

Gender and Sexualities

Chapter 8 on Gender and Sexualities focusses on the themes of women's subordination across societies, on the interlinking of gender and sexuality and on the development of various women's, feminist and LGBTQ movements. The stress on the interrelated nature of gender categorisations and divisions, and those of sexuality and sexual preference, is welcome, as is the 'Global Thinkers' box which focuses on the important work of Sylvia Chant on female-headed households and on gendered poverty. In line with the text's main focus on globalisation, a section of the chapter discusses the effects of women's entry into factory work in Export Processing Zones as well as the growth of global care chains involving (mainly) female migrants working as cleaners and domestic workers, in healthcare and elder care. The chapter makes links between global social change, changes in women's status(es) in different societies, and social movement mobilisation in a manner that standard accounts do not. It is also very clearly-written and an interesting read.

It is difficult to fit everything of relevance within a short chapter, but mention of other areas or topics might provide a useful additional focus to add to analysis. Although the world's population has recently (in 2006) become more urban than rural, the majority of women globally live in rural areas and poverty, particularly severe poverty, is concentrated in rural areas (IFAD, 2001; IFAD, 2011; FAO, 2011). Thus, highlighting the importance of agriculture, land and landlessness for rural women is a key concern, although one often overlooked (see Jacobs, 2010 for discussion). A second point is that women's movements have organised particularly around the issue of violence (discussed briefly in Chapter 11) at local and international levels. Violence against women has proved a powerful mobilising force and one which in 2013 seems likely to grow transnationally.

It might prove useful for students to read Chapter 8 in conjunction with (the excellent) Chapter 13 on 'Globalization, Family and Social Change', since

family and kinship structures and relations are often crucial for women's social positioning. However, it is a strength that *Global Sociology* does not try to pigeonhole all matters concerning gender relations and globalisation into one chapter, since this helps to indicate that gender and sexual relations permeate most aspects of social life.

Chapter 8 manages to pull together conceptual and empirical work in a manner that will engage students. It also encourages reflection on complex issues such as women's human rights and cultural relativism, presenting the dilemmas involved in a succinct way. This is an excellent introduction to a range of issues concerning women, gender relations, sexuality and globalisation.

References

FAO (Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations) (2011) *The State of Food and Agriculture 2010-11; Women in Agriculture: Closing the gender gap for development*, Rome: FAO
available at: <http://www.fao.org/publications/sofa/en/>

IFAD (International Fund for Agricultural Development) (2001) *World Poverty Report*, Rome: IFAD of the UN.

IFAD (International Fund for Agricultural Development) (2011) *Rural Poverty Report 2011: New Realities, New Challenges*, Rome: IFAD
<http://www.ifad.org/rpr2011/>

Jacobs, Susie (2010) *Gender and Agrarian Reforms*, New York and London: Routledge (International Studies of Women and Place).

Susie Jacobs is Reader in Sociology at Manchester Metropolitan University, UK.