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Gender, Generation, and Jobs: Differences in Gender Role Ideologies by Age and Occupation

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GENDER, GENERATION, AND JOBS: DIFFERENCES IN GENDER ROLE IDEOLOGIES BY AGE AND OCCUPATION

by

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ABSTRACT

Gender inequality in the workplace remains a salient issue today; women continue to earn less than men, driven in part by occupational segregation and by general perceptions about socially constructed gender norms. Using the United States General Social Survey, I conduct multivariate Ordinary Least Squares regression analysis to explore the differences in gender role ideologies by generational cohort and occupation. The results highlight differences in gender role ideologies amongst occupations and suggest that while perceptions of gender influence occupational choices, so too do occupations impact our perceptions of gender roles. Individuals working in occupations atypical for their gender, those who challenge gender norms through their field of work, tend to hold more egalitarian attitudes towards gender roles. Such findings reinforce the importance of not only understanding the individual but also the structural factors that drive our attitudes towards gender and gender roles, which are of key importance for driving gender equality.

Keywords: Gender, Gender Roles, Generation, Occupational Segregation, U.S. General Social Survey

Significant gains have been made in terms of gender equality in the last few decades. However, inequality remains. Women continue to earn less than men, driven in part by occupational segregation and by general perceptions about socially constructed gender norms (Buchanan, 2014; Cejka & Eagly, 1999; Lips & Lawson, 2009) and young women these days are less likely to identify as feminist or to identify gender inequalities (Morrison, Bourke, & Kelley, 2005). To understand the forces driving gender inequality, it is necessary to understand the nature and impact of gender role ideologies, especially those pertaining to paid work. By studying perceptions of gender norms, we can begin to understand how societal changes are driven by and influence our perceptions about gender, leading to potential opportunities for change.

As Connell (2002) outlines, women and men are believed to have distinct and dichotomous stereotypical characteristics: while women are nurturing, caring, social, and emotional, men are aggressive, instinctual, private, and promiscuous. Much research demonstrates that gender is a social construction, meaning that gender and the attributes associated with being male or female are culturally defined rather than biologically defined. West and Zimmerman (1987) go further, arguing that gender is not only an external imposition but also an active part of everyday life. Individuals actively participate in and enact these cultural understandings of gender (West & Zimmerman, 1987). These socially constructed gender norms distinguish between men and women themselves, as well as outline a separation both between work and family and between 'men's work' and 'women's work' (Mennino & Brayfield, 2002). These norms not only drive our conception of roles and responsibilities but also influence our collective ability to identify gender-based inequalities. This paper provides insight into the ways in which age, in terms of generational cohort and

individual age, as well as organizations contribute to and reinforce specific gender norms and attitudes.

Much recent academic research has prioritized understanding gender inequalities in the workplace (Buchanan, 2014; Cech & Blair-Loy, 2010; Cejka & Eagly, 1999; Lips & Lawson, 2009; Reskin, 2000; Weisgram, Bigler, & Liben, 2010; among others). In particular, understanding the impact of gender role ideologies, stereotypes and values on gender inequality has been of prime importance. Reskin (2000) argues that while sociologists have long articulated and demonstrated the existence of discrimination and inequality in the workplace, not enough has been done to understand the causal factors driving these inequalities.

Gender Role Ideologies

Attitudes towards gender have changed substantially since the mid-twentieth century (Nielsen 1990, Hoschild 1989). Traditional gender role ideologies reinforce a nuclear family ideal where men are expected to be the primary breadwinners in the family while women are expected to remain in the home as caretakers and mothers (Wilcox and Nock 2007). However, the prevalence of such household structures has declined and instead the proportion of families with egalitarian structures, where men and women share the household economic and domestic responsibilities, has increased (Wilcox and Nock, Maurer and Pleck 2006, Phillips 2013). Alongside these changes in family structure, societal perceptions of gender role ideologies have changed; the proportion of individuals who are supportive of women working outside the home and contributing as equal breadwinners has increased over time, while support for "traditional" gender ideologies has decreased.

Despite these changes in gender norms, occupational sex segregation continues to exist; statistics indicate that as much as 53-77% of the female workforce would have to switch jobs in order for women to have the same occupational distribution as men when considering both occupational differences overall and differences within occupations (Cha, 2013; Tomaskovic-Devey et al., 2006). There remain many jobs in which one gender composes the majority of employees, and often these roles are associated with stereotypical gendered norms of masculinity and femininity. In other words, some jobs may be seen as more appropriate for women than are others, and individuals holding stereotypical gender role beliefs may gravitate to stereotypically gendered jobs, or demonstrate different commitment levels in the labour force, including part-time versus full-time employment (Hakim, 2000).

Previous research suggests that the historic trend towards egalitarian views on gender roles can be attributed to generational change and as such will continue to slow or flatten in time due to generational replacement (Farley, 1996; Rindfuss, Brewster, & Kavee, 1996; Spain & Bianchi, 1996). As those with egalitarian ideologies replace those with traditional ideologies, the trend in ideological change slows and eventually disappears. However, there is debate over the relative importance of individual age and generational cohort in gender role ideology development. Mason and Lu (1988) challenged previous findings that cited the primacy of generational cohort as a driver of gender role ideology and instead found that individual attitude changes represent a greater proportion of overall change. Conversely, while Brewster and Padavic acknowledge the important contributions of both individual attitudes within cohorts and cohort replacement to overall attitude change, they argue that the

importance of cohort replacement (generational change) has increased since Mason and Lu's (1998) work was completed.

Studies consistently find that the trend in ideology change has slowed; although egalitarian views continue to be more and more prevalent, the change in ideology is nowhere near as drastic as earlier timeframes (Brewster & Padavic, 2000; Mason & Lu, 1988). Still, Brewster and Padavic (2000) argue that monitoring this trend remains important, for a variety of reasons; individual opinions may change due to societal fluctuations and, more importantly, the generational cohort change does not act in a concrete and linear manner. Just as older cohorts may have been influenced by the women's movement, younger women, particularly Generations X and Y, are now much less likely to identify with feminism generally (Morrison et al., 2005; Suter & Toller, 2006) and because of this they have the potential to change or impact the gender ideology trend.

