CHAPTER 10

Social and Cultural Influencers

Gender Effects on Emotional Labor at Work and at Home

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Three decades have passed since sociologist Arlie Russell Hochschild changed the way emotions are studied. Instead of focusing on the physiological components of emotion, she shifted our attention to the social rules—feeling rules that tell individuals what to feel and how to express those feelings. To capture the process as it occurs in private life, Hochschild coined the term emotion work; to capture the process in public life—especially when done in exchange for a wage—she coined the term emotional labor.

Since Hochschild's original arguments, several scholars have examined the emotion work individuals do in their personal relationships (e.g., Staske, 1996; Schrock, et al., 2009). Some of these studies focused on emotion work that occurs at home and involves intimates (e.g., DeVault, 1991; Lois, 2009), while others centered on emotion work that occurs in public settings and involves strangers (e.g., Schrock, et al., 2009). Others, however, focused their attention almost entirely on workers' emotional labor sold for a wage (e.g., Sutton, 1991), while others chose to blur the
distinction between emotion work and emotional labor by documenting emotion work in the workplace or other formal organizations (e.g., Harlow, 2003; Lois, 2003; Wingfield, 2010). Others, still, documented individuals’ emotion management in backstage areas for the purposes of performing emotional labor in front stage areas (Lively, 2000; Smith, 2008).

Throughout most of these studies, one trend is increasingly clear: emotion rules differ for women and men. Men and women are held to a different standard of emotion work/labor across contexts. To date, most explanations of this difference draw on either the cultural or the structural perspective on emotion. The cultural perspective suggests that emotion norms are a result of deeply held cultural understandings about women and men – with women being viewed as more emotional, caring, and nurturing than men, and men being more affectively neutral and stoic than women. The structural perspective suggests that individuals of lower status are held to a higher degree of emotion work (or labor) than their higher status counterparts. Given that women are routinely subordinate to men in the areas of home and at work, the structural effects and the cultural meanings associated with sex are often conflated, making it difficult to distinguish between them (but see Lively & Powell, 2006).

In this chapter I discuss how the emotional culture in the U.S. – a culture which in part helps to reify the current social structural relationship between women and men – has shaped women’s and men’s emotion management at home, as well as their emotion management and emotional labor at work. I do so by bridging theoretical insights from status expectations states theory (Ridgeway, 2001) and affect control theory (Heise, 2007) and empirical research within the sociology of emotion. I conclude by discussing how this same emotional culture has shaped the type of research emotion scholars have produced regarding this topic, despite recent changes in the cultural expectations of young women and men (Gerson, 2010; Jayson, 2011), as well as women’s changing structural position vis-à-vis men’s position (Rosin, 2011).

U.S. EMOTIONAL CULTURE

The U.S. has a highly gendered emotion culture (see Simon & Nath, 2004 for a more detailed discussion). According to this emotion culture, men and women expect to – and are expected to – engage in and benefit from emotion work and emotional labor to varying degrees. These differential expectations are based on different beliefs about men’s and women’s emotions and these shared cultural beliefs shape the types of emotion work/emotional labor that men and women are likely to perform. In particular, women are believed to be more caring and nurturing than are men, whereas men are believed to be more stoic and task oriented (Hochschild, 1983; Pierce, 1995; also see Heilman & Okimoto, 2007). These differential expectations of emotions that are “appropriate for” or “easily accessible for” men and women shape the types of emotional regulation that men and women are subject to. Additionally, women tend to get less credit for their caretaking and nurturing, which is a necessary but often undervalued part of social life, because it is “part of their nature” (Heilman & Okimoto, 2007). When men display similar emotions, however, they tend to be more highly valued and are more likely to be rewarded both socially and monetarily. Similarly, men’s displays of stoicism and bravery are often overlooked (Lois, 2003), whereas the same emotions in women tend to be stigmatized or looked down upon (also see Millie, Simon & Powell, 1997).

According to U.S. cultural norms, there are also gendered norms of emotional expression. Thoits (1991), for example, found that college student women, when faced with a stressful situation, are more likely to express their feelings and cope with their emotions by seeking social support than their male counterparts (also see Simon & Nath, 2004). Indeed, in a number of experimental studies, scholars have noted that females are more expressive than males in response to a variety of experimental stimuli (e.g., Kring & Gordon, 1998). Further, both males and females tend to judge and subsequently label females as more emotional and emotionally expressive than males (e.g., Robinson & Johnson, 1997). And in terms of emotion management strategies, Lively (2008) found that men and women may use “gender appropriate” emotional seques, or emotional transitions, when managing or regulating their emotions (also see Lively & Heise, 2004).

According to Simon and Nath’s (2004) extensive review of gender and emotions research, developmental scholars suggest that males are socialized to conceal their feelings at an early age, whereas women are socialized to express their emotions more freely (e.g., Brody, 1985). Notably, these arguments mirror those made by Hochschild (1979), when she suggested that U.S. women – particularly middle class white women – are socialized to be more in tune with their own and others’ emotions and to trade emotions and emotion work in exchange for financial security and support. Although the bulk of research on gender and emotion is based upon U.S. and European samples, emotions scholars expect gender differences in emotional norms to be less pronounced in egalitarian countries and more pronounced in countries with more pronounced gender inequality (Brody, 1985; also see Smith, Umino & Matsuno, 1998).

As evidenced by the scholarship cited above, there are several gender differences within U.S. emotional culture that affect men and women in
are perceived to have advantages in influencing members of other groups, due to possessing greater resources. Applied to differences in emotion, men are able to demand the positive emotions of women and to get by with performing less emotion work or emotional labor, because of their structural position relative to women. Ridgeway & Bourg (2004) note that if such perceived differences are observed across multiple interactions, in multiple contexts, they may become ingrained as a status belief. When that happens, as with the notion that women are more emotional than men, individuals tend to continue to rely on them in future interactions.

