Introduction

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We hope that this December edition of Gender Issues finds you well and excited for the new calendar year. As we gather with friends and family to celebrate (or not) December holidays, we want to highlight the importance of gender within the family unit. Our authors have submitted manuscripts reflecting gendered expectations about marriage, childbearing, breastfeeding, and childrearing.

The issue begins with Stoiko and Stroug’s analysis of how college students view women’s marital last name change as a social custom of heterosexual marriages. In *‘Choosing’ the Patriarchal Norm: Emerging Adults’ Marital Last Name Change Attitudes, Plans, and Rationales*, we see that women’s attitudes about name change are more egalitarian than men’s, but conformity to patriarchal norms is more evident in women’s plans than in men’s plans.

In *Hillary Rodham versus Hillary Clinton: Consequences of Surname Choice in Marriage*, Shafer explores the personal and public consequences of last name change. Is a woman’s decision to change her last name after marriage a social indication of marital commitment?

Motherhood is often at the center of perceived femininity. *Pronatalism and Social Exclusion in Australian Society: Experiences of Women in their Reproductive Years with No Children*, by Turnbull et. al. explores the nature of this maternity-driven social connection and exclusion.

So what happens after birth? In *Abnormal mothers: Breastfeeding, Governmentality, and Emotion amongst Regional Australian Women*, Malatzky juxtaposes breastfeeding as mandatory for “good mothers;” and yet the act of breastfeeding is considered a private, corporeal act. How do these mixed messages constrain the decision to breastfeed and mother?

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As we conclude the December issue, Butler-Sweet explains how race is understood within a familial context. In *Not Like the Other Black Girls: How Class and Family Structure Impact Young Black Women's Experiences of Competition and Alienation*, Butler-Sweet finds that young middle class black women experience particularly tense relationships with poorer black women. Transracial adoptees and young biracial women face unique challenges within and outside of the family context.

We hope that you have an excellent end to 2017 and we look forward to connecting with you again in March 2018.

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