Many factors may influence perceptions of gender role ideologies, and this paper will consider the impact of two key independent variables: age (in terms of individual age and generational cohort), and occupational category. Although research typically demonstrates that attitudes towards gender roles influence employment choices, and gender is often seen as something that people bring into the workplace rather than as inherent in the workplace itself (Acker, 1990), individuals actively participate in the gendering process in a cyclical manner (West & Zimmerman, 1987); people may gravitate towards jobs that fit their gender role ideology, but gender is embedded in and reproduced in organizations and through social interactions.

Age and Gender Roles

Schnittker, Freese, & Powell, (2003) found that individuals who entered adulthood during the "second-wave" feminist movement are more likely to hold specific feminist attitudes, while others have found that younger generations are less likely to perceive gender and gender issues as salient in today's society or, more specifically, to identify themselves as feminist (Morrison et al., 2005; Ortner, 2014; Suter & Toller, 2006). Although it makes logical sense to attribute these attitudes to the widespread feminist movement or to a post-feminist world, we may also want to consider how these perceptions may change with age. Perhaps, rather than being attributable to growing up in a specific time, we can attribute changes in attitudes to aging itself, regardless of when the members of various age groups were born.

- *Hypothesis 1a*: Individuals born in Generation Y will hold more egalitarian attitudes towards gender roles than individuals born in older generations.
- *Hypothesis 1b*: Older individuals will hold more traditional gender role ideologies than younger individuals, controlling for generational cohort

Occupation and Gender Roles

Much of the research conducted on the relationship between occupation and gender role ideologies focusses on the role that gender role ideologies play in shaping occupational preferences, experiences, and pay. Individuals form conceptions about gender, and about men's work and women's work, long before they enter the workforce. Weisgram et al. (2010) and Teig and Susskind (2008) both demonstrate that gender roles influence occupational preferences in that males prefer masculine occupations while females prefer feminine occupations. Firestone, Harris and Lambert (1999) found that gender role

ideologies impacted earnings, and similarly Buchanan (2014) found that gender role ideologies influence expectations of performance. In particular, he argues that individuals with more egalitarian gender role attitudes are less likely to assume that female performance in the workplace is inferior to male performance. Additionally, liberal gender role views are associated with stronger support for equal pay, except in the case of white male participants (Buchanan, 2014).

Although these studies demonstrate that gender role ideologies are related to occupation, they do not consider the impact that occupation may have on gender role ideologies. Acker (1990) argues that occupations themselves, along with the concept of the ideal worker, are gendered. Gendered structures and perceptions exist externally to the individuals within the workplace and reproduce gender beliefs and expectations for men and women especially in relation to work and appropriate work/life decisions. Thus, gendered structures may influence individual perceptions about gender. Furthermore, occupational sex segregation may reinforce gendered norms and expectations thereby influencing attitudes towards gender norms. Employment in traditionally male-dominated or female-dominated occupations may contribute to a more traditional view of gender roles.

It is therefore worthwhile to consider the impact of occupation, particularly in male-dominated and female-dominated fields such as trades and labour or sales and service, respectively, on gender role ideologies. As West and Zimmerman (1987) explain, gender is not fixed but, rather, is fluid and as such our interactions within the workplace and the structures and expectations of the organization can influence how we perceive gender and gender norms. In her study on men in non-traditional fields, Williams (1995) provides strong

examples of the challenges facing individuals who contradict these societal norms, and the ways in which organizations steer non-conformists towards accepted gendered behaviours.

- *Hypothesis 2a:* Individuals in gender-typical fields may hold less egalitarian attitudes towards gender roles than individuals employed in fields atypical for their gender
- *Hypothesis 2b:* There may be an interaction between occupation and gender such that men and women employed in gender-typical fields may hold more traditional attitudes towards gender role ideologies than their counterparts in fields not typically associated with their gender.

Additional Control Considerations

Research has also demonstrated that intersections between race, ethnicity, and class produce variations in gender norms and attitudes (Browne & Misra, 2003). Buchanan (2014) finds that African American respondents in his study expressed more egalitarian gender role attitudes than White respondents, were more likely to support equal pay, and were less likely to associate inferior work performance with women.

Given these previous findings, a number of covariates are considered as potentially correlated to gender role ideologies. Control variables in this study will include survey year, race/ethnicity, gender, education, survey language, employment status, likelihood of job loss, mother's employment status when the respondent was growing up, strength of religious association, and political views. Previous studies have demonstrated statistically significant differences in gender role attitudes between men and women, with men holding more traditional views, as well as among levels of education, with college graduates holding the least traditional views (Brewster & Padavic, 2000). Brewster and Padavic (2000) found that

church attendance was positively correlated with traditional gender role views, but argue that this was stronger for older cohorts, while Mason and Lu (1988) found that those with more liberal views tended to support more egalitarian gender roles. Primary language is included as an additional control variable to explore any differences in ideology and/or ideology change between English-speaking and Spanish-speaking respondents as the survey used in this study, the US GSS, has been offered in Spanish since 2006. Mother's employment status has also been shown to influence perceptions of gender role ideologies: those whose mothers were employed while the respondents were children are more likely to espouse egalitarian gender role ideologies (Buchanan, 2014).

This present analysis builds on previous research which investigated the changing gender role ideologies in the United Stated between the 1970s and the 1990s, identifying a societal transition from more traditional to more egalitarian gender roles. There is reason to question whether this trend has continued as younger generational cohorts tend to demonstrate an aversion to labelling themselves as feminist and are often hesistant to frame experiences in the context of gender, but rather espouse postfeminist attitudes that equality has been achieved (Morrison et al., 2005; Schnittker, Freese, & Powell, 2003; Suter & Toller, 2006). Furthermore, previous research has focused on the association between gender role ideologies and occupational choice (Cejka & Eagly, 1999; Correll, 2001; Weisgram et al., 2010), rather than exploring how gendered organizations and occupations may influence perceptions of gender roles. This paper will evaluate the association between younger generational cohorts as well as employment in gendered fields and gender role ideologies.

Methods

Using the United States General Social Survey (US GSS), conducted since 1972 by the National Opinion Research Centre, this paper examines attitudes towards gender role ideology. The US GSS dataset is appropriate because it is conducted every two years and includes identically worded gender role questions in every wave since 1977. The data include numerous covariates, allowing for multiple controls and therefore a deeper understanding of the factors that are related to gender roles. No similar Canadian data consistently captures perceptions of gender roles, and thus this dataset provides information that cannot be accessed elsewhere.

