

## Introduction

Ashley Simons-Rudolph<sup>1</sup> · Joseph Simons-Rudolph<sup>1</sup>

Published online: 2 August 2017  
© Springer Science+Business Media, LLC 2017

Happy Fall! I hope that all of our readers enjoyed a brief respite (or at least a decreased workload) over the summer and are returning to our varied academic, corporate, nonprofit, and advocacy positions with renewed vigor. As we ease back into the demands of fall, *Gender Issues* presents an issue filled with articles which showcase the varied ways in which gender shows up in our work. All too often we hear our own (American) students proclaim that we live in a post-gender society, citing increased acceptance of sexuality and “that time I saw my boyfriend cry at a movie.” Yes, gender and its distasteful cousin patriarchy are constantly shifting and redefining themselves. Perhaps history will reveal exceptional change in gender norms for this young generation. However, gender and its definition and expectations are alive and well and demand greater understanding. This issue is dedicated to highlighting some of the diversity of work documenting difference within the gender spectrum.

We begin the issue with an exploration of mental health. As Yu et al. shows us in *Examining Gender Differences in the Roles of Meaning in Life and Interpersonal Expectancies in Depressive Symptoms*, there is a relationship between having and searching for meaning of life in both women and men. Yet, this meaning is a stronger predictor of mental health in women. Yu et al. additionally finds that both meaning of life and interpersonal expectancies cause more significant interactions in women. Why is this? How and why does gender interact with the human search for meaning?

If gender is shown to impact the self in unexpected ways, two other articles show how gender impacts judgements of others. In *The Good, the Bad, and the Male: Men, But Not Women, Avoid Own-Gender Stereotypical Judgments of Affective Valence*, Conrad and von Scheve explore how women and men rate words such as

---

✉ Ashley Simons-Rudolph  
apsimons@ncsu.edu

<sup>1</sup> Raleigh, NC, USA

“butcher,” “eternity,” “witch,” and “palace”. They find that female self-ratings parallel that of their estimations of the majority of women, yet male participant self-ratings significantly differ from their estimations of the majority of men. Conrad and von Scheve argue that words associated with maleness and masculinity are declining in popularity and acceptability, particularly among men.

Gender difference is evident in the online world as well as you will see in Erchull et al.’s *Slut-shaming on Facebook: Do Social Class or Clothing Affect Perceived Acceptability?* The term “slut,” commonly used as a disparaging remark, serves to “police” women and reinforces the ideal of sexually demure women. Erchull et al. finds that while slut-shaming generally draws negative perceptions, they are moderated by both perceived social class and the clothing worn in the online images. Interestingly, a feminist identity moderated their results, providing evidence that gendered perceptions can be unlearned through social training.

In *Female Delinquency in Portugal: What Girls Have to Say About Their Offending Behaviors*, Duarte and de Carvalho provide additional evidence of gendered nuance for socially unacceptable behavior. Exploring delinquency in the juvenile justice system and social housing neighborhoods, the authors find that delinquents understand their delinquent behavior in part by creating non-normative femininities which focus on risk and experimentation. Understanding the gendered framing of delinquent behavior provides insight into the social construction of gender more generally.

Last but not least, the issue shows how policy (still disproportionately created by men) reflects male bias. In *Which Gender is More Concerned About Transgender Women in Female Bathrooms?*, Stones finds that cisgender males are more likely to express concern about the safety and privacy of cisgender females in bathrooms, a concern not shared by the majority of cisgender women they purport to protect. By analyzing a large number of online comments, men’s concerns reflect a misunderstanding of transgender identities. The gender difference in perception of safety has wide implications, particularly in areas like North Carolina in the USA which continues to debate legislation related to gender and bathroom use. We encourage our readers to consider the reasoning underlying the concerns of cisgender men, despite the lack of evidence or agreement from cisgender women and consider the policy implications in areas where cisgender men largely make policy.

Yes, gender continues to be a central lens through which we view everyday life. We hope that you enjoy some of the many samples of work documenting this and invite you to submit your own work to Gender Issues for future consideration.

Ashley Simons-Rudolph  
Joseph Simons-Rudolph  
*Co-Editors in Chief*