According to expectation states theory, status beliefs can eventually give rise to a hierarchy in which dominant members come to have power, authority, and influence over subordinate groups. In the case of emotion work and emotional labor, this means that the higher group can demand more emotion work/emotional labor from the subordinate group and, at the same time, withhold emotion work/emotional labor from subordinates. As Ridgeway (2001) and others are careful to stress, the construction and reification of status beliefs typically appear consensual, if not cooperative. In other words, both the perceived higher and lower status groups take part in their formation, as well as their propagation (also see Lively, 2000).

Gender status beliefs attribute greater competence and social status to men than to women, just as they attribute greater emotional range and better skill at care-taking and nurturing to women than men (Ridgeway, 2001). Moreover, expectation states theory posits that status beliefs about gender (that is, gender stereotypes are prescriptive in nature, meaning they represent what is, and what should be. Because both men and women have internalized and cooperatively enact these beliefs, women too often act in ways that 1) undermine their own power and status vis-a-vis men, and 2) leave them increasingly vulnerable to emotional burnout and psychological stress (Hochschild, 1983, 1989; Wharton, 1993).

It is important to note that expectation states theory views individuals not only as men/women but also as an aggregate whole of all identities that bestow them status in the eyes of others. The theory holds that while people are sex-categorized in almost every situation, they are also categorized according to other markers as well (e.g., race, education, or sexual orientation) (Ridgeway & Bourg, 2004). A key tenet of the theory is that it includes traditional demographic differences as important contributors to status beliefs and also important aspects of an individual’s identity such as education, title, and occupational or family role. Depending on which status characteristics are salient at a given time, gender and such other identities will combine to influence the ultimate performance expectations held by the individual and observers. In summary, an individual’s behavioral and status differences are determined not only by his/her
gender, but they are also a function of the aggregate expectation of all identities relevant to a given task (Ridgeway, 2001).

One of the long-standing questions surrounding expectation states theory research is the relatively marked attention to where status beliefs actually originate. Offering one possible explanation, Ridgeway (2006) posited that the culturally shared expectations that individuals hold about self and others may stem from culturally shared fundamental dimensions of affective meaning attached to personal attributes. Drawing on insights from affect control theory (Heise, 2008), Ridgeway proposed that the status beliefs may depend largely on how good or bad someone is perceived to be, how powerful or impotent they are perceived to be, and how active or inactive they are perceived to be. Generally speaking, before any individual interaction occurs, men are affectively viewed as not quite as nice or active as women, but considerably more powerful. Thus individuals create interactions (or, to use Heise’s terminology, “events”) to confirm these beliefs.

AFFECT CONTROL THEORY

Much like expectation states theory, affect control theory was not developed as a theory of emotion. Instead, the main objective of the theory, which combined insights from psycholinguistics (Osgood, 1962), empirical studies of impression formation (Heise, 1969, 1970) and a cybernetic model of perception (Powers, 1973), was to explain behavior—both the routine and the unexpected—with the context of social interactions. According to Robinson, Smith-Lovin, and Wescup (2006), affect control became part of the new sociology of emotion for three reasons: 1) the theory assumes that cognitive understandings of social interaction around us cannot be separated from our affective reactions to them; 2) the core affect control principle is that people act to maintain the affective meanings that are evoked by a definition of the situation—from the control of affect the key feature underlying social life; and 3) the affect control model was elaborated soon after its development to conceptualize emotions as signals about self-identity meanings within a situation and how well those meanings are aligned with stable, fundamental self-conceptions.

According to affect control theory, individuals create events that confirm their fundamental sentiments. As noted above, one of the ways that status beliefs may come into play is *vis-à-vis* the affective meanings we have around social identities, behaviors, emotions, attributes, etc. (Ridgeway, 2006). Affect control theory posits that all elements of social events (i.e., social actors, behaviors, objects, emotions, attributes, and settings) can be classified in terms of three dimensions of affective meaning (Heise, 2008): Evaluation or “how good or bad someone or something is,” Potency or “how strong or weak someone or something is,” and Activation or “how active or inactive someone or something is.” Evaluation—Potency—Activation (EPA) dictionaries have been collected from numerous sources ranging from college students at a large Midwestern university to Janband music fans (Hunt, 2008). These dictionaries represent a given culture or subculture’s affective sentiments regarding how good or bad (E), powerful or weak (P), or active or inactive (A) any given identity, behavior, setting, attribute, or emotion is perceived within the surveyed culture or sub-culture. Individual EPA values, which make up aggregated EPA profiles, are measured on a scale from −4 to +4, ranging from extremely bad, impotent, and quiescent to extremely good, powerful, and active. The mean is then calculated and reported. Based on the cross-cultural work of Osgood and associates, affect control theory has assumed that these fundamental sentiments are shared within and across cultures. Recent studies, however, have shown there are some situationally specific differences at the cultural level (Smith, 2002; also see Smith, Matsuno & Umino, 1994) and also differences at the sub-cultural level (Smith-Lovin & Douglass, 1992).

The underlying assumptions of affect control theory have been implemented as a computer simulation program, Interact. Interact uses impression formation equations, based on a cybernetic model of human behavior that assumes individuals are motivated to minimize distance between their transient and fundamental identities, which allow researchers to mathematically predict not only individuals’ emotions, but also their most likely next step to bring their situated identity (or their transient sentiments) back in line with their fundamental identity (or their fundamental sentiments; MacKinnon & Heise, 2010). When transient sentiments fail to confirm fundamental sentiments regarding some aspect of a social interaction, individuals are expected to take restorative action, either behaviorally or cognitively.

