Moving: Gendered Experiences of Migration, Gentrification, and Displacement.

ABSTRACTS

**Catherine Besteman** -- *Gendered Refuge and Security Panics*. One might imagine that the resettlement of refugees into a space of permanent refuge by international humanitarian organizations represents the end of their experience of loss, displacement, and forced mobility. But for the resettled Somali refugees I know in the US, the refuge of resettlement is not something given; it is something made, by them, in difficult and even dangerous circumstances. It is made in fundamental ways through gendered renegotiations of family structure, gendered experiences of local places of refuge, and gendered experiences of xenophobia and the security panics currently gripping so many places to which refugees are moving. The presentation is built around a series of vignettes drawn from experiences of Somali refugees in Lewiston, Maine, to tell stories about the gender of refuge through these prisms of life in resettlement.

**Ruth Gomberg-Muñoz** -- *Parents, Workers, Migrants: Gendered Dimensions of Labor Migration*. When the Mexican government began a post-NAFTA highway construction project to alleviate the strain of goods flowing from the national interior to port cities, Flor was hopeful that the highway would bring more customers to the family’s restaurant business, which catered to truck drivers. Instead, it bypassed them. The restaurant went out of business and Flor’s husband, himself a truck driver, left her and their three young children and did not return. Flor placed her children in the care of her mother and went to the United States in search of work. Like millions of working migrant mothers, Flor left her children in order to provide for them.

When women and men migrate to work, they do not leave their gendered responsibilities behind. Instead, gender roles deeply shape every dimension of migration, from conditions in emigrant communities, to experiences along the migrant trail, to work and settlement in places of destination. This paper draws on the experiences of working migrant men and women to explore gendered dimensions of labor migration, paying particular attention to how gendered inequities create barriers to economic and legal well-being for Mexican migrants in the United States.

**Marcus Hunter** – *Black Citymakers: How Black Women Changed Urban America*. Focusing on Black working class women’s urban activism in the postwar period, this paper distills the political approaches and strategies they employ. Detailing how Black women’s leadership and ideas were consequential to urban policy, this paper demonstrates the lasting though often under appreciated efforts of Black women as citymakers.

**Lise Nelson** -- *Immigrant Labor and the Fractured Geographies of Everyday Life in the Context of Rural Gentrification*. This paper explores how race, class, gender and
‘illegality’ shape low-wage labor and everyday life for immigrants living in high-amenity, gentrifying rural communities in the United States. From Cooperstown, New York to Sun Valley, Idaho, high-amenity rural communities have witnessed (particularly since the early 1990s) an influx of wealthy, mostly white urbanites who move as permanent or part-time residents to ‘their’ paradise—seeking access nature, spectacular views, fishing, hiking, golfing and/or small town life. Rural gentrification remakes local housing markets, economies, and social-cultural norms, transforming rural landscapes of production to landscapes of consumption. Critical to sustaining this process across the United States is the recruitment of low-wage workers to these areas, many of whom are undocumented Latino/a immigrants but who nevertheless are essential to building and maintaining both the housing and the lifestyle of gentrifiers. The paper draws on research conducted in rural Georgia to examine labor dynamics and spaces of everyday life for immigrants in gentrifying rural communities. The analysis highlights how race, gender, and legal status operate to incorporate and subordinate immigrants economically, facilitating the emergence of flexible and profitable labor regimes for a range of employers, while working to exclude immigrants socially and civically.

Hongxia Shan -- Gendered Geography of Power: Exploring Immigrant Women Engineers’ Career Pathways with Transnational Sensitivity. Maintaining a professional career is a consistent challenge facing professional immigrants in the industrialized West, particularly women immigrants trained in traditionally male-dominated professions such as engineering. Given this context, this paper focuses on the challenges faced by 11 women engineers from eight different countries, and the strategies they undertook to retain or regain a professional life after immigrating to Canada. I argue that the career pathways of the women are typically paved with the labour of love and the labour of learning; the former rooted in the gendered organization of home and work, the latter in response to Western-centric recognition practices in the host labour market. I also show that while the women share some common challenges, they are differentially positioned within matrixes of power; gender, race, class and other social relations of differences such as culture and language intersect with one another in converging and yet complex ways to shape differential opportunities for the women. This paper is informed by the transnational perspective of gendered geographies of power, which focus on the social agency individuals exercise to effect changes in their social locations.

Rachel Silvey -- Speculative Displacements: Gendered Transnational Labor in the City.

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