily reality as a stage for possible changes. Issues such as the marketing of women's bodies, the trafficking of people, the right to personal autonomy, etc., are now part of this analytical universe.

An important aspect of recent developments in the movement of alternatives to globalisation is pluralism, the inter-action between the political, academic, militant and 'popular' spheres, as a creative process in imagining another possible world. One of the outcomes of this imagining of a diverse universe, with multiple practices and ways of thinking, is managing to develop discursive convergences into concrete actions. In other words, the main door open for considering economic and sexual justice at the same time is related to proposals for changing the model through concrete measures for making equality visible and sustaining social, political, economic, body, identity, etc., self-determination.

2. What are the obstacles, both in political activism and conceptual representations, to responding effectively to sexual and economic injustice? What keeps activists and scholars from approaching sexual and economic justice as co-constitutive?

Sexual justice is a recent concept and its intersection with the economy is new. It is a focus that is only just beginning to define itself and that, in order to establish itself, needs to be sustained from multiple points of analysis.

On the other hand, predominating views, both with academia and society; consider issues of economic justice as an added factor, set in the "social" sphere, not in the economic one. From this perspective, the solution to problems that are a result of economic injustice are dealt with from partial views and through localised and focused policies and palliative measures, generally "assistencialist", aimed at sectors considered to be living in extreme poverty, quantified by parameters unrelated to issues of sexual justice.

Issues regarding sexual justice are, generally, seen as issues of concern only to minorities, removed from economic considerations, especially macro-economics. This leads to it being included within sociology or anthropology, and its virtual inexistence in economics.

Economic dimensions of sexuality continue to require research and analysis; although many feminist studies have revealed the power in sexuality, this has not been widely

⁶ www.movimientos.org

related to the economy. The focus on the commercialisation of the body is clearly an economic issue. However, this is not the case as regards to private relations and sexuality.

In the Latin American case, the economic model, due to its exclusionary effects, made the rights won by women in the past decades inapplicable. Both the carrying-out and the obstacles for them to exercise their rights, are intrinsically linked to the way the connection between gender relations with the structural, social, economic, cultural and political situations. This means that access to equality is produced proportionally, to their positioning within relations of class, ethnicity, sexual orientation, place of origin, among others. This situation has generated a set of priorities among many sectors, for whom sexual justice does not figure as a priority.

In the same way, in this same region, the processes of change currently taking place in most Latin American countries start off from a political vision aware of intersectoralism. Many countries have promoted a process of public development policies (the citizens' revolution in Ecuador, for example, includes sexual diversity as a priority issue in its strategic development plan). However, conservative sectors in a number of countries maintain their influence in academia and society in general; furthermore, ultra-conservative groups have formed and strengthened in the sectors, promoting the fight against sexual diversity, abortion, contraception, sexual education, etc.

In this situation, the challenges are many. One is to ensure that the inter-relationship between economic and sexual justice are visibilised and treated as political issues, concerned with power relations between different sectors that fight over societies' orientation and definition.

But another great challenge is to reveal the inter-link between relations of economic and sexual power as being part of the dynamics of the existing model: globalisation. And, finally, to subvert the existing unjust and patriarchal vision of "integrating excluded groups into the economy", especially in stereotyped areas, in order to establish one in which these are considered to be economic subjects, with equal rights. This would contribute to see the intersections between different aspects of people's lives and pose them as questions of justice.

Gabrielle Le Roux

Toward a Vision of Sexual and Economic Justice
Thought Paper

TOWARDS A VISION OF SEXUAL AND ECONOMIC JUSTICE
by Gabrielle Le Roux

The opportunity of sharing visions of sexual and economic justice in such stimulating company is very exciting. I have battled terribly and spent many sleepless nights with the questions which I found very dauntingly academic. Here I attempt to answer them but probably raise more questions than answers. My approach is pragmatic not academic, I am a feminist activist and an artist. In my work I learn from listening to ordinary people and believe that differences in education need not create barriers to communication. I am inspired and nourished by many examples of courage and commitment and in the process come to understand the broader world we share.

It is in the ground-breaking and exciting sexual rights activism geared to service the needs of working class sexual minorities that connections are made between labour rights and sexual rights, between the various groupings who are particularly vulnerable to the extremes of homophobic and transphobic violence and hate-crimes. The gap between what has occurred in order to build the sort of global gay movement that anyone with an online computer can use to access the world of alternative lifestyles, and the utter isolation of people all over the world without that access, is an economic gap. Class is the issue too often ignored in much sexual rights activism.

Often less resourced organisations don't know about each other. They may not be known about by the groupings that have high-level discussions either so their examples of good practice are not incorporated at the levels where there are real resources. Linking up and sharing information between exciting organizations and creating initiatives that facilitate travel both virtual and physical for the people doing the work, and result in materials - videos, books, talks, performances, exhibitions that can be distributed broadly and stimulate public debate is important. Their work is not reflected in the mainstream media - what do we do about the media?

People need to talk to each other in language everyone understands about the diverse problems they face across all the divides of privilege, poverty, gender, race, sexual orientation, education and so on. The process of bringing people together and facilitating discussion so that everyone's voice can be heard is profoundly transformative, people educate each other, it is a political intervention. This is something I have rich experience of. People change each other's lives with their stories. Each group/class/sector has its own language and terms, our lived experience is buried in that language, learning the languages is the beginning of understanding different experiences and concepts. I find academic language dries up that freedom people feel to express themselves. Although probably for academics the reverse is true.

Effects of socialization include how access to resources and education shape one's chances of getting heard and taken seriously in the world. The less money you have and the less you conform to prescribed gender and sexual norms the further you slide from the likelihood of being granted respect and rights. Respect itself is key to finding

workable strategies that can create sexual and economic justice. It is too little valued – more emphasis is placed on being respectable. Even the term “respectability” conjures a picture of middle-class conformity. The old virgin and whore divide is still in place and misshapes our world. It even affects many human rights groups where attempts to be respectable so that their struggle can be seen as legitimate are divisive and this is being exacerbated by funders right-wing agendas. Sisters, a drop in centre for transgender Thai sexworkers I spent time in in Pattaya was only allowed by USAID to do health support but no advocacy or educational work. All too often transgender people are made to feel unwelcome in both the gender and sexual rights sectors in spite of all they have to teach about both.

The intention of the project below was to find and share information about organizations and movements engaged with sexual rights where the priorities of the poorest, most vulnerable and socially ostracized members of the community shape the agenda. Where this is happening there is no gap between sexual and economic justice. I collaborated with Nigerian blogger Sokari Ekine at the World Social Forum in Nairobi earlier this year in this ad hoc and unfunded online exhibition of portraits and podcasts. “Sexuality and Social Justice at the WSF 2007” pays tribute to activists who put their lives on the line for sexual rights. www.pambazuka.org/blogs/wsf2007

Brief extracts from that project follow with the corresponding portraits:



Victor

Mukasa, Ugandan LGBTI activist, Frontline Human Rights Defender, co-founder of Sexual Minorities Uganda, SMUG, now working with IGLHRC recently took the Ugandan government to court in a brave move that mobilized the LGBTI community in an unprecedented way. Victor's life is lived at the intersection of sexual and economic injustice. Commenting on the threat of homophobic legislation, the proposed Nigerian Same Sex Marriage Bill:

“The bill prohibits activism around gay rights and will tie the hands of human rights defenders. If passed in Nigeria it will spread like a fire around Africa and it will take us back twenty years.”



Manohar Elavarthi director of campaigns and founder of Sangama - a vibrant organization with many thousands of members from sexual minorities in Bangalore describes its inception:

"I'm queer myself and I faced lots of police and thug violence. I joined the student movement in India at the age of 16. In spite of being an activist I found there was no space in the Communist party, the women's movement, students movement and trade unionist movement to talk about my sexuality. That's the main reason I started Sangama.

We realized at Sangama all sexual minorities don't face the same problems. Women face very different problems than men. Men at least are free to move around and women are not free and have to get back home early. Often women don't have jobs and economically are in a different position than men. Transgenders face very different problems to gender-normative people - people can find you out and you are the target for homophobes and transphobes.

With working class people we realized that if you are English speaking and have internet access and you have private space, you can pick a partner using internet, be part of the global gay community. If you're a working class person who doesn't speak English you think you're the only one in the world, there's nobody else like you, you don't know there's a global queer community, you don't even have a name for your sexuality, for your sexual behaviour.

Often the only place you can meet people like you is in a park, in a public toilet in a dark corner where police can abuse you, thugs can beat you up, you can get raped, it's a life-and-death situation. The class makes the extra difference. So that's why we decided to work more and more with people who didn't speak English and working class because they're the ones who needed us the most.

We invited people to come and talk and share their problems and to my surprise, out of 30 people who came to the first meeting, 20 said they were sex-workers and they were facing lots of police problems and needed solutions for this. That opened our eyes and now sexworkers are at the centre of this work.

Initially there were bitter fights and distrust and rejection between the groups. That's when we started building this common identity as a sexual minority person: a person who's excluded, discriminated or facing oppression because of gender identity or sexual expression."



Fadzai Maparutsa, gender officer of Gays and Lesbians of Zimbabwe warns that popular beliefs about low HIV/AIDS transmission between women who have sex with women may be misleading in an African context. Coerced sex with men and “curative” rape mean the figures “could be very high”.



