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## Femicide

#### When the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) was signed, it created an unprecedented transnational economic space across North America that eliminated substantial trade barriers between the three signatory nations. To date, about 3,100 maquiladoras have been built in north Mexican border towns, employing more than one million assembly-line workers, roughly one fourth of whom are living in Ciudad Juárez.

#### Since then, Ciudad Juárez has made headlines because of the longest epidemic of femicidal violence in modern history -a sheer endless chain of inexplicable murder cases, with so far more than 500 women raped, tortured, mutilated, and strangled in the desert surrounding Ciudad Juárez.

#### But the question remains, where does responsibility lie? What are the conditions by which women are murdered everyday with impunity?

Arriola 07

- visited several border towns and met privately with mostly female workers -Elvia R., Professor of Law - NORTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY, Seattle Journal for Social Justice, Vo. 5, Issue 2, Spring/Summer

Claudia Ivette-González might still be alive if her employers had not turned her away. The 20-year-old resident of Ciudad Juárez-the Mexican city abutting El Paso, Texas-arrived at her assembly plant job four minutes late one day in October 2001. After management refused to let her into the factory, she started home on foot. A month later, her corpse was discovered buried in a field near a busy Juárez intersection. Next to her lay the bodies of seven other young women. In less than a decade, a city that once had very low homicide statistics now reports that at least 300-400 women and girls were killed between 1994 and 2000. Along with an increase in murder rates, the rates of domestic violence have increased as the border town of Ciudad Juarez has experienced heavy industrialization since the signing of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). Some murders have fallen into a bizarre serial killer pattern while others have been suspiciously linked to illegal trafficking gangs with money. Others clearly involve abductions of young, female maquiladora workers who never made it to or from work and whose bodies were later found dumped in Lomas de Poleo, the desert that surrounds Ciudad Juárez. Many of the murdered women have been raped, beaten, or mutilated. In Mexico, the maquiladora worker is someone typically without much education or property and is often a migrant from an even poorer region of the country. Thousands of workers in these factories eke out sad lives in shantytowns without water, electricity, or public lighting. Dozens of families may stake out plots of land near public utilities or the industrial parks. There they camp out for years, pirating essential public services and building by hand or hiring itinerant laborers to build a shack out of sticks, cardboard, rags or discarded constructor's platforms. Some make home next to trash dumps. They walk on unpaved stretches of land that flood during storms. Although news of the murders has generated much public discourse about the injustices taking place in Ciudad Juarez, an important factor is constantly overlooked in the discourse. What about the environment allowed the violence to take place? What about the fact that the government is in a cozy relationship with the CEOs of major corporations who come in to Mexico, lease large plots of land, set up factories with 24/7 operating schedules, pay no taxes, do little to make sure the workers they employ will have a roof over their head, a bed to sleep in and enough money to feed their families? What about the fact that the very girl whose body was found mutilated and dumped had worked hard, very hard, for one of those factories trying to improve her lot and that of her family? What of the fact that the same attitude about the murders - we are not responsible - is reflected in the policies of employment that encourage indifference to the workers needs or human rights whether in or out of the factories? This paper argues that the Juarez murders are an extreme manifestation of the systemic patterns of abuse, harassment and violence against women who work in the maquiladoras, whose treatment derives from privileges enjoyed by the investors who employ them pursuant to the North American Free Trade Agreement. I begin by acknowledging that there is a critical relationship between women, gender violence and free trade as noted by Professor Weissman and others, but I also seek to understand how the absence of regulation to benefit workers in standard free trade law and policy perpetuates the degradation of maquiladora workers and produces environments hostile to working women's lives, including discrimination, toxicity in the workplace and threats of fatal assault. The unquestioned right to exploit the mostly female working poor incites gender violence while it makes Mexico a major player in global economic politics, even if rapid industrialization is encouraging more domestic violence and occasional incidents of female murder. I. BEAUTY AND PAIN: GLOBALIZATION AND THE WOMEN OF THE MAQUILADORAS A. Gender and Globalization at the Mexican Border: before and after NAFTA. Globalization today has its fans and its critics. To some, like Thomas Friedman, it is the happy way of the future where people of different nations and cultures will interconnect easily through the Internet, where markets and democracy will flourish and all things stodgy, inefficient and dictatorial (e.g., Communism, Sadam Hussein) will fade. Others are more cautious, calling for better regulatory insight by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and other financial players in the politics of free trade. Still others see a deadly combination for nations that make too quick a transition to market economies and democracy. Most contemporary discourse surrounding globalization focuses on the economic theories supporting or rejecting the trend; those who view gender and global trade as crucially related are still in the minority in academic discourse. After observation of the relationship between gender and the operation of the maquiladoras at the Mexican border it is easy to see how gender based attitudes, affect everything from recruitment and hiring (nearly 100% female for workers) to treatment of women in the workplace. When American electrical, television, and stereo component companies such as GE, Sony, and Panasonic, began relocating to Mexico, women were blatantly preferred for the job. Women were seen as better fits; with smaller hands and fingers, they could better assemble tiny parts of export goods such as light bulbs, cassette tapes, and recorders. The ideal maquiladora worker thus emerged as a hybrid of stereotyped images based on sex, race and class - she was not only more docile and passive than Mexican men, but submissive, easily trainable and unlikely to pose problems with union organizing. B. Where the Violence Leading to Murder Begins - The Voices of Experience from Inside the Maquiladoras Over several years I visited several border towns and began to meet privately with mostly female workers and heard about their experiences. I sometimes met workers in their homes, which were uniformly tiny and clean but quite often without flooring, plumbing or more electricity than a single light bulb. "Fatal indifference" is the best way to describe the totality of circumstances suffered by maquiladora workers - a systematic structural disregard by corporations and their agents for the humanity of the laborer. Amparo was 38 and raising two teenage boys. She was desperately trying to keep the older boy in school so that he might avoid the destiny of the working poor - to start working at age 15 in the factories that average 10 hour workdays and little pay. Amparo had been fired for being outspoken about the bad worker treatment at Dimmit Industries, which is now defunct. Amparo was hired at Dimmit to work sitting down for long hours sewing on the waistband to a minimum 1200 pairs of expensive dress slacks per day in order to receive the base weekly wage of 300 pesos and 200 pesos in bonus (about 35 dollars per week). To have a more livable take home paycheck she pushed herself to produce at 150% of the expected quota or about 1800 slacks per day. Everyday Amparo walked out with a blackened face full of lint and dust that escaped the poor ventilation system in the plant. She remembered the terrible coughs she endured almost all of the time as a result of the fibers distinctly visible in the surrounding air that settled on her skin and in her lungs. Then she had to endure the exhaustion of the typical 10-12 hour shift with only a half hour break for lunch and a ten minute break in the morning. Amparo was one of five workers who filed an unfair labor practice charge after she was fired for complaining about the piece work policy that keeps the wages so low. Amparo knew she was in for a long haul by filing a claim, but she said, it was worth it because "I've tolerated them for 8 years." 2. Miserly Wages in Return for exposure to Toxicity. Maria Elena pointed to dark scarred tissue mostly on the upper side of her feet: old scratch marks and evidence of once-ruptured skin, from a year-long period when her feet had first developed an unexplainable fungus infection that had broken and rotted the skin so badly "that my own brothers and sisters would tell me to stay away from them because of the awful smell." The doctors concluded that the condition was so bad that if she did not find a remedy and did not stop working in the environment that had obviously contributed to the infection, she would lose her feet to gangrene. Her mother told her, "although I appreciate the help from your working I don't want you to lose your feet." Maria Elena quit the job where she had been assembling one section of seatbelts over and over for two years, during which she was exposed to fine chemical dust particles in the fabric of the seatbelt that caused a condition without a permanent cure. Maria Elena's condition is only one of a variety of illness and conditions, including back problems, carpel tunnel syndrome, asthma and disabling allergic reactions which typically accompany the privilege of working in a maquiladora. 3. NAFTA: Setting an Agenda for the Global Factories of the World The maquiladoras thrive on the structure of a work week designed to produce the highest levels of output. In the United States, the average work week is 38 to 40 hours. However, in the maquiladoras, the average is 5 to 10 hours longer. Maquiladora workers average 48 hours per week, sometimes 10- and 12-hour shifts, no overtime pay, and, in some factories, only one day off per week. One worker named "Angela," who had arrived from Veracruz seven years earlier, earned 750 pesos per week (about $75.00) and felt grateful not to have to work weekends. She said that her daughter was earning much more, about 950 pesos per week, (about $95.00) but to do this she had to work 12 hour shifts, 6 days per week. As one worker stated: "It's really unreasonable because we work from 7 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. To arrive on time, I have to get up at 5 a.m., and at that hour you really don't feel like eating. At 9:30 they give us 10 minutes for breakfast, and half an hour for lunch at 1 p.m." Global employment then, whether in Mexico or elsewhere, falls into a familiar pattern - one where the policies of worker treatment emphasize rapid production, not worker health and safety or improved living conditions. As some critics note, the new wealth that comes with free trade often benefits a tiny privileged minority not the general population of the poorer country. To care about the workers would entail caring about things that don't factor well in a business driven by commitment to the bottom line, or cost-benefit analysis. The disciplinary methods, the production quotas at any cost, the speed-ups and injuries, punishments for using the bathroom during work time, the exposure to danger instruments or chemicals, all flow directly from the signal by company owners and their agents to supervisors and managers that: Workers' lives are less important than production schedules; and Safety of the workers is another cost that disturbs the projected return from investment. Therefore, adequate safety gear for employees who must work with toxic chemicals, lighting around the factory, security for the workers -- all of these things are not as important as making sure workers do their tasks, supervisors meet the production schedule, and goods are exported and released into the stream of commerce that generates the consumption and the profits that will ultimately line the pockets of the owners and shareholders. These are the consequences of privilege and rights enjoyed by employers under free trade law and policy. It is a policy that doesn't give a damn about workers. The workers, after all, are only an insignificant cog in the wheel of production.

