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MA, International Relations
United Kingdom

I was raised in a working class/blue collar family in Minneapolis, Minnesota, however, my extended family are from a strong farming background. My mother had a high school diploma and my father dropped out of school at the age of 13, three out of my six siblings graduated from college through our own perseverance. We were not encouraged to further our education past high school. My mother was abused as a child and became an abuser as an adult and mother. The result of this is I have the skull of a boxer, 40% loss of hearing in my right ear from a hard blow to the head, and my left leg was broken by my mother before my second birthday.

My father dealt with my mother's abuse as best he could with the knowledge he had. He died of a heart attack at the age of 46 years old. It was just before my 21st birthday and I was already living on my own since 17 years old (when my mother kicked me out) and had moved to San Francisco when I was 19 years old.

I was lucky enough to have had the influence of my paternal grandmother and aunts, all farmers. I would have had a very different perspective on being a woman without their influence. They worked on the farms along side their husbands and children and were empowered to make decisions both for the home and the farm business.

I received my Bachelor of Science in 2002 at the age of forty-six years old going to school fulltime while working fulltime. I worked hard to keep up my GPA, 3.6. I have found that to change careers at my age I need a graduate degree in the field of my interest, International Relations to work for NGOs or governmental agencies. It has been a rough road to finding out what I really wanted to do with my life, give back to the community and empower women to reach their goals much more quickly than I have done so.

I am very committed to helping others and believe that women's lives in the Third World are changing drastically with the globalization of the economy. I would like to focus my studies and research on Globalization and Gender. Do men and women feel the effects of globalization differentially? Has globalization from above resulted in further enmeshing of women in patriarchal structures? How has migration and globalization affected gender identification?

Feminist studies since the 1970s have continued to address the gender issues in relation to political economy, international division of labor, and globalization. It has been revealed that there is the co-existence of sexism, patriarchy, and capitalism. In fact, in some instances international capitalism has thrived within the context of patriarchy.

In comparison to the Third World today: Women in Europe and Americas were considered equal partners along with their spouse with the cottage industry and the proto-industry of the seventeenth and the beginning of the eighteenth century. Alice Clark in "Working Life of Women in the Seventeenth Century" distinguished three kinds of production: domestic industry (where goods are produced exclusively for the family, not exchanged), family industry (where the family is the unit for the production of goods sold or exchanged) and capitalist industry (where owners of capital control production and pay men, women and children wages.)¹ The home was no longer the site of production and industry had redefined "women's work".

Because of the prosperity and growth of the middle-class from the Industrial Revolution, more and more of the women could stay at home fulltime. The lower classes did not fair as well. The women not only had to work outside the home, most times along side their own children but to take care of the home (meals, laundry, etc.) when they returned from their jobs. Before the Industrial Revolution they had a more equitable share of the job and home life. They would help tend the shops, keep the books or tend the family garden (food supply). They worked side by side with their husbands and some were even allowed into different guilds for apprenticeships such as midwifery.

¹ "Consuming Subjects: Women, shopping, and Business in the Eighteenth Century", Elizabeth Kowaleski-Wallace, Columbia University Press, 1997

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Many agriculture workers were forced off the land by enclosure of the landlords. Many of those put out of work from traditional jobs found new work opening up to them. They were very often brutally treated in the factories by the foreman. It was thought that the single women were better off and had less difficult roles, i.e., no children or husband to look after along with working long hours.

How does this compare to the "new globalization" of the world? Will these same changes happen in the Third World for women? How do we change the culture to accept these changes? How do we empower these women? I would like to be instrumental in finding solutions in the globalization and gender issues.

I am proud to work for a company that has been a leader in ethical behavior in contracting manufacturers around the globe. Levi Strauss & Co. is recognized as a leader in corporate citizenship, including ethical practices in sourcing production around the world.

In 1991, Levi's became the first multinational company to establish a comprehensive ethical code of conduct for manufacturing and finishing contractors working with the company. This code, known as the Global Sourcing and Operating Guidelines, directs business practices, such as fair employment, worker health and safety, and environmental standards, among others. Levi's groundbreaking code earned the company the America's Corporate Conscience Award for International Commitment from the Council on Economic Priorities.

I have looked at numerous colleges/universities offering an MA in International Relations and have interviewed at several, however, I found the program at King's College to be exceptional. It would also enable me to complete the program in one year rather than the two years normally structured at American universities.