The US GSS is nationally representative and uses a modified random sampling approach to capture the opinions of the non-institutionalized population of English and Spanish-speaking (since 2006) Americans over the age of 18. Controlling for survey year, this paper pools data from 10 waves of the study, including years 1996, 1998, 2000, 2002, 2004, 2006, 2008, 2010, 2012, and 2014, resulting in average attitudinal scores over the 18-year time period and a total potential sample size of 27,219 respondents. As explained below, the dependent variable is an additive scale comprising three questions, each of which were asked of 2/3 of the sample (n=15,719). Any respondent who selected the "Don't Know" response category or did not answer one of the questions was removed from the sample (n=667 or 4% of the sample). These missing responses were evenly distributed across the three questions and represent a small percentage of the total respondents.

The key independent variable measures occupational field using an industrial classification system, and missing cases (n=693) were deleted, as the purpose of including this variable is to determine the different gender ideologies by occupational field. Because

the question is worded such that individuals who were previously employed could provide an occupation, those who are retired or who left the workforce (for instance to care for young children) are included in the study. Although these individuals are not presently employed, their occupation is measured based on the field in which they were previously employed. Individuals who were never employed would not be represented in the study.

Missing cases were deleted for several independent variables as they represented small proportions of the total sample size: generation (n=45), marital status (n=7), work status (n=4), and education (n=36). Additionally, missing data was removed for mother's employment when respondent was growing up (n=840) as, similarly to the dependent variable, it was only asked of 2/3 of the sample each wave. "Missing" categories were created for the following control variables due to large numbers of missing respondents with statistically different responses: political views, religion, strength of religious affiliation, and likelihood of job loss. The final analytic sample includes 13,423 respondents.

The US GSS does not ask explicit questions about gender role ideologies; therefore, based on previous approaches used by Brewster and Padavic (2000) and Mason and Lu (1988), I used a modified scale for the dependent variable comprising three attitudinal questions that measure gender role ideology. These questions focus on preferences regarding the division of labour in the home between men and women, and the impact of working outside the home on mothers' relationships with their children:

1. It is much better for everyone if the man is the achiever and the woman takes care of the home and family
2. A preschool child is likely to suffer if his or her mother works

3. A working mother can establish just as warm and secure a relationship with her children as a mother who does not work

Each question is measured on a four-point scale of Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, and Strongly Disagree. After reverse coding the values for question 3 to ensure consistency of direction in response categories, the scale ranges from 3 to 12 points, with 3 being the most traditional attitudes and 12 being the most egalitarian attitudes. For ease of interpretation I recoded the scale to range from 1 (most traditional) to 10 (most egalitarian). When considered together these variables represent an index of gender role ideology, from most to least traditional, with a Cronbach's Alpha score of 0.73.

A limitation of using this question series is that each question represents a specific facet of gender role attitudes, and as such does not provide a comprehensive analysis of attitudes towards gender inequality as a whole. The questions address only mothers' perspectives and so seem to inherently minimize the contributions of fathers or at the very least to reinforce the notion that mothers and fathers play different roles, automatically assuming the very social constructions I am trying to investigate. Furthermore, the reference to "works" seems to translate to "works [outside the home]" which essentially establishes women's work in the home as not work (Brewster & Padavic, 2000; Mason & Lu, 1988). Although, as with any secondary dataset, these are imperfect measures of the concept, they do provide significant insight into gender norms. Despite the outlined limitations, the variables selected have been used for many years and provide a strong starting point for understanding perceptions of gender roles as they relate to paid employment.

There are two key independent variables for this study: generational cohort and respondent's occupation. Generational cohort was measured as respondents' birth year and

recoded into categories: Lost Generation (1883-1900); Greatest Generation (1901-1927); Silent Generation (1928-1945); Baby Boomers (1946-1964); Generation X (1965-1980); Millenials/Generation Y (1981-Present). Occupation was measured based on the question "What kind of work do you (did you normally) do? That is, what (is/was) your job called?" and responses were coded using the 1988 International Standard Classification of Occupation (ISCO) system based on the 1980 US Census Occupational Codes (Smith, Marsden, Hout, & Kim, n.d.). While updates are regularly made to the GSS occupation codes, they are only used for new respondents and are not used to recode previous surveys. However, all respondents receive both the most up-to-date occupation code as well as all previous occupation codes; I can only use the codes that were in place prior to 1996 to ensure all respondents are captured.

The occupational categories included in the analysis are: Trades and Labourers; Legislators, Sr. Officials and Managers; Professionals; Technicians and Associate Professionals; Clerks; Service Workers and Sales; Nursing Professionals; Teaching Professionals; and, Armed Forces[1]. The reference category, Trades and Labourers, was selected because it is the largest category and because it had the lowest mean score on the gender role ideology scale when considering the bivariate correlation between gender roles and occupation.

Additional factors related to employment were also considered in this study and were represented by work status, likelihood of job loss, and mother's work status when respondent was growing up. Brewster and Padavic (2000) argue "an exogenous factor, such as [an] economic reversal, that throws thousands of men into unemployment, can completely shift

[1] The occupational categories are based on the 1980 US census occupational codes, which include overarching categories as well as subfields within each area. The overall professional category was very broad and included multiple professions that tend to be dominated by one gender. Teaching and nursing professionals were extracted from the professions category to ensure that the gendered makeup of certain occupation was more accurately reflected.

the direction of a trend" (p. 478); perhaps those who are in more precarious economic and work situations will hold different attitudes towards gender than those with secure full-time work. Furthermore, there are likely gender differences in choices to work part-time or to keep house that are related to gender role ideologies.

Work status was based on the question "Last week were you working full time, part time, going to school, keeping house, or what?*"* with response categories including Working Full Time (which I treated as the reference category), Working Part Time, Unemployed, Retired, School, Keeping House, and Other. Because the occupation variable used in this study was asked of all respondents who had ever been employed, including current employment and past employment, individuals who are retired, in school, and keeping house are included in the results of the study.

