

Globalization, Feminist Solidarities, and Human Rights

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Globalization offers many challenges and promises for feminist theory. Even while social and political borders appear more porous with global communication and transportation, however, some nation-states are issuing ever more stringent immigration policies, refusing to enter global agreements for the prosecution of transnational crimes, and imposing gendered cultural codes that change the social meaning of the body and the market. Many of the negative effects of globalization fall on women, creating new categories of human rights violations or transforming the old categories with new cultural and ideological effects; globalization, in other words, has a gendered side. These gendered effects of globalization implore women's activists and feminist theorists to look beyond national and even regional concerns to scrutinize the implications of globalization on the lives of women across borders of nation-states, cultural and religious ideologies, global class, race and ethnicity, and other boundaries or margins that divide us. In response, global, transnational, third world, and postcolonial feminists have turned to innovative alliances often (ironically) using the tools of economic globalization itself to address specific violations affecting women. In the process, these global feminist solidarities are reshaping human rights and human rights discourse. Instead of looking for a philosophical grounding of human rights, transnational, global, third world and postcolonial feminists employ a critical strategy, transforming human rights and human rights discourse into an organic process in response to ever changing violations.