Phumi

Mthetwa, Director of the Equality Project in Johannesburg started young with political and LGBTI activism in South Africa and then South America. She talks about the importance of process and principle. “The old slogan ‘An injury to one is an injury to all’ is as valid now as it was under apartheid. The role of activists is not only to look at my corner but to know what’s happening in other places. We have to speak to each other more, international campaigns like ‘In a diverse world equality comes first’ are important.

We need to see how what is happening in Darfur happens in Colombia and Philippines and we need to see the links. We need an analysis of the context in which we live and how it affects our struggle for sexual rights.”

Conclusion

The people with the most knowledge about economic injustice are the poorest and the ones with the most knowledge about sexual injustice are those who are vulnerable to its worst abuses. Multi-pronged strategies are needed locally, South-South and globally and nothing can be traded off against anything else – we need progressive legislation, and participatory research around issues, creative initiatives and high-level advocacy. Most of all we need to work respectfully and inclusively and break down the barriers in our own lives.

Who gets seen and heard, what gets given importance, what gets seen as political, who and what gets silenced? My portrait and story projects are my response to those questions. They are about seeing, hearing, recording and paying tribute to people whose brave work and choices in the face of poverty, prejudice and societal blindspots goes unrecognized.

Njoki Njoroge Njehu

Toward a Vision of Sexual and Economic Justice
Thought Paper

Intersection of Economic and Sexual Justice (?)

The questions posed here are challenging -- too many and too broad to do justice to. So I will address myself to some general notions and some of the specific issues raised by the questions provided, in no particular order or ranking. I must begin by admitting that I am not wholly clear on what is meant by sexual justice in this particular context and how it differs from gender justice. But I will add that gender justice remains controversial in Kenya, indeed in most of Africa; and sexual justice, if I understand it, is a downright combustible topic.

In a few days I will be at a conference in Johannesburg focused on funding for African women's human rights. Among the organization listed as attending the conference is the Association of African Lesbians, a group that is no doubt challenging Africans' very definitions of themselves and the continent. If I had written this paper two years back, before I relocated back home to Kenya it would also have been a different paper, different and perhaps less accurate views of this/such a debate in the African context. As of this writing, my response is that across almost all of Africa, except, to some degree, in South Africa, the notion of sexual justice is a concept that is difficult to articulate let alone get people to understand or support.

A few anecdotes from my Kenyan experience inform my assertions above. The very notion of gender justice - not sexual justice - is often ridiculed and painted as un-African, unacceptable, and perhaps as the beginning of the end of civilization as we know it, by many politicians, religious leaders, and even some women. In the lead-up to a referendum on a new constitution for Kenya in November 2005, there were entire ethnic communities that opposed the draft constitution on the grounds that it provided for the right of women to inherit land. Also in the last year Parliamentary debate on a proposed Sexual Offences Bill was so sexist and offensive that at one moment all the women members of parliament walked out - I believe they had showed remarkable restraint.. In that debate, it also became clear that a huge majority of men and women do not believe in the very concept of marital rape. On the other hand, wife inheritance (where a widowed woman is inherited and/or 'cleansed' through sex by her late husband's brother or other male relative) is more and more frowned upon, undoubtedly because of the risks it presented in the context of the HIV/AIDS pandemic . But the battle is far from over.

Sexual justice is a concept that is not understood and that is likely to be narrowly construed to only relate to sexuality - here I am assuming this is not how the conference organizers meant it to be understood. Perhaps in most African contexts, I think an interesting, and most potentially productive area to

consider is working on economic justice and progressive politics in general within a context that largely rejects the notion of sexual justice, at least insofar as homosexuals are concerned. The perceived U.S./European/Western "obsession" with sex and sexuality is seen as what distinguishes Africa from the ostensibly overly-modernized West. While most people in the "west" will not openly articulate or express sexist or bigoted ideas and attitudes in 'polite company' that is not the case even in so-called progressive circles in Africa.

I have listened to African colleagues try to explain why, for instance, gay and lesbian rights should not be part of progressive discourse or space, as in the case of the World Social Forum events in Bamako (2006) and Nairobi (2007). The catch all and 'don't need further elaboration' reason being that this is not an African issue. However, given the loud volume and bellicose nature of the discussion about the ordination of openly gay Episcopalians by leaders and members of the African Anglican communion, it is clear that this is an issue that not a small number of Africans feel very strongly about.

Currently, it is difficult to imagine when and in what space and on what scale one can approach questions of economic and sexual justice. The moralistic, socio-cultural construction that sex and sexuality-related issues are often couched in make it even difficult to respond because stereotypes, propaganda, and just plain misinformation surround discussion of these issues. The debate on economic justice is a different ball of wax; the notion of economic justice is widely embraced in its diversity and specificity. Economic justice activism at local levels to transnational solidarity and campaigning is quite common from the struggles of the Khoi San in the Kalahari and anti-gentrification campaigns to huge campaigns such as the ones to cancel debt or end poverty. It is clear that issues of economic justice have respectability and are widely raised across socio-economic, political, religious, racial, gender, and many other lines. And the crossover to the rather obvious links to other justice campaigns (gender, race, labor, environmental, health, social justice, etc.) is often easy and desired.

In fact the economic justice arena is the one area where links are easily made and it is less about looking for leadership from outside and more about people asserting their rights. The state, corporations, and multilateral institutions are often the targets (the accused) in many economic justice struggles. Economic justice campaigners target and engage in advocacy directed at the state, corporations, and the multilaterals as the offending parties or as potential 'allies' in many of the campaigns. I believe the same is/should be true in the case of sexual justice, but due to some of the aforementioned issues, sexual justice does not enjoy the same 'respectability' or support.

And combining the two is/would be perceived as a waste of time, energy, and resources; thus raising some questions: Is there an intersection of sexual and economic justice? How can we bring the intersection front and center of popular struggles, say like what happened with gender and environmental justice? Should we bring about the intersection of sexual and economic justice? Is there a hierarchy of struggles and where does sexual justice fall in the 'mainstream' of struggles?

Rhacel Parreñas

Toward a Vision of Sexual and Economic Justice
Thought Paper

“TOWARDS A VISION OF SEXUAL AND ECONOMIC JUSTICE”

Rhacel Parreñas

University of California, Davis

In addressing the intersections of sexual and economic justice, I find the issue of sex trafficking and the discourse on sex trafficking to be one of our most pressing issues for feminists. According to the United States Trafficking in Persons Report, approximately 800,000 women and children are trafficked in the sex industry. This claim is a contentious and divisive subject for feminists, splitting them into two camps between radical feminists and postmodern feminists. The former accepts the claims of the U.S. Department of State at face value and wholeheartedly support the call of the United States for the “rescue, rehabilitation, and reintegration” of trafficked persons. On the contrary, the latter group questions the discourse on trafficking and considers the current moral hysteria over trafficking to be a backlash against the independent migration of women.

I am currently conducting a research study on migrant Filipina hostesses in Japan, a group labeled by the U.S. Department of State as one of the largest groups of women trafficked into the sex industry. The United States has taken center stage in combating trafficking worldwide. The United States uses a 3 P’s strategy to combat human trafficking: they focus on the “prevention of trafficking, prosecution of traffickers, and protection (social services and other programs) for trafficking victims.” The United States also requires other countries to impose a 3Ps solution to the elimination of trafficking and

accordingly condemns countries that do not. Radical feminists, as I noted above, support the call of the United States for the elimination of trafficking and likewise supports the anti-prostitution stance of the U.S. government.

Due to the stronghold of the U.S. anti-trafficking campaign on our understanding of trafficking as a political issue, “postmodern” feminists such as Laura Agustin (2002) and Nandita Sharma (2003) have avoided the use of the category “trafficked persons” to describe subjugated women migrants. They equate the concept of anti-trafficking with the discouragement of women’s migration and sex work. They consider the construction of trafficking as a global feminist platform. I did likewise when first thinking about migrant hostesses in Japan. I faced a dilemma of whether to think of the current situation of Filipina entertainers as one of migrants or trafficked persons. I hesitated to call them trafficked persons because of the stronghold that the U.S. hegemonic construction has over our understanding of trafficked persons. Following the definition imposed by the United States, a trafficked person is one who is without agency and in need of rescue. Hence, in a public lecture that I delivered earlier in Ochanomizu University in Tokyo, I disagreed with the categorization of hostesses as trafficked persons and insisted on the construction of them as migrants with severe structural constraints. I had accepted without question the U.S. discourse on trafficking and assumed that labeling them as trafficked persons would unavoidably translate to my support for their rescue and return to the Philippines.

Yet, I could not feel completely satisfied with the term “migrant” when referring to the situation of the women who I met in Japan. The term “migrant” does not completely capture their experience of migration, specifically their position of indenture

including the long-term control of managers over their labor, the absence of a release clause in their contracts with managers and promotion agencies, and the heavy penalties that they are saddled with if they choose to terminate their job prior to the end of their contract. These subjections are not mirrored in most other labor migrant communities. As such, they pushed me towards reclaiming the term trafficked from the hegemonic control of the United States and use it to describe the current situation of migrant entertainers.

