

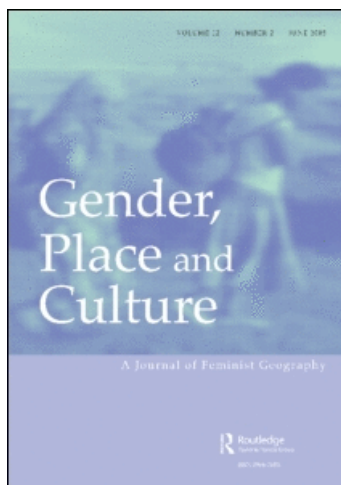
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Book Reviews

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such as emotional distress and lack of access (p. 135). In the next chapter, Taylor dissects the role of 'scene spaces' in these women's lives, i.e. commercialized, 'friendly' gay and lesbian leisure spaces. The lack of access and entitlement these women feel in these spaces provokes an understanding of socio-economic (and sexist) inequalities taking place within them. These spatialities are often more urban than rural, although the different experiences of these types of spaces prove to be specific to individual experiences.

Chapter 7 concludes by taking up the issue of sexual citizenship, a key topic in gay, lesbian, and queer everyday lives and studies, interweaving her work on spaces and development. She found that working-class lesbians lack the economic and social capital to buy, work, or network their way into 'scene spaces' of gay liberation. Furthermore, 'coming out' often or identifying as a lesbian puts them at a disadvantage within their working-class networks.

The strength of *Working-Class Lesbian Life* lies in its deep and thoughtful consideration of working-class lesbian's everyday lives, and its contribution in demonstrating the importance of class as a key subjectivity for participants. This book offers a unique and important view into the social geographies of working-class lesbians, particularly in its emphasis around foundational everyday experiences over the lifespan rather than focusing merely on present situations or specific 'scene spaces' such as bars or neighborhoods. I found that the use of long, well-chosen quotes and exchanges provides a convincing and powerful narrative of everyday working-class lesbian life.

As someone greatly interested in the possibility of intersectionalities, I felt the book's weakness developed from a repeated prioritization of the classed formation of these women's lives before attending to participants' sexualities, or gender. However, after further consideration, I came to imagine that narrating such processes over the lifespan explains an unfolding of identity whereby, in the lives of these women, individuals would be steeped in class identity before developing their sexuality. Perhaps inadvertently, this project supplies a structure and model of analysis that could be both integral if not momentous to the study of intersectionalities and subjectivities. Overall, *Working-Class Lesbian Life*'s contributions are significant. I recommend this book to those in the social sciences, particularly sociology and geography. As such, it would be most useful to those who are studying women, gay, lesbian, bisexual, queer, and/or working-class individuals for the valuable insights into the study of everyday space, place, and identity it offers.

Reference

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Gender divisions and working time in the new economy: changing patterns of work, care and public policy in Europe and North America, edited by Diane Perrons, Collette Fagan, Linda McDowell, Kath Ray and Kevin Ward, Cheltenham, UK and Northampton, MA, Edward Elgar Publishing, 2007, 319 pp., \$50.00, £28.50 (paperback), ISBN 978-1-8454-2020-8

Over the last two decades, the shifting spatial and temporal boundaries between work, home and family that have accompanied the transition to the 'new economy' have become

the subject of widespread academic, policy and media debate. As a short-hand term – to encapsulate the simultaneous rise of feminised services, the global reorganisation of business through ICTs, new forms of ‘flexible’ work and employment, and the decline of the male breadwinner/female caregiver model since the late 1970s – the ‘new economy’ has been celebrated by some commentators as emancipatory and egalitarian in its opening up new opportunities for women across multiple spheres of public and private life. However, as this edited collection by Diane Perrons and her colleagues shows, in many ways the ‘new economy’ actually reworks and reinforces longstanding gender divisions and inequalities in relation to work, employment, pay, working times, and provision of unpaid work and care in the home. Encouragingly, however, the book also makes clear that these gender divisions and inequalities are unavoidably complex and geographically differentiated by country-specific social and cultural norms, state legislation, welfare regimes, and trade union activity; that is, in the context of the current global neoliberal order, they are neither universally felt, nor are they always and everywhere inevitable.

