

University of Massachusetts Boston

Economics 392: Women's Economic Roles
Fall 2005
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Course Description: This course presents an empirical and historical overview of the economic activity and roles of women in the United States. It also examines how economic theories explain these roles and looks at policies affecting women's economic status.

Prerequisites: Either Economics 101 or 102, or permission of the instructor.

Objectives: Women and men have historically faced very different economic opportunities and prospects. While these have changed dramatically over the last 30 years, women's and men's economic patterns and fortunes are still not the same, with women more likely than men to receive less income, more likely to face poverty, and more likely to be responsible for doing unpaid or low-paid care taking work. Students should become familiarized with women's and men's economic activity in the United States, how these have developed, and how they have changed. Students should be able to analyze the role gender plays in important economic paradigms and in economic policies.

Readings: There are five required books. All are available in the UMass Bookstore (Administration Building Upper Level). You may also find these books for purchase on-line at various web sites selling books. I will try to place copies on reserve as well. The books are:

Daphne Spain and Suzanne Bianchi, *Balancing Act: Motherhood, Marriage, and Employment Among American Women*, Russell Sage, 1996.

Stephanie Coontz, *The Way We Never Were: American Families and the Nostalgia Trap*. Basic Books, Reprint edition 2000.

Teresa Amott and Julie Matthaei. *Race, Gender, and Work: A Multicultural Economic History of Women in the United States*. South End Press, Revised Edition 1996.

Drucilla Barker and Susan Feiner. *Liberating Economics: Feminist Perspectives on Families, Work, and Globalization*. University of Michigan Press, 2004.

Barbara Ehrenreich, *Nickel and Dimed: On (Not) Getting By in America*, Metropolitan Books, 2001.

In addition there are some readings. I will make those available to you. Readings will be on electronic reserve through the library or posted on Prometheus.

Grades: Your final grade will be based on weekly classroom assignments, one paper, a mid-term exam and one additional substantive piece of work (either a book review and final exam or a research paper). Specifically, I will give weekly in-class writing assignments (worth 10% of your grade). These will be short (5-10 minute) writing exercises covering reading, classroom

discussions and/or current event topics relating to the course, usually but not always given at the beginning of one class every week. You will be graded on the best 10 of 13 of them. Your first paper assignment is a short (5-7 page) paper depicting some aspect of women's economic status in the United States. It will be due on October 6 (worth 25% of grade). There will be a mid-term exam administered in class on November 8 (worth 30% of your grade). You have a choice for your last graded assignment. You may either write a 8-10 page research paper that looks at how a specific economic policy affects women's economic status. That paper is due on December 13 (worth 35% of your grade). [You will be required to turn in an outline and an annotated bibliography for that paper by November 22.] Alternatively you can write a review of a lengthy article, report, or a book on women's economic policy AND take a final exam during finals week (worth 35% of your grade – the review is worth 15% while the exam is worth 20%). The review (a 4-6 page paper) is due December 6th and you are required to choose a book to review from a list I provide. You must discuss which book you intend to review with me by November 22. The final will be given during final's week.

Attendance Requirements: You are expected to attend all classes. Reading materials and important material not covered in your readings are regularly discussed. If you do not attend on classes when there are in-class writing assignments you will receive no credit for that assignment and there will be no make-up assignments. You can (and should) let me know if you are not able to attend. *If you do miss class you are responsible for any materials, instructions for the following week's writing assignment, or changes to the outline.*

Web-based materials: A syllabus, course outline, some readings, and most in-class handouts (including assignments) will be posted on this course PROMETHEUS website. You must register for the course and then sign in at <http://boston.umassonline.net>. **The course ID is 7486 and the password is women.**

Office Hours: Tuesday 1:00 - 2:15 and by appointment. I have voice mail, so you can always leave a message at 617- 287-6963. The quickest and easiest way to reach me is through email (randy.albelda@umb.edu). Do not hesitate to communicate with me.

Academic Integrity: You may work with other students when preparing for exams or in thinking about putting ideas together for your papers. *However, all written work for a grade must be your own work.* It cannot be copied from another student, a book, magazine, Internet, or any other written materials. If you do not abide by these standards it is academically dishonest, which can lead to a failing grade and possibly dismissal from the University. It is crucial you understand and abide by these rules and that is why I will be asking you to sign a form indicating that you understand these rules.

One serious and unfortunately common infraction of academic integrity is plagiarism. If you are unfamiliar with the rules regarding plagiarism, consult the Economics Department's statement on plagiarism at <http://www.economics.umb.edu/plagiari.htm>. Also, you may consult http://www.umb.edu/student_services/student_rights/code_conduct.html -- the University rules in the Code of Student Conduct at, under Part II., Academic Dishonesty. (Please note that the web address for the Code of Student Conduct contains the underscore mark between the words "student" and "services," "student" and "rights," and "code" and "conduct.").

