

>> Good afternoon, everybody, and welcome. Happy to see everybody on this beautiful, almost spring day. We want to welcome you to the latest presentation in the MillerComm Series of the Center for Advanced Studies. CAS sheds light on interdisciplinary thought in hopes to start conversation, inspire action, and transform the world; no small goal. The MillerComm Series is made possible by a generous bequest from the estate of George A. Miller, and I'm just going to take a second to talk about Dr. Miller. He was born in 1863, was a Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and a member of the National Academy of Sciences. He was an author of more than 20 volumes of publications and was well known for his work in the theory of finite groups. When he died, in 1951, he left an estate of almost a million dollars to the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, "to be used for educational purposes other than current general operating expenses." He was devoted to this university and to his field of mathematics. He worked daily in his office at all Guild Hall until a few months before his death, and he is said to remark that "Everything I have, I have received from the University and simply want to repay my obligation." So, today, we are very pleased to have Dr. Manisha Desai joining us from the University of Connecticut. Dr. Desai's areas of research and teaching include Gender and Globalization, Transnational Feminism, Human Rights, Contemporary Indian Society, Social Movements, Gender and Development, and South Asian American Issues. She is also examining Student Protests and Decolonial Imaginaries of social Justice in India, South Africa, and the United States, and many of you may know Dr. Desai from her years working at the University both as a Program Coordinator and Acting Director of the Women and Gender in Global Perspective Center, and as an Associate Professor in the Department of Sociology. She's a prolific scholar who is currently completing two monograph linked projects related to the struggles against the violence that continues to mark marginalized bodies in post-Colonial and settler Colonial sciences, and is also, it might be in her spare time, I don't know, completing a book on Women in Gender and Globalizing Work. Today, Dr. Desai will discuss the Politics of Transnational Projects to Build Links and Solidarities between Movements of Women Activists Differently Situated on Local and Global Systems of Power and share her insight from sustained engagement in the dynamic ways which localizing movements challenge global injustices while insisting on differences. She will answer the questions, how do differently situated and subordinated groups learn from one another, and how do we build bonds of solidarity necessary to sustain a global movement in justice? And I will say that I enjoyed one of her earlier works, and it gave me the phrase "gendered globalization." I just love it because I am the Acting Director of the Center for Global Studies. After Dr. Desai's speech, you are invited to step out into the foyer and enjoy a reception in her honor. And with that, I will turn the microphone over to you.

[ Audience Applause ]

>> Thank you so much for inviting me and for that introduction, and also it's good to be back. My talk is going to be a little bit different than what my title suggests. It's partly, you'll see why based on the kind of argument that I'm going to lay out. But I want to start by saying that given the history of the chief when I was here and from 2002 to 2007, I was very pleased to see that UIUC now actually has a land acknowledgement statement on the Chancellor's webpage. And when I first encountered such a statement, it was in Australia maybe about seven, eight years ago, and I was both moved and later wondered about such symbolic gestures, particularly in light of continuing policies to dispossess Native peoples from their lands there and all over the world. But I think we have to start somewhere, so I think I'd like to start by reading the statement that is on the UIUC website, the Land Acknowledgement Statement, which says, "I would like to begin by recognizing and acknowledging that we own the lands of the Peoria, the Kakaskia, the Peankashaw, Wea, Miami, Mascoutin, Odawa, Sauk, Masquaki, Kickapoo, Potawatomi, Ojibwe, and Chickasaw Nations. These lands, with the traditional territory of these Native nations prior to their forest removal, these lands continue to carry the stories of these nations and their struggles for survival and identity. As a land grant institution, the University of Illinois has a particular responsibility to acknowledge the peoples of these lands as well as the histories of dispossession that have allowed for the growth of this institution for the past 150 years. We're also obligated to reflect on and actively address these histories and the role that this university has played in shaping them. This acknowledgement and the centering of Native peoples is a start as we move forward for the next 150 years." So, that's the Land Acknowledge Statement that the Chancellor's webpage has. So, I was really very pleased because, you know, the struggles around Chief Illiniwek were kind of heating up just as I left, and I remember the big billboard that used to be there in Champaign above that. So, this is I think a welcome move and at least gestures towards, I think, possibilities for global justice. So, what I want to talk about today is Forging Feminists Cross Border Alliances for Global Justice. Feminism in Women's Movements more generally have been theorized narrowly either as about women's liberation or, more recently, as about gender justice. This, despite the long history of women's organizing being intersectional and transnational before these became

