

SERIES FOREWORD

The politics of marriage (and divorce) is an often-used strategic tool in various social, cultural, economic, and political identity projects as well as in symbolic conflicts among ethnic, national, or religious communities. Despite its multiple strategic applicability, its pervasiveness in everyday life, and its huge significance in performing and managing identities, the politics of marriage is surprisingly underrepresented in both the international book publishing market and the social sciences.

The Politics of Marriage and Gender: Global Issues in Local Contexts is a series from Rutgers University Press examining the politics of marriage as a phenomenon embedded into and intensely interacting with much broader social, cultural, economic, and political processes and practices such as globalization and transnationalization; international migration and human trafficking; vertical social mobility; the creation of symbolic boundaries between ethnic populations, nations, religious denominations, or classes; family formation; and struggles for women's and children's rights. The series aims primarily to analyze practices, ideologies, and interpretations related to the politics of marriage and to outline the dynamics and diversity of relatedness—interplay and interdependence, for instance—between the politics of marriage and the broader processes and practices mentioned above. In other words, most books in the series devote special attention to how the politics of marriage and these processes and practices mutually shape and explain each other.

The series concentrates on, among other things, the complex relationships between the politics of marriage and gender, ethnic, national, religious, racial, and class identities globally, and examines how these relationships contribute to the development and management of social, cultural, and political differences, inequalities, and conflicts.

The series seeks to publish single-authored books and edited volumes that develop a gap-filling and thought-provoking critical perspective, that are well-balanced between a high degree of theoretical sophistication and empirical richness, and that cross or rethink disciplinary, methodological, or theoretical boundaries. The thematic scope of the series is intentionally left broad to encourage creative submissions that fit within the perspectives outlined above.

Among the potential topics closely connected with the problem sensitivity of the series are “honor”-based violence; arranged (forced, child, etc.) marriage; transnational marriage markets, migration, and brokerage; intersections of marriage and religion/class/race; the politics of agency and power within marriage; reconfiguration of family; same-sex marriage/union; the politics of love, intimacy, and desire; marriage and multicultural families; the (religious, legal, etc.) politics of divorce; the causes, forms, and consequences of polygamy in contemporary societies; sport marriage; refusing marriage; and so forth.

Redefining Multicultural Families in South Korea is a fascinating account of how the multilevel politics of partner selection, family formation, interpersonal intimacy, and cultural brokerage and mediation work and how, from time to time, it is modified and reconceptualized in multicultural South Korean contexts. As many chapters in this volume superbly demonstrate, the relationship between the varied practices and lived experiences of multiculturalism versus South Korea’s multicultural family policies is complex and dynamic—one of the major merits of the volume is that it offers a sophisticated and illuminating investigation of why the nature of this relationship is often conflicted and tense and of how the changing dynamics and content of the interplay between these personal and family practices/experiences, as well as state policies, can be meticulously documented and analyzed. To emphasize that marriage migration is only one of the many possible ways of forming multicultural families, the authors pay special attention to the high diversity of contemporary immigrants (among others, to the families of undocumented migrant workers or Korean Chinese migrants) who become part of multicultural families in South Korea. In an effort to deconstruct and destigmatize the popular depiction of immigration, the chapters convincingly highlight and investigate the major challenges (economic precarity, exploitative labor conditions, racial discrimination, gender inequality, nationalist xenophobia, and restrictive immigration policies) that immigrants and their families face in their everyday life. *Redefining Multicultural Families in South Korea* presents not only a brilliant example of how state policies shape lived experiences and everyday practices of multiculturalism (and vice versa), but also offers a perceptive insight into the dynamics and logic of distribution of marital power between spouses living in multicultural families and into how the intrafamily politics of inequality (based on race, ethnicity, legal status, nationality, socioeconomic status, or religion) affects multicultural family members in contemporary South Korea.

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Redefining Multicultural Families in South Korea