Without doubt the forced and coerced labor of women and children throughout the world exists and should accordingly be combated and abolished. It is also without doubt that women – who constitute 70 percent of the poorest individuals in the world – are vulnerable to trafficking. Trafficking is a term that feminists need to reclaim. We need to recognize that the multiple forms of trafficking in existence in the twenty-first century require multiple solutions to combat trafficking. Not all trafficked persons are in need of rescue, rehabilitation, and reintegration. Anti-trafficking campaigns should advocate for improving conditions of labor and migration. At the moment, the solution for the trafficking of migrant Filipino entertainers to Japan -- from their rescue to their curtailed entry -- is no more than a call for an end to their migration. But rather than being imposed with restrictions that discourage and make difficult their labor migration to Japan, trafficked persons such as the talents who I met in Japan need greater control of their migration and labor. The only way to successfully design policies to aid trafficked persons is to use a bottom to top approach that takes into account different groups' experiences of trafficking.

Economic justice for women can be achieved with a greater acceptance of the types of work that are acceptable for women to perform. In the Philippines, anti-

trafficking campaigns have led to a reduction on sex workers, specifically hostesses in Japan, but not so much domestic workers. As such, an inadvertent effect of the anti-trafficking campaign in the Philippines has been to further ghettoize migrant women in the low paying occupation of domestic work. With the elimination of hostess work as a viable employment for Filipina migrants, domestic work is now left as the only occupation possible occupation for prospective migrants without an education.

In summary, I am advocating for a middle ground in our discussion of sex trafficking, one that recognizes the reality in the trafficking of women – a reality caused by the fact that 70 percent of the world’s poor are women – but at the same time rejects the universal solutions to trafficking posed by the United States. First, we should reject the call of the US. Congressman Christopher Hill of anti-trafficking as an anti-prostitution campaign. Secondly, we should see trafficked persons as not without agency. Trafficking, as I noted earlier, calls for multiple solutions with our end goal being the need to ensure that women have control over their labor.

Sexual and Economic Justice Preparatory Questions

1. From your activist and/or academic position, what are the most pressing concerns surrounding the intersection of economic and sexual justice? With respect to which concrete issues does that intersection appear most relevant?
2. What are the possibilities for collaboration between and among social movements with respect to global economic and sexual justice?
3. How do we think through sexual justice in intersectional form – attentive to structurally produced differences of gender, race, class, and able to produce the political responses these differences require?
4. What are the obstacles, both in political activism and conceptual representations, to responding effectively to sexual and economic injustice? What keeps activists and scholars from approaching sexual and economic justice as co-constitutive?

5. What initiatives can we invoke that consider sex work from the interlinked perspectives of sexual and economic justice, and how can these help us re-think the broader debate between global markets and intimacies, love and sex?
6. How is the intersection between sexual and economic injustice shaped by war and militarization?
7. HIV/AIDS scholarship and activism is another privileged site within which to interrogate the connections between sexual and economic justice, structural inequality and intimate desire. What are the possibilities in *this* arena for forging a model of global justice in its full, sexual and economic, complexity? What are the limitations?
8. What scale is helpful to you as you approach these questions? The national? The global? The regional? The local? The South-South? Something else? To whom do you look for responses that will secure sexual and economic justice? The state? Transnational social movements? Bretton Woods institutions? Civil society organizations?
9. Finally, how do we develop effective rhetorics and practices of resistance in the present context, and how do we reimagine global justice as involving both sexual and economic components?

Brooke Grundfest Schoepf

Toward a Vision of Sexual and Economic Justice
Thought Paper

BODIES THAT MATTER IN THE TRANSNATIONAL BODY POLITIC

Barnard College, November 29-30, 2007

Brooke Grundfest Schoepf, Ph.D. Harvard Medical School bgscs@netzero.net

WOMEN AND AIDS IN AFRICA: POLICIES THAT FUEL THE EPIDEMIC

In 1985, I began prevention HIV/AIDS research with African colleagues in Kinshasa, the capital of Congo/Zaire. We created the transdisciplinary CONNAISSIDA Project to discover popular constructions of the disease and ways to help people toward behavior change, while at the same time we investigated structural conditions fueling the spread of the epidemic.¹ By then, Zaire's economy had been in crisis for a decade, and the government began to implement some of the more draconian Structural Adjustment (SAP) measures, including downsizing the civil service and user fees for health services and education, accompanied by private sector lay-offs. Research in countries across the continent replicates many of our findings that show how SAPs affect women and men differently.²

While AIDS was discovered in 1983 among wealthy African men seeking treatment in Europe, the vulnerability of women to HIV in Africa, where heterosexual transmission predominates, emerged from the earliest population-based epidemiological research (1984-85).³ Young women of 15 to 24 years were more than twice as likely to be infected as men of the same age. The elements of women's vulnerability, the inability of most women to prevent infection, are multi-dimensional. They include the biology of the female reproductive tract as well as social factors.⁴ Our ethnographic research showed the central role of socioeconomic conditions, politics and culture, including widespread and deepening poverty, SAP measures, gender inequality and prevalent constructions of multi-partnered masculinity, in fueling the epidemic.⁵

In both biomedical and local men's discourse, the bodies that mattered were those of men, particularly men of wealth, political power and renown. Men were warned not to patronize prostitutes, but their regular multiple partnerships were ignored. Women were warned to be faithful to their husbands, and assured that this would protect them from HIV risk.

In central, southern and eastern Africa, old myths with respect to sexually transmitted diseases were applied to AIDS. Discourse inscribed the body politic on women's bodies.⁶ When men fell sick, popular male-dominant constructions, including those of moralist leaders in several religious denominations, blamed women, including wives, for spreading the virus. The discourse of blame echoed the earlier stigma of "polluted" women as "disease-bringers" of ordinary sexually transmitted infections; AIDS was "a women's disease." In reality, although sex workers were the most at risk, many young women had older, sexually experienced partners, and married women's fidelity could not protect them against husbands who had other concurrent partners. Men

began to seek young partners, believing them free of infection. Some men sought to infect many women, either out of anger or because they believed "traditional healers" who asserted that sex with a virgin would rid men of infection.

International discourse and policy errors stimulated African leaders' denial, while moralistic attitudes toward sexuality added fuel to the epidemic. Northern biomedical researchers' statements with respect to the role of prostitutes in spreading infection echoed earlier racist constructions of the sexuality of African women as "loose" and "promiscuous." One article constructed a continuum of relationships from marriage through quasi-prostitution to prostitution. Another categorized women having more than one partner prior to marriage as "promiscuous."⁷

The racism surrounding AIDS in the international arena reverberated across Africa, where resistance fueled denial in the early years. One popular African construction dubbed AIDS (SIDA) the "*Syndrome Imaginaire pour Décourager les Amoureux* (an imaginary syndrome for discouraging lovers). Which lovers were being discouraged? Africans, of course. By whom? By Europeans, who since the colonial era had attempted to regulate Africans' sexuality through missionary preachments and the actions of the State. ("Really, they are jealous," people said.)

With a focus on prostitutes (stigmatized as "bad" women) as the motor of what by 1985, already was a generalized epidemic, prevention was off to a bad start. By emphasizing their connection to friends and acquaintances, rather than to professional sex workers, men could deny their risk. Some women who occasionally traded sex to make ends meet said to themselves, "But I'm not a prostitute, so AIDS information does not apply to me." The same was true of adolescents sent into the streets to garner cash for their hard-pressed families, and of women who enjoyed gifts of coveted consumer goods and material support from wealthy men.⁸

Few women found themselves in a position to propose condom protection to partners they suspected might infect them or to refuse risky sex. Most women depended on men for the means of subsistence. This was true of the wives of wealthy men as well as poor unmarried women, and of women engaged in commercial sex work. Only women with post-secondary education and independent incomes who learned of HIV/AIDS in time could insist on protection or refuse sex. Even for some of the latter, however, knowledge of AIDS came too late, as researchers and governments maintained complete silence until 1986, and little official information appeared until mid-1987.⁹

As time went on and many people found themselves touched by AIDS deaths, women who could avoid sex with men who refused condom protection began to do so. They were in a minority. Some married women convinced husbands to use condoms for birth spacing. Others tried to lead men to prayer groups in the hope that religion could convince husbands of the need for marital fidelity. While the numbers of men who claimed monogamy increased, anecdotal evidence suggests that many wealthy men simply denied their extra-marital partners while continuing with their adventures. As times grew harder, men with few resources could no longer support their preferred multi-partnered lifestyles, however, leaving women without other resources to seek more multiple partners at ever-lower remuneration.

Marginalisation and Agency

Sex work was illegal and remains so. Sex workers who work the streets, in bars or from their homes, must pay bribes to local gendarmes (who shared their receipts with their superiors); where they can, women pay in kind. In downtown streets of the capital, they also pay off the guards of the compounds in front of which they plied their trade. Thus, sex work fits seamlessly with the panoply of corrupt, illegal and informal sector activities that provide much of the population with precarious livelihoods. Like smugglers and petty traders, poor sex workers live in fear of police raids, with violence and shakedowns. This situation is not unique to DRC and must be acknowledged when micro-credit in support of income-generating activities is proposed as a poverty-reduction strategy.

There is no question of sex workers exercising political agency. Indeed, since all unofficial gatherings that can be considered political may lead to violent repression and arrest, there is no women's mass organization of any kind. In 1989, market women who marched downtown to protest ever-rising prices were arrested and some raped while in jail. This cautionary tale is repeated whenever political opposition groups stage rallies. With the escalation of inter-ethnic violence, sex workers, more than ever, are divided into small clusters along ethnic lines.