academic buzzwords, right, when you'd only think of the gender truth on the underground railroad, to the International Women's Strike of 1917 that sought bread and roses, or the many examples of women in Asia and African fighting for national freedom, along with women's empowerment, or the Black Radical Nationalists of the early 20th century voting solidarities with women across the globe that articulated struggles for women's equality and liberation as intrinsically linked to those of class, race, colonization, and empire, or to the work of Third World Women's Association in New York in the 1970s and their publication, *Triple Jeopardy*, referring to the jeopardies of race, class, and gender. Yet, most histories of global justice rarely foreground these feminist struggles. In part, this is a problem of feminism is narrated in the Anglo world, right, which begins not with these feminists but with the struggles of white women in the context of US or elite women in the context of the erstwhile Third World, who organized specifically around women's issues as though these were not also about global justice. Subaltern women, and I prefer to use subaltern rather than the Global South for as Conway has suggested in a recent article, Global South very often stands in for the subaltern even though many of us from the Global South are neither subaltern nor invisible and, you know, it invisibilizes subaltern women in the Global North, and their global justice activism is always rendered as a response to exclusion by elite feminists, even though in most cases it either predates or is at least was simultaneous with that activism. Fortunately, such histories are being rewritten not only providing a new genealogy but also enabling to make a case, as I did in my 2009 book on *Gender and the Politics of Possibility*, but subaltern feminists politics is global justice politics, given its multi-dimensional and intersectional conceptualizations, it's multi-scaler mobilization, transversal and collaborative practices, and networking organizational forms. While women's struggles for global justice were often framed in intersectional and transnational logics, the actual politics and practices did not always reflect that. Explicitly reckoning with inequalities and differences among women, whether locally or transnationally, is a much more recent phenomenon. In part, what enabled women's movements to do so were the spaces and opportunities for dialogue and dissent provided by the two decades of UN led intergovernmental and angio deliberations from the 1970s to the 1990s, initially around women's rights, and then around human rights, the environment, race, indigeneity, and social development. The UN World Conferences on women let what has been called the Gender Global Equality Regime, i.e., a global consciousness of women's second class status all around the world and a series of commitments and declarations, laws, policies, and state machinery for gender equality and women's empowerment. Yet, emerging as it did in the context of increasing neoliberalization of the global political economy, the gender equality regime became a tool for the state to consolidate the project as evident in microfinance, gender mainstreaming, and women's empowerment as means to economic growth. There is a huge literature on the politics of these decades of transnational collaborations among women's movements, not only of the UN Conferences but also later at the grassroots level and the Global Justice Movements. Not surprisingly, most of this literature shows that these transnational alliances reproduce inequalities among women, that they are primarily dominated by urban educated women from the Global North and South, who are able to navigate these spaces. I have characterized these politics as much by epistemic spatial and fracis [phonetic] inequalities among feminists. Epistemically, the dominant discourse is informed by the anglic inceptions of a gender binary, gender inequality, and gender justice. As the historian, [inaudible] notes, "While we certainly have a great deal of scholarship on women's and gender history in global context, we have not learned sufficiently from these contexts to begin to open up the concept of gender itself to different meanings. We must distinguish between merely exporting gender as an analytical category to different parts of the world and rethinking the category itself in light of those different locations." In other words, what do these different global locations contribute to the meaning of gender theoretically? And I would add to the meaning of gender justice and global justice. As I will discuss later, such epistemic hegemony is now being challenged, particularly by indigenous activists as they seek to decolonize feminism. Spatially, in most feminist collaborations across borders do use [inaudible] and felicitous title, there are certain constraints to when and where subaltern women enter; that is, subaltern activists are often front and center in protests and performative spaces, in other visible public events; not often in spaces of decision-making or theoretical discussions. Finally, in terms of practices, contrary to Spirac [phonetic], it remains the task of the subaltern to speak, even though she may not be heard, and raise issues that elite women often allied and failed to recognize. And despite the diversity of organizational forums, the network in angio forums that dominate transnational feminist collaborations require professional skills and time commitments that, again, marginalize subaltern feminists. Yet, transnational feminists are self-critical and reflective about their activism and have forged new ways of working with each other across difference, recognizing the ways in which inequalities are insidious and need constant vigilance. I turn to two new expressions of transnational feminist solidarities that are attentive to the above critiques, even as they are constrained by them. One is the reinvigoration of a radical working class feminist organizing across borders in the US as the International Women's Strike in 2017, and is also called the feminism for the 99% that draws upon the successful metaphor of "Occupy Wall Street" that has become part of mainstream political discussions and is in opposition to the court lien [phonetic] and feminism of Sheryl