#### We begin our analysis here, on the border. Women in maquiladoras become living worthlessness and abjection. It is this state of dependency and submission that makes them so valuable. The disposability of the female body is captured in a paradigm of value versus waste.

Beltrán 9,

associate professor of political science at Haverford College,

(Cristina, *Political Theory*, Going Public Hannah Arendt, Immigrant Action, and the Space of Appearance, Volume 37 Number 5 October 2009 595-622)

Such activities do not reveal human uniqueness—instead, labor is defined by interchangeability. In Disposable Women and Other Myths of Global Capitalism, Melissa Wright describes how the Mexican women working in U.S.-owned maquiladora factories come to personify the meaning of human disposability, “subjects who eventually evolve into **a living state of worthlessness**.”88 Operating in the free-trade zone along the U.S.–Mexico border, these labor intensive assembly plants have developed systemic hiring practices that assume high levels of turnover among the predominantly young and female workforce, often dismissed as “untrainable” and “unskillable.” This depiction of maquila workers as defined by high turnover rates allows employers to characterize them as members of the “permanent labor force of the temporarily employed.”89 Described as a story of capitalist turnover, the Mexican maquila women are defined by the companies that hire them as “waste in the making . . . permanently and ineluctably headed towards decline . . . eventually worthless even as she creates value.”90 Linking her own critique of labor turnover in the maquiladoras with Uma Narayan’s discussion of “death by culture,” Wright connects the murders of women in Ciudad Juárez to this myth of capitalist disposability, claiming that the very logic of depicting some people as “eventually worthless” leads to a condition of violence wherein “female bodies have been dumped like trash in the desert.”91 In a similar vein, Nicholas de Genova argues that “it is deportability and not deportation per se” that has historically rendered undocumented labor a distinctly disposable commodity.92 Defined by a cyclical and unending process of nondistinctiveness and interchangeability, Arendt’s vocabulary of labor can be considered here in relation to the bodies of Mexican maquila workers and the Latino undocumented in the United States. Just as Arendtian labor is meant to be “used up” in a cycle of production and consumption, so too is the labor of the undocumented. In both cases, the qualities of disposability, deportability, and replaceability are the very characteristics that make this labor valuable. Defined by their temporary status, the value of undocumented labor is critically linked to the fact that it is understood to be impermanent and interchangeable. In this way, the value of undocumented labor is based less on long-term investment and its growing value over time than on its endlessness. It’s here that the language of surplus and oversaturation becomes important.

#### Globalization and Free Trade creates structures of systemic violence against women, a war waged with unsafe working conditions, insufficient healthcare, and a lack of respect for worker’s health. The under-privileging of these everyday forms of discrimination in the public create the cultural conditions for ongoing femicide outside of the factory.

Arriola 2006

Professor, Faculty Associate in the NIU Women’s Studies Program (Elvia R. "Accountability for Murder in the Maquiladoras: Linking Corporate Indifference to Gender Violence at the US-Mexico Border." Seattle J. Soc. Just. 5 (2006): 603).