In summary, individuals create events that confirm their fundamental sentiments (measured in terms of Evaluation—Potency—Activation [EPA] values) about themselves, about others, about behaviors, and about settings. Simply put, individuals tend to engage in behaviors that confirm their fundamental sentiments regarding their identities, to experience and express emotions that are consistent with those identities, and to do so in complementary settings and with other actors who have consistent and/or complementary role identities.

Likely actions create post-event impressions that match fundamental sentiments. An action that deflects impressions away from these sentiments seems unlikely (Heise, 2008). Any action deflects impressions
away from sentiments to some degree, but the deflection is small in the case of likely actions and large in the case of unlikely actions (Heise, 2008). For example, consider the following event: "Mother Kisses Child." According to affect control theory, you have a nice (Evaluation), powerful (Potency), and active (Activation) actor doing a nice, powerful, and active behavior to a much nicer, much less powerful, and more active object. This action creates impressions of mother and baby that are probably very close to culturally shared sentiments about mothers and babies, thus this action seems likely, even to the point of being something you expect of mothers. Theoretically speaking, this event creates no deflection (or sense of unlikelihood) either mathematically or affectively. However, now consider the following: "Mother Kicks Child." Here, you have a nice, powerful, and active actor doing a very bad, powerful, and active behavior to a much nicer, much less powerful, and more active object. This event, unlike the event "Mother Kisses Child," causes significant deflection (or sense of unlikelihood) both mathematically and affectively because it creates impressions that are probably very far from culturally shared sentiments about mothers and babies.10

According to the theory, the next action of the mother who kicked her child (to reframe her "Mother identity") will have to be very, very nice (referring to Evaluation), less powerful (referring to Potency), and similarly active (referring to Activation), or else she will have to reframe her identity, her behavior, or the identity of her child. So, for example, if she were to reframe her actions as "Playing With," or if she were to reframe her child's identity as that of a "Demon" or a "Delinquent," or she were to reframe herself as an "Alcoholic," the event would create less deflection. Attributes can also be added as a tool for reframing. If individuals were to see a "Mother Kick a Child," they might label her as an "Abusive Mother" or a "Psychotic Mother" or label the child as "Evil" in order to minimize feelings of deflection caused by the event. A "Mother who Kicks a Child" may also label herself as an "Overwrought Mother" to the same purpose.

Affect control theory's model of identity confirmation is consistent with literature on harassment and undermining. Maas, Cadny, Guarneri and Graselli (2003), for example, found that highly identified males (i.e., men who see themselves as very masculine or 'male-like'), following conditions of threat were more likely to sexually harass female interaction partners than those men who 1) were not highly identified males or 2) had not perceived a threat. According to affect control theory, highly identified males, following a threat condition, would feel compelled to engage in a somewhat negative, powerful, and somewhat active act (i.e., sending pornographic photographs to a female coworker) in order to confirm their identity as highly identified males. Notably, the act of sexual assault, while also negative, powerful, and active, would be too negative, too powerful, and too active an event to confirm the identity of highly identified male and would risk causing him to either self-identify or to be identified as a "Lout," a "Bully" or even as a "Rapist."

Similarly, Magley, Hulan, Fitzgerald and DeNardo's (1999) work on sexual harassment suggests that many women fail to report having been a victim of such treatment because to do so changes their identity of "Woman" or "Coworker" to that of "Victim." Interestingly, affect control theory's sentiment formation equations (Heise, 2008) capture society's tendency to blame the victim. When a woman is abused (or raped), one of the ways in which people make sense of that (or attempt to minimize deflection or the accompanying feeling of unlikelihood) is to ask: What kind of woman is likely to be abused or raped? Additionally, women who labeled the behavior as harassment were more likely to feel badly about it. Again, one of the questions that Interact's impression formation equations allow scholars to model is what are the emotions that a woman who has been abused is likely to feel? Simply put, women who are harassed are expected to (and do) experience more distressing emotions than those who perceive that they have been merely flirted with or flattered (Magley, et al., 1999).

Notably, many of the social roles that actors occupy are gendered, and these gendered meanings are evident in differential Evaluation–Potency–Activation scores. For instance, based on the data collected from male college students in 2002–2004, the EPA values for "Mother" and "Father" (see Table 10.1) suggest that as a culture, we expect mothers to be similarly nice, fairly less powerful, and fairly more active than fathers. In terms of their behavior, especially their behaviors towards children, fathers are expected to cuddle, massage, caress, hug, forgive, smile at, sympathize with, embrace, listen to, counsel, and protect a child, whereas mothers are expected to cuddle, massage, embrace, hug, forgive, listen to, sympathize with, smile at, caress, make up with, wink at, console, soothe, counsel, hold, compromise with, dine with, reward, protect, reassure, and mother.11 Note that not only does the order of the expected behaviors differ for fathers and mothers, but mothers have a much longer list of expected behaviors, including behaviors such as make up with, and compromise with, which reflect their lower power compared to that of fathers.