Sandberg. And the other example that I will use is of Idle No More, which is a decolonial feminist organizing of indigenous feminists that began in Canada but has reached across the Americas to Australia and New Zealand. While informed by Global Justice imagery, each operates at a different scale and articulates a different epistemic and emancipatory vision in activism that are instructor for how to build solidarities for global justice. So, first, I turn to the International Women's Strike. The impetus for the International Women's Strike in 2017 were large-scale strikes in Poland, Argentina, and Ireland in 2016, first, against the repressive Abortion Bill in Poland, and then against violence in general. Both in Poland and Ireland, there were Abortion Bills that were being considered, and they were inspired by the strike that women in Iceland had had a one-day strike in 1975, and that was about, again, for women's right, and the whole point was that if you just kind of withdraw your labor one day from everything that you do in the home outside, you kind of make, you know, women's, both social and productive labor experience. So, that was the inspiration with the Poland Strike in 2016. Taking the inspiration from the 1975 strike for a day by women in Iceland for Gender Equality, it was a Polish feminist, who, using the slogan "Solidarity is our Weapon," reached out to women's movements in other countries, particularly Argentina, Mexico, Russia, and South Korea, where there were similar kinds of strikes and protests, particularly, around women's reproductive rights. This initial called, "We, the women of the world, have had enough of physical, economic, verbal, and moral violence directed against us. We will not tolerate it passively. We demand that our government stop using misogynistic insults and start taking real steps to solve numerous problems related to our security, free access to medical care, including reproductive rights, the establishment and application of serious legal sanctions against our oppressors in cases of rape, domestic violence, and every type of gender crime we're increasingly experiencing, as well as comply with an effective secularization of our state. Before we are biologically feminine, above all, we are human beings, and besides, we are in the year 2016." So, this was their initial call. As conscious citizens, as women know the world is going through a phase of crisis, but we do not accept being victims of it, right. Governors of our countries be aware, be mature, and approach the problems of the world in a direct gentle way without hurting us. We, the women of the world, announce that if we do not take effective measures to stop this violence urgently and immediately, we will make a strike caring and united all over the world to defend our human rights. We constitute more than half of the world's population, and we know that power is in our hands. This first action that they chose was in November 25, 2016, which some of you might know is the International Day Against Gender-based Violence. It was also the day in 2012 and events were launched for a Billion Women Rising Campaign, specifically, against gender-based violence. They had also planned to call for a worldwide strike on March 8, 2017, proclaiming why are we striking? Because we are tired of not having our lives and rights respected. Could I have the first clip, please? I just want to show you a little clip from that first strike in New York.

[ Music ]

>> I am [inaudible].

[ Music ]

>> Striking is something that's not super familiar in the United States. It's not something that's done a lot, and it's a really important way to understand the ways in which labor in this century is super divided, depending on which demographic groups you're in, how you get paid, what you get paid, what hours you work.

[ Crowd Noise ]

>> I strike because of everybody here. Because we need people to stand up for our rights, and I don't think that we're getting enough of that nowadays. It starts with those who have privilege acknowledging it and, you know, just kind of say, you know, you're right, I have privilege. What can I do about it? What can I do to help you?

[ Crowd Shouting ]

>> I'm here to protect women's rights and fight against the chauvinists and [inaudible]. If you look here, you have people saying Black Lives Matter, Trans Lives Matter. There's the Palestinian flag. There's so much going on here that it shows that this movement is about solidarity with all these other movements, and as a black male, I know that sexism and racism grew up together. If I'm against one, I'm against all.

>> We didn't go to walk today because we went to a take action [inaudible] camp, and we want to get our images alike. Muslims should be a part of this country. We will be stronger with that and all [inaudible].

[ Group Chanting ]

>> Put all sides together like intersectionality is the name of the game. Women's lives aren't just women's lives. There are black women; there are trans women; there are queer women; there are refugee women. I am a child of immigrants. I am a queer woman of color, and I'm proud of it, and that's why intersectionality matters.

[ Group Talking ]

>> We have to stand up against patriarchy. It's going backwards. We're tired of fighting this. We fought this already. If a woman wants to have an abortion, where's she going to have to go? In Texas, she has two places to go in the entire state right now. Are we going to let that happen in all these other states that's happening now? Ladies, you got to stand up.

[ Group Shouting ]

>> Women don't work only in the workplace, in the formal labor market. They also do work that sustains life on this planet. They take care of children. They take care of the house also. So, this strike today was also a strike on this kind of work, and also, the majority of women work in precarious jobs. This should, incidents like this, [inaudible] workers of empowering women who then can also go back to the workplace and organize their feelings of reality [phonetic].

[ Group Shouting ]

>> The liberal mainstream for which we have been told that we must moderate our message doesn't really exist, and we are the mainstream. We, the women, who are here, who are calling for an anti-imperial, anti-racist feminism, and what we needed was to take back our voice and take back those faces.

[ Group Shouting ]

>> When people really want to come together and go power that is possible. We will continue to build bigger and bigger until we defeat oppression in all its forms, from patriarchy designisms, imperialism to capitalism. I believe in the people and these marches. Reinstate that belief.