Pro-globalization advocates measure success only from the standpoint of markets.202 They do not address the questionable relationship between claims of benefits and increased costs for things that are priceless, such as clean environments, secure families, relationships, and human life.203¶ I have introduced some of the stories and testimony gathered on many visits to the border as an ally of women working in the maquiladoras, and more recently, as a committed educator trying to introduce students to the human face of free trade. What I have hoped to elucidate is how a combined host of variables, including typical corporate decisions about discipline for workers, as well as the clear bias that favors investors in free trade law and policy, produces a hostile work environment with a discriminatory effect on women and female children. What happened to Claudia Ivette González and other maquiladora workers[[1]](#endnote-1) is inseparable from the employer’s attitude of indifference to the health and safety of working women inside the factories. If a company is not required to care about the injuries and the toxicity in the factory, why would it care about what might happen to a young girl who is sent out on foot in the early hours of the morning into unsafe areas of the city? ¶ The role NAFTA has played in luring rural families north to the border towns and into the maquiladoras, only to discover nonliving wages, no place to make a home, and frightening social conditions that threaten the safety of their health and their families, is widely ignored. Additionally, because of the historic presence of women in the maquiladoras, systemic and ignored patterns of gender discrimination well-recognized throughout the industry (e.g., sexual harassment, forced pregnancy testing)[[2]](#endnote-2) provided a foundation for the emergence of more violent forms of social chaos and gender violence to erupt in Juárez along with its development into a major export processing zone.¶ Ciudad Juárez is still Mexico’s shining star as an example of a successful export processing zone. But it has also become a haven for violence against women in the form of systematic abuse inside the factories and in the production of subtle effects on the working and living environment for all women in the city. As the activists in the factories often note, the phenomenon of the murders is inseparable from the gross indifference to the health and safety of the workers employed by the large and powerful maquiladoras, whose activities are licensed by free trade law, and are welcomed and unquestioned by the power elites of the host government. When gender abuse and violence, corporate power and indifference, and government acquiescence come together in the city of Juárez, they produce an environment hostile to women and hospitable to the rise of maquiladora murders.¶ Sadly, Claudia Ivette González is a martyr for justice in the maquiladoras, a place where workers have no expectation of safety in or out of the workplace and where supervisors can take actions against workers that, collectively, become the structure of fatal indifference. Claudia’s abduction, and that of so many of the victims of Juárez who were maquiladora workers, is the ultimate result of free trade and globalization. Her body may have been abducted and grossly violated by whomever found an easy target that morning, but the life preceding her brutal killing had already been defined as insignificant: a fleck in the fabric of global production.

#### We should connect gender to the economic rights of trade agreements as a way of politicizing the gendered roots of exploitation. A labor movement in transnational female workplaces is critical to furthering workers’ ability participate in the political culture that determines their lives. This is critical to spurring debates within the American labor movement, international cross-border organizing, working directly with women in maquiladoras and providing the basis for larger progressive coalitions.

#### Without this focus, women are treated as passive victims to be advocated for rather agents capable of change.

Andrias 03

Kate E., Special Assistant To The President and Associate Counsel To The President, and Chief of Staff of the White House Counsel’s Office. Academic Fellow at Columbia Law School. Taught American Constitutional Law as a Visiting Professor at L'Institut d'Études Politiques - Paris, France. She has also practiced labor law and worked as a union organizer. University of San Francisco Law Review, Spring, 37 U.S.F. L. Rev. 521

The time since NAFTA's signing has made clear that globalization is not a passing phase in our economic system, and that this global restructuring has particular impact for women workers. It is critical that those concerned about gender equality begin to engage in and support cross-border labor organizing campaigns, and, when possible, exploit NAALC's expressive capabilities. Moreover, such groups must begin to advocate for the creation of stronger, more effective transnational labor agreements. Such organizing efforts and transnational legal provisions are essential to the existence of democracy, workers' rights, and gender equity in an increasingly transnational economy. As international law experts have argued, NAALC confronts one of the central tensions now facing the world: that which exists between nationally organized democratic regulatory frameworks and the emerging transnational nature of economic life. 154 Moreover, as often ignored by international law and NAFTA experts, this tension has gendered roots and effects. 155 Eight years after the passage of NAFTA, there are hopeful signs, at least in terms of citizen efforts to shape trade debates while connecting gender to economic rights. Faced by a sharp decline in union membership caused by the flight of the manufacturing industry, unions have increased their focus on organizing women and immigrants in the growing service sector. Shortly after the passage of NAFTA, a political struggle within the labor movement broke out. A dissident group of union leaders, expressing frustration with years of membership decline, was elected to the leadership of the federation in the first contested election in the AFL-CIO's history. 156 The new slate was headed by John Sweeney of the largely female and immigrant Service Employees International Union, Richard Trumka, former president of the United Mine Workers of America, and Linda Chavez Thompson, a Mexican-American immigrant and the child of farmworkers. [\*558] The new leadership promised increased militancy and more progressive politics. 157 Subsequently, the AFL-CIO has built an active new department focusing on women's rights, nationally and internationally. 158 Unions such as the Service Employees International Union have focused intensely on organizing in female-dominated industries such as health care and homecare. Indeed, two out of three new union members are women. 159 With increasing numbers of women in unions, the number of women in leadership positions is also increasing. The national federation has begun taking public stands in support of women's rights legislation, publicly endorsing national legislation for contraceptive equity and to protect survivors of domestic violence from unemployment and insurance discrimination, for example. 160 In addition, acutely aware of the diminished power of workers with respect to multinational corporations, parts of the American labor movement, particularly the United Electricalworkers and the Steelworkers, are beginning to engage in more international cross-border organizing, working directly with women in the maquiladoras. 161 NAALC has facilitated these cross-border efforts. 162 Further, the AFL-CIO has dramatically revised its position on immigration, putting new emphasis on the rights of immigrant workers rather than on narrow protectionism. 163 Although there is much more progress to be made within the labor movement, and although unions face significant obstacles to organizing, changes enacted since the passage of NAFTA are promising. 164 [\*559] While unions have moved in the right direction, so too have women's groups. Although few women's groups have been involved in active organizing campaigns, such as the campaigns that brought complaints under NAALC, women's NGOs have become much more active in the trade debate. Since NAFTA's passage, new NGOs have formed that are focused on trade and women workers' rights. There are now more than thirty organizations doing advocacy and policy work around women's issues in the global economy. 165 Even traditional, well-established women's organizations are beginning get involved in the issue. In May of 2002, the League of Women Voters reassessed its stance on trade, for the first time since 1973, calling specific attention to the need to improve labor conditions and guarantee core labor rights. 166 The National Council of Jewish Women formed the No Sweatshop Coalition ("NOSCO") after their conference on sweatshops in October 1996. 167 Major national women's groups, including NOW and Feminist Majority recently wrote a letter to Speaker Hastert arguing against the renewal of fast-track trade authority. 168 Such advocacy work, merging issues of trade and gender, focusing specifically on women workers in the global economy is critically important. However, much of the current NGO work posits the women as victims of exploitation and sexual harassment at work, rather than as actors engaged in their own organizational efforts; it decides priorities and advocates policies on behalf of working women, rather [\*560] than furthering the rights of those women, as workers, to organize and to determine their own priorities. 169 The focus on working women as victims in need of someone to speak for them is not only normatively troubling, it is also practically limited. It occludes the importance of worker organizations. Unionization strongly correlates with economic gains for workers, and to some extent with social rights such as child-care, health care, and paid family leave. 170 Union membership raises median weekly earnings of American workers and reduces gender based income gaps. Overall, women who are members of a labor union earn over 30% more than their non-union counterparts; African American women earn 38% more and Latina women 41% more than non-union women of the same ethnic or racial background. 171 In addition, union membership decreases the wage gap between men and women by more than 10%. 172 Union workers are also much more likely to have health care and pension benefits than non-union workers. 173 Thus, a vital labor movement in transnational female workplaces such as Mexican maquiladoras and the American service sector, is critical for advancing women's economic and social rights. Moreover, facilitating organization is essential to furthering democracy and workers' ability to participate in and affect democratic political culture. Workplace organizations, like other voluntary associations, enable civic participation and strengthen democracy. As Theda Skocpol, Marshall Ganz, and Ziad Munson write: Public life in the United States has long been rooted in voluntary membership groups as well as competitive elections. From churches and unions to social groups and reform crusades, membership associations have provided paths into active citizenship, allowing [\*561] Americans to build community, pursue shared goals, and influence social and political affairs. 174 The right to organize, the right to bargain collectively, and the right to strike run parallel to basic American political rights - the right to assemble, the right to freedom of speech, and the right to petition the government for redress of grievances. Unions are some of the most formally democratic institutions in American society, aside from actual elected bodies. They can be a space where workers learn about democracy first-hand, and, as a result, they tend to foster greater political participation. 175 Moreover, unions have historically constituted a fundamental basis for a progressive coalitions in American politics. 176 Thus, unionization in female-dominated industries has the potential not only to improve women's economic conditions, but also to give them a collective voice through which to exercise power in the democratic process. Skocpol, Ganz, and Munson warn us that the precipitous decline of organizational life in American society has dangerous implications for democracy. They urge Americans to "reimagine their democratic future and look to revitalize their shared and representative institutions not just in national politics but in associational life as well." 177 [\*562] Reconsidering their words in light of NAFTA, NAALC, and the current global economy, suggests that we must "re-imagine" organizational life not only nationally, but internationally. Foremost in the agenda of rights activists - human rights, women's rights, and labor rights alike - as well as that of sympathetic legal scholars must be to create transnational legal norms that strengthen civic participation and democratic structures. In short, efforts should focus on shaping trade agreements so that they protect the rights of workers to build effective labor organizations across borders. Only if NAALC and similar agreements include stronger organizational rights will they play a critical role in reestablishing democratic life on a transnational basis, allowing women to finally decide for themselves what rights they deserve.