Today, people are poorer and more marginalized than ever, beset by "structural violence;" social solidarity and respect for human rights are further undermined. AIDS widows and abandoned women who seek to exchange sex for subsistence are blamed as dangerous disease-carriers. Some widows and orphaned children have been cast out as "witches," shunned, and even threatened with death, as families seek to shed themselves of responsibility supporting vulnerable relatives.

Failed States and Inequality

The Mobutu regime, supported financially, militarily and politically by the U.S, Belgium and France, and by contracts with transnational firms, was one of the world's longest running dictatorships. Its leading members grew fabulously wealthy, while the majority suffered from penury. In 1990, Mobutu apparently bowed to pressure with promises of "democratization," which turned out to be a ruse. In 1997, Mobutu died in the midst of a rebellion. When Laurent Kabila's forces won, they installed a new set of "kleptocrats" bent on getting wealthy from public resources, including diamonds, gold copper, timber, uranium, cobalt, coltan and other space-age metals. The transnational players bent on exploiting Congo's natural resources are more diversified than in earlier decades. Democracy remains a sham despite parliamentary and presidential elections held by his son and successor, Joseph Kabila, to placate Northern governments.

Claims to social justice and human rights that fueled popular discontent have not penetrated political discourse or changed the processes that continue to create widening social differentiation. Instead, human rights groups are weak; the cause of marginalized women is not on their agenda. Nor are gender issues much discussed, even by critical scholars.¹⁰

The State still provides virtually no public services. Religious communities attempt to fill some of the gaps for the poor and middle classes, while the wealthy can afford private schools and health care, abroad if need be. The formal economy is in tatters, unemployment remains rife and inflation continues to soar. Once-organized labor has

been casualized. Most people are left to fend for themselves in the informal economy, with the poor garnering precarious livelihoods in some of the most degraded and dangerous work in resource extraction.

Meanwhile, violence continues in the East, the aftermath of the 1994 genocide in Rwanda and prolonged civil war in Congo. Sexual violence, including rape of girls and women by military men and militias, many of whom are likely carrying the HIV virus, is reported commonplace. The most egregious are the remnants of the genocide militias who were accorded asylum in DRC. Even some UN peacekeepers stand accused. International agencies and NGOs give modest support to women's mobilization around issues of gender violence, but impunity prevails.

The Future of AIDS in Africa

Although DRC/Zaire, with its failed state and continuing violence, is an extreme case, prevention of HIV infection was and remains the step-child of AIDS policy virtually everywhere. To date this has meant behavioral change interventions, on a limited scale, and more often, messages beamed at people categorized as members of high-risk groups, accompanied by condom distribution. Some of these messages have had an effect, as has the high toll of death and orphanhood, leading some men to seek fewer partners and use condoms in casual sex. Prevalence among young people has fallen in some countries, partly due to these shifts. Still, millions of people become infected each year, and any let-up in prevention efforts, sends the rates up again. This is the case in Uganda, where notable success of condom prevention in casual sex has been more than offset by transmission *within marriage*.¹¹

Treatment with antiretroviral (ARV) medications can delay progression to fatal disease in many persons, but treatment is no panacea. Expanded access to treatment resulted from clamor by a broad social movement; it is still limited, mainly to urban dwellers, with more men than women enrolled in many programs. Dearth of funds, the dilapidated state of African public health care delivery systems and flight of health workers, consequent upon a quarter century of economic crises, exacerbated by Structural Adjustment Programs (SAPs) and privatization, limit program expansion. Even in areas where treatment is available, the same stigma and lack of agency, including power to act independently and to exercise control over their bodies, that keep women from reducing their risk of contracting HIV infection also limits many women's access.

Twenty-five years into the epidemic, recognition of the need to reduce poverty, change in gender relations and other forms of inequality to slow the spread of HIV has grown. This recognition is the due in large part to struggles by African women affected by the epidemic, with support from the international women's health movement. A substantial body of research findings from across the continent and from other areas of the world where similar conditions obtain, confirms these claims. Understanding offers no recipes for a quick fix, there is no magic bullet, no technology that can bring about change in relations between women and men, youth and elders, rich and poor, or believers of one and other religions or none at all. Yet unless the structural and social relations that impede prevention change, the epidemic, already the most devastating in history, will continue to spread.

How to create the necessary political will in a globalized economy in which Africa remains on the periphery, a continuing source of raw materials cheap labor and super-

profits for investors, is an open question. Clearly, international solidarity, based on understanding of Africa's past contributions to capitalist development, beginning with the enslavement of millions, its historic and current place in the world economy as a source of cheap raw materials, is critical. Economic justice requires restructuring of trade, profit-sharing and redistribution of the benefits of African resources. Some would add that past injustice requires redress through reparations.

As a first step, many in Africa, with women's groups at the cutting edge, seek to bring women's reproductive health and gender equality to international recognition as part of indivisible human rights and to foster programmatic action with resources from the developed world. The 1994 Cairo Conference on Population and Development accomplished this at the international level, with an agreement signed by the world's leaders. The United States, along with several Muslim nations rescinded their approval, an ironic alliance of Christian and Muslim fundamentalism. Solidarity in support of human rights and economic justice can place the world back on track.

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Stephanie Seguino

Toward a Vision of Sexual and Economic Justice
Thought Paper

Economic justice, bargaining power, and sexual justice

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Sexual justice—broadly defined as equitable achievement of sexual well-being, and the right to sexual orientation and expression—has not been a focus of economics research until recently. Even now, conventional economics has not had a way to talk about this subject, perhaps due to the absence of a framework and tools to explore issues of identities, social norms, and intergroup inequality.

Political economists have, however, pursued approaches that offer an entry to issues of sexual justice. Feminist economists in particular have underscored that issues of economic and sexual well-being and justice can be explored through the lens of bargaining power.

Power influences our probabilities of achieving well-being because it determines the breadth of choices available to a person and enhances the ability to negotiate with others in order to act on those choices. Those with weaker power have limited choices and are thus less able to act upon their sexual desires and reproductive decisions, or to control access to their body (and protect themselves from sexual violence) than those with more economic power. In particular, an individual's ability to control her or his body, make and enforce reproductive choices, and maintain sexual health is directly related to relative bargaining power—vis a vis members of their family, household, communities, intimate networks, and with respect to legal and political bodies.

What then are the determinants of bargaining power at these various levels? A major component of bargaining power is a person's comparative economic status. This is especially significant at the micro-level—in the family and household, and to some extent, in the community. The more income a person has, or the more access to those things that provide for material well-being, the better able a person is to have her or his desires reflected in household decisions about how to share resources, and importantly, also about sexuality. Unequal bargaining power between men and women in heterosexual relationships (in favor of men) undermines women's ability to control their fertility, access to their bodies, and the manner in which sexual contact occurs.

A woman's bargaining power is related to her fallback position—that is, the next best outcome should a negotiation (over fertility, when and where to engage in sexual relations, etc) fail. Typically, the next best outcome would be the economic conditions of each of the parties in the event of divorce or dissolution of the household. With regard to heterosexual households, when women's job prospects are more limited than men's, women's bargaining power in the household is weak. Income under women's control then has been found to improve women's ability to express and protect their sexuality, use household income to fund their reproductive health, and significantly in many countries, diminish son preference that leads to the "missing" women phenomenon (Sen 1990) due to sex selective abortion, infanticide, and unequal investments in girl children's well-being.

It is not just a woman's access to income that can influence her ability to negotiate. The state can play a major role in equalizing status within the household. For example, the state, which devises family law, sets rules on how assets are to be divided after divorce. The more the rules favor men, the less bargaining power a woman has in the relationship. The state may also establish rules on child custody and support. In South Korea, until 1988, men automatically gained custody of children, and there was no provision for alimony. This weakened women's position within the relationship, led to an overemphasis on their reproductive role, and inhibited their ability to work in the paid labor market.

Within lesbian and gay households, the determinants of bargaining power and sexual well-being have received less attention, though some work suggests that economic equality contributes to more equitable bargaining power and thus sexual equality in such relationships.

A key then to sexual equity within the household or family is the type of job and how much income a person can earn in labor markets. There is ample evidence that heterosexual women continue to suffer wage discrimination relative to men, and that lesbians and gays pay a "wage penalty" for their sexual orientation (Badgett and Frank 2007). A variety of factors contribute to this outcome, including job crowding, job segregation, and norms and stereotypes that contribute to the devaluation of the labor provided by these groups. Low wages and income further reinforce low bargaining power in other domains—the home, the state, and the community. Discrimination in housing, credit, and retail markets compound wage discrimination.

Communities also influence bargaining power. In particular, if social norms punish women more than men for divorce, then women's fallback position is weaker. In such cases, women in heterosexual relationships are less able to prevail in negotiations over sexuality within relationships—be it fertility, sexual intimacy, or abuse and violence. Similarly, in the case of gay and lesbian partners where the state does not have equalizing rules, sexual inequality in the relationship is not counterbalanced by laws that protect members of the household equitably.

This tells us that in order to promote sexual justice and equality at the micro level, we need to work towards both equitable access to income, and rules and legislation that counterbalance inequality that might exist between household partners.

Class matters, too. Even in gender equitable households, where income is low, women and men are less able to access resources needed for reproductive care than those whose control over income is greater. Absolute status matters less if the state can step in. If the state provides universal access to reproductive care, state-subsidized child care, paid parental leaves—all programs that reduce the care burden of women (and men who engage in such work), this better enables women to participate in paid labor, improving their bargaining power within the household. Women (and men) will be better able to achieve sexual well-being, even if poor.