[ Music ]

>> So, as you can see, this march was organized, this strike was organized on March 8, 2017. That was the first time it came together but, obviously, what was interesting, as I said, was the origin goes back to Poland and Ireland and some of the strikes that were happening there. But obviously, in the United States came January 2017, and need I say any more. The huge outpouring of protests by women after the election and the Women's March in Washington and around the world gave further impetus to the organizing that women in Poland were already doing and reinvigorated the activism of subaltern women in the US and around the world. As women became the backbone of new liberal global capitalism and factories everywhere, the poor and lower model classes everywhere now faced a crisis of social reproduction, often narrowly conceived as care work, as women, overburdened by poorly paid jobs and poor working conditions, found themselves stretched to the limit. This had resulted in renewed organizing of subaltern women everywhere, including in the US, and I think we forget that this is when from 2010 to 2015, we had domestic workers organizing and actually winning. New York became the first state to have a Domestic Workers Bill of Rights. Immigrants were organizing and others that were deeply impacted by the 2008 recession had returned to discredit, discredited all the forms of collective organizing, such as unions and strikes. Alongside this organizing was also the renewed attention to social reproduction theory by feminists inside and outside the Academy. Italian Marxist feminists, such as Mariarosa Della Costa and Sylvia Federici, in the late 1960s and 1970s had already argued that housework created surplus value through saving the capitalists across the social reproduction, and hence should be seen as productive labor. They had even advocated for wages for housework. But this was in the context of the worldwide recession that there has been a resurgence in social reproduction theory as it made to move beyond to use Heidi

Hartman's famous 1979 essay titled, "The Unhappy Relationship Between Marxism and Feminism." But today, as you saw in the clip, it's not only Marxism and Feminism but against all forms of oppression, such as race, class, sexuality, and disability, among others. In the Anglo-feminist world, Lisa Wolgo [phonetic], Martha Heminas [phoneic], Johanna Brenner, Nancy Frazier, [inaudible] Acharya are among some of the feminists who have been working on Marxist transformative, but incomplete inside about the relationship between production and social reproduction under capitalism. Growing up in India where it was always a day marked by protest and collective demand, I was surprised when I came to this country in 1982 that it was such a nonevent here. I guess it takes a Trump to dislodge a sedimentation of Cold War political rhetoric. The 2017 International Women's Strike on March 8th was billed as a Day Without Women and recognizing that not all women could stay home for a day, women were asked to step outside for at least an hour. Using the slogan, again, Solidarity is our Weapon, women marched from Geneva, New York, to Geneva, Switzerland, from Rome to Romania, Mexico to Argentina, and each country that strike was organized in collaboration with local unions and movements and highlighted their specific issues, so as you could see from. And the reason I want to highlight the US is we very often forget their radical history in the US itself, and we think about transnational and global justice as somehow residing outside the US, but I think we need to bring it back here as well. Reviving the concept of a political strike, this call for a strike in the US noted and the spirit of that renewed radicalism, solidarity, and internationalism, the International Women's Strike US continues to be a national organizing center by and for women who have been marginalized and silenced by decades of neoliberalism directed towards the 99% of women, working women, women of color, native women, disabled women, immigrant women, Muslim women, and lesbian, queer, and trans women. Another strike was again organized on March 8, 2018, and this past week, March 8, 2019. While there had been some initial criticism of the International Women's Strike for not going beyond a day-long strike, seeing thousands of women and street all over the world focusing on reproduction, the major issue of our age, puts feminists so-called in the driver's seat. Learning from the limitations of sisterhood is global of the 1970s and 1980s. The International Women's Strike seeks to build a global feminist working class movement united by commitments, and these are their platforms to end gender violence and share reproductive justice for all laborites, full social provisioning, developing an anti-racist and anti-imperial feminism, and environmental justice for all. Because what unites women is a platform, a common political strike, it avoids some of the pitfalls of building solidarities across borders, namely, some of the inequalities that I mentioned earlier. While many cities, states, and countries have their own local women's assemblies that are linked to the International Women's Strike, they're not linked in any hierarchical international organization of the old, you know, solidarity model. They can and do upload the local [inaudible] on the website and the International Women's Strike rather than an annual event is a political process at multiple levels and multiple skills, informed by a common platform and commitment to global justice. It is still new information to really know what promise it holds for global justice and solidarities across borders, but the energy and visibility that has gone there, particularly with subaltern women in the Global North, who see themselves allied with those in the Global South, I think, is heartening. But the history of similar recent efforts, such as the World Social Forum, should give us pause. The World Social Forum began in Brazil in 2001. It's a gathering of social movements opposed to corporate globalization and for global justice, and since has met more or less annually with some breaks, mostly in Brazil but also in other parts. Their slogan of Another World is possible, which was then later transformed recently into Another World is Necessary, and together we must build it, sought to bring into dialogue activists from across borders at a global gathering, which meant that only those with resources could travel, and it depended on an international committee to coordinate, which was primarily white men of the Brazilian and Latin American Left. But like the International Women's Strike, there also was a political process at local and regional level, but because there were tensions between those who, including the original organizers, conceptualized it primarily as a space for dialogue, and those who saw it as a movement of movements, it's dynamics and influences were different. But both [inaudible] social forum in the International Women's Strike highlight are the ways in which subalterns cannot be heard specifically when they speak in the register that is incompatible to the global gender equality regime, such as the Idle No More Movement that I will talk about now. The Movement called Idle No More began in November 2012, and three indigenous women, Sylvia McAdam, a Cree lawyer and educator; Nina Wilson, an [inaudible] and Plains Cree; Jessica Gordon, a Cree in Anishinaabe; and Sheila McLean, a non-native person, held a teach-in about the implications of two huge omnibus bills, C38 and Bill C45, that sought to rewrite the Indian Act, the Environmental Protection Act, Fisheries Act, the Waterways Act in Canada, overturning decades of reform and redressal. The first gathering took place on November 10, 2012 at the Community Center in the predominantly indigenous community of Saskatoon and Saskatchewan. To disseminate information, the women set up a Facebook and Twitter handle, #IdleNoMore, and sent invitations to about 3800 people. Of the 573 people that said they would attend or likely attend, only about 40 or 50 people actually showed up. Yet, as the Facebook and Twitter messages spread, within a week, they were joined by indigenous and non-indigenous activists throughout Canada,