#### The discourse surrounding the maquila workers refigures our narrative of all marginalized women. It is crucial to make connections between the women of Juarez and labor conditions worldwide.

Wright 11

(Melissa W. Spring 2011. Disposable Women¶ and Other Myths of¶ Global Capitalism. Departments of Geography and Women’s Studies, Pennsylvania State University. p. 180)

¶ In 1999, when I first published the essay that constitutes this chapter, a¶ crime wave against women in Ciudad Juárez, Chihuahua, was just gaining¶ international attention. At that time, more than a hundred women¶ and girls had been murdered, many of them tortured and discarded¶ in the city’s marginal areas, since 1993. There is evidence, however,¶ that this violence and dumping of female bodies in the desert began¶ years earlier (Monárrez 2005). At the time of this writing in 2006, that¶ number has increased at least twofold, and hundreds of other women¶ and girls are missing. I have chosen to reprint this essay in its original¶ version rather than to revise it to account for events that have occurred¶ in the last several years. I provide a more updated version in chapter 7¶ of the events surrounding the crimes and the social movement that has¶ grown as a protest to the violence against women in northern Mexico.¶ In this chapter, however, I keep my focus on the connections linking¶ a discourse of third world female disposability to the forces that treat women as if they were real instances of disposable humanity.¶ Here I make these connections between the internal dynamics of factory¶ production and the urban violence that has, over the last twenty¶ years, transformed Ciudad Juárez into one of the most violent cities, especially for women, in the Western Hemisphere. In doing so,¶ I revisit some of the themes discussed in previous chapters, particularly¶ with regard to the discourses of an essential feminine condition¶ and the high labor turnover that derives from it, and relate them to¶ events occurring beyond the factory walls. My intent is to illustrate¶ how the myth of a disposable third world woman worker travels outside of the global factory system and interacts, often in extremely cruel ways, with other stories that degrade women, especially those who work for low wages around the world. Perhaps, my biggest hope¶ for this chapter is to dispel any doubt regarding the innocence of the¶ myth of the disposable third world woman and to set the scene for¶ the following chapters, in which I discuss how many people expose¶ the tale for what it is and fight against its many dangers.¶ In this chapter, I shall use Walter Benjamin’s notion of a dialectical¶ image to examine the figure of the Mexican woman worker¶ formed within the narrative of her general disposability.1 The dialectical¶ image is one whose apparent stillness obscures the tensions¶ that actually hold it in suspension. It is a caesura forged by clashing¶ forces. With this dialectical image in mind, I see the Mexican woman¶ depicted in the murder narratives as a life stilled by the discord of¶ value pitted against waste. I focus on the narrative image of her,¶ rather than on the lives of the murder victims, to reveal the intimate¶ connection binding these stilled lives to the reproduction of value in¶ the maquiladoras located in Ciudad Juárez. Through a comparison¶ of a maquiladora narrative of categorical disavowal of responsibility¶ for the violence with another maquila narrative explaining the¶ mundane problem of labor turnover, the Mexican woman freezes as¶ a subject stilled by the tensions linking the two tales.

## Plan

#### The United States federal government will clarify that the NAFTA agreement itself obligates binding worker protections in Mexico, including mechanisms for improving basic labor standards based on the recommendations of the International Labor Organization (ILO).

## Solvency

#### Dispute resolution is the key – strengthening and publicizing these panels creates a symbolic disincentive for corporations to abuse workers.

Garcia 9 Kimberly A Nolan, Political Science = The University of New Mexico Albuquerque, New Mexico, Transnational advocacy and labor rights conditionality in the international trading order, Chapter One: Transnational Advocacy Networks and Trade-Based Labor Rights Conditionality

According to this argument, if labor rights standards are used as a comparative advantage in trade by states, labor standards should be subject to dispute resolution just like tariff assessments, intellectual property rights, and investment rules (Ehrenberg 1996; Moorman 2001). When labor conditionality is attached to trade agreements, labor rights compliance becomes enforceable through dispute resolution as for other trade issues, and consequences are important enough to discourage breaking the rules. States that relax labor standards face strong incentives to improve labor rights performance and conform to policies supported by industrialized countries, or suffer the potential costs of trade sanctions (Rodrik 1996). Further, trade based conditionality can provide incentives for compliance, as states that meet the prescriptions of labor rights conditionality can be rewarded with market access. 7

#### The ILO should choose enforcement measures – their standards and expertise are universally recognized. The ILO strengthens crucial union formations.