While differential bargaining power can help us understand some of the critical pressure points we need to address to create the conditions of "choice and voice" for those who suffer from sexual injustice, we need a broader set of tools to gain some traction on how to achieve the goal of sexual justice. A rights framework may be a useful approach, so that issues of sexual orientation and expression do not get defined only as issues of preferences. Too frequently, economists view people as making constrained choices, based on an analysis of the costs of benefits of decisions. Such a lens, however, reduces some sexual decisions or acts to a calculus of costs and benefits, rather than focusing our attention on fundamental sexual rights—as important as the right to shelter, the right to food, education, and health care. For example, lesbians and

gays may be reluctant to reveal their sexual orientation, due to fears of the economic and social costs. Whatever the benefit of being out, the costs are greater. A rights based approach would not require individuals to make such painful calculations and costly “choices.”

Given these linkages, there are several pressing concerns globally that affect economic and sexual well-being and justice. In particular, the current economic policy environment and structure undermine the bargaining power of some groups, in particular women. A philosophical shift has occurred with the reification of “economic man”—a self-interested, individualistic being with little human connection. The rhetoric that flows from this iconic figure is that we are individually responsible for our economic status; failure to achieve well-being is due to individual weakness or deficiency. This framework began in the early 1980s to replace an earlier lens of the “basic needs approach” to economic development—the idea that a primary goal of the state was to ensure that basic economic and social needs were met. Not surprisingly, the spread of neoliberal policies has undermined the role of the state—an entity that has the possibility of redistributing income, ensuring a social safety net, and equalizing inequalities at the micro-level, in the household, and in the community in particular. As a result, we do not have a policy environment that enables us to be governed by a rights-based approach.

Three channels have transmitted the changes that have shifted bargaining power globally towards corporate interests, away from the state (especially in developing countries) and workers and small farmers: trade reforms, investment liberalization, and financial liberalization.

Financial liberalization in particular has resulted in two negative effects on sexual well-being. First, global interest rates are higher due to liberalization, resulting in a slowdown in the growth of employment (and rising absolute joblessness), and greater inequality to the benefit of financial capital—or what economists call “rentier interests.” Women more than men are likely to face joblessness and underemployment.

As an example, in the Caribbean, slow growth due to the combined effect of trade, investment and financial liberalization, has redounded negatively on women whose unemployment rate is twice that of men, despite their high educational attainment (Seguino 2003). Underemployment or unemployment can drive women (and men) into sex work with concomitant negative health effects (Kempadoo 2004). Globally, to the extent women lack economic opportunities more than men, they are unable to negotiate with partners for fidelity or condom use, resulting in risks of contracting STDs and HIV/AIDs.

Slow growth and inequality are not the only negative consequences of financial liberalization. Economies have also become more susceptible to economic “shocks” and volatility. These phenomena almost always weigh more heavily on the poorest citizens, with gender implications. Women have tended to be the “adjusting variable” during economic crisis. In low income households, women are expected to spend more time in paid labor to make up for lost male income in response to economic crisis, and frequently must also face increased rates of domestic violence as norms of masculinity are challenged by men’s reduced ability to provide for families. Research from Central and Latin America, regions that have some of the highest rates of domestic violence globally, demonstrates the linkages to the severity of income inequality (Larraín 1998).

Further, the dual impact of investment liberalization and trade reforms has permitted firms to roam the globe in search of least cost labor to produce goods that can then be traded. Thus, an important dynamic in the West has been the deindustrialization of industrialized countries with jobs moving to middle and low income countries, and women the primary source of labor. These jobs—whether women are hired directly by multinationals or work for local subcontractors who

are part of a global commodity chains (such as a sweatshop in Thailand producing for Wal-Mart which globally sources)—pay low wages and provide few possibilities for moving up the ladder to better paying jobs. They offer little means for women workers to organize. The jobs have little security. With the first sign of a decline in demand, businesses lay off these workers, largely women. Because women's income is intermittent, the evidence suggests that their wages afford women very little bargaining power in the household (Kabeer 2002).

These combined factors—women's weak bargaining power within the home and more generally in sexual relations, as well as the pressure to engage in sex work—have negatively affected women's sexual health. One result has been a significant increase in women's HIV infection rates among those 15-49 in a short period of time, from 1997 to 2003 (Grown 2005). Declining nutritional status in some countries, due to structural adjustment and austerity measures, has contributed to higher infection rates, particularly among women in Sub-Saharan Africa. Changes in trade agreements—mistakenly called trade liberalization since in many cases, this has led to re-regulation in favor of corporations, such as pharmaceutical companies—have also had an impact on sexual justice, by raising the cost of imported drugs related to sexual care, including HIV/AIDS medication and other reproductive drugs, supplies, and vaccines. Higher prices for these goods and services have reduced access.

More broadly, the shift in the macroeconomic policy regime that pressures countries to conform to the “Washington Consensus,” or what Naomi Klein (2007) describes as “shock doctrine,” has constrained the state from adequately funding social safety nets and public expenditures. As a result, comprehensive reproductive services are less available. As a stark indicator of a reversal of progress in this arena, data on maternal deaths per 100,000 live births shows a rise in numerous countries from 1990 to 2000 from the poorest (Nicaragua, Tanzania, Zimbabwe, Mauritania) to middle income countries (Trinidad and Tobago, Panama, Russia) to some of the richest (US, UK) [World Bank 2006].

The expansion of neoliberal economic policies then has led to greater economic volatility, inequality, and declining well-being and precariousness for those at the bottom of the distribution. An ironic example of these trends is Russia, a country in which women had greater access to paid work before the shock treatment of the early 1990s and unbridled “liberalization” of the economy. The resulting economic crisis has contributed to the resurgence of gender unequal norms in which jobs are slotted for men when scarce. The rise of sex work and sex trafficking and Russian women's migration, often under dangerous conditions, demonstrate the worsening of gender inequality, with women's choice set in how to provide for themselves shrinking due to economic crisis.

A second and telling example is the case of South Korea, a country that has had the most rapidly growing economy in human history until recently surpassed by China. Women's labor has been pivotal to this growth, with labor-intensive export industries a key to moving the country up the industrial ladder and women forming the overwhelming majority of the workers in such industries. Forty years later, we continue to see women's wages little more than half men's, despite what would appear to be their greater economic value. Female sex selective abortions are on the rise, so much so that female to male population ratios are in decline. Somehow, the process of rapid growth that has employed female labor has not been enough to give women more bargaining power in households and in society, or more voice to articulate for more gender equitable norms. It suggests that employment is not enough to give women more bargaining power. In the case of South Korea, it is likely that a major reason for the continuation of sexual injustice in that country (along with gender economic injustice) is that the state's growth strategy

was based on low cost female labor, a strategy that conflicts with the goals of empowering women and achieving social and economic equity.

How do we then achieve greater sexual and economic justice in the context of globalization? A policy framework that reinvigorates and extends the role of the state is required, such that the state can provide a social safety net, support public expenditures for sexual health (including reproductive care), buffer the economy from the vagaries of economic volatility (by limiting capital flows, using fiscal and monetary policy to create employment and exit from recessions more quickly). A focus on well-being more than “free markets” would enable states to negotiate trade and investment agreements that protect and support employment and wage equity, and access to essential medical goods and services. This is not an exhaustive list; it is illustrative in that it serves to remind us that the diminished capacity of the state to act on behalf of vulnerable citizens, especially women, has contributed to an exacerbation of sexual inequality. Macroeconomic policies, including industrial and agricultural policies, that make growth more compatible with equity, also can play a key role (Seguino and Grown 2006).

Such policies cannot alone overcome norms of heterosexism or sexual subordination of women, however. Change at this level requires activism as much as increased economic empowerment of groups negatively affected by such norms.

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Svati Shah

Toward a Vision of Sexual and Economic Justice
Thought Paper

Sexual and Economic Justice Preparatory Questions Response

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Given my own work on sex work and migration in Mumbai, and on the ways in which issues that impact debates on sex work in the Global South also intersect with questions surrounding the deployment and expansion of neoliberalism, I address myself here to four of the questions raised for discussion prior to our meeting.

What are the possibilities for collaboration between and among social movements with respect to global economic and sexual justice?

The possibilities for collaboration between and among social movements with respect to struggles for justice globally are endless, and, yet, bounded by the analytical frameworks which theorize synergies and points of connection between movements, issues, and struggle. The most successful intermovement collaborations are those which pay particular attention to the specific histories, strengths, and emphases that inhere in an intersectional approach for building social movements. An intersectional approach, such as those elaborated by feminists of color in the US in the 1990s, is proving to be critical for contemporary social movements that address sexuality in any way. Sexuality based movements that have chosen not to work intersectionally have tended to reiterate identitarian paradigms for sexuality, and, often, normative paradigms of morality and social organization as well. Those that have worked intersectionally with other movements have done so through a range of collaborations, including working with key individuals, organizations, theoretical frameworks, campaigns that have required collaboration, or in support or capacity building roles when actual inter-organizational or intermovement collaborations were either not possible, or not warranted. Successful sexuality based movements and campaigns have been mindful of the importance of working with other movements for social change, including labor movements, the so-called 'mainstream' left, women's movements, and movements for racial justice, which, some have argued, include movements working to overturn caste based discrimination, as well. These sexuality-based, collaborative movements, embodied in the work of funded and non-funded organizations and networks that are both national and transnational, have intermittently managed to move beyond the politics of a single sexual minority group or issue, while retaining their core goals and political priorities. I would argue that these movements represent a shift from 'LGBTQ' or 'sex workers' movements to expanding category of 'sexuality rights' or 'sexual justice' movements.