Just as social roles are gendered in the family, they are also gendered in the workplace. For example: the EPA values for "Waitress" and "Waiter" suggest that we, as a society, expect waitresses to be more pleasant and more active than waiters, meaning not only do we expect them to work faster, if not harder, but also to be friendlier while they do it. Waitresses who fail to live up to these expectations may create deflection and cause them to be labeled negatively, thus causing them to lose tips when
engaging in behaviors and displays that would be considered normal for a waiter. Notably, Hall (1993) suggests that the work of “waitressing” versus “waiting” is also gendered; in other words, the label linked to the type of service as well as to the person providing it. According to her analyses of 55 restaurants, “waitressing” was typical in restaurants that she described as low prestige (where servers, regardless of their sex, were expected to seat customers, serve coffee, make drinks, etc.), whereas “waiting” was typical in high prestige restaurants (where servers, regardless of their sex, were expected to instruct customers on wines and entrees and to literally wait with their hands behind their backs until the customer needed assistance). In this study, waitresses (be they male or female) are expected to be nicer and more active than waiters, which is consistent with the EPA values cited above.12

THE EMPIRICAL EVIDENCE

When applied directly to emotion work/labor, actors who are nicer, less powerful, and slightly more active are more likely to experience more pleasant, less powerful, and more active emotions and engage in nicer, less powerful, and more active emotional displays as a means to confirm their views of themselves as well as the views of others. At home, this means that mothers (and wives) are normatively more affectively engaged, less powerful, and more active than the men in their lives (Hochschild, 1989; DeVault, 1991). Conversely, fathers can “get away with” being emotionally stoic disciplinarians who simply do less (or are less active) when compared to the emotional labor involved in childrearing and other forms of emotional and domestic work (Coltrane, 1998; Hochschild, 1983; Lively, et al., 2010).

In the workplace, as suggested earlier, the story is somewhat more complicated. When women are employed in historically female-dominated occupations, such as nursing, teaching, caretaking, etc., it is relatively easy for them to satisfy the cultural expectations of being 1) female and 2) a member of a “caring occupation.” Similarly, when men are in historically male-dominated professions or occupations, their twin obligations (of being male and being professional, simultaneously) are also easily met. When employed in historically male jobs or professions, however, women are automatically viewed as less pleasant, significantly less powerful, and less active, because the culturally shared fundamental sentiments regarding professional jobs are more consistent with the fundamental sentiments associated with men or being male. Indeed, Koenig et al.’s (2011) meta-analysis suggests that not only do men fit cultural constructions of leadership better than women do, they also have better access to leader roles and face fewer challenges in their enactment of those roles. When women act in ways that are consistent with professional/leadership roles, they (and those around them) experience deflection and may end up overcompensating with other gender-appropriate behaviors (Pierce, 1995), limiting themselves to androgynous – and, thus, relatively impotent – behaviors (Eagly and Karau, 2002), or adopting negative labels from themselves and others (Heise, 2007; also see Thoits, 1985).13

Gendered emotion work at home.

Although there has been less empirical attention to the emotion work performed by individuals in private life than there has been to the emotional labor performed in public life (Hochschild, 1983), scholarship on both types of emotion management support the theoretical predictions made above. Most of the studies that document emotion work in families focus on individuals’ attempts to manage their emotions and the emotional investments that are made in others, especially children.14 DeVault (1991), for example, documents care work as a type of emotion work. Care work is typically carried out by women and includes such activities as gift giving, food preparation, tradition maintenance, relationship work, and remembering family birthdays, anniversaries, etc.15

Closely related, some scholars have studied the emotional costs that come when facing perceived inequities in the household division of labor. In her ethnography of dual earner families, Hochschild (1989) documented the emotion work spouses do when their gender ideology does not correspond to their domestic situation. For example, a feminist woman may find herself doing more than her fair share or a traditional male may find himself being asked to do more around the house than his father did. In order to manage their negative emotions, one or both parties must reframe their situations as “fair,” creating what Hochschild (1989) termed “family myths.”

Given wives’ structurally subordinate positions within the marriage, greater financial need, and fear of divorce, they were more likely to construct myths that reaffirmed the status quo, while simultaneously managing their feelings of anger, disappointment, frustration, sadness, etc. Husbands, who also suffer emotionally from perceived inequity in the home even when they themselves are benefiting also participate in family myths. However, given their dominant structural position, plus men’s greater belief that they can easily remarry, their participation in these myths tend to rest on behaviors (such as working longer hours or merely removing themselves from the situation) as opposed to the emotional gymnastics performed by their wives (Hochschild, 1983).

Other studies of emotion work in the home highlight the emotional nature of paid domestic labor. Hondagneu-Sotelo’s (2001) study of
Latina domestic workers, for example, reveals that female domestic workers are often expected to engage in true "labors of love," many of which undermine their ability to ask for raises, bonuses, or other rights due to more traditional employees. At the same time, the women who employ them are expected to manage the relationship between the worker and the family, which can, and often does, require emotional labor. Not surprisingly, one of the most notable features of these types of studies is the marked absence of men. Again, the cultural expectations that we have about what constitutes women's work, that are upheld in large part by our affective assessment of how good or bad someone is, how powerful and impotent they are, and how active and quiet they are drives our expectations for behavior, which includes who does what – and who feels what – around the house and for the family.

**Gendered emotional labor at work.**

The gendered pattern of emotion work/labor that occurs at home is reproduced in the workplace as well. Nowhere is this more apparent than in qualitative studies that compare women and men in similar, or even the same, organizations (Martin, 1999; Lois, 2003; Pierce, 1995). As these studies reveal, women expect (and are expected) to be more emotionally engaged, whereas their male counterparts expect (and are expected) to be less affectively involved. In particular, female police officers (Martin, 1999) and rescue workers (Lois, 2003) tend to assume the more emotionally draining responsibility of dealing with distraught, frightened, or angry victims and families, whereas their male counterparts are more likely to do the "real" work of policing, detecting, and rescuing. Similarly, in Pierce's study of male and female paralegals, women are expected to take on the emotionally-laden roles of the mothering paralegal, the cheerleader, and what Pierce refers to as the "perfect wife," roles that require not only managing their own emotions, but also calming down, building up, and caring for their disproportionately male attorneys. The male paralegals, however, were often exempt from this type of emotional labor, although they were expected to play the less emotionally involved roles of political "yes men," which required stoicism and "strategic friendliness."