including Chief Teresa Spence, who is the Chief of the Cree Nation in Saskatchewan, and she actually went on a hunger strike to force Prime Minister, then Prime Minister Harper to meet with them to reconsider the Bills. Their initial call read, Idle No More and Defenders of the Land, and that work of indigenous communities and land struggle have joined together to issue this common call for escalating action. Our message is clear and in accordance with the principles of co-existence and mutual respect between indigenous and non-indigenous peoples. We call for Canada, the provinces and the territories, to repeal the provisions of the Act, to deepen democracy in Canada to practices such as proportional representation and consultation on all legislation in accordance with the United Nations declarations and the rights of Indigenous peoples, to seize its policy of extinguishment of Aboriginal title and recognize an affirm aboriginal titles and rights, honor the spirit and intent of the historic treaties, and to actively resist violence against women and hold a national inquiry into missing and murdered indigenous women and girls. Following this call, there were huge mobilizations across Canada that included drumming and round [phonetic] dancing in public places, including streets, malls, and state offices, and a two-week blockade of railways in Alberta. The "21st century debt collectors," as they call themselves, organized in specifically gendered and indigenous ways with the round dance becoming the key mobilizing tactic. According to a Cree Elder, the dance was taught to a grieving daughter by her dead mother so that the mother could achieve peace in the spirit world. The mother asked the daughter to dance with the community in a circle for the circle is made with the ancestors will be dancing with you, and we will be as one. Thus, the dance, as one activist describes it is not only writing with our feet but also ruptures [inaudible] temporarily connecting past and present in the future. Can we see the second --

>> Idle No More. Across the country, today is December 21, 2012.

[ Cheering ]

Idle No More.

[ Cheering ]

>> The Drum Dancing was, and the amount of mobilizing was also evident in the call for a global day of action that was called on January 13, 2013, in which the activist not only highlighted the 2007 United Nations Declaration on the rights of indigenous people but also the need to work towards a "Fourth World." Fourth World is a theoretical and political category, dates to a 1974 meeting between Chief George Manuel and then Tanzanian President Jovius Nehrarian [phonetic], which the latter said, "When Native people come into their own on the basis of their own cultures and traditions, that will be the Fourth World." These powerful metaphors from ancestors and earlier activists led to where a collaborative book by nearly 40 academics and activists titled, The Winter we Danced. The global Day of Action in 2013 mobilized activists in New Zealand, US, Chile, and Australia. Following direct action, the Idle No More has begun long-term community action and reflection that addresses violence, not only against the land but also gendered and queer bodies. Some of these local efforts include land based practices, such as walking the land, knowing its contours to provide alternative to capitalist settler colonialism [phonetic], but we are harvesting practices such as hunting, gathering, fishing, along with relearning ceremonial activities that are not only empowering and educational but provide an alternative model of radical sustainability antithetical to abstractive capitalism that has plagued not only indigenous communities but subaltern communities everywhere. Land [inaudible] understood as reciprocal relations of obligation rather than a commodity. Similarly, nation is rooted in language, culture, and relations with other living organisms beyond the legal framework of the nation state. Such alternative to capitalism involved not only through direct actions, as we saw in some of these large mobilizations but also solidarity and openness to others who share the vision of capitalism no more, as it's one of their other slogans but refuse erasure through inclusion; that is they do not really want to be included in the Canadian settler colonial Nation State, but they want to change the terms of that Nation State itself. As [inaudible] has argued, Idle No More represents the rejection of the politics of recognition and instead advocates a personal and collective transformation for global justice, which he calls a paradigm of indigenous resurgence. In this paradigm, tradition and change are contested, even as the common core of gendered cultural practices are revived to ensure consistency between means and ends and which reaches across borders and learns from other subaltern movements. Further, he argues, it is only such resurgent practices rounded in normative life, grounded in normative life ways that can enable indigenous communities to survive the colonial state with integrity. Like the International Women's Strike, the Idle No More organizing is also in keeping with the long history of indigenous feminist organizing and scholarship. While engaged in transnational feminist organizing, indigenous feminists found the language of

