

Monday, March 24th, 2014
4:00-5:30 p.m.
Burnside 426

Nicole Constable

Professor, Department of Anthropology
Director, Asian Studies Center
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TITLE: “The Global Politics of Migrant Labor, Gender, and Everyday Life.”

Talk co-sponsored by Sociology and Institute for Gender Sexuality and Feminist studies.

ABSTRACT: This talk focuses on the everyday challenges faced by temporary migrant workers, especially migrant women from the Philippines and Indonesia who become pregnant in Hong Kong. Various factors – especially the migratory status of their partners – deeply color their own and their children’s opportunities and vulnerabilities. Migrant mothers’ stories point not only to their creative tactics for survival, but also to ever-growing global patterns of economic inequality and to the wider politics of privilege and precarity that define and limit their life choices. The stories of migrant mothers and their babies in Hong Kong may seem unique, but they echo many contemporary problems and vulnerabilities faced by temporary migrants the world over. This talk draws from recent anthropological and ethnographic fieldwork, and from my forthcoming book entitled: *Born Out of Place: Migrant Mothers and the Politics of International Labor* (University of California Press, 2014).

BIO: Nicole Constable is Professor of Anthropology, core faculty member in Asian Studies and in Gender, Sexuality and Women’s Studies, and is Director of the Asian Studies Center at the University of Pittsburgh. She is author of several books and edited volumes including *Maid to Order in Hong Kong: Stories of Migrant Workers* and *Romance on a Global Stage: Pen Pals, Virtual Ethnography*, and ‘Mail Order’ Marriages.