Likelihood of job loss was based on the question "Thinking about the next 12 months, how likely do you think it is that you will lose your job or be laid off?*"* with the response categories Very Likely, Fairly Likely, Not Too Likely, Not Likely, and Leaving The Labour Force. For ease of interpretation, I recoded the variable to combine the Very Likely and Fairly Likely categories as Likely to Lose Job, with Not Too Likely and Not Likely as Not Likely to Lose Job. Leaving The Labour Force (n=5) was included with the Don't Know/No Answer category, which was included as a third category in the regression analyses because it was extremely large; the question was only posed for those who were currently employed, therefore anyone retired, attending school, or keeping house was not included in the responses.

Additional demographic and attitudinal characteristics (see Table 1) were drawn from previous studies (see Brewster & Padavic, 2000; Firestone, Harris, & Lambert, 1999; Mason

& Lu, 1988). Survey Language, measuring whether the respondent completed the survey in English or Spanish, was included to determine whether cultural differences influence gender role ideologies. Controlling for political and religious beliefs, as well as strength of religious affiliation, was important because they may be confounded with gender role ideologies.

Political Views was based on the question "do you think of yourself as liberal or conservative" with response categories Extremely Conservative, Conservative, Slightly Conservative, Moderate, Slightly Liberal, Liberal and Extremely Liberal. For ease of analysis and to address the issue of a large proportion of missing data, I collapsed the categories into Conservative, Moderate, Liberal and Don't Know/No Answer (n=714). Respondents were also asked about the strength of their religious affiliation: "would you consider yourself a strong [denomination] or not very strong [denomination]," with response categories of Strong, Not Very Strong, and Not Religious.

Bivariate associations were tested using t-test and chi-squared tests, while multivariate OLS regression models estimate mean scores on the gender ideology scale for occupation and generational cohort, controlling for (a) demographic characteristics, (b) work status and job precariousness, and (c) political and religious attitudes. An interaction was estimated for the difference in the association between occupation and gender role ideology by gender, as it is possible that women in certain occupational fields may hold different gender attitudes than men in the same fields. Additionally, the final regression model, including all covariates, was stratified by gender to determine whether or not there are differences in covariate statistical significance for men and women. The regression equation is as follows:

$$\hat{y}=\beta_0 + \beta_1 Age_1 + \beta_2 Generation_2 + \beta_3 Occupation_3 + \beta_4 Year_4 + \beta_5 Demographics_5 + \beta_6 Work\ Status_6 + \beta_7 Political\ and\ Religious\ Attitudes_7$$

Demographic variables include sex, race, and education while Work Status includes respondents' work status, likelihood of job loss, and mother's work status when the respondent was growing up. Political and Religious Attitudes include religion, strength of religious affiliation, and political views.

Results

Table 1 presents descriptive statistics for the variables included in this study. The majority of respondents fall in the Baby Boomer cohort (39%), followed by Generation X (29%). Millenials/Generation Y and the Greatest Generation as the youngest and oldest cohorts represent 9% and 6% of the sample, respectively. Occupational categories are roughly similar in size, with the exception of Trades and Labourers, which represents the largest proportion of the sample at 28%. Legislators, Senior Officials and Managers represent 13% of the sample while Professionals represent 10% of the sample. Teaching professionals account for nearly 6% of the sample and Technicians and Associate Professionals, Clerks, and Service Workers and Sales each represent approximately 13% of the sample.

The mean age of sample respondents is 47 years and the mean years of education is 13.5, with two key peaks at 12 years and 16 years, representing high school graduation and university graduation. The majority of sample respondents are married (48%) or never married (24%) with the remaining respondents either widowed or divorced. Nearly two-thirds of respondents indicated that their mothers worked while they were growing up, and over half of the sample (54%) were employed full-time at the time of their interview. Political views were relatively even across the sample, with nearly 40% of respondents

identifying as Moderate (37%), just over 30% identifying as Conservative (33%), and one quarter of respondents identifying as Liberal (26%). The majority of the sample selected Strong or Not Very Strong (with 36% each) in terms of strength of religious preferences.

Bivariate

Table 2 presents bivariate regression results for the two key independent variables: generation and occupation. Regression coefficients indicate that the differences between each category and the reference categories are statistically significant. In the bivariate model, Generation Y holds the most egalitarian gender role ideologies, with the highest scores on the scale. The regression coefficients for the Baby Boomers (-0.53) and Generation X (-0.26) each indicate slightly lower scores on the scale compared to Generation Y, while the Greatest Generation scores nearly 2 points lower on the scale than the reference category (-1.95).

A similar pattern emerges when considering respondents' occupation, with the reference category, Trades and Labourers, scoring the lowest on the scale when compared to all other occupational categories. Nursing professionals hold the most egalitarian views compared to the reference category with a regression coefficient of 1.2, while Service Workers and Sales workers are only slightly more egalitarian than Trades and Labourers with a regression coefficient of 0.492. Despite these results, controlling for the covariates provides additional insight and changes both the direction and magnitude of regression results.

Multivariate

Table 3 presents regression coefficients for four multivariate models. Although each generational cohort is statistically different from Millenials when we consider the bivariate

relationship, no statistical differences amongst generational cohorts remain after controlling for demographic characteristics and attitudes, with the exception of the Greatest Generation, which is comparatively less egalitarian. Age, however, remains significant in all models and as age increases, scores on the gender role ideology scale tend to decrease. By Model 4, for every one unit increase in age there is a corresponding -0.0089 decrease in gender role ideology score.

Several occupation categories demonstrate statistically different results from that of Trades and Labourers. In Model 2, Professionals, Sales and Service workers, and Teaching professionals hold more egalitarian attitudes than the reference category. Adding mother's employment status, labour force status, and likelihood of job loss into Model 3 results in a suppression of the statistically significant difference between Sales and Service Workers and Trades and Labourers, but after controlling for political views and strength of religious affiliation in Model 4, the difference becomes significant once again. Although Nursing professionals held significantly different attitudes towards gender roles in the bivariate relationship compared to Trades and Labourers, once the control variables have been included in the model, no statistical difference in attitudes between the two remains.

When considering the interaction between occupation and sex, female Legislators and Senior Officials hold even more egalitarian gender role ideology scores than their male counterparts. Interestingly, women in the Sales and Service sector hold less egalitarian views (or more traditional views) than men in Sales and Service jobs, and in fact score lower on the gender role ideology scale than men in Trades and Labour positions. These results hold across all three models in which the interaction was included. While female professionals

demonstrate more egalitarian attitudes than male professionals in Models 2 and 3, in Model 4 the difference is no longer statistically significant.