Overall, this is an impressive, engaging and high quality collection of essays that began life as an ESRC funded seminar series at the London School of Economics (see <http://www.lse.ac.uk/collections/globalWorklife/>) and now forms the seventh title in Edward Elgar’s ‘Globalization and Welfare’ series. The central aim of the book is to explore how the various macro-level changes that collectively make up the ‘new economy’ are affecting the micro-organisation of the reproductive tasks necessary for daily well-being by workers and families in different nation-states. Within this framework, discussion focuses on a series of important themes including work inequality, patterning of work hours, feminisation of employment, degrees of work intensity and stress, work–life ‘balance’/integration/articulation, cultures of parenting, and household strategies for combining paid work with caring. These issues are explored through different theoretical and conceptual frameworks, combined with a diverse range of empirical evidence (with a particular emphasis on the UK, Sweden, Norway, and France), from national-scale worker surveys, to in-depth worker interviews, to household biographies, to multivariate statistical analyses. Contributions come from both well-known established researchers and up-and-coming scholars in a range of disciplines (economic geography, economic sociology, comparative social policy, and social and political science), as well as from the UK’s Trade Union Congress. As such, the collection fully reflects the multifaceted nature of these complex problems, and the multidisciplinary of the research literatures which grapple with them in pursuit of a more time-just, sustainable and equitable work–life balance in knowledge-based economies.

The book is structured around five sections, each with a clear introduction and three short, highly readable chapters. Each section is constructed so as to add a further layer of complexity to debates covered in earlier sections. Part I is concerned with the changing patterns of work and working times; whether or not popular conceptions of ever-increasing work intensity and work insecurity are borne out by the evidence; and the wider consequences of these changes for worker health, stress and well-being both in the UK (Brendan Burchell) and the USA (Harriet Presser). This section demonstrates that while these strains are particularly salient for women in low-income families, their impacts are also felt by professional women in elite labour markets (see Chapter 4 by Melissa Fisher on ‘broads’ on Wall Street). Within this context, Part II moves on to explore the implications of the feminisation of employment for combining paid work and care through three European case studies of different welfare regimes and work–life ‘balance’ policy provisions, specifically: France’s reduced working time law and its differential implications (Jeanne Fagnani and Marie Thérèse Letablier); the sustainability of

Sweden's dual-earner/dual-carer model in a period of economic crisis (Anita Nyberg); and the relationship between new working patterns and stress in UK (Rosemary Crompton and Michaela Brockman). The overriding conclusion from this section is that while in the short term various work–life 'balance' provisions might succeed in reducing gender divisions in labour market participation, this does not necessarily force a deeper cultural shift required to challenge more deep-seated gender inequalities.

Part III focuses on household decision making and the roles of class structures, geographical context and state policies in shaping the gender division of labour within households. A particularly significant contribution from this section is the demonstration of how cultural moral norms surrounding what it means to be a 'good' mother/father/worker powerfully shape the labour market behaviour of men and women (see e.g. Chapter 8 by Simon Duncan on 'gendered moral rationalities'), with many parents faced with ongoing dilemmas about which particular aspects of life should be prioritised in order to reconcile tensions between their multiple identities as parents, spouses, workers, colleagues, etc. (see Chapter 10 by Irene Hardhill and Joost van Loon). This section also demonstrates that while work–life integration measures based on better access to childcare and flexible working are reshaping notions of 'good mothering' in different nation-states, those designed to reshape the notions of 'good fathering' continue to lag behind. Or, in other words, while it is now much more acceptable for mothers to work, it is not equally acceptable for fathers *not* to work.

Taking these debates in yet another direction, Part IV explores the spatial mismatch of places of work, home, schools and nurseries, and the establishment, operation and outcomes of new initiatives that use new technologies and 'city time' policies to deliver local government services in a manner that better matches (spatially and temporally) the needs of a flexible and feminised workforce working in a 24/7 service economy. Examples showcased here are 'e-government' initiatives in the UK (Sarah Walsh et al.), 'urban time' policies in the EU (Jean-Yves Boulon), and UK union-led work–life balance initiatives in the public sector (Jo Morris and Jane Pillinger) – all three case studies highlight some encouraging potential benefits coupled with a range of ongoing challenges. Finally, Part V explores the tensions, uncertainties and opportunities of policies that promote progress towards gender equality. The discussion by Teresa Rees on the increasing prevalence and relative merits of differently motivated gender mainstreaming approaches in the private sector ('managing diversity' as a business case) and in the public sector ('promoting equality' as social justice) is particularly excellent here.

In sum, the collection provides a broad-ranging, comprehensive and authoritative resource for researchers and policy makers with interests in gender, work, employment and care in the new economy. Particularly impressive is the way in which (unlike a lot of other edited collections) the various contributions are neatly woven together by the editors through a series of expertly written, concise and engaging introductory commentaries to each of the five sections, such that the reader never gets lost. As such, in addition to its intended researcher and policy audience, it offers a valuable entry point for graduate students new to these burgeoning research literatures (something which can only be helped by this 2007 paperback edition as a follow-up to the more expensive hardback!).

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