There seems to be a resurgence of interest in intersectionality, from funders, non-governmental organizations, and other representatives of civil society. The success of the

Intermovement Dialogue at the World Social Forum meetings in 2004 and 2005 speaks to this interest. The Intermovement Dialogue, organized by a Mumbai-based women's movement organization, included representatives of trade union, women's, racial justice/anti-caste, and sexuality based movements in one conversation about their potential for collaborating with and supporting one another more proactively. These kinds of conversations entail examining obstacles that prevent sexual and economic justice from being seen as co-constituted, and what the theoretical and political consequences of keeping these apart might be. For sex workers, the consequences of keeping economic justice out of the central frame of discourses on prostitution have included constructing a discursive focus on morality and the question agency, read as individual choice, in an individual's engagement with sexual commerce, rather than maintaining a perspective of agency as linked with, and constituted by, the structuring contexts of class, race, ethnicity, caste, and/or migration. With respect to potential collaborations and alliances between sexuality justice movements themselves, I argue elsewhere that holding economic and sexual justice apart has consequences for these as well. For lesbian/gay/bisexual/trans/queer movements, for example, the consequences of holding sexuality and class apart have included a) barriers to forming meaningful alliances with sex workers rights movements, b) reliance on an ethnicization model of sexuality, one which precludes agency or choice in the origins of non-normative sexualities, and which rationalizes same sex sexual preference as biologically determined or inflected, c) conflicts between lesbian/gay struggles for inclusion into normative forms state-level recognition and struggles undertaken by both trans communities and queer communities of color to address class based inequalities and differential marginalities deployed and maintained by the state.

What initiatives can we invoke that consider sex work from the interlinked perspectives of sexual and economic justice, and how can these help us re-think the broader debate between global markets and intimacies, love and sex?

One node of the contemporary debate on prostitution centers on whether the issue relates to questions of class based oppression, or whether sexual commerce is primarily a discourse of violence against, primarily, women. Proponents of a frame which accounts for economic justice as central to developing critical understandings of the ways in which sexual commerce operates socially and politically must necessarily account for the growing intellectual and political contexts being formed through critical engagements with neoliberalism. Centering neoliberalism in framing sexual commerce, particularly in the Global South, has meant centering the key critique of neoliberalism as constituting lowered barriers to the migration of capital, while increasing barriers to legal migration for poor migrants who have a shrinking range of options for economic survival in their places of origin.

Several Indian initiatives, especially the Calcutta-based Durbar Mahila Samanwaya Committee, and SANGRAM in Western India, have been lauded as exemplary for dealing with issues around sex work intersectionally. Both of these organizations have contributed unique perspectives to international debates on prostitution, maintaining, in general, that sex workers themselves should be central to any

interventions that are undertaken to impact, circumvent, or police the sex industries in which they work. While both of these organizations have been extremely successful in building Indian sex workers' rights movements in a collaborative mode with other movements, including labor, women's, and LGBT movements, their engagement with discourses of sex work and trafficking raise two issues that bear consideration: 1) How effective are these local initiatives in the face of international pressure for governments to conform to the abolitionist anti-trafficking/anti-prostitution agenda (exercised by the US government through various means, including the Trafficking in Persons Report and the anti-prostitution pledge enforced by USAID)? India's recent revision of its legal code to reflect the so-called 'Swedish model,' which criminalizes clients of sex workers, may have some relationship with abolishing prostitution, abstinence-only sex education, and other perspectives being promoted by the US government through its bilateral aid programs. Although the DMSC, SANGRAM, and a host of other progressive sexuality-related organizations in India lobbied parliament for months on this issue, they could not prevail over the extant power centers within the Ministry for Women and Child Development to change the existing law in a way that would not threaten sexual commerce as a livelihood option. 2) Can sex workers' rights movements truly 'globalize'? What happens when sex workers' rights movements in the Global South and Global North interact? While the points of connection between sex workers' rights organizations in various parts of the world are clear, and strategically critical, these relatively new collaborations raise questions around both the similarities and historical differences between movements in the South and the North. For example, movements in the Global South have tended to emphasize class and caste based marginalities that constitute an engagement with any form of paid work, especially for women, in both formal and informal economic sectors, in their critiques. Within the register of sexuality and morality, Southern sex workers' rights movements seem less to emphasize sex work as a disjuncture from sexual or gender based normativity than do their Northern counterparts. At the same time, Northern movements' focus on civil liberties as individual freedom recalls a familiar Occidentalism. Transnational collaborations and conversations within sex workers' movements must not only address the question of strategy and analysis, but also varying views on sexuality, normativity, modernity, affect, and intimacy.

What scale is helpful to you as you approach these questions? The national? The global? The regional? The local? The South-South? Something else? To whom do you look for responses that will secure sexual and economic justice? The state? Transnational social movements? Bretton Woods institutions? Civil society organizations?

Most campaigns for sexual justice have focused on changes to the law to decriminalize LGBTQ people, sex workers, and other sexually non-normative social groups. These campaigns have been successful both in changing laws, and in mobilizing campaigns for social justice, of which legal change is one aspect. The strategic focus on the law necessarily raises the question of the role of the State in maintaining sexual marginalities, and the consequences of focusing on the State in campaigns undertaken by movements that ultimately seek social change. The consequences of appealing to any set of actors, be they states, Bretton Woods organizations, or 'civil society,' are carefully

weighed by sexual justice movements. In the Global South, the context of bilateral and multilateral aid, and the so-called 'NGOization' of social services in certain regions inflect these decisions. Approaching these questions requires a clear analysis of what all of these factors mean in any given context, as well as strong links with, and assessments of, transnational social movements.

Finally, how do we develop effective rhetorics and practices of resistance in the present context, and how do we reimagine global justice as involving both sexual and economic components?

Rhetorics and practices of resistance are linked with refocusing global justice in terms of social movements in both their funded and non-funded aspects. Effective moments of resistance tend to be those in which resistance is historicized, precedents are examined, and contemporary forms of resistance are placed within economic, social, and regional contexts. Resistance is also inextricably linked with the production of knowledge about sexuality and social movements, which addresses social normativities. New modes of generating knowledge also produce new modes of generating resistance. The lessons of the US 'war on terror' is a case in point, as social and political movements aim to shore up civil liberties by countering hegemonic narratives of scarcity, fear, and imminent threat with historicized narratives on how, why, and to what end discourses of terror function. Deconstructing the 'imminent threat' of non-normative genders and sexualities has entailed re-framing normativity altogether, and showing the ways in which normativities function to maintain the status quo. The basis of resistance for sexual justice movements has been recasting epistemologies of sexuality through multidisciplinary practices of knowledge production.

Anna Marie Smith

Toward a Vision of Sexual and Economic Justice
Thought Paper

Anna Marie Smith
Response for Barnard Colloquium, Fall 2007

Q. 4. What are the obstacles, both in political activism and conceptual representations, to responding effectively to sexual and economic injustice? What keeps activists and scholars from approaching sexual and economic justice as co-constitutive?

I will respond to this provocative question by referring to the issue of welfare reform in the United States. Poverty programs ought to be placed at the top of the feminist agenda. With the feminization of poverty, especially among single women with children, women are highly overrepresented among low-income Americans. Due to the deeply engrained nature of structural racism, this is all the more true for black women and Latinas. Moreover, we segregate needy families headed by single parents within their own poverty program, the Temporary Assistance to Needy Families program (TANF, which replaced Assistance to Families with Dependent Children, or AFDC, in 1996). It is, by and large, women who head single parent families; single fathering is relatively rare. The single mothers who have only a high school education are particularly vulnerable to poverty; they typically find only minimum wage jobs, and, given their childcare duties, they often have to settle for part-time, dead-end, temporary, and non-unionized work.

While the federal government does provided a limited amount of aid for the full-time low-income wage earner (think, for example, of the Earned Income Tax Credit program), it leaves even these more highly valued individuals to sort out their own

caregiving arrangements. On the whole, the poor are left to fend for themselves in a harsh low-wage market. Since the 1960s, when the civil rights movement and the poverty rights movement successfully pushed local, state, and federal poverty agencies to admit black families onto the rolls in significant numbers for the first time in the nation's history, we have seen a highly racialized and misogynist backlash against needy mothers. Led by a bipartisan bloc of political forces that includes mainstream feminists, this backlash against the so-called "welfare queen" has attracted enthusiastic support from the mass public.

Compared to other OECD countries, we come dead last on subsidized childcare. We have extraordinarily high poverty indicators: in 2002, 12.1 percent of the total population fell below the poverty line. The figure for African-Americans was 24.1 percent; that is, one out of four. Almost seventeen percent of all American children and one out of every three black children were living below the poverty line. In this same year, however, only 5.3 percent of American children lived in households that received TANF benefits. It has become much harder for needy Americans to obtain poverty assistance since the 1960s and 70s. Eligibility rules have been tightened, time limits have been imposed, and recipients must name the absent second parent of their children and participate in a mandatory work assignment in order to receive benefits. Even if they do receive TANF, however, poor families only see their income increase by a few hundred dollars each month. The pressure upon poor mothers with children to go into the paid labor force is enormous, but studies of TANF leavers indicate that they are experiencing severe difficulties in finding and keeping a living wage job. The rolls have been cut, but extreme poverty is becoming more commonplace.