Demographic characteristics such as sex, age, education and race are each statistically significant across all models. Females tend to hold more egalitarian attitudes than males, and for every one year increase in education there is a corresponding 0.88 increase in a respondent's score on the gender ideology scale by Model 4. As has been demonstrated in previous studies (Buchanan 2014), Black people hold more egalitarian attitudes towards gender roles than White people, while those in the 'other' category for race hold more traditional attitudes. Furthermore, even when controlling for race, those who took the survey in Spanish hold significantly more traditional attitudes towards gender roles than those who took the survey in English.

While the majority of respondents stated that their mother worked when they were growing up (67%), those whose mothers did not work have statistically lower scores on the gender role ideology scales, meaning that they hold more traditional attitudes towards gender roles. Respondents who are working part-time or keeping house hold more traditional gender role attitudes, even when controlling for gender and other variables that may influence an individual's decision not to work full time.

As one might expect, self-identified Liberals hold the most egalitarian gender role attitudes, with Moderates, Conservatives, and those choosing not to answer the question each demonstrating significantly lower scores on the gender role ideology scale. Strength of religion also had a number of significant results, with those who state that they have a strong religious affiliation holding the most traditional gender role attitudes, and those whose

affiliation is only somewhat strong and those who have no religion holding more egalitarian gender attitudes.

Although including an interaction term for sex and occupation provides additional insight into the correlation between occupation and gender role ideologies, several of the other covariates may in fact differ by gender and as such I opted to stratify the model by gender to determine which covariates are statistically significant for men and women, respectively. Table 4 presents these additional regression results, demonstrating that the variables relevant to gender role ideologies differ by gender. It is important to note that for ease of comparison the reference categories are the same for each gender. However, while Trades and Labour is a common career choice for men, it is a strongly non-traditional career choice for women and therefore we would expect that female Trades and Labourers might hold more egalitarian attitudes towards gender compared to other occupational fields.

Differences in gender role ideologies by generation are only significant for men, and only for the Greatest Generation (-0.65), holding more traditional views than Generation Y. Conversely, age is only significant for women, with a corresponding -0.00997 decrease in score on the gender role ideology scale for every one-year increase in age. Although on a yearly basis this may seem small, over the course of several decades this can result in a substantially lower score.

Gender role ideology scores for occupations, in relation to Trades and Labourers, provide distinctly different statistical results for men and women. Male Professionals (0.28), Service Workers and Sales employees, (0.20), and Teaching Professionals (0.41) demonstrate significantly higher scores on the gender role ideology scale than Trades and Labourers. Conversely, 3 occupational categories are significant for women, and although female

Legislators, Senior Officials, and Managers (0.17) as well as Professionals (0.25) score higher on the gender ideology scale than Trades and Labourers, female Service Workers and Sales employees (-0.19) score lower than Trades and Labourers.

The relevance of demographic characteristics for gender role ideology scores differs by gender as well. On average, men identifying as Black hold more egalitarian views on gender roles than men identifying as White, while women identifying as Black do not hold statistically different views than women identifying as White. Marital Status is significant for women but not men; women who are Divorced or Separated (0.13) and women who have never married (0.19) score higher on the gender role ideology scale than married women. However, both men and women answering the survey in Spanish hold more traditional views than those taking the survey in English, and both men and women whose mothers worked when they were young hold more egalitarian views than those whose mothers did not work.

Although political views and strength of religious affiliation appear to have similar levels of significance and direction of correlations for both men and women, the impact of labour-related variables differs across genders. Labour force status is only significant for women, with those working part-time or keeping house (-0.39) holding more traditional gender role ideologies than those working full time. Furthermore, job precariousness is also only significant for women, with those likely to lose their jobs holding more traditional views (-0.35) than those who are not likely to lose their jobs. Those for whom job loss is not applicable (those not currently working, including those keeping house) hold more traditional views as well (-0.36).

Discussion

Beliefs about gender and gender roles can and do change over time, and this study seeks to understand how attitudes towards gender differ by generational cohort and occupation. Using the US General Social Survey data from 1996 through 2014, I conducted multivariate OLS regression models to understand the association between generation, occupation, and gender role ideologies, controlling for demographics, labour forces factors, and political and religious attitudes.

The first hypothesis in this paper supposed that respondents in Generation Y would hold more egalitarian attitudes towards gender roles than older generations. The results of the study do not support this hypothesis; despite an apparent trend in increasing egalitarian attitudes towards gender over time, as previous studies have found (Brewster & Padavic, 2000; Mason & Lu, 1988), controlling for occupation, demographic characteristics, and political and religious attitudes results in limited statistical differences among generations. With the exception of respondents in the Greatest Generation, who hold more traditional views on gender roles than Generation Y, generation (as it is framed in this study) is not correlated to gender role ideology. Hypothesis 1b proposed that older individuals at different ages would hold more traditional attitudes towards gender roles even when controlling for generation. Age remains significant across all multivariate models, with older individuals holding more traditional gender role attitudes, supporting this hypothesis. Once the models are stratified by gender, however, this correlation remains significant only for women. Although several studies have indicated that young women today are less likely than older women to identify as feminist, and do not tend to contextualize issues and challenges in terms of gender (Morrison et al., 2005; Ortner, 2014; Schnittker et al., 2003; Suter & Toller,

2006), some previous research indicates that young women may hold equally or more egalitarian attitudes compared with older women (Schnittker et al., 2003). Additionally, trends in changing family structures and divisions of household labour may indicate and reinforce more egalitarian gender norms (Maurer & Pleck, 2006; Phillips, 2013; Wilcox & Nock, 2007) which may help to explain why younger women hold more egalitarian views than older women.

My second set of hypotheses concerned the relationship between occupation and gender role ideologies. My hypotheses predicted that individuals in male-dominated or female-dominated fields might hold more traditional gender role ideologies than individuals employed in fields not traditional for their gender. Building on the premise of the gendered organization as articulated by Acker (1990), this paper evaluates the extent to which occupations themselves are related to, and potentially reinforce, gender norms.