In my own research on paralegals (Lively, 2000, 2001, and 2002), both male and female paralegals routinely used "the marriage metaphor" to describe their relationship with their attorneys; notably, however, the way in which this metaphor played out differed was highly gendered. As a 42-year-old female paralegal explained of her relationship with her male attorney: "It's just like we're married. I make his coffee, I pick up his dry cleaning, and when his dog needs to go to the vet, I do that too." Contrast that description to one provided by a 48-year-old male paralegal, speaking of his female attorney: "It's just like we're married. When she's wrong, I tell her she's wrong." These comments, as well as many others, illustrate how male and female paralegals and their female and male attorneys recreate cultural stereotypes about marriage and the relative status of women and men in the workplace. These stereotypes not only shape individuals' experience of work, but also their emotional experiences and expressions.

Notably, sex differences are not just limited to front line service occupations, but also can be found among professional jobs as well. The EPA values for "Attorney", for example, irrespective of sex are 0.66, 1.60, 0.94, suggesting that culturally attorneys are viewed as being slightly good, fairly powerful, and somewhat active. However, when we add sex-based attributes - male or female - the affective meanings change (see Table 10.1): we expect female attorneys to be slightly nicer than, significantly less powerful than, and less active than their male counterparts. When a female attorney acts in ways that are deemed too powerful they may inadvertently lower their evaluation, causing deflection. This mechanism serves as the basis of the double bind that many female litigators face when attempting to be both female and professional at the same time (Pierce, 1995; also see Eagly & Karau, 2002). The differences between male versus female EPA profiles in historically male-/female-dominated fields have important implications for the behaviors that women and men engage in, as well as their emotional experiences (Lively & Heise, 2004) and expression (Lively & Powell, 2006).

Further, in comparison to the Evaluation-Potency-Activation profiles for women employed in stereotypically female occupations such as waitressing or nursing, where females are viewed as fundamentally more pleasant, more powerful, and more active than their male counterparts, women in historically male-dominated professional roles tend to be viewed as being slightly less pleasant, significantly less powerful, and fairly less active when compared to similarly employed men. Just by virtue of being female and our cultural understandings of what it means to be a professional, women in professional occupations are viewed as less pleasant, less powerful, and less active than their male counterparts. Thus, in order for women to be seen as pleasant, as powerful, or as active as men, they must engage in some sort of self-regulation, some of which may be behavior, but some of which is undoubtedly emotional. In fact, there have been numerous qualitative studies demonstrating that women in professional jobs must engage in an additional layer of self-regulation (or "emotional management") beyond the labor for the job itself (Bellas, 1999; Pierce, 1995).

In a series of experimental studies, Heilman and Okimoto (2007) attempted to understand why it is that women are often disliked and interpersonally derogated, in addition to being overlooked, discriminated
against, and under rewarded, when succeeding in historically male jobs (Heilman, 1995, 2001). Essentially, they tested the hypothesis that “women’s success in a male domain arises from the perceived violation of communality prescriptions” (p. 82) and that evidence of communality – that is, exhibiting nurturing and socially sensitive attributes that demonstrate concern for others, such as being kind, sympathetic and understanding – will prevent the social disapproval and social penalties otherwise directed at a woman when she is successful in a male job. They found that stereotypically female behavior – that is, behavior that corresponds with both our status expectations and our fundamental sentiments regarding women – only ameliorated the social sanctions if the information was “clearly indicative” of communal attributes, could be “unambiguously” attributed to the female manager, and could be conveyed by role information (i.e., motherhood status) or behavior. Although Heilman and Okimoto’s focus is not on emotion work/emotional labor per se, their definition of communality is suggestive of the stereotypical emotion work/emotional labor required not only of mothers, but also middle class service workers.

Interestingly, men in historically female-dominated occupations (such as teaching or nursing) do not face the same challenges as women. In other words, men in these occupations are often granted special dispensation on the basis of their gender. Whereas earlier scholars documented men’s rise to the top of these professions, using such terminology as “the glass elevator” (Williams, 1992), later scholars have suggested that men tend to create their own niches within female occupations, niches that include behaviors that occur in historically male-dominated settings, or grant them access to powerful interaction partners – all of which, according to an affect control theory perspective, allows them to confirm their fundamental sentiments about themselves as men. For example, male nurses tend to specialize in areas of medicine that require more brute strength or are sufficiently technical such that they have more contact with physicians than family members, thus freeing them of the more emotionally challenging aspects of the job (also see Lois, 2003).

PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

Men and women do different types of emotional management in both work and family contexts. Generally speaking, women take on more emotionally expressive duties involving children, intimate partners, extended family members, colleagues, and customers, etc., than their male counterparts. Men on the other hand, are more likely to stay affectively neutral, rational, professional, and businesslike, etc., in their interactions with others, even those with whom they are on intimate terms. Although this idea is not new, to date there have been few systematic attempts to explain either how or why this happens. Why is it that others expect women to do more and also qualitatively different emotion work/labor than men? Why is it that the emotion work/emotional labor that women do is more likely to be viewed as more time-consuming, more strenuous, more degrading, less valuable, and more likely to result in feelings of inauthenticity or burnout (Erickson and Ritter, 2001)? Why is it that both men and women believe this is the way things are, and the way they should be (Ridgeway, 2005)?

