This article discusses Helen Safa's analyses of the impact of development strategies and social policies on gender relations and women headed families in the Caribbean and Puerto Rico. The discussion focuses on findings of a research project regarding patterns of women's employment, autonomy, marital relations, family headship and poverty in Puerto Rico in the decade beginning in the year 2000, using excerpts from interviews conducted with women workers displaced from a clothing and a tuna factory between 2001 and 2002 (Colón et al. 2008), as well as data from the Public Use Sample (PUMS) of the U.S. Census Puerto Rico Community Survey 2005-2007. It is argued that women's employment has resulted in advances in women's autonomy, gender equity, and renegotiations of the provider role, but, intensified by men's unstable earnings, it has also led to the increase of female family headship even among married women. Women's education and employment have been an important means of reducing family poverty both among dual earner families and female heads. Yet, the continuing joblessness in the Island places even higher educated sectors on the verge of economic precariousness.

Keywords
Puerto Rico, women's employment, gender relations, female-headed families, Helen I. Safa

Abstract
This article discusses Helen Safa's analyses of the impact of development strategies and social policies on gender relations and women headed families in the Caribbean and Puerto Rico. The discussion focuses on findings of a research project regarding patterns of women's employment, autonomy, marital relations, family headship and poverty in Puerto Rico in the decade beginning in the year 2000, using excerpts from interviews conducted with women workers displaced from a clothing and a tuna factory between 2001 and 2002 (Colón et al. 2008), as well as data from the Public Use Sample (PUMS) of the U.S. Census Puerto Rico Community Survey 2005-2007. It is argued that women's employment has resulted in advances in women's autonomy, gender equity, and renegotiations of the provider role, but, intensified by men's unstable earnings, it has also led to the increase of female family headship even among married women. Women's education and employment have been an important means of reducing family poverty both among dual earner families and female heads. Yet, the continuing joblessness in the Island places even higher educated sectors on the verge of economic precariousness.

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