emancipation and social justice inadequate to address their continuing coloniality. They were not post-colonial subjects in the settled colonies of the Americas, and the genocide of the ancestors, the original sin of colonization, was seldom a central concern in most transnational feminist organizing. Hence, their articulation of a decolonial rather than a post-colonial feminism, and like the International Women's Strike, indigenous feminist organizing also contributed and shaped the scholarly debates of decolonial feminism. While the early efforts to decolonize feminism centered on decentering white feminism and tracing the multiple roots of feminism of women of color in the north and south, the contemporary decolonial turn seeks to rethink the basic categories of feminism emancipation, including gender. Like Sinome [phonetic], I cited earlier, Maria Lagunas is also critical of the category gender. Drawing upon Keyhanos [phonetic] *Coloniality of Power*, which he defined as the ongoing process of social and political stratification in settler colonial countries of the Americas, even after the end of Spanish and Portuguese colonialisms, Lagunas conceptualizes the coloniality of gender as the gender system that flows from the dichotomizing of the human and the non-human men and women under colonial capitalist modernity. Rather than reading a priority [phonetic] gender binary into social relations, Lagunas likes in her argues that we need to see how social relations are organized. Doing so, not only disrupts coloniality but also offers other possibilities for gender justice and global justice more generally. Because colonialism did not completely erase need of cosmologies and anthologies, it's possible to overcome the coloniality of gender via decolonial practices. These decolonial practices begin with acknowledging other gender systems beyond the gender binary and using local languages rather than colonial articulations of alternative gender designations. Furthermore, Lagunas argues that it's not possible to resist the coloniality of gender without resisting systems that undermine the significance of life for profit and of communities for individualism. Ultimately, decolonial feminism needs to function with the recognition that we are beings in relation not dichotomously split in hierarchical systems. Based on her work with indigenous feminist in Mexico, Sylvia Marco similarly makes a case with gender justice as what she calls coming [inaudible] or walking together towards a just relationship with men rather than against them and as a collective rather than individual endeavors expressing collective enterprise. It does no favor to congregate only among women because when the men hear our voices, they begin to be reeducated. Similarly, for Perez as well, a deacon organizing politics must introduce, engage, and circulate previously unseen modulate and stigmatize notions of spirituality, philosophy, gender, sexuality, art, and any other category of knowledge and existence. These two examples of contemporary feminist global organizing offers, I think, several insights for constructing solidarity across borders in these perilous and precarious times. First, rather than categorize movements in terms of their demograph, dominant demographic as either women's or indigenous movements, which is what one could read the International Women's Strike as an [inaudible] Women's Movement and the Idle No More as indigenous movement, I want to argue that these are actually global justice movements in the ways in which they have, they're calls to justice and practices, to understand them as global justice as we fought solidarities. These movements go just beyond a protest and a march to a more sustained engagement, theoretically and politically, wherever we may be located. Second, while both offer an anti-capitalist vision, the International Women's Strike is still rooted in a modern emancipatory logic while the Idle No More proposes a decolonial vision, which is community specific and self-organized. It's [inaudible] reversal rather than universal based on reciprocity, conviviality, care, and the commons. Finally, both are informed and embedded in long histories of struggles and scholarship, not always across borders but often at the borders, right. But nonetheless, reorients our thinking about them for as Lagunas writes, "Coalition is a radical deepening of that permeability to learning others way of living, their spiritual and social relations and longings, their knowledges, their economies, their ecologies towards liberation. It's moving together defying colonial cartography, seeking autonomy from the nation's state, enriching the communal sense of self, designing practices of self-government that places all members at the place of deliberation and decision-making, and accord each the power to participate." Boris also argues for a profound solidarity based on politics of identification with the otherness of the other as an invertebrate [phonetic] interdependent part of our own selves and being even as it is a recognition of the irreducible differences of the other as such. Desparis [phonetic] is not referring to difference that is subsumed in a unity based undominant cultural translations that in effect you press what is too different and are challenging and that renders the difference into same or totality but to a perspective based on many traditions, which essentially say that you are my other self. So, in conclusion, I think I want to sort of hearten to June Jordan's work, which is to say that none of the solidarities can be built of there is no love, right. As she says, where is the love? If there is, love is missing, then how do we end these tyrannies, these corrosions of a sacred possibilities? And as to Recertiva [phonetic], who's Afro-Fujian scholar and a political theorist with whom I worked at the International Feminist Journal of Politics and who died, unfortunately, too early, in her poem, reminding us about what solidarity looks like. This is what she says how change happens. She says, "Some feminists make it happen; some feminists let it happen; some feminists make other feminists give them what they want; some feminists give other feminists what they ask for; some feminists are selfish; some feminists are selfless; some feminists will never change; some feminists are

always changing. How does change happen? Oh, ever so easily. Oh, ever so slowly." Thank you.