Alternatives for the Americas 98 second draft of a document initially prepared for the April 1998 Peoples' Summit of the Americas-a historic gathering of activists determined to change the prevailing approach to trade and investment policy in the Western Hemisphere. Building a People's Hemispheric Agreement, http://www.iatp.org/files/Alternatives\_for\_the\_Americas\_Building\_a\_Peopl.htm

Naturally, such a workers' rights provision would be effective only to the extent that it were accompanied by an effective monitoring and enforcement mechanism. We propose that the monitoring function, as well as that of making recommendations regarding the application of specific enforcement measures, be delegated to the ILO, whose expertise in the field of monitoring the application of international labour standards is universally recognized. The complaints-based procedure that the ILO currently uses for keeping track of the respect of the freedom of association Conventions would be used for the Americas' workers' rights clause. That is to say, unions or other non-governmental organizations could initiate an examination procedure by the ILO by lodging a complaint to the latter when fundamental rights contained in the core Conventions are violated. The ILO would, at a first stage, carry out an investigation to verify whether or not the Conventions have in fact been violated. In cases where the Conventions are confirmed to have been violated, the ILO would, at a second stage, formulate recommendations to the country to assist it in complying with the Conventions which have not been respected. Only if this second stage were unsuccessful would the enforcement mechanism be applied, which is to say that the direct perpetrator of the violations would be deprived of specific benefits of the accord, i.e., through trade sanctions. To the extent that the perpetrator of the violation was a specific company, any specific sanctions would be directly targeted at that company. For example, if an auto-parts manufacturer in Country A were found to have violated the rights of freedom of association of its work-force, the exports coming from that particular manufacturer in Country A would no longer benefit from tariff-free access to all other countries party to the accord. Regular customs duties would be applied, in accordance with WTO agreements, as if the particular export came from outside of the Americas' free-trade area. More generalized sanctions – i.e., sanctions which would apply to all exports from a particular country – would only be administered if the country's government were shown to be an active and repeated accomplice in the violation of fundamental workers' rights in that country. If both countries and companies were obligated to respect and apply fundamental workers' rights, this would help to establish and generalize workplace practices throughout the Americas, in which: the most extreme forms of labour exploitation would be eliminated workers could, without suffering threats to their jobs and their physical well-being, strive to improve their wages and working conditions workers and employers could resolve their differences through peaceful means

#### The aff is more than just a legal solution – it is also a merge of legal work to the already active forms of transformative organizing. The framing of our aff is critical to radicalizing new notions of economic rights – creating a shared normative formula for a socially aware global economy. Upholding internationally recognized workers' rights is necessary to set a less ambiguous floor for labor standards which inspires both organized labor and NGOs to get involved.

Jacobs 10

Cody, Attorney at Law Center to Prevent Gun Violence, Writing Program Director at Georgetown Journal on Poverty Law & Policy, Winter, 17 Geo. J. Poverty Law & Pol'y 127