In addition, this harsh welfare regime includes what I call a sexual regulation dimension. Animated by vicious racist slander about the “welfare queen,” these policies are deliberately designed to reduce childbearing and childrearing among poor women in the United States and to punish the families that are not headed by a marital couple. The child support enforcement rule has a direct impact upon about twenty million adults at any given moment. Under its terms, every single mother receiving TANF benefits must name the absent father — that is, her spouse, or, in the case of never married women, the biological father — of her children and assist the state in pursuing him for child support. Not that she benefits if he is found and begins to make payments; the government captures almost all of the support monies to pay itself back for her benefits. Most of the men who are named as payers are too poor to meet their obligations. In some cases, they are unemployed or incarcerated; in others, their own wages are too low. Studies have found that most of these needy women do in fact want their male partners to make a contribution to their household, but that they want the freedom to identify the responsible party according to their own values and to design a contribution arrangement that is suited to their circumstances. By and large, they do not want the government to interfere with their personal affairs in this manner. Because the exemptions for the victims of domestic violence are woefully inadequate, and because many of the payers take revenge upon the TANF mothers, the child support enforcement rule places a particularly harsh burden upon dv survivors. (The other sexual regulation measures include the family cap, marriage promotion, and abstinence education.)

Many leading feminists, including Sen. Hillary Rodham Clinton, are enthusiastic supporters of welfare reform, workfare, and the child support enforcement rule. Other feminists, including Rep. Patsy Mink (HI) and thirteen other women of color representing the Democratic Party in Congress, did everything they could to oppose these measures, in the name of poor mothers' right to a decent standard of living, their right to benefits in return for their caregiving labor, and their right to privacy. Why do we have this split on welfare reform among American feminists, and why has Sen. Clinton been so successful at mis-representing herself as a staunch feminist ally of American women? I will offer a schematic summary of my thinking on this issue.

- 1) Welfare reform debates among feminists shine a light upon the unfinished work within the American feminist movement where confronting racism and white supremacy is concerned; by the same token, welfare reform and economic inequality in general is one of the most significant racially-constructed political issues in contemporary American politics.
- 2) Unlike the feminist movements in some of the other developed countries, American feminism has never been deeply informed by a dialogue with a strong labor movement that represents the interests of low wage workers.
- 3) American feminists are not immune from the prevailing ideological tendencies that are prominent in American society as a whole, including the fetishism of the market, the mythical figure of the rugged individual, and the work ethic; the attack on the public sphere and the normalization of regressive tax policies; and a Puritanical approach to deviant families and sexualities.

- 4) During a period of tremendous defeats — on the ERA, the Hyde Amendment and the general rollback of abortion rights, affirmative action, the treatment of women in the national spotlight such as Geraldine Ferraro and Anita Hill, Reaganism, and now, post-9/11, the rise of a militarist and imperialist masculine culture — and the consolidation of the two-party system since 1980, ambitious women in the political mainstream have been eager to find an issue field in which they could gain bipartisan credentials. At the same time, the power base of the American feminist movement has moved toward middle-class women oriented lobbying and legal reform projects. Grassroots activism has continued to flourish (RiotGrrrls, Women’s Action Coalition, Code Pink, campus groups, and so on) but it has generally prioritized anti-war and cultural projects. Sen. Clinton’s support for welfare reform might alienate the working class black women who are the backbone of a community-based reproductive health project, for example, but those women cannot transfer their vote to anyone to the left of the Democratic Party. Meanwhile, the middle-class white women who are targeted by centrist national women’s organizations like Emily’s List largely applaud Sen. Clinton’s stance on welfare reform or ignore it altogether. In a country dominated by the two parties and single issue lobbying — where a politician merely has to declare his or her support for the thinnest imaginable construction of abortion rights in order to be accepted as a reliable feminist advocate —, powerful women like Sen.

Clinton are free to gain political ground in the mainstream by embracing the harshest type of neoliberal attacks on poor mothers.

(For a more detailed and referenced version of these arguments, please refer to my recent book, *Welfare Reform and Sexual Regulation*, Cambridge University Press, 2007.)

Ara Wilson

Toward a Vision of Sexual and Economic Justice
Thought Paper

Ara Wilson

January 31, 2008

Statement for the colloquium *Towards A Vision of Economic and Sexual Justice*,
Barnard Center for Research on Women

SEXUAL JUSTICE AND ALTER-GLOBALIZATION

One way to consider actual or potential relations between sexual justice and economic justice is to ask, how is, or isn't, sexuality included in the actually existing alter-globalization (or anti-globalization) movement? How do (or don't) sexual-rights advocates see the alter-globalization movement as relevant for their struggles?

In the post-Cold-War period, the most vibrant and extensive calls for economic justice at the transnational level are the disparate political projects that loosely cohere under the labels global justice or anti/alter-globalization. These movements crystallized in the series of protests beginning dramatically in 1990 in Seattle. They came together at the World Social Forum, a large gathering that took place primarily in the global south between 2001 and 2007. Feminists have noted that the relation of alter-globalization movements to feminism is uneven, incomplete, or not thought through.ⁱ If that is so for feminism, the place of sexual justice has been even less clearly articulated. My focus here is on the World Social Forum as one manifestation of global justice movements, a cardinal site for working out the "rhetorics and practices of resistance in the present context: and for "reimagining global justice," to quote from the questions that framed the Barnard colloquium.

As political projects, sexual justice and global justice entail differing geographies, scales, and paces, differences that hold implications for their engagement. The World Social Forum is premised on the notion that transnational forces require transnational struggles, ideally centered in/on the global south (but not exclusively so). Even where the struggle are "local," such a global focus is obviously relevant for the mobility of capital and the transnational forces. Organizing for sexual rights, however, has a complicated, somewhat paradoxical scalar quality. Organizing around sexual issues takes aim at the diffuse realm of culture, attitudes, and public opinion – one where transnational venues can matter for shaping political discourse worldwide.ⁱⁱ Many of those activists for sexual rights at the World Social Forum had taken part in 20+ years of international organizing for sexual rights within Human Rights groups, the UN, and through NGOs.ⁱⁱⁱ LGBTQ and women's sexual-rights advocacy thus targeted the transnational scale of the UN orbit or the global civil society in order to advance discourse about sexual rights. However, at the same time, in general, the ultimate target of such advocacy remained the national level of state governments. Advocates for sexual rights have targeted the transnational arena for strategic reasons more than for a worked out analysis of the transnational as domain salient to sexuality.

Sexual rights advocates find a sympathetic ground at the WSF although the incorporation of sexual politics into WSF visions is piecemeal and partial. The limited attention to sexuality in Forum texts shows that sexuality does not "count" in the same way that food security, sovereignty, and US imperialism do for constructing alternative visions to the dominant world order. WSF documents range from silent to erratic on the question of sexual rights. The 2005 WSF "press release" of sorts, the "Call from social

movements for mobilizations against the war, neoliberalism, exploitation and exclusion,” writes:

We recognize diversity in sexual orientation as an expression of an alternative world and we condemn mercantilization. Movements commit to participate in the struggle against exclusion based on identity, gender and homophobia. We will unite our voices against all forms of mercantilization of the body of women and GLBT.^{iv}

The WSF paragraph (and others) presents sexuality mainly in two ways: as a positive part multicultural diversity and as a symptom of the exploitation of global capitalism, notably trafficking in women and girls and sex tourism.

The first component – the WSF recognition of “sexual orientation as an expression of an alternative world” represents an expansive shift from the origins of the WSF as protest against capitalist globalization (and the World Economic Forum) in 2001. Sexual and to a very limited extent gender diversity is now at least occasionally included in a broad vision of global justice. The emphasis is on welcoming diversity *within* the progressive movement itself. The WSF in Brazil and India are characterized by a marked emphasis on political means as vital to progressive politics. The WSF and alter-globalization movements represent not only critiques of global capital but also critiques previous left movements, notably the centralization and normativity of parties, and attempting among other things to avoid the sexism, homophobia, nationalism or other violent exclusions found in the history of struggles for economic justice. One of the ways sexuality enters into the Forum is within the commitments to diversity in post-communist, processual, inclusive politics, a tacit rebuke of the homophobia found historically (and still) in many progressive struggles. As a corrective, a political emphasis on inclusive alternatives allows sexuality to be part of the movement for, and in theory part of a vision of a more just world.

Yet how sexual orientation might be “an expression of an alternative world” has not been explored in Forum texts. There is a pronounced difference in the level of precision in discussions of such established material issues as food,^v global trade, Cuba or Palestine and those of sex. Sex, in WSF texts, seem mostly to be an afterthought. The emphasis in 2005 documents on “mercantilization” is typical of the way that sexuality appears as an illustration of the harm of globalization. Yet “mercantilization” does not echo any mobilizations for sexual justice I know of. It could, along with mention of the “sex trade,”^{vi} reference trafficking of women and girls. Yet while an obvious subject for critics of global capitalism, anti-trafficking groups were not present at the Forum. Rather, anti-trafficking groups have focused their efforts on laws and policies, targeting the United Nations, member states, and police forces concerned with international crime. (Anti-trafficking organizations like CATW have worked with the US department of state -- hardly a manifestation of alter-globalization politics.) Indeed, the WSF texts’ emphasis on “mercantilization” or the sex trade per se is at odds with most local radical organizing: sex-worker organizing, women’s organizations working on sex work and trafficking (not at all of which unite behind anti-trafficking measures), or most international GLBTQ organizing. In general these projects emphasize the rights of sex workers and insist that the sex-work component should not be the focus of efforts to address the problems of trafficking. By emphasizing mercantilization, the 2005 WSF text presents a *hypothetical* rather than a *political* interpretation of the relationship of sexuality and global justice, assessing the problem as the presence of the market economy rather than incorporating the demands of actual radical activists working on these issues. This gap between actual pro-sex advocacy and WSF texts points to a limited engagement between these

movements. It suggests that there may be profound differences in the analysis of what sexual rights/justice might mean for activism around sex work and activism criticizing global capitalism.