The overarching results indicate that men in gender neutral or female-dominated fields, such as service workers and teaching professionals, tend to hold more egalitarian attitudes towards gender than men in traditionally masculine fields like trades and labour. Similarly, women in traditionally female-dominated fields like sales and services tend to be less egalitarian than women in non-traditional fields including professionals and legislators or senior officials. Further, the results demonstrate that both male and female professionals tend to hold more egalitarian views, even when controlling for education. Although historically many professions were male-dominated, women have made significant inroads, and formerly male-dominated professions are more gender neutral today; for example, in 2010 women represented 47.9% of US law school graduates and currently make up 45% of associates (Catalyst, 2014), and women represent 41% of PhDs (Executive Office of the

President, 2011) in Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) fields. However, occupational segregation remains an important contributor to gendered inequalities in the workplace, as professions certainly demonstrate. Despite the statistics listed above, women represent only 20% of managing partners at law firms (Catalyst, 2014), and only 28% of tenured academic positions in STEM fields (Executive Office of the President, 2011). Because this study looks at professions as one single category, the nuances amongst specific fields cannot be as clearly identified. In other words, although both male and female professionals appear to hold more egalitarian views, there could be different attitudes among specific professions within the category.

Challenging the gendered status quo is not easy, and many studies have articulated the challenges women face as they enter non-traditional fields (Demaiter & Adams, 2008; Miller, 2004; Roth, 2004). Although these women often downplay gender in the workplace, by entering into fields that are not associated with typically feminine characteristics they are, ultimately, challenging gender norms. As such, it is not surprising that they might have more egalitarian views regarding gender. Conversely, women in traditional fields, specifically Service Workers and Sales employees, appear more inclined to espouse traditional gender role ideologies.

Masculinity plays a powerful role for men who work in nontraditional fields (Williams, 1995). According to Williams' (1995) study on men who do 'women's work', men in these fields use a variety of tactics to distinguish themselves from women and establish and maintain a "subjective sense of their masculine identity" (p. 144). Although a minority of men in the interviews rejected hegemonic masculinity and developed their own conception of alternative masculinities, those individuals stated that they felt pressure to

conform to hegemonic norms. The dependent variable in this study focused on women's roles as caretakers and workers, rather than masculinity specifically, and the results indicate that men in gender neutral or traditionally female-dominated fields do in fact hold different attitudes towards gender than men in traditionally male-dominated fields. These results are consistent with certain aspects of Williams' (1995) findings.

Brewster and Padavic (2000) argue that economic downturns may drive individuals to change their expectations of gender roles, while others suggest that discrimination may occur in times where individuals compete for employment (Bonacich, 1972). Many scholars have shown how men have historically restricted women's job opportunities for their own advantage. In this study, however, it was not men in precarious positions that held traditional gender roles, but women. Women who are working part-time, keeping house, and who are likely to lose their jobs tend to hold more traditional gender role attitudes. These individuals may have chosen to work part-time, keep house, or engage in precarious work due to their own personal preferences (Casey & Alach, 2009), while some choose to stay home and raise their children, or work part-time to facilitate raising their children, because they hold more traditional attitudes towards women's roles in the home and the workplace. In this regard, gender role ideologies may influence work status and employment in precarious fields where job loss is likely, such as contract and temporary work.

Additional factors that influence attitudes towards gender roles include various demographic characteristics and political and religious attitudes. In particular, those who identify as Black, or African American, hold more egalitarian attitudes towards gender roles than those who identify as White. This finding is consistent with previous work that suggests that African Americans tend to be more egalitarian overall (Buchanan, 2014; Mason & Lu,

1988). Buchanan (2014) argues that this may be driven by the fact that working outside the home has been a norm for African American women than for white women. He also finds that individuals whose mothers worked when they were young hold more egalitarian gender attitudes, but the statistical difference in race holds even when he controls for whether or not the respondent's mother worked while the respondent was growing up, as is the case in this paper. Additionally interesting is that even when controlling for race, those who completed the survey in Spanish hold significantly more traditional attitudes towards gender roles than those who completed the survey in English. This finding suggests that there are perhaps additional cultural aspects influencing gender role ideologies.

Political and religious attitudes were also significantly related to the gender ideology scale for individuals across the political spectrum and for those both with and without strong affiliations. Consistent with Mason and Lu (1988), Liberals hold the most egalitarian attitudes towards gender role ideologies when compared with Moderates and Conservatives, and those without a strong religious affiliation or with no religion tend to hold more egalitarian gender attitudes than those with strong religious affiliations. Religion often goes hand in hand with certain political affiliations, particularly with Christianity and Conservatism in the United States, and there are certain gender roles inherent in Christianity generally, specifically in relation to the position of women in the family, that align with more the traditional gender role ideologies reflected in this scale (Gonsoulin & LeBoeuf, 2010; Phillips, 2013). Because of this, the findings make logical sense in conjunction with one another and with previous research.

Limitations and Future Research

As with any study, this paper faces certain limitations. Question wording for the dependent variable has heteronormative and gendered characteristics, and assumes specific attitudes that the paper is trying to investigate. Certain variables also pose limitations for this study and can potentially bias results. Analyzing age, cohort, and time collectively results in an issue called the "Age-Period-Cohort" problem. I attempted to overcome this issue by treating generation as a categorical variable and compare each cohort in relation to Generation Y, but this produces different results from previous work and is therefore not easily comparable. Despite these limitations, I endeavored to produce results that are as representative as possible and the outcomes of the regression analyses reconcile with the literature well.

Future research could consider using a Generalized Linear Latent and Mixed Model (GLAMM) rather than simple OLS regression, to account for the exogenous effects associated with the changes in survey year beyond those included in the model. It may be beneficial to consider stratifying the model by occupation, rather than simply comparing each field to Trades and Labourers, to understand whether or not covariate significance differs by occupational field. For example, perhaps job precariousness matters more for gender role ideology scores for certain occupational fields than for others. Finally, it may be beneficial to consider the association between overarching economic trends and gender role ideologies. Based on the results of this study, men who are at risk of losing their jobs and those who are not working full time do not report different gender role attitudes than men working full time. If society as a whole experiences an economic decline, it may lead to different gendered expectations, which could impact the potential for driving gender equality forward.

Conclusion

Although society has been progressing towards gender equality for some time, a number of gendered inequalities remain, from the wage gap to occupational segregation to the perceptions of what constitute "men's work" and "women's work". This paper highlights differences in gender role ideologies amongst occupations and finds that while perceptions of gender influence occupational choices, so too do occupations impact our perceptions of gender roles. Individuals working in occupations atypical for their gender, those who challenge gender norms through their field of work, tend to hold more egalitarian attitudes towards gender roles. Such findings reinforce the importance of not only understanding the individual but also the structural factors that drive our conceptions of, and attitudes towards, gender and gender roles.