While some would argue that imposition of "international" labor standards amounts to an intrusion on sovereignty, the United States' existing Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) already requires other developing countries to conform to "internationally recognized worker rights" in order to access special trade benefits. 90 Requiring Mexico to meet similar standards to gain NAFTA's benefits would not be a huge logical leap. A more harmonizing agreement has the advantages of being less ambiguous and setting a "floor" for labor standards to prevent a "race to the bottom." 91 The US-Jordan Free Trade Agreement (US-Jordan FTA) provides a good model of steps that could be taken in that direction. Under that agreement, both nations are required to "strive to ensure" that the law protects the labor principles recognized by both countries as members of the International Labor Organization (ILO). 92 [\*139] Failure to uphold these principles, whether through inadequate enforcement or inadequate laws, can be a ground for dispute resolution under the agreement. 93 Additionally, by incorporating the ILO standards rather than relying solely on each country's domestic laws, the US-Jordan FTA makes it easier for the parties to determine whether there has been a violation. 94 The ILO standards have the advantage of being more specific and objective than the NAALC principles, while still broad enough to allow the US and Mexico to maintain independent systems consistent with the vast socio-economic differences between the two nations. 95 Any renegotiation of NAFTA to better protect worker's rights should follow the lead of the US-Jordan FTA by adopting binding, specific standards that uphold internationally recognized workers' rights. Even if the parties refuse to adopt uniform standards, there are still several improvements which can be made to NAALC's existing framework that would make it more effective, including: creating a non-political non-diplomatic entity to adjudicate disputes, creating incentives for private parties to bring complaints, making all labor principles equally enforceable and incorporating NAALC into NAFTA itself. NAALC's dispute resolution mechanism is reliant entirely on action by the secretary of labor in each country, a political appointee. When deciding, for example, whether to call for an ECE to be convened on a complaint or whether to stop at the ministerial consultation level, the secretary will not just consider the merits of the complaint, but also will be considering, inter alia, her country's diplomatic posture with regard to the complained against country, the ideology of her administration and the political clout of the companies, labor unions and NGOs involved in the complaint. 96 Thus, it seems clear that to provide any meaningful remedy for violations, the agreement must be overseen by an independent adjudicatory body. 97 A permanent supranational body that is more isolated from political and diplomatic concerns would be able to provide a much more neutral arbiter of the agreement as well as a source of consistent [\*140] interpretations of the agreement that diplomatic negotiations simply cannot provide. 98 However, such a supranational body will not be effective unless the victims of violations bring complaints to its attention. It is no accident that the majority of the cases brought under NAALC have been related to the right to organize; organized labor is the only group with a broad enough constituency in all three countries and enough financial resources to bring claims which will, at best, result in publicity for their cause. 99 In order to promote more broad based enforcement, the agreement must create incentives for private parties, particularly wronged workers, to bring complaints to their NAOs. For example, countries could be required to provide back-pay, re-instatement or other remedies through their domestic courts to workers who prevail in a NAALC claim. More stringent trade sanctions, equivalent to sanctions a party would face for violating NAFTA's trade provisions, could also motivate NGOs to bring complaints since stronger penalties would be more likely to achieve NGOs' policy goals. Any stronger NAALC would also have to eliminate its "tiered structure" where only three of the eleven labor principles are currently enforceable. This structure has been widely criticized since the rights to organize, bargain collectively and strike are the least enforceable, 100 even though the exercise of these rights may be the most effective way for workers to secure the other eight principles NAALC articulates and better working conditions generally. Perhaps in recognition of this flaw, subsequent U.S. labor agreements in free trade agreements have made all worker's rights equally enforceable. 101 Changing this aspect of NAALC might be one of the more uncontroversial ways to make it more effective since even ardent free traders seem to have already accepted equality of treatment among labor rights as a standard part of labor provisions in free trade agreements. Making all of the labor rights guaranteed in NAALC equally enforceable would bring it "up to speed" with modern free trade agreements and, at the very least, would be an important symbolic recognition of the equal importance of all the rights NAALC seeks to promote. Similarly, NAALC's status as a "side agreement" rather than a part of NAFTA itself is inconsistent with modern agreements, sends the wrong message symbolically and limits the potential effectiveness of NAALC's enforcement [\*141] mechanism. After NAFTA, U.S. trade agreements have generally included labor provisions in the text of the agreement rather than in a side agreement. 102 Symbolically, this inclusion sends a signal that the people making the goods in international trade are as worthy of protection as the goods themselves. 103 Incorporation into the body of an agreement sets the stage for subjecting labor rights disputes to the more effective trade dispute enforcement processes. 104 Similar to other modern free trade agreements, a new, stronger NAALC should be included within the body of NAFTA in order to recognize the agreement's importance and increase its efficacy. While making any modifications to NAFTA, particularly its labor provisions, will be an uphill battle, making any of the changes outlined above will at least take a step towards leveling the playing field for American blue collar workers and finally giving NAFTA a chance to have an unequivocally positive impact on the lives of working class Mexicans. b. Development Fund Although improving NAALC will go a help set up a more equitable legal framework for workers to assert their rights, workers lives will only improve when the infrastructure is in place in all three countries to help workers adapt to the realities of global competition. As discussed above, Mexico simply lacks much of the physical, educational and administrative infrastructure necessary to provide workers with the bargaining power to make meaningful use of the rights articulated in NAALC to improve their working conditions. Blue collar workers in the United States and to some extent Canada, even with an improved NAALC, will continue to be pushed into lower paying service sector jobs as the manufacturing sector takes advantage of still cheaper Mexican labor. 105 Therefore, it is essential that the NAFTA partners work together to help workers in all [\*142] three countries and plan for long term economic growth. Professor Stephen Zamora and other experts have proposed the creation of a North American Regional Development Fund to help ease the hardships of economic integration in all three countries. 106 The fund would require significant funding from all three countries in order to have a real impact on development, particularly in Mexico. 107 One possible source of this funding would be a tax on the multinational corporations that have seen the most benefits from NAFTA. 108 Creating this fund would be a giant step towards spreading the benefits of NAFTA more equitably and could fund worthy projects aimed at this goal. Such could be used to fund essential infrastructure projects in Mexico to improve both its physical infrastructure (i.e. transportation, water management, power generation) and social infrastructure (i.e. better schools, more effective administrative agencies, unemployment assistance). 109 But the fund would not simply be a U.S. "foreign aid" program for Mexico; it would also be a source of funding to help people in the United States hit hard by the loss of manufacturing jobs as a result of economic integration. The fund could create programs for education and job training or public works projects to give blue collar workers an opportunity to maintain the standard of living that has been slipping away from them since NAFTA's implementation. These programs will pay long term dividends for both countries: Mexican workers will enjoy a higher standard of living and greater purchasing power, increasing demand for U.S. goods; 110 Mexican migration will be reduced as the lives of the working poor improve 111 and American workers will be better able to compete, not just in NAFTA, but in the increasingly globalized economy generally. 112 V. CONCLUSION Renegotiating NAFTA will certainly be no easy task politically, but in a time when workers are already reeling from the global economic crisis, the imperative has never been clearer. Reflexive protectionism is not efficacious or realistic, and [\*143] workers may have been even worse off had the United States and Mexico gone the Ross Perot route. Over the last fifteen years, NAFTA has proven to be a rapid creator of economic growth, but proper measures are needed to make sure this growth is shared equitably. NAFTA's future success should not be measured in GDP or corporate profits but should be measured by the living standards of workers--from farmers in Oaxaca to factory workers in Ohio. Empowering workers with rights and giving them the structural tools they need to exercise these rights in a meaningful way is an important step in this direction.

#### Incorporating civil society input about NAFTA’s labor failures is a critical corrective. Public debate and documentation of NAFTA’s impact is critical to move past the logic of markets and to force the government to live up to its promises, rolling back the current model of NAFTA

Carlsen 9

Laura, Director of the Americas Policy Program in Mexico City, where she has been an analyst and writer for two decades. She is regular columnist for Foreign Policy In Focus, The Huffington Post, 1-12, http://www.huffingtonpost.com/laura-carlsen/obama-reaffirms-promise-t\_b\_157316.html