Course Schedule

September 6 through 29 **Current Economic Roles of Men and Women**

We will look at women's current economic status with particular attention to the sexual division of unpaid and paid labor, access to income, and earnings levels. We will also take a closer look at low-waged women's work.

Assigned Reading:

September 6-15

Spain and Bianchi, *Balancing Act*, chapters 1,2, 4, 5-6

Look through tables U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Women in the Labor Force: A Databook*, February 2004. Can be found on Prometheus and at <http://www.bls.gov/cps/wlf-databook.htm>

“Guidelines for the Documentation of Academic Work” and review UMB Economics Department Guidelines for Academic Work <http://www.economics.umb.edu/plagiari.htm>.

OPTIONAL READING: Gary Martin and Vladimir Kats, “Families and Work in Transition in 12 Countries, 1980-2001” *Monthly Labor Review*, September 2003. Download on Prometheus or <http://www.bls.gov/opub/mlr/2003/09/art1full.pdf> [Provides a good, updated summary of the data presented in Spain and Bianchi].

United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD) Chapter 1 “After Beijing: Unequal Progress in an Unequal World” of Gender Equality: Striving for Justice in an Unequal World” 2005. Link on Prometheus or download at [http://www.unrisd.org/unrisd/website/document.nsf/\(httpAuxPages\)/FED27F9F0686F315C1256FB1004B3692?OpenDocument&panel=additional](http://www.unrisd.org/unrisd/website/document.nsf/(httpAuxPages)/FED27F9F0686F315C1256FB1004B3692?OpenDocument&panel=additional). [Provides an excellent overview of women's status worldwide – entire report can be found at [http://www.unrisd.org/80256B3C005BCCF9/\(LookupAllDocumentsByUNID\)/1FF4AC64C1894EAAC1256FA3005E7201?OpenDocument](http://www.unrisd.org/80256B3C005BCCF9/(LookupAllDocumentsByUNID)/1FF4AC64C1894EAAC1256FA3005E7201?OpenDocument)]

September 20-22

Barker and Feiner, *Liberating Economics* chapters 3, 5, and 6

Salary.com, “Dream Job: Stay-At-Home Mom” May 2005 download from Prometheus or http://www.salary.com/careers/layoutscripts/crel_display.asp?tab=cre&cat=Cat10&ser=Ser253&part=Par358

Read ONE of the following three articles:

Yun-Suk Lee and Linda Waite, “Husbands’ and Wives’ Time Spent on Housework: A Comparison of Measures,” *Journal of Marriage and Family*, May 2005: 328-336.

Shannon Davis and Theodore Greenstein, “Cross-National Variations in the Division of Household Labor” *Journal of Marriage and Family*, December 2004: 1260-1271;

Suzanne Bianchi et al. “Is Anyone Doing the Housework? Trends in the Gender Division of Household Labor, *Social Forces*, September 2000; 191-228 [skim regression results and

skip appendix.]

September 27-29

Ehrenreich, *Nickel and Dimed* (entire book).

Paper Due October 6

October 4-11 Women and Capitalist Production

The economic activities of all people in market-based all quite varied by age, race/ethnicity and gender. In this section we examine capitalist production and ways to think about women's and men's role in it historically.

Assigned Readings:

Amott and Matthaei, *Race, Gender and Work*, chapters 9 and 10.

Barker and Feiner, *Liberating Economics* chapter 2

Coontz, *The Way We Never Were*, chapter 1

NO CLASS OCTOBER 13

October 18 through 27 Women's Economic History in the United States (pre-WWII)

In this section we look at the specific economic activities of women in the United States. We will pay particular attention to the similarities and differences by race, ethnicity, age, and marital status.

Assigned Readings:

October 18-20:

Amott and Matthaei, *Race, Gender and Work*, chapter 3 or 4.

Julie Matthaei. *An Economic History of Women in America: Women's Work the Sexual Division of Labor, and the Development of Capitalism*. Shoken Books, 1982, chapter 5 "The Development of Separate Sexual Spheres ..."

Joan Williams, Chapter 1 of *Unbending Gender: Why Family and Work Conflict and What to Do About It*, Oxford University Press, 2000.

October 25-27:

Amott and Matthaei, *Race, Gender and Work*, chapter 5 or 6.

Coontz, *The Way We Never Were*, chapters, 3, 5, and 6.

November 1 through November 3 Women's Economic Roles in WWII-1970s

Women's economic roles in these decades have been characterized by those immortalized in the popular TV shows "Ozzie and Harriet" or "Leave It to Beaver." In this section of the course we will explore the ways in which women's economic status did resemble these "traditional" roles.

Assigned Readings:

Amott and Matthaei, *Race, Gender and Work*, chapters 7 or 8.