[ Audience Applause ]

>> Okay. Thank you very much. We have time for a few questions, and we actually have a microphone with a person attached to it. So, just raise your hand. Okay, down here.

>> Thank you so much. I wanted to ask you about the recent nationalist resurgence that feminist scholars call gender backlash and especially how decolonial feminism might be a better response to that than a post-colonial one.

>> Yeah. And I think that there's a constant tension, and there's just been a lot of debate now between not only post-colonial and decolonial, but also bringing in global and then transnational feminism, and how do those all intersect. And I think the decolonial feminism does have more possibilities, but it also has possibilities for cooptation by the right wing authoritarians, who have, just example what we see in India with, and some of you may or may not know, but you know, the Temple protest that women were trying to enter this temple where women were forbidden because the god is a celibate god and so he didn't want women to enter. But the Supreme Court ruled that they could enter, and so they've been trying, and this was, you know, since September, but the ruling came in, and they haven't been able to go. And what is interesting is the way in which kind of the right wing authoritarian politicians are able to use that, precisely to question gender equality and say, well, but if you're going to go to where it's, you know, respecting our cultures and traditions, then that would also mean then we have to respect that. So, I think there's also that kind of danger, but I think be that as it may, I think decolonial feminism has more possibilities because it does not in some ways prescribe what gender equality looks like. It is for women and men in those communities to decide what gender equality is. And so, for example, one of the ways in which, you know, even earlier works like Maxine Mulliner talks about practical and strategic interests where, you know, the division of labor is by, you know, is necessarily unequal, all right. But it may not necessarily be so. The division of labor within particular capitalist formations has become unequal, but that doesn't mean that in and of itself the division of labor leads to inequality. So, I would agree that I think decolonial feminisms has more possibilities, but it also has then the danger of being coopted by authoritarian politicians for their own ends.

[ Inaudible Speaker ]

Sure. So, I think the post-colonial feminism really has a longer history. There are two different histories. The post-colonial is very much rooted in South Asian feminists and particularly English decolonial efforts. The decolonial feminists come particularly from Latin America and a longer history of I think Spanish and Portuguese decolonial efforts. And so, they are just spatially different, and therefore they draw upon different political and theoretical histories. And I think both colonial feminism, particularly in South Asia was about what do we do once we've become independent, right? While what decolonial feminism is talking about is that we are not independent yet. And so, if we're not postcolonial subjects, we need to start in settler colonies like the United States and Canada. They're not a post colony. They continue to be a colony. So, we need to kind of, so in some ways, it's a reflection of the realities, right, within the settler colonies of the Americas. And I think that too, really the impetus for that was the fact that a lot of native feminists felt that the postcolonial feminism did not speak to their conditions, and therefore, you know, they wanted really to articulate their own version of decolonial feminism, and they don't necessarily want the modern emancipatory sense of gender justice, of, you know, necessarily that women equality meant you could only have equality through the workplace, right, because we all know the workplace isn't necessarily a place that's either safe or equal for women. So, why do you necessarily have to go to that workplace, right? So, I think they have a very different emancipatory logic, which is not based in sort of the modern western history of capitalism and then socialism, and it really comes from their own traditions, which they know that they have to recover, but these traditions aren't pure, and they are being reinvented and changing, but you still have some core that continues, and that's kind of what they want to draw upon. Does that make sense?

[ Inaudible Speaker ]

Yeah. So, global feminism really dates to the 1970s, and I think its emergence is from the west, but particularly from the US, you know, the whole notion Robin Morgan sisterhood is global, that you know. Women all over the world are oppressed, and therefore, you know, we need a collective, you know, sisterhood, but that sisterhood was very much

differentiated by differences of class and race. So, global feminism kind of did not acknowledge the differences among women, and international feminism similarly. So, global international feminism are, you know, date from the early second wave feminism of the 1970s and 1980s, when it really kind of, you know, white women and elite women also from the Global South were in kind of, you know, the ones who were articulating feminism, right. And what we now have, you know, postcolonial, decolonial, I think are much more subaltern. So, for example, in India, we have ballot [phonetic] feminism, which is also, I would sort of put in the same, you know, history as decolonial feminisms.

>> So, thank you for a wonderful talk, and I think particularly the reference to Glen Coulter's work on the idea of refusing recognition is one of, I think, the most serious challenges. So, I want to return if you want to at a more kind of grounded level to older terms like poverty, you know, and consumption. And so, I'm asking this because when I go to South Africa, one of the issues is again to think back with people now if you want to, and I don't know, neocolonial South Africa. Well, the idea that the models of catch up don't seem to be going anywhere, right. So, what are the alternatives to sort of catching up in these extremes, and cities like Cape Town, cheap by job. People are living with no toilets, and then there's like, you know, dozens of toilets. So, how does this new feminism help us think through poverty and affluence? So, in the US, I'm dealing here with, you know, pushback, I think, against consumption, and one of the difficult challenges I have is like when is enough? Like how many shoes do you actually need? How many cars, and so forth? Whereas in, I mean, students go to, well, in South Africa, you know, there's abject poverty. So, how does this help us connect the economic [inaudible] or do we need to go back to anti-poverty studies and developments?