Drawing on insights from core sociological theories within social psychology, this chapter provides one possible pathway through which cultural understandings about the social roles that women and men occupy and, indeed, about women and men more generally, influence everyday life. As a culture, we share fundamental sentiments about social roles, behaviors, settings, attributes, and emotions (Heise, 2008). These are the basic elements of all social interactions and, for the most part, we expect them to be consistent – i.e., we expect very good, slightly powerful, and fairly active social actors (e.g., women) to engage in very good, slightly powerful, and somewhat active behaviors (e.g., nurture, tease, care, etc.). Moreover, we expect them to do these things in very good, slightly powerful, and somewhat active settings (e.g., a home or a boutique), and while exhibiting very good, slightly powerful, and somewhat active attributes (e.g., friendly) or emotions (e.g., happy). These sentiments, which are culturally shared but may differ within certain subgroups of the population and most certainly differ across cultures, come to form the basis of our expectations states, vis-à-vis our status beliefs (Ridgeway, 2001). These status beliefs, many of which are built up through social interaction over time, get attached to gender, to social roles (many of which are gendered), to settings, as well as to attributes, which themselves get attached to social roles, interactively changing the meaning of that role.

Although status expectations theory was originally developed to explain status processes in small groups, many of which are task-oriented, one could argue that much of the behavior that occurs in work settings and in homes is also, loosely defined, task-related. Moreover, despite the dissimilarities that may or may not exist between small groups and the longer-term relationships that comprise work and family life, some of the same mechanisms that govern interaction in small groups seem to operate at the level of family and workplace (Heilman & Okimoto, 2007; Lively & Powell, 2006; Lively, et al., 2010).

Indeed, some scholars have suggested that family settings are ideal, though surprisingly underutilized, settings for groups research, especially
when dealing with questions related to emotion (Steelman & Powell, 1996; see also Lively, Powell, Geist, & Steelman, 2008; Lively, et al., 2010). Others, however, have lauded the workplace as the ideal setting in which to test insights garnered from more traditional forms of groups research, calling for a more serious and systematic consideration of social psychological theory by those studying emotion in the workplace (Clay-Warner, 2006; Lively, 2008; but see Correll, Bernard & Paik, 2007).

Despite the utility of expectations states theory and the ease with which scholars can document the effects of status beliefs in small groups and, albeit less formally, and to a lesser degree, in workplace and family settings, the question remains: where do the status beliefs come from? How do they relate to emotion work/labor? And, perhaps even more importantly, to what degree are they subject to change? In this chapter, I have drawn on insights from affect control theory, arguing that the status beliefs that we, as a society, hold and rely in terms of our daily interactions come from our affective understandings of how good or bad someone is, how powerful or impotent someone is, and how active and inactive someone is. As the theory predicts, and numerous empirical studies support, social actors who see themselves in terms of a good, powerful, and active identity are expected to engage in good, powerful, and active ways and to experience and express good, powerful, and active emotions. Because affective sentiments are largely shared within a given culture, individuals who see themselves in terms of a good, powerful, active identity are affectively motivated to meet these behavioral and emotional expectations.

Affective sentiments impact men and women differently in a number of ways. First, the Evaluation–Potency–Activation profiles for the identities “Woman” or “Female” (discussed above) are significantly more pleasant, significantly less powerful, and slightly less active than the corresponding identities of “Man” or “Male.” Second, some social roles are gendered, meaning that the role itself is gendered (such as “Mother” or “Waitress”) regardless of the person who actually performs the work associated with that role; in this sense, men can “mother” just as easily as a woman, although it is not as common an occurrence (also see Heilman & Okimoto, 2007). Third, domains or settings that have been deemed historically as female or feminine tend to be more pleasant, less powerful, and more active (i.e., a “Home” versus a “Boutique” versus a “Hardware Store”). When in those settings, actors are expected to act in ways that confirm the fundamental definition of the situation. So, not only are nice, passive, and active actors expected to be in those settings, all actors are expected to behave in nicer, less powerful, and more active ways, including experiencing and expressing corresponding emotions. Finally, when gender is used as an attribute, it changes the affective meaning that society has of social roles. A female attorney, for example, is viewed more negatively than a male attorney because the Evaluation–Potency–Activation profiles of “Female” and “Attorney” are less consistent than the Evaluation–Potency–Activation profiles of “Male” and “Attorney.” All of these considerations are important not only for the emotional experiences of men and women, but also for the emotional expectations that are placed on them by themselves and others.

One of the reasons a female attorney may be required to engage in an additional layer of emotional labor is because she may be viewing herself (and thus acting in ways appropriate to that vision) as an attorney, whereas her interaction partners, be it paralegals, secretaries, other attorneys, judges, clients, or witnesses, may be viewing her (and acting towards her) as if she were a female attorney, a woman, a female, or, in some cases, even a girl. Indeed, one of the biggest sources of frustration between Latina domestics and their, mostly white U.S. born, employers is the former’s unwillingness to see themselves as domestic workers. This nearly unilateral reluctance stems in part from the stigma associated with “dirty” work and the fact that most of the immigrant domestic workers had previously held social roles with higher status, and thus different EPA values, such as college student, attorney, physician’s assistant, etc., in their countries of origin. Further, many employers, the majority of whom were female, were reluctant to see themselves as employers or to acknowledge their domestic workers as anything other than “help.” Whenever individuals enter into interactions with different definitions of themselves or others, social disruptions, misunderstandings, and hurt feelings are likely to ensue. When this happens, the lower status person, often, but not always female, is required to engage in emotional labor not only to manage her own anger, but also to put her interaction partner at ease (again, Harlow’s (2003) and Wingfield’s (2010) analyses of emotional regulation among black professionals).

