**Chapter 12: The Architecture of Inequality: Sex and Gender**

Discussion Questions:

1. How are the people in these articles suffering from and/or resisting prejudice and discrimination such as sexism and homophobia?
2. Is a sentiment of comparable worth present among the subjects of these articles? Explain how?
3. What, if any, role does patriarchy play in these situations?
4. How do gender stereotypes become reinforced even when cultural patterns change?

Alexandra G. Murphy

The Dialectical Gaze: Exploring the Subject-Object Tension in the Performances of Women who Strip

Journal of Contemporary Ethnography, Vol. 32, No. 3, 305-335 (2003)

<http://jce.sagepub.com/cgi/reprint/32/3/305?ijkey=yddgJESh.TH6c&keytype=ref&siteid=spjce>

**Abstract:**

Much of past research on female exotic dance has characterized strippers as deviant workers who are either passive, objectified victims of a sexploitation system that trades on their bodies for financial gain or as active subjects who work the exchange for their own benefit. Drawing on theories of power, performance, and communication, this work complicates the subject-object tension, showing how power circulates through a system of competing discursive relationships forming a dialectic of agency and constraint in which strippers are simultaneously subjects and objects. The author presents ethnographic data of how strippers discursively negotiate the ambivalence and contradictions they experience during their interactions with customers, management, and their families. Finally, this work concludes that given the need for all women to perform their prescribed gender in the course of their everyday lives, the occupation of the exotic dancer may not be as deviant as previously defined.

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Elizabeth A. Larsen

A Vicious Oval: Why Women Seldom Reach the Top in American Harness Racing

Journal of Contemporary Ethnography, Vol. 35, No. 2, 119-147 (2006)

<http://jce.sagepub.com/cgi/reprint/35/2/119?ijkey=1SqmxwuJHFKc2&keytype=ref&siteid=spjce>

**Abstract:**

This article explores the gendered contradictions of visibility for self-employed women in male-dominated occupations. It provides a link between the extant literature on women’s workplace issues with visibility and the recent, dramatic increase in self-employed women, especially those who work in male-dominated fields. The author uses a harness-horse racetrack as the site for exploring the social mechanisms behind the invisibility and negative visibility experienced by these women in their work. Through an ethnographic study of their daily work experiences, an insidious pattern of events surfaced in which every path leads to the same endpoint: the underutilization of self-employed women in a male-dominated field. This article also explores the social processes and pressures that lead these women to contribute to their own oppression in male-dominated fields.

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Chauntelle Anne Tibbals

Doing Gender as Resistance: Waitresses and Servers in Contemporary Table Service

Journal of Contemporary Ethnography, Vol. 36, No. 6, 731-751 (2007)

<http://jce.sagepub.com/cgi/reprint/36/6/731?ijkey=yhq4hGtO/fraM&keytype=ref&siteid=spjce>

**Abstract:**

This article examines the different ways in which "waitresses" in a traditional restaurant setting and "servers" in a routinized and standardized corporate restaurant setting "do gender" in the workplace. Whereas waitresses are permitted interpretative use of gender in the workplace, the goals and ideologies of the corporate restaurant limit servers' use of gender in the workplace. My findings suggest that normatively accepted versions of gender can be done as a method of resistance, rather than conformity, in standardized and routinized workplace settings. These conclusions are informed by ethnographic research conducted over twenty-two months in two different Los Angeles area restaurants.

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Esther Ngan-Ling Chow

Gender Matters: Studying Globalization and Social Change in the 21st Century

International Sociology, Vol. 18, 443 – 460 (2003)

<http://iss.sagepub.com/cgi/reprint/18/3/443?ijkey=Z/JS40xzer6zc&keytype=ref&siteid=spiss>

**Abstract:**

This introductory article is aimed at promoting transformativescholarship and research that emphasize the centrality of genderin studying social change associated with the process of globalizationlocally, nationally and regionally. Six major interrelated themesof this special issue are identified. These themes all emphasizeglobalization as a gendered phenomenon, studying how genderis embodied in the logic of globalization and embedded in itsprocess and structure. The themes examine how globalizationshapes gendered institutions; how it constructs gender differentiallyin women's and men's access to and control of resources, values,identities, choices, role behaviors, and gender power relations;and how it affects the societies and cultures in which womenand men live. The themes also address the dialectics of globalizationas results of conflicting interaction between global and localpolitical economies and socio-cultural conditions, yieldingmixed outcomes for women and men. Throughout, the emphasis ison the development of strategy for effective social change.

Maria Charles

What Gender Is Science?

*Contexts, May 2011; vol. 10, 2: pp. 22-28.*

<http://ctx.sagepub.com/cgi/reprint/10/2/22?ijkey=Ohg/jyI.pf8b.&keytype=ref&siteid=spctx>

**Abstract:**

Looking at science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) fields across countries challenges the assumption that women in more economically and culturally modern societies enjoy greater equality. Rather, freedom to choose a career may paradoxically cause women in affluent Western democracies to construct and replicate stereotypically gendered self-identities.

Umberson, Debra, Montez, Jennifer Karas

**Social Relationships and Health: A Flashpoint for Health Policy**  
Journal of Health and Social Behavior, Nov 2010; vol. 51: pp. S54-S66

<http://hsb.sagepub.com/cgi/reprint/51/1_suppl/S54?ijkey=0K3WWyq06zndk&keytype=ref&siteid=sphsb>

**Abstract**:

Social relationships--both quantity and quality--affect mental health, health behavior, physical health, and mortality risk. Sociologists have played a central role in establishing the link between social relationships and health outcomes, identifying explanations for this link, and discovering social variation (e.g., by gender and race) at the population level. Studies show that social relationships have short- and long-term effects on health, for better and for worse, and that these effects emerge in childhood and cascade throughout life to foster cumulative advantage or disadvantage in health. This article describes key research themes in the study of social relationships and health, and it highlights policy implications suggested by this research.

Bates, Nancy, DeMaio, Theresa J.

**Measuring Same-Sex Relationships**

Contexts, Feb 2013; vol. 12: pp. 66-69

<http://ctx.sagepub.com/cgi/reprint/12/1/66?ijkey=s7ZL1nFx0eKt2&keytype=ref&siteid=spctx>**Abstract**:

The last decade has seen dramatic changes in how U.S. society views and recognizes same-sex couples. U.S. Census Bureau employees, Nancy Bates and Theresa J. DeMaio, chronicle recent efforts taken by the Census Bureau to update and improve the measurement and counting of same-sex couples.