The mainstream press is wrong when it says the United States can't "unilaterally" call for renegotiation. Not only is renegotiation permitted legally -- in fact, any country can unilaterally withdraw with six months notice -- but there have been many calls for renegotiation in Canada and Mexico. Canadians have built a strong grassroots movement to protect natural resources from predatory NAFTA clauses. Broad-based citizen groups like the Council of Canadians oppose NAFTA because of the energy proportionality clause that requires Canada to export oil to the United States even in times of scarcity, the investor-state clauses that give investors the right to sue governments contained in Chapter 11, and the clause that permits bulk-water exports. Polls in the general population show that 61% favor renegotiation. In Mexico, 100,000 people marched in the streets on two separate occasions under the banner of renegotiation to revise NAFTA's agricultural provisions. They demanded protection of basic food production by removing corn and beans from the agreement. In 2003, former President Vicente Fox requested opening up the agreement only to be rebuffed by the U.S. government. For the United States, the main issue is jobs. Senator Sherrod Brown, an Ohio Democrat, cites a loss of 200,000 manufacturing jobs due to NAFTA for his state alone. The nation has lost 3.1 million manufacturing jobs since 1994, and its trade deficit with Mexico and Canada has risen to $138.5 billion in 2007 from $9.1 billion in 1993. The opposition to NAFTA within the United States goes well beyond organized labor. While job loss and insecurity under globalization were major constituency-builders in blue-collar states during the elections, polls taken before the election revealed that a national majority opposes free trade and particularly NAFTA, and that opinion increased during the campaign. A June 2008 Rasmussen nationwide poll showed 56% in favor of renegotiating NAFTA. Many people feel that NAFTA has given companies incentives to move production to where labor is cheaper, exporting jobs and eroding working conditions. In general, U.S. opposition to the trade agreement is split between fair-trade groups that focus on jobs and the environment and a nationalist rightwing that believes NAFTA and its offspring, the Security and Prosperity Partnership, threaten U.S. sovereignty through the nefarious -- and non-existent -- creation of a North American Union. Neither of these currents could properly be called "protectionist," and both call for more transparency in the process. Among the differing priorities, citizen demands concur that the current agreement favors transnational companies and is unfair to citizens in all three nations. Broadly shared priorities for renegotiation are: -- Eliminate Chapter 11. Corporations shouldn't have the right to sue governments and supersede national laws. Trade tribunals lack adequate transparency and accountability, and consistently reflect a strong, pro-corporate bias. -- End the energy proportionality clause between the United States and Canada, and exclude bulk water as a commodity. Canadian national and provincial governments should be able to fulfill their responsibilities in long-term energy planning without restrictions under NAFTA. Get NAFTA out of food and agriculture. Countries should be able to develop national agendas to assure food quality, farm livelihoods, and consumer safety and then adapt the trade agreement to those objectives rather than the reverse. NAFTA favors corporate farms and bans certain policy tools to support small farmers and consumers, including special products protections. Renegotiating the agreement's agricultural provisions shouldn't involve surgical incisions of specific clauses, but a deep reform and reorientation toward food sovereignty. End the Security and Prosperity Partnership. This 2005 NAFTA extension into further trade and investment liberalization and national security has no public mandate in any of the three countries. Further negotiations on expanding integration should be reviewed and, where approved, be channeled into open, representative talks. The U.S. military aid package it spawned, the Merida Initiative, should be converted into a development aid package for the 2010 appropriations. -- Citizen movements also call for national governments to have more development and social policy tools, many of which are prohibited under the competition and privatization terms of NAFTA. Some of these groups together produced a document of 10 areas that should be reviewed: energy, agriculture, role of the state, financial services, foreign investment, employment, migrants, environment, intellectual property, and dispute settlement. Will He or Won't He? Obama's campaign promise was explicit: "NAFTA's shortcomings were evident when signed and we must now amend the agreement to fix them." The president-elect called for enforceable labor and environmental standards in the text, an end to the ability of corporations to sue governments, and emphasizing the needs of "Main Street" over "Wall Street." But some Obama-watchers claim he's waffling on his trade commitments. Although these contentions in the pro-free-trade press are mostly wishful thinking, experts and activists are following the appointments closely. So far it has been a mixed message. The initial nomination of Bill Richardson, point-person for the passage of NAFTA under the Clinton administration, didn't sit well with fair-trade groups and elicited a sigh of relief among free-trade promoters, who instantly chalked up the president-elect's anti-NAFTA statements to electoral propaganda. Obama's economic advisors, led by Larry Summers, and appointee for Treasury, Timothy Geithner, at face value would also indicate a commitment to the status quo on trade. And when Ron Kirk, a former mayor of Dallas who proclaimed his city the "capital of NAFTA," accepted the nomination for U.S. Trade Representative, it reversed satisfaction among fair-traders at the initial nomination of Xavier Becerra, who turned down the job. Pending the new Commerce designate, that leaves Hilda Solis, Obama's nominee for Secretary of Labor, as the only real bright spot for fair-traders. A NAFTA critic, she would wield real clout since jobs will be the pivotal issue for the United States in renegotiation. As a Latina, she also has an acute understanding of the need to make NAFTA fair for all partners. Pessimistically, it's possible to imagine that the Obama presidency could end up merely adopting the Democratic platform on trade, which would stick side agreements in the text, add International Labor Organization core labor standards, and create an expanded U.S. jobs displacement program. Obama supported the U.S.-Peru Free Trade Agreement, which was modified along these lines. But the economic crisis has changed everything. Even as the Bush administration frantically -- and incredibly -- insists that free trade isn't the problem but the solution, most other countries are taking a second look at the model. As the crisis sets in, Europe wants more regulation and developing countries want more policy space. And Americans want more protection from the disaster that's currently befalling them. With every appointment, Obama has insisted he'll be the one calling the shots. For the next few weeks, then, all we really have to go on for predicting trade policy is Washington's current favorite game -- the psychic exploration of Obama's inner mind. A more productive activity for fair-traders is to pull out all the stops in the tri-national campaigns to renegotiate NAFTA and impose a moratorium on new free trade agreements. This is an historic opportunity to change course in crisis. Citizens Organize for Renegotiation Citizen organizations and legislators have called for renegotiation of NAFTA in the United States, Canada, and Mexico. The collapse of the financial sector spells the need for a reconversion strategy for the "real economy;" that is, U.S. productive capacity in the United States. This strategy will require a careful and critical look at NAFTA, our blind reliance on market forces, and the promotion of outsourcing as a competition strategy. The industrial policy that Obama outlined clashes ideologically and legally with NAFTA and other free trade agreements. It hasn't been lost on the rest of the world that the U.S. government is adopting measures such as massive subsidies and bailouts that it has sought to deny developing countries under free-trade rules. Robert Kuttner at The American Prospect refers to this as "the sin of committing industrial policy" and warns that it's only a matter of time before a trade partner registers a suit against Obama's anti-crisis measures. This would be an excellent opportunity to expose the hypocrisy of our trade policies and chart a new course. The new fair-trade members of Congress and others outside the leadership clique will provide new allies and be far more willing to move beyond the stodgy party leadership's position on trade. Some already have. The TRADE Act, introduced into Congress in April 2008, calls for a NAFTA review and lays out fair-trade principles. Meanwhile, poor countries need maximum room for maneuver to help those who are already living on the edge. Mexico is no exception. Although the current government isn't likely to willingly change neoliberal policies and accept NAFTA renegotiation, the citizenry opposes NAFTA two to one. Echoing the phrase that did in John McCain's candidacy, President Felipe Calderón continues to argue that the Mexican economy will be fine even as reports of job loss, wage declines, inflation, and capital flight pour in. In Mexico, as in the United States, only energetic measures can address the deepening crisis and growing social unrest. Renegotiation can and should be good for citizens in all three countries. With such a high degree of integration, our futures are intertwined. A recent study calculated that when Mexican real wages drop 10%, apprehensions at the border rise around 8%. Real wages in Mexico fell 24% from December 2006 to August 2008 and are plummeting now with the crisis; renegotiation should include a view toward job generation and retention in Mexico, and a compensation fund similar to the European Union's transition funds for less-developed countries. The current security aid in the ill-conceived Merida Initiative should be converted to this end. Review and Redo The first step for renegotiation must be a broad, in-depth review of NAFTA, or rather three reviews, one per country. Review bodies must be independent, representing different orientations and expertise. These should carefully define the criteria of evaluation, including social, economic, political, and cultural indicators. The U.S. TRADE Act, which also calls for a review, lists some criteria for evaluation, but we need precision. Also necessary are public consultations and other mechanisms for incorporating civil society input into the process. The review would achieve several important goals. First, it would open up a debate that in the United States had been practically dormant between NAFTA's passage and the recent presidential campaign. It also would provide valuable information on impacts. The apples-and-oranges debate on trade policy -- one side argues that NAFTA increased international trade and the other argues that international trade isn't all it's cracked up to be -- is sterile and abstract. We should be able to move beyond this debate with additional data and analysis. To convince public opinion of the case for renegotiation, at this critical moment in a process of economic integration gone awry, will require thinking about international trade and investment in the context of new economic arrangements. To do this we need to build both arguments and alliances. Renegotiation demands must be woven into comprehensive proposals for reform that have a coherent logic and go beyond NAFTA articles. Related issues include enforcing antitrust legislation, ending commodity speculation, adopting supply management mechanisms, creating grain reserves, supporting domestic food production, and building local marketing systems. The Obama statement from Jan. 12 indicates the president-elect will stand firm on renegotiating NAFTA. It may no longer be a question of "will he or won't he". To confront the crisis and establish mutual well-being in the region, the debate must move quickly now to "how and when."

