

Introduction

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Published online: 6 February 2017
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Happy New Year! After building our submissions, editorial board, review team, and readership, we are excited to begin our third year as co-editors in chief with new themed issues. We begin our themed issues with *Social Backlash and the Gendered Representation of Women's Work*. True to our commitment to an international focus, this issue contains data from Mexican, Chinese, and American communities. This cross-cultural perspective is important in illustrating the common challenges surrounding women's work.

A central theme of this issue is the complicated interaction between work and cultural expectations across the gender spectrum. Marquez shows us in *The Effects of Hacienda Culture on the Gendered Division of Labor Within the Charro Community* how traditional values of gendered labor are a primary way in which Charro members from urban areas reject mainstream cultural influence. It would be a mistake to believe that men alone create a chasm of occupational acceptability. As Luo et al. shows in *For Love or Bread: What Determines Subjective Well-Being Among Left-Behind Women in Rural China*, there is a complex relationship between adherence to gendered expectations of work and feelings of familial satisfaction. In fact, Luo et al. shows that reliance on a male provider “feels” like love and women must often trade conformity with traditional values for economic survival.

Yet, there is an underlying resistance to the simple acceptance of gendered work. Marquez and Luo et al. provide examples of ways in which women adapt their understandings of their production to maximize their life satisfaction. Whether intentional or not, American women also seek happiness through conformity to gendered expectations as well. As Moras examines in “This Should be my Responsibility; Gender, Guilt, Privilege, and Paid Domestic Work,” even in the relative privilege of release from the traditionally feminine household chores,

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women internalize the guilt of not performing gender. A common sense of “should” characterizes women’s work, even in very different cultural settings across the income spectrum.

We know that patriarchal systems which overtly circumscribe ideas about a “woman’s place,” do so indirectly as well. In her article, *Resistance and Adherence to the Gendered Representation of School Lunch Ladies*, Vancil-Leap reviews popular media stereotypes about cafeteria employees and notes the lack of spectrum of feminine expression in this occupation. The ways in which cafeteria employees challenge these media-created stereotypes provides an example of everyday resistance to gendered expectations.

Finally, Rice and Barth’s *A Tale of Two Gender Roles: The Role of Implicit and Explicit Gender Role Traditionalism and Occupation Stereotype on Hiring Decisions* provides further evidence that gender role stereotypes cross national and socioeconomic boundaries. Rice provides convincing argument on how, despite decades of awareness, gendered expectations continue to impact hiring. Partiality to male-identified candidates is pervasive among male and female evaluators. We conclude this special issue with Rice’s ideas of change. Awareness of one’s own biases it seems, is primarily superficial. In the absence of a clear standard or even goal of gender equality in the workplace, communities must authentically examine their cultural expectations and honestly evaluate the consequences of these for their communities.

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