Coontz, *The Way We Never Were*, chapters 2 and 7.

November 8: Mid-term Exam

November 10 through December 1: Explaining Women's Contemporary Economic Status

We will look at how does contemporary economics explain women's economic roles and women's economic progress. We will examine if and how gender makes a difference in economic outcomes.

Assigned Readings:

November 10-17:

Randy Albelda, Robert Drago, and Steve Shulman, *Unlevel Playing Fields*, Chapter 4.

U.S. General Accounting Office, *Women's Earnings: Work Patterns Partially Explain Difference between Men's and Women's Earnings*, October 2003. Read main report (pages 1-20) and Appendix III (pages 56-65). For those interested in the empirical model to get findings, read the Appendix. Download from Prometheus or http://www.house.gov/dingell/documents/pdfs/womens_report03.pdf

Barker and Feiner, *Liberating Economics* chapter 4

Francine Blau, Marianne Ferber, and Anne Winkler, *The Economics of Women, Men and Work*, 4th Edition 2002. Chapter 3.

November 22- December 1:

Barker and Feiner, *Liberating Economics* chapters 1 and 7.

Nancy Folbre, *The Invisible Heart: Economics and Family Values*, chapter 2.

Joan Williams, Chapter 3, *Unbending Gender, Why Family and Work Conflict and What to Do About It*, Oxford University Press, 2000.

OPTIONAL READING

Barbara Bergmann, "The Economic Risks of Being a Housewife" *American Economics Review*, 1981. pp. 81-86.

Book/Report Review Due December 6**Research Paper Due December 13**

December 6 through 13 Gender and Economic Policies

With a firm grasp on women's economic history and economic explanations for women's economic status, we examine possible economic policies concerning women's economic status.

Assigned Readings:

Barker and Feiner, *Liberating Economics* chapters 8

Read **one** of the following two articles:

Nancy Fraser, Chapter 2 (After the Family Wage), *Justus Interruptus: Critical Reflections on 'Postsocialist' Condition*. New York: Routledge, 1996. pp. 41-65

OR

Susan Himmelweit, "Making Visible the Hidden Economy: The Case for Gender-Impact Analysis of Economic Policy," *Feminist Economics*, 2002: pp. 49-70.

And read at least **four** of the following twelve articles:

Aging and Social Security:

Sunwha Lee and Lois Shaw, *Gender and Economic Security in Retirement*, Institute for Women's Policy Research, 2003. Available at: <http://www.iwpr.org/pdf/D456.pdf>

Maya Rockey Moore, *The Privatization Crisis: Assessing the Impact on African American Families*, Congressional Black Caucus Foundation, 2005. Available at http://www.ourfuture.org/docUploads/CBCF_SS_Privatization_Impact_1_19_05.pdf

Single Mothers and Poverty

Randy Albelda and Chris Tilly, "Single, with Children: The Economic Plight of Single Mothers," with Chris Tilly, Updated and reprinted in *Women and the Economy: A Reader* edited by Ellen Mutari and Deborah Figart, ME Sharpe, 2003.

"Lone Mothers: What is To Be Done?" Dialogue from *Feminist Economics*, 2004.

Minimum Wage

Jared Bernstein, Heidi Hartmann, and John Schmidt, *Minimum Wage Increase: A Working Women's Issue*, Economic Policy Institute Issue Brief 133, 1999. Available at: <http://www.epinet.org/Issuebriefs/IB133.pdf>

Paid Parental Leave

Randy Albelda and Alan Clayton-Matthews, "Love's Labor's Lost?: The Costs and Benefits of Paid Family and Medical Leave in Massachusetts" *Future of Work*, forthcoming.

Sheila Kamerman, "Parental Leave Policies: An Essential Ingredient in Early Childhood Education and Care Policies," *Social Policy Report*, 2000.

Early Education and Child Care

Barbara Bergmann, "What Would We Gain by Subsidizing Child Care?" in *Squaring Up: Policy strategies to raise women's incomes in the United States*, 2001, pp. 46-62, edited by Mary King, 2001.

Comparable Worth

Margaret Hallock "Pay Equity- Did It Work?" in *Squaring Up: Policy strategies to raise women's incomes in the United States*, 2001, pp. 136-161, edited by Mary King, 2001.

Linda Levine, *The Gender Wage Gap and Pay Equity: Is Comparable Worth the Next Step?*, Congressional Research Service, June 2001.

Women's Equality Generally

Eileen Appelbaum, "Shared Work-Valued Care: New Norms for Organizing Market Work and Unpaid Care Work" *Economic and Industrial Democracy*, February 2002.

Organization for Economic Co-Operation and Development, *Babies and Bosses: Balancing work and Family Life*, Policy Brief March 2005.