#### Silence about the gendered dimension of economic engagement is an intended tactic and cloaking device that serves to conceal the work of masculine violence.

Chow ’03 (Esther Ngan-ling, Prof. @ American Univ. “Gender Matters: Studying Globalization and Social Change in the 21st Century,” International Sociology 18:3)

Why is globalization as a gendered phenomenon not well recognized? Among many reasons, several are relevant here. First, mainstream discourse focuses on globalization primarily as encompassing macro and disembodied forces, flows and processes in terms of its economic and societal impact. The concept remains at a general, abstract level that has greater meaning and relevance to academicians, journalists and some activists than to the general public, even though people’s everyday lives are very much affected by global forces and happenings. Much of the theorizing about globalization is either gender-neutral or gender-blind, ignoring how globalization shapes gender relationships and people’s lives materially, politically, socially and culturally at all levels and treating its differential effects on women and men as similar. Gender is basically taken for granted, as if it does not matter. In particular, women’s voices and lives are virtually absent from much theoretical discussion on globalization. When the gender issue is discussed, the focus tends to be on the effects of globalization on women rather than on the effects of gender on globalization. Some of globalization’s gendered effects are invisible, particularly when its victims, such as poor Third World women, are structurally marginalized, rendering these effects less apparent and less directly observable. How the gender dimension shapes the globalization process is ignored as either unimportant or irrelevant. How gender relations are products of various global–local systems of patriarchy and hegemonic masculinities seldom enters critical debate and discussion. The failure to incorporate gender into the study of globalization in meaningful and systematic ways not only produces incomplete views of women’s rights as fundamental human rights and inaccurate understanding of the sources of gender inequality, but also can actually undermine development policy and practice. In other words, the gender dimension is a critically important missing piece in the theorizing of globalization. Therefore, gender matters for understanding what globalization is and how it is influenced by gendered hierarchies and ideologies, which in turn shape gendered institutions, relationships, identities and experiences of women and men.

#### Framing the world through gendered dualisms orients all policies towards economic growth, effeminizing all alternative discourses as irrational or impossible. This precipitates war, poverty, oppression, and environmental degradation-- making extinction inevitable.

Nhanenge 7

[Jytte Masters @ U South Africa, paper submitted in part fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of master of arts in the subject Development Studies, “ECOFEMINSM: TOWARDS INTEGRATING THE CONCERNS OF WOMEN, POOR PEOPLE AND NATURE INTO DEVELOPMENT]

Generation of wealth was an important part of the Scientific Revolution and its modem society. The scientific discipline of economics therefore became a significant means for wealth creation. However, since it is founded on similar dualised premises as science, also economics became a system of domination and exploitation of women, Others and nature. The following discussion is intended to show that. The way in which economics, with its priority on masculine forces, becomes dominant relates to web-like, inter-connected and complex processes, which are not always clearly perceived. The below discussions try to show how the dualised priority of the individual over society, reason over emotion, self-interest over community-interest, competition over cooperation, and more pairs, generate domination that leads to the four crises of violence and war, poverty, human oppression and environmental degradation. The aim in sum is to show how the current perspective of economics is destroying society (women and Others) and nature. The following discussion is consequently a critique of economics. It is meant to highlight some elements that make economics a dominant ideology, rather than a system of knowledge. It adopts a feministic view and it is therefore seen from the side of women, poor people and nature. The critique is extensive, but not exhaustive. It is extensive because economics is the single most important tool used by mainstream institutions for development in the South. Thus if we want to understand why development does not alleviate poverty, then we first need to comprehend why its main instrument, economics, cannot alleviate poverty. A critical analysis of economics and its influence in development is therefore important as an introduction to next chapter, which discusses ecofeminism and development. However, the critique is not exhaustive because it focuses only on the dualised elements in economics. It is highly likely that there are many more critical issues in economics, which should be analyzed in addition to the below mentioned. However, it would exceed this scope. Each of the following 10 sections discusses a specific issue in economics that relates to its dualised nature. Thus, each can as such be read on its own. However, all sections are systemically interconnected. Therefore each re-enforces the others and integrated, they are meant to show the web of masculine forces that make economics dominant towards women, Others and nature. The first three sections intend to show that economics sees itself as a neutral, objective, quantitative and universal science, which does not need to be integrated in social and natural reality. The outcome of this is, however, that economics cannot value social and environmental needs. Hence, a few individuals become very rich from capitalising on free social and natural resources, while the health of the public and the environment is degraded. It also is shown that the exaggerated focus on monetary wealth does not increase human happiness. It rather leads to a deteriorating quality of life. Thus, the false belief in eternal economic growth may eventually destroy life on planet Earth. The next section shows that economics is based on dualism, with a focus solely on yang forces. This has serious consequences for all yin issues: For example, the priority on individualism over community may in its extreme form lead to self-destruction. Similarly, the priority on rationality while excluding human emotions may end in greed, domination, poverty, violence and war. The next section is important as a means to understanding “rational” economics. Its aim is to clarify the psychological meaning of money. In reality, reason and emotion are interrelated parts of the human mind; they cannot be separated. Thus, economic “rationality” and its focus on eternal wealth generation are based on personal emotions like fears and inadequacies, rather than reason. The false belief in dualism means that human beings are lying to themselves, which results in disturbed minds, stupid actions with disastrous consequences. The focus on masculine forces is consequently psychologically unhealthy; it leads to domination of society and nature, and will eventually destroy the world.

1. The title of the appendix, *The Dead Women*, is the creation of other activists working for justice for the Juárez murders. Research assistant, Kelly Varsho, compiled the names of the victims from a variety of online sources. [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. *See Voices*, *supra* note 20, at 761-83. [↑](#endnote-ref-2)