SOAN\*4230 Gender and Global Inequality II

Winter 2025

University of Guelph -- Department of Sociology and Anthropology

**Instructor**: Prof. Lisa Kowalchuk

**Class Location**: MacKinnon 315

**Class Format:** “Blended”

**Class Time**: Tuesday and Thursday 10:00 to 11:20 am (Tuesday in person; Thursday by Zoom)

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**Office:** MacKinnon 645

**Office Hours**: Wednesdays 2:30 to 4:00, virtual

**Course description**

What kinds of programs and initiatives devised by development assistance institutions can achieve improvements in gender justice, well-being, and empowerment in disadvantaged communities or disadvantaged groups? What is the impact of grassroots initiatives including social movements, led by members of disadvantaged communities? Can these two types of actions – development programs delivered by specialized organizations, and grassroots collective action – ever connect?

Answering these questions requires understanding how these concepts – gender justice and empowerment – are defined and applied in practise. Since we are also interested in health and well-being, we also pay attention to numerous social determinants of health including the quality and accessibility of health-care, access to means of earning a livelihood, societal norms about femininity and masculinity, and exposure to interpersonal and structural violence.

Themes of the readings and seminar discussion will include: cultural relativism and universalism as philosophical approaches to assessing, intervening, and allying; sexual and reproductive health; interventions with men focusing on masculinities and health; micro-credit programs for women; and colonization, Indigenous health, and gender in Canada. Geographically, about half of the assigned readings and audio-video materials focus on countries of the global south, and the remainder focus on affluent countries of the global north.

The assessment methods – assignments – will include a research paper on a topic related to the major themes of the course.

# Required Readings

* Several chapters in Dworkin, Shari L, Monica Gandhi, and Paige Passanno (Eds.). 2017. *Women’s Empowerment and Global Health: A Twenty-First Century Agenda*. University of California Press. (available as an e-book at the University of Guelph library, to be made available online via ARES and Courselink.
* A set of readings (journal articles and book chapters) and films available online via ARES and Courselink.

# Assessments (subject to modification before course starts)

Participation (in class and online) 15%

Presentation (individual or paired) 10%

Readings analysis (4) 40%

Film review 10%

Research paper 25%

Total: 100%