Appendix: Tables and Results

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics

N= 13423	Mean	Percent
Age	46.7	
Education	13.6	
Respondent's Generation *(Generation Y)*		
Greatest Generation		5.8
Silent Generation		17.5
Baby Boomers		38.8
Generation X		29.1
Generation Y		8.7
Respondent's Occupation Category *(Trades and Labourers)*		
Legislators, Sr. Officials and Managers		13.2
Professionals		10.5
Technicians and Associate Professionals		12.5
Clerks		13.5
Service Workers and Sales		13.9
Trades and Labourers		28.1
Nursing and Midwifery Professionals		2.0
Teaching Professionals		5.7
Armed Forces		0.6
Marital Status *(Married)*		
Married		47.7
Widowed		8.4
Separated/Divorced		19.3
Never Married		24.6
Respondent's Race *(White)*		
White		78.0
Black		14.2
Other		7.8
Interviews in Spanish or English *(White)*		
English		97.9
Spanish		2.1
Labour Force Status *(Working Full-time)*		
Working Full-time		54.3
Working Part-time		11.4
Unemployed		5.8
Retired		14.9
School		2.2
Keeping House		9.3
Other		2.1
Respondent's Sex *(Male)*		
Male		44.9
Female		55.1
Mother's Employment Status *(Yes)*		
Yes		67.3
No		32.7
Likelikood of Job Loss *(Not Likely to Lose Job)*		
Not likley to lose job		57.9
Likely to lose job		6.8
Not applicable		35.3
Political Views *(Liberal)*		
Liberal		26.4
Moderate		36.8
Conservative		33.4
Not Applicable		3.4
Strength of Religious Affiliation *(Strong)*		
Strong		35.9
Somewhat Strong		8.5
Not Very Strong		36.5
No Religion		15.8
No Answer		3.3

Table 2: Gender Role Ideology Coefficient by Occupation and Generation (Bivariate)

	Occupation	**Generation**
Respondent's Occupation Category *(Trades and Labourers)*		
Legislators, Sr. Officials and Managers	0.650***	
	(11.42)	
Professionals	0.962***	
	(15.62)	
Technicians and Associate Professionals	0.703***	
	(12.13)	
Clerks	0.659***	
	(11.67)	
Service Workers and Sales	0.492***	
	(8.79)	
Nursing Professionals	1.175***	
	(9.36)	
Teaching Professionals	1.039***	
	(13.26)	
Armed Forces	0.862***	
	(3.89)	
Respondent's Generation *(Generation Y)*		
Greatest Generation		-1.948***
		(-21.65)
Silent Generation		-1.141***
		(-16.35)
Baby Boomers		-0.529***
		(-8.39)
Generation X		-0.260***
		(-4.00)
Constant	5.780***	6.894***
	(179.76)	(120.96)
N	13423	13423

t statistics in parentheses
* p<0.05, ** p<0.01, *** p<0.001

Table 3: Gender Role Ideology Scores (Multivariate)

	Model 1 - Occupation	Model 2: Demographics	Model 3 - Work Status	Model 4 - Attitudes
Respondent's Occupation Category *(Trades and Labourers)*				
Legislators, Sr. Officials and Managers	0.631***	-0.000451	-0.0359	0.00326
	(11.40)	(-0.01)	(-0.48)	(0.04)
Professionals	0.923***	0.216**	0.200*	0.214**
	(15.43)	(2.64)	(2.46)	(2.69)
Technicians and Associate Professionals	0.634***	0.0556	0.0382	0.0850
	(11.24)	(0.67)	(0.46)	(1.05)
Clerks	0.681***	0.164	0.155	0.152
	(12.42)	(1.48)	(1.42)	(1.42)
Service Workers and Sales	0.392***	0.181*	0.164	0.202*
	(7.19)	(2.08)	(1.91)	(2.40)
Nursing Professionals	1.254***	0.859	0.702	0.486
	(10.28)	(1.53)	(1.27)	(0.90)
Teaching Professionals	1.067***	0.392**	0.385**	0.317*
	(14.02)	(2.71)	(2.69)	(2.26)
Armed Forces	0.737***	0.299	0.248	0.315
	(3.42)	(1.23)	(1.03)	(1.34)
Respondent's Generation *(Generation Y)*				
Greatest Generation	-1.955***	-0.718**	-0.673**	-0.584**
	(-22.03)	(-3.18)	(-3.01)	(-2.66)
Silent Generation	-1.179***	-0.259	-0.256	-0.167
	(-17.09)	(-1.54)	(-1.53)	(-1.02)
Baby Boomers	-0.569***	0.00665	-0.0482	0.000258
	(-9.10)	(0.06)	(-0.42)	(0.00)
Generation X	-0.289***	0.0228	-0.00674	0.0304
	(-4.51)	(0.30)	(-0.09)	(0.40)
Respondent's Sex *(Male)*				
Female		0.721***	0.846***	0.886***
		(10.88)	(12.67)	(13.52)
Sex*Respondent's Occupation Category *(Male*Trades and Labourers)*				
Female*Legislators, Sr. Officials and Managers		0.367***	0.309**	0.239*
		(3.33)	(2.83)	(2.24)
Female*Professionals		0.278*	0.233*	0.142
		(2.34)	(1.98)	(1.23)
Female*Technicians and Associate Professionals		0.0921	0.0297	-0.0359
		(0.81)	(0.26)	(-0.32)
Female*Clerks		-0.0467	-0.0623	-0.0751
		(-0.35)	(-0.48)	(-0.59)
Female*Service Workers and Sales		-0.295**	-0.303**	-0.375***
		(-2.58)	(-2.68)	(-3.38)
Female*Nursing Professionals		-0.493	-0.397	-0.206
		(-0.86)	(-0.70)	(-0.37)
Female*Teaching Professionals		-0.247	-0.291	-0.244
		(-1.46)	(-1.74)	(-1.49)
Female*Armed Forces		0.536	0.444	0.375
		(1.13)	(0.94)	(0.82)
Respondent's Age in Years		-0.0150***	-0.00998**	-0.00897**
		(-4.49)	(-2.93)	(-2.69)
Survey Year		0.0312***	0.0289***	0.0283***
		(7.58)	(7.04)	(7.02)
Respondent's Education in Years		0.100***	0.0889***	0.0872***
		(14.66)	(13.05)	(12.97)
Respondent's Race *(White)*				
Black		0.112*	0.0740	0.112*
		(2.36)	(1.56)	(2.39)
Other		-0.380***	-0.346***	-0.396***
		(-6.06)	(-5.57)	(-6.48)
Marital Status *(Married)*				
Widowed		0.142*	0.125	0.0614
		(2.09)	(1.85)	(0.93)
Separated/Divorced		0.216***	0.159***	0.0570
		(4.95)	(3.64)	(1.33)
Never Married		0.274***	0.244***	0.117**
		(6.13)	(5.47)	(2.65)
Interviews in Spanish or English *(White)*				
Spanish		-0.826***	-0.674***	-0.667***
		(-6.91)	(-5.65)	(-5.69)
Mother's Employment Status *(Yes)*				
No			-0.426***	-0.394***
			(-11.87)	(-11.20)
Labour Force Status *(Working Full-time)*				
Working Part-time			-0.131*	-0.124*
			(-2.46)	(-2.38)
Unemployed			-0.0271	-0.0354
			(-0.31)	(-0.41)
Retired			-0.0445	-0.0418
			(-0.44)	(-0.42)
School			0.0659	0.0926
			(0.49)	(0.70)
Keeping House			-0.526***	-0.479***
			(-5.31)	(-4.94)
Other			-0.157	-0.116
			(-1.15)	(-0.86)
Likelihood of Job Loss *(Not Likely to Lose Job)*				
Likely to lose job			-0.183**	-0.219***
			(-2.81)	(-3.42)
Not applicable			-0.174*	-0.185*
			(-2.13)	(-2.32)
Political Views *(Liberal)*				
Moderate				-0.231***
				(-5.72)
Conservative				-0.775***
				(-18.40)
Not Applicable				-0.506***
				(-5.59)
Strength of Religious Affiliation *(Strong)*				
Somewhat Strong				0.158**
				(2.65)
Not Very Strong				0.319***
				(8.49)
No Religion				0.460***
				(9.22)
No Answer				0.229*
				(2.56)
Not Asked				-0.233
				(-0.32)
Constant	6.429***	-57.44***	-52.57***	-51.21***
	(102.49)	(-6.99)	(-6.42)	(-6.38)
N	13423	13423	13423	13423