>> Well, interesting there. I mean, I sort of think about how I think of it is Escobar who talks about how with, you know, stroke of a pen, Truman made, you know, three-quarters of the world, people of the world poor, right. So, they were suddenly poor, in poverty, underdeveloped, right. So, that's kind of, they probably didn't think of themselves as poor, you know, but now they do because the relation is in how much you can consume. And I think both of these two examples that I use have I think a different take on that. So, for the International Women's Strike, they are talking precisely about women's rights. They're you know, working around the \$15 wage in here, in other parts, you know, organizing people, and so their focus is on organizing women to get a better pay. So, they aren't necessarily dealing with that critique. The Idle No More is saying we don't really want a part of, be part of that system itself, and that, you know, if we go back to sustainable models that are more community oriented and more autonomous and self-organized, then you have different relationship to land, which you can then through, you know, this practice of land walking, as I was talking about, you know, they actually go and reinvent sustainable alternatives to capitalism. So, that's their answer to poverty. While the International Women's Strike, I think, is calling for, you know, shorter work hours, calling for, you know, basic income guarantees to everyone. They're calling for the \$15, you know, a minimum wage, so they have a very economic answer to issues of poverty. In neoliberalism, that's about, you know, going against the capitalist system but working within the system, and I think the Idle No More has a very different way of addressing that same issue. But for them, within the system, even if you get a \$15 wage, then you're going to need \$20 because then everything else is going to go up, and so you're never going to quite catch up if you work within the system. So, I would say that's, there are different ways of addressing issues of economic inequality and poverty.

>> I don't know. Let me just pause and so one of the difficulties I have as a parent is teaching the kids to share, right.

>> Mm-hmm.

>> You know, it's that they have, so this idea of sharing, I mean, what are the insights about the clusters divide? You know, what are women and feminists teaching us about the new politics of sharing resources, emboldening these collectives?

>> And I think, again, both have different visions and different practices. And so, I think if you're working with organizing women in the informal sector, immigrant women, domestic workers, right, they're also learning that there is actually a lot of sharing, particularly of social reproduction because without sharing of, you know, childcare, without sharing of, you know, all of those transportation and other needs, they wouldn't be able to even get to work, right. So, in that sense, there's that kind of sharing. But I don't know that at least within these two examples that I used that there is any particular elaboration of, you know, for example, sharing jobs, or you know, the ways in which resources can be shared. I think there is still a much more individual focus on livelihood. So, how do we have a collective livelihood? I don't think it's a question that's addressed at least by the International Women's Strike. I think it's much more part of the

Idle No More inception.

>> So, I have sort of an unformed question for you.

>> Okay.

>> And the two examples you gave us are perfect. There's the Idle No More and the Women's Strike. One is a large, let's make the world come and do what we should do. The other one is sort of, to paraphrase, leave me alone.

>> Yes.

>> So, is the whole question about choice?

>> I think, I don't know that it's necessarily about choice because at least with the other one, you know, let's get all the world together, in the getting the world together, there's choice in how we want to sort of get to that, yeah.

>> Yes.

>> So, I think it's not an either or because I think part of what's, even the International Women's Strike, they're for environmental justice and sustainable ecologies. How do we do that? We might need to, you know, draw upon some of the indigenous ways of sustainability. So, I think that's not an either/or, but it is pretty ludicrous [phonetic] that we are not going to have one answer. It's precisely because capitalism forces us all to be in one way, like we're in this struggle. So, if you're going to move out of this, then you're going to need multiple ways of organizing, which include sustainable logics, which might include cooperatives, which might, you know, include other ways but which have all of this basic normative groundwork in terms of people's ability to live lives of dignity.

>> Okay. Thank you very much.

>> Any other questions? Comments? I do need to thank very many people, including Dr. Desai for a wonderful, wonderful event. I would be remiss if I didn't thank the Center for -- there is a whole list. There is such a long list I'm not even going to read the list, but basically, most of the area Study Centers, but particularly Women in Gender perspective, Center for Global Studies, European Union Center, the International Area of Studies Library. I could just, the Department of Anthropology, the Department of Sociology -- we could go on forever. But this is what makes this happen is the cooperation and the interest of many, many departments, centers, and funders who help pull this together every year. So, if you're out there, thank you very much. And again, we are having a small reception in the Atrium there, so we invite you to join us. And once again, thank you very much, Dr. Desai.

>> Thank you.

[ Audience Applause ]