Because cultures and, subsequently, affective sentiments and status beliefs are slow to change, much of the literature on emotion work/emotional labor has continued to focus on events in which we know gender differences are most likely to occur—that is, husbands and wives in the home (especially following the birth of a child), the service industry, or women working in male-dominated fields or males working in female-dominated fields. Less attention has been paid to events that may be less influenced by tradition or power and, therefore, gender. When scholars focus on the extremes or differences, they tend to find them (Thorne, 1993). Indeed, in Thorne’s seminal ethnography on school children, she admitted her natural gravitation towards the extremes (e.g., the popular kids) led her to report many gender differences. However, when she forced her attention to the less popular children, the differences
TABLE 10.1 Changes in Evaluation-Potency-Activation (EPA) Profiles for Gendered Roles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Man</td>
<td>1.08, 1.07, 0.56</td>
<td>0.82, 1.55, 0.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woman</td>
<td>2.34, 0.44, 1.12</td>
<td>1.27, -0.24, 0.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father</td>
<td>1.77, 2.14, -0.68</td>
<td>2.45, 2.54, 0.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother</td>
<td>2.52, 1.50, -0.13</td>
<td>2.48, 1.96, 1.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waiter</td>
<td>0.77, -0.33, 0.22</td>
<td>1.08, -0.45, 0.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waitress</td>
<td>1.06, -0.39, 0.81</td>
<td>1.46, 0.25, 1.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male Attorney</td>
<td>0.66, 1.56, 0.37</td>
<td>0.60, 1.86, 1.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female Attorney</td>
<td>1.47, 0.76, 1.04</td>
<td>0.75, 0.25, 0.47</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Scores ranged from -4 to +4 and were obtained via the online program Interact, to represent Evaluation (E) = good or bad; Potency (P) = powerful or weak; or Active (A) = active or inactive.

were less clear. Moreover, when focusing solely on classroom/school yard interactions, where many teachers used sex as an organizing principle, gender differences were prevalent and easily seen. However, when watching children play in neighborhoods and parks, away from adults, the gender differences were less apparent.

Despite the enduring status beliefs (i.e., stereotypes) we have regarding women and men and roles that have been historically gendered (e.g., mother v. father or waitress v. waiter) affective sentiments are changing, as evidenced in Table 10.1. For instance, the EPA profiles for the pairs “Man” and “Woman,” “Mother” and “Father,” “Waiter and Waitress,” each became more similar between the years 1978 and 2002-4 in terms of evaluation (i.e., pleasantness), yet more disparate in terms of potency (power).

Moreover, the identities of “Man” and “Woman” flip on the activation dimension, suggesting that women, over the last 25 years, are now seen as less active compared to men, even though stereotypically female roles, such as “Waitress” and “Wife” are still viewed as somewhat more active than their male counterparts. Because power and activation are such important components in emotional experience, expression, and management (Kemper, 1978; Lively & Powell, 2006), as is evaluation, these changes may have interesting, and important, implications for women’s and men’s emotion work/labor at both home and work.

CONCLUSION

In this chapter, I have suggested that a cultured affective meaning regarding social roles, behaviors, emotions, and attributes (including attributes regarding gender), comes to form the foundation of our status beliefs, which, in turn, becomes status expectations. Research on status expectations has shown time and again, both in context-free and context-dependent situations, that the expectations we—and others—carry into an interaction affect not only our status, but also our behaviors and our emotions. They also affect our emotional behavior, including the expectation, the likelihood, and the quality of our emotional work/labor.

In undoubtedly the most lucid discussion of affect control theory ever written, David Heise (2008) argues that cultural sentiments—which, as I argue, form the basis of our status beliefs, which in turn become expectations states that shape emotional labor—come not only from our personal experience with particular types of social actors or from being in certain types of environments, but from our broader cultural experience with them. So, for example, even though we may have no personal experiences with vampires, our cultural sentiments regarding them in the 1970s were, nonetheless, extremely negative, very powerful, and somewhat inactive. In the late 1980s, one could argue after the publication of Anne Rice’s widely popular vampire novels, the cultural sentiment around vampires changed: although still negative, vampires were viewed as considerably less powerful, yet more active. Given the recent popularization and, indeed, sexualization, of vampires, via Stephanie Meyer’s Twilight series (2005) and the HBO series, “True Blood,” I would imagine a further shift in sentiments regarding vampires over the next decade or so.

So what do vampires have to do with gender and the ways in which it affects men and women’s emotional work/labor in the home and at work? Simply put, our cultural sentiments are shaped by interactions, personal experience, cultural representations, popular culture, economic realities, and structural conditions. As noted in Table 10.1, “Men” and “Women” were more similar in terms of perceived potency (also conceptualized as powerful) in 1978 than they were in 2002-4. Although this may seem counterintuitive, keep in mind that during the 1970s, “women’s lib” was on everyone’s lips (Evans, 1997, p. 287). In the 1980s, however, although women remained in favor of women’s rights, they became less favorable in terms of the labels “women’s lib” and “feminism” (McCabe, 2005).

At the same time, recent statistics reveal that for the first time in history, more women than men are in college, in graduate schools, in professional schools, and in management. These trends suggest that in the very near future, women may have the potential to outstrip their male romantic partners and also to out-earn them (Rosin, 2011). Moreover,
emotional labor skills—skills in which women have traditionally been socialized to excel since childhood—are no longer stigmatized, but are being touted by best-selling business authors as necessary for both corporate and managerial success (Godin, 2010; Goleman, 1997). And, given the changing nature of the U.S. and other post-industrial societies, socioeconomically disadvantaged men face the steepest job losses, whereas lower class women continue to seek and find employment in service jobs that require emotional attentiveness, emotional labor, etc. Indeed, according to Rosin (2011), by 2020, women will out-earn their male partners in approximately 75% of couples.

Sea changes are occurring as well (Jayson, 2011). According to a survey of 5,000 single U.S. adults, men are expressing attitudes that have been historically associated with women (i.e., greater interest in love, marriage, and having kids) whereas women are expressing attitudes that have been historically associated with men (i.e., a desire for more independence and the idea that “hooking up” and romantic one-night stands are not necessarily just meaningless encounters). These findings are consistent with Gerson’s (2010) recent analyses of young men and women, who appear to want more flexible marriages for themselves and for their partners and who seemingly subscribe to less traditional notions of gender.