t statistics in parentheses
* p<0.05, ** p<0.01, *** p<0.001

Table 4: Gender Role Ideology Scores by Gender (Multivariate)

	Men	Women
Respondent's Occupation Category *(Trades and Labourers)*		
Legislators, Sr. Officials and Managers	0.0621	0.173*
	(0.84)	(2.01)
Professionals	0.279***	0.287**
	(3.39)	(2.88)
Technicians and Associate Professionals	0.128	0.0000253
	(1.60)	(0.00)
Clerks	0.186	0.0431
	(1.78)	(0.58)
Service Workers and Sales	0.199*	-0.187*
	(2.42)	(-2.46)
Nursing Professionals	0.570	0.198
	(1.08)	(1.48)
Teaching Professionals	0.409**	-0.00678
	(2.91)	(-0.06)
Armed Forces	0.328	0.662
	(1.43)	(1.63)
Respondent's Generation *(Generation Y)*		
Greatest Generation	-0.654*	-0.451
	(-2.05)	(-1.50)
Silent Generation	-0.455	0.102
	(-1.93)	(0.45)
Baby Boomers	-0.138	0.140
	(-0.85)	(0.90)
Generation X	0.0240	0.0691
	(0.22)	(0.66)
Respondent's Age in Years	-0.00838	-0.00997*
	(-1.73)	(-2.18)
Survey Year	0.0288***	0.0281***
	(4.94)	(5.07)
Respondent's Education in Years	0.0801***	0.0954***
	(8.60)	(9.88)
Respondent's Race *(White)*		
Black	0.239**	0.0228
	(3.25)	(0.37)
Other	-0.430***	-0.373***
	(-5.15)	(-4.21)
Marital Status *(Married)*		
Widowed	0.0843	0.0426
	(0.73)	(0.51)
Separated/Divorced	-0.0629	0.132*
	(-0.99)	(2.25)
Never Married	0.0184	0.186**
	(0.29)	(2.97)
Interviews in Spanish or English *(White)*		
Spanish	-0.561***	-0.772***
	(-3.37)	(-4.70)
Mother's Employment Status *(Yes)*		
No	-0.422***	-0.375***
	(-8.28)	(-7.75)
Labour Force Status *(Working Full-time)*		
Working Part-time	-0.00995	-0.185**
	(-0.11)	(-2.78)
Unemployed	-0.176	0.0729
	(-1.42)	(0.61)
Retired	-0.141	0.0526
	(-1.00)	(0.37)
School	-0.232	0.349
	(-1.18)	(1.94)
Keeping House	-0.0135	-0.389**
	(-0.06)	(-3.04)
Other	0.0211	-0.255
	(0.11)	(-1.32)
Likelihood of Job Loss *(Not Likely to Lose Job)*		
Likely to lose job	-0.0950	-0.350***
	(-1.06)	(-3.87)
Not applicable	0.0222	-0.364**
	(0.20)	(-3.20)
Political Views *(Liberal)*		
Moderate	-0.213***	-0.242***
	(-3.58)	(-4.41)
Conservative	-0.739***	-0.781***
	(-12.17)	(-13.41)
Not Applicable	-0.399**	-0.581***
	(-2.91)	(-4.82)
Strength of Religious Affiliation *(Strong)*		
Somewhat Strong	0.169	0.166*
	(1.88)	(2.09)
Not Very Strong	0.285***	0.361***
	(5.12)	(7.06)
No Religion	0.495***	0.418***
	(7.22)	(5.70)
No Answer	0.232	0.233
	(1.80)	(1.87)
Not Asked	-0.0360	-0.817
	(-0.04)	(-0.63)
Constant	-52.24***	-50.08***
	(-4.49)	(-4.53)
N	6023	7400

t statistics in parentheses

* p<0.05, ** p<0.01, *** p<0.001

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