



ASIAN INSTITUTE

East Asia Seminar Series

Precarious Life at the Margins: Migrant Mothers, Asylum Seekers, and Overstayers

Nicole Constable

Professor of Anthropology in the Dietrich School of Arts and Sciences,
Director of the Asian Studies Center at the University of Pittsburgh

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2:00 PM - 4:00 PM

Asian Institute, Munk School of Global Affairs
1 Devonshire Place, 108N, North House

Register Online at: <http://munkschool.utoronto.ca/ai/event/14259/>

This presentation draws from a chapter of my forthcoming book, *Born Out of Place: Migrant Mothers and the Politics of International Labor*. It focuses on a spectrum of migratory situations faced by migrant women workers who become mothers in Hong Kong, paying particular attention to the experiences of those who have become asylum seekers and overstayers. These women are on the least privileged end of the migratory spectrum. Many of them have spent time in prison. Their situations are highly precarious, and their tactics are more desperate and creative than among the privileged migrant wives and workers. Their tactics, in de Certeau's provocative words, "are procedures that gain validity in relation to the pertinence they lend to time". Indeed, "time" is central to mothers' tactics which serve as interventions that creatively and strategically transform bad situations into more favorable ones, that alter the organization of space, and that fundamentally extend and transform their experiences in Hong Kong.

Nicole Constable is Professor of Anthropology in the Dietrich School of Arts and Sciences, and Director of the Asian Studies Center, at the University of Pittsburgh. She is author of several books including: *Romance on a Global Stage*, *Maid to Order in Hong Kong*, and *Born Out of Place: Migrant Mothers and the Politics of International Labor*, soon to be released.

Co-sponsored by the Department of Sociology, Department of Geography & Program in Planning, Women and Gender Studies Institute, Centre for Southeast Asian Studies, Asian Institute, Department of Anthropology.