If our affective sentiments and our status beliefs and expectations regarding gender are changing, then we can expect that the types of emotion work/labor performed at work and home, by men and women, are also subject to change. If the demographic predictions hold true, then these changes may happen more quickly in the next thirty years than they did in the last thirty years. In order for scholars to keep up with these coming changes, we will have to develop new, increasingly agile methodologies. We will need to collect more data in more diverse situations, and do so more frequently over longer periods of time.

ENDNOTES

1 Notably, Hochschild (1983) introduced a third term, emotion management, which she used interchangeably with emotion work but later scholars tended to use as an umbrella term that included both emotional labor and emotion management (Lively, 2000). Graney (2000) introduced the term emotional regulation in an attempt to gain greater conceptual clarity. Although widely adopted among psychologists and other organizational scholars, “emotional regulation” has been relatively underutilized among sociologists (see Graney, Diefendorff & Rupp, 2013 for a more detailed discussion of these theoretical and conceptual nuances).

2 Sociologists treat gender and sex as conceptually distinct. Sex refers to the biological and, indeed, chromosomal differences between males and females. Gender, on the other hand, refers to a set of cultural practices that women and men “do” in order to present themselves as masculine or feminine (West and Zimmerman, 1987) or, in the case of transsexuals, as male or female (Schrock, et al., 2009).

3 Shortest-path analysis—a methodology that seeks out high-level correlations among concepts that is most often used in conjunction with network analysis—reveals that men may have an easier time transitioning through anger or pride when trying to get from distress to tranquility (or vice versa), whereas women may have an easier time transitioning from negative to positive emotions by first invoking joy, fear, or both (Lively, 2008).

4 Small group experiments have frequently shown that in the absence of task-related information, individuals with higher diffuse status characteristics tend to emerge as leaders, and that the contributions from individuals with lower status characteristics tend to be ignored, refuted, or co-opted by higher status others. Further, in mixed-sex task groups, men tend to emerge as the instrumental or task leaders, whereas women are more likely to emerge as the social leaders and to exhibit for socio-emotional support and other "helping" behaviors (Ridgeway & Johnson, 1990).

5 Affect control theory, thus, is a variant of symbolic interaction, positing that social actors respond to a symbolically represented world and strive to maintain the meanings that are associated with the elements of that world (see MacKinnon, 1994 for a detailed discussion of the two theories). However, unlike the overly cognitive symbolic interactionist paradigm, affect control theory posits affect front and center, positing that the dynamics of affective processing underlie both routine role-taking behavior and creative, negotiated responses to non-routine situations.

6 Individuals are asked to rate identities, behaviors, settings, attributes, and emotion out of context. So, for example, although individuals may see their own fathers as very bad, very weak, and inactive, their rating of the cultural identity “father” may be more positive, more powerful, and more active. Affective sentiments that are culturally shared come from broader understandings in addition to personal experience.

7 Sub-cultural differences in EPA values tend to be limited to identities, behaviors, settings and attributes closely associated with the subculture. For example, drug users have different EPA values for marijuana use than individuals who have never used drugs (Heise, 2008).

8 Transient sentiments are the sentiments that arise within situated action. Again, we tend to think of fathers as good, powerful, and relatively active. However, if a father were to throttle an infant, a transient sentiment regarding that particular father would occur that does not correspond easily with our fundamental sentiment regarding fathers and how they should interact with infants.

9 To learn more about Interact, EPA Dictionaries, or the Affect Control Theory research community, go to http://www.indiana.edu/~socpsy/ACT/index.htm.

10 The definition of deflection is literally the “unlikelihood” that an event will occur: it is the mathematical distance between what would confirm the event...
and what actually happened. Because most individuals prefer cognitive consistency, it is often experienced as surprise, stress, or another form of dissonance.

11 These predictions were derived from Interact, the computer simulation tool mentioned above; extracted June 19, 2011. Expected behaviors, which are listed in order of most likely to least likely, are those that cause a deflection of 1 or less, meaning that they are highly likely and also confirm both the actor and the observer's fundamental identities.

12 In support of the claim that the work role itself is gendered, Hall (1993) cites a male manager at the low prestige "Sandwich Shop" referring to his wait staff (both women and men) as waitresses, and female servers at the high prestige "Elegant Noveau" referring to themselves as waiters.

13 Qualitative studies of professionals, or paraprofessionals, suggest that women are more likely to inquire about and exhibit concern regarding the personal lives of support staff, refraining from making requests or demands - for assistance that may be common from males in similar roles, and to manage the anger of higher status others than their male counterparts (Hochschild, 1983; Lively, 2000; Pierce, 1995).

14 In her ethnography of homeschooling, Lois (2010) uses the term emotional labor to describe the efforts of homeschooling mothers, who often find themselves managing their own emotions so to better elicit the desired state from their sometimes unruly "students." Here it is a "work role," but performed at home and with family, showing the fuzzy boundaries illustrated in Chapter 1 (Grandey, et al., 2013).

15 Men do not take in the more pleasant duties associated with childcare. Indeed, ethnographic studies reveal that men's involvement with kids tends to be more centered around weekend activities, events, and father-son/daughter excursions than around the routine day to day care giving, or mothering, provided by women (Hochschild, 1989).

16 Lois' (2009, 2010) analysis of homeschooling provides a similar story; although both parents may prefer homeschooling, the supervision of such a task, if not the implementation, almost always falls to the mother, even if homeschooling was not her first choice.

17 The EPA profile for Attorney is not the average of the EPA profiles for Male Attorney and Female Attorney. Instead, it has its own value. That value changes when it becomes associated with either gender vis-à-vis the impression formation models used by Interact. These EPA values were taken from the EPA Dictionary collected at