It would be a mistake to only discuss WSF documents as the way to evaluate the visions of these different movements. The textual level is limited in illuminating the relationship between alter-globalization and sexual politics. What is taking place on the ground at the WSF is different, particularly since the 2004 Mumbai Forum, and varies at Forum held in different regions. In Mumbai in 2004, there was a panel on “LGBT alternative strategies to exclusionary globalization.” Next year, the 2005 Porto Alegre Forum included a tent dedicated to “sexual diversity” and a number of panels that addressed LGBT issues, and stalls representing a Brazilian sex worker organization and the International Gay Games. Other sexual-rights groups present at the 2005 Forum included the US-based International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission (IGLHRC), South-South LGBT, and Brazilian organizations. In the 2007 World Social Forum in Kenya (which I did not attend), sexual rights were discussed at several panels. A leading left-male theorist of the Forum, Boaventura de Sousa Santos, is unusual for mentioning sexuality as part of political alternatives. In practice, some GLBT groups and feminists find the WSF a relevant site to link progressive sexual politics with other struggles. At the same time the presence of sexual politics at the forum is clearly limited.

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One Forum event offers a concrete example of the convergence between sexual and economic politics. Organized by the Feminist Dialogues,^{viii} a network of women’s organizations in the global south, this panel aimed to model dialogue across four political sectors: feminism, GLBTQ, labor, and race. Each speaker discussed points of convergence as well as critique of other movements. While a conversation among four representatives on one hot afternoon in a riverside warehouse in Porto Alegre is obviously circumscribed, it provides a noteworthy model for incorporating sexuality with more recognized forms of radical political claims. The Feminist Dialogue’s other event also included attention to sexuality and sexual diversity in conjunction with discussion of global capitalism, US imperialism, militarization, and fundamentalism.

Organizations in the global south have done a better job making these links between economic and sexual justice. The Feminist Dialogues’ effort at intersectional analysis (showing how militarization and capitalism affect third-world women’s bodies) represents one example. A small organization, GLBT South-South Dialogue – founded by a black South African lesbian now based in Latin America and Ecuadorian lesbian – consistently emphasizes a critique of globalization. They have published a small volume and hosted panels at the World Social Forum to explore these connections.^{ix} The southern feminist group DAWN – Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era – has issued statements on sexual rights as part of its work for feminist global justice.^x Other groups that have struggled to shift projects on population, family planning, or health to reproductive and sexual *rights* often present a keen awareness of material, economic issues that is predicated on a critique of global political economy. Many progressive networks include individuals who are activists for both sexual and economic justice. Just one example: One of the only people to mention sexuality at the 2004 African Social Forum in Mali was an Afrikaans South African labor organizer, a lesbian, who had been imprisoned under apartheid.

Aside from the examples of Feminist Dialogue, GLBT South-Dialogue, and a few individual activists, I have not seen sexual-rights advocates dedicate consistent effort to linking sexual politics with critiques of global capital and visions for alternative worlds.

Many transnational sexual-rights advocates are allied with alter-globalization struggles, yet institutionally and theoretically have not often forged alliances or analyzed relations to transnational struggles for economic justice. Certainly this has to do with the different political domains of the sexual and economic. It also emerges from the different geographic scales of politics for each domain I noted above. Claims about the sexual usually target political institutions and cultural norms. Especially in the global north, some claims for queer sexual rights have benefited from the resources of corporate capitalism, such as selective gay-friendly policies for elite workers in US corporations (that are unavailable to subcontracted staff or overseas producers). Connections and failures of articulation among sexual and economic movements also are a consequence of specific political and institutional histories, on one hand the homophobia of various lefts and on the other hand, the strategies of mainstream LGBT organizing, feminism, and advocacy in the UN-NGO orbit, which have worked with market and state structures and ignored economic justice. The World Social Forum offers one concrete venue to explore linkages among actually existing projects for economic and sexual justice.

NOTES

ⁱ On the relation of alter-globalization movements to feminism, see Catherine Eschle, "Skeleton Women': Feminism and the Antiglobalization Movement." *Signs* 30.3 (2005): 1741-70. On the World Social Forum and feminism, see the special issue of the *Journal of International Women's Studies* 8(3) April 2007 at <http://www.bridgew.edu/SoAS/jiws/April07/index.htm>; Sonia E. Alvarez, Nalu Faria, and Miriam Nobre. "Another (Also Feminist) World Is Possible: Constructing Transnational Spaces and Global Alternatives from the Movements." *The WSF: Challenging Empires*. 2006. October 20 (2004).

ⁱⁱ But in the realm of public opinion, LGBTQ prominence in the media is a double-edged phenomenon. It helps to shape a cosmopolitan worldview that is against homophobia, at the same time, being presented in corporate media, this presence reinforces an association of sexual-rights or sexual diversity with the materialism, capitalism, and imperialism of the West and also presents queer rights as a *fait accompli* – even a domain of special privilege (e.g., films about straight white men masquerading as gay to realize some institutional or political benefit) – rather than a period of entrenched backlash and struggle.

ⁱⁱⁱ In those years of organizing in the UN-NGO orbit, advocates found that sexual rights are not remotely as legible as calls for political rights or economic justice. It was considered either a luxury issue of the industrialized West or a form of Western, materialist imperialism. The form of sexual rights that obtain most visibility is *negative* rights, that is, freedom from harm, in issues like sex trafficking or sexual violence – issues that also happen to fit with commonplace notions of women's sexual purity and vulnerability. To consider positive rights – the right to a full sexuality, to sexual pleasure – is much more difficult to frame, particularly as a *material* issue. In some venues, sexual rights are most visible when they articulate with the market economy. For example, in the U.S., it is easier to argue that gays and lesbians should not face barriers to employment (except in faith-based organizations) than it is to argue for other rights. Another limit that sexual-rights advocates confronted both in the UN-NGO orbit and in more radical circles is the repeated assertion that sexual rights were a Western, Northern issue, one either reserved for advanced economies (which developing countries could only arrive at later) or else another example of the imperialist force of Western materialism. For years, the major organizations concerned with sexual rights – IGLHRC, ILGA, Amnesty International -- did not directly address this perception. Arguably, they still have not fully presented arguments about the material dimensions of sexuality. The recognition of this limit may explain why some sexual-justice advocates see the importance of aligning their projects with the WSF and with the alter-globalization movement. See Ara Wilson, "The Transnational Geography of Sexual Rights." In *Truth Claims: Representation and Human Rights*. Eds. Mark Philip Bradley and Patrice Petro. Pp. 253-265. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2002.

^{iv} WSF, January 31 2005.

(http://www.nadir.org/nadir/initiativ/agp/free/wsf/portoalegre2005/0131call_from_social_movements.htm, accessed 3/8/05).

^v On food, the 2005 World Social Forum statement speaks with great precision:

We struggle for the universal right to healthy and sufficient food. We struggle for the right of the peoples, nations and peasants to produce their own food. We manifest against subsidies to exports which destroy the economies of rural communities. Let's avoid food dumping; another agenda item, We reject GMO foods because besides threatening our

health and the environment, they are an instrument for five transnationals to have control of all markets. We reject patents on any form of life and in special on seeds, since the intention is the appropriation of our resources and the knowledge associated to them. We demand the Agrarian Reform as a strategy to allow the access of peasants to land, and healthy and sufficient food, and not to be concentrated in the hands of transnationals and latifundiários.

^{vi} Supporting the World March of Women, the Forum text writes, “We call all movements to organize feminist actions during this period against free trade, *sex trade*, militarization and food sovereignty.”

^{vii} At the regional forum, the African Social Forum, held in Mali in 2004, there was barely any mention of sexuality; it remained implicit in discussions of AIDS and rights of the girl child. While organizing around these issues has been fraught outside of South Africa, there are African gay, lesbian, and trans organizing efforts. But they were not integrated into a broader progressive African movement that affiliates with the WSF.

^{viii} "Feminist Dialogues 2005 Focus on Militarism, Fundamentalism and Globalisation". 2005. Online. Isis. Isis Women.

<http://www.isiswomen.org/pub/we/archive/msg00202.html#fd>.

^{ix} Irene León and Phumi Mtetwa, eds., *Globalization: GLBT Alternatives*, Quito, Ecuador: GLBT South-South Dialogue, 2003.

^x DAWN consistently attends to reproductive and sexual rights. One example is the talk at the 2007 World Social Forum in Africa, “Sexuality in Africa Regional Perspective” given by Bene E. Madunagu, the General Coordinator of DAWN. Available at http://www.dawnnet.org/ARCHIVE/NOTICE_BOARD.HTML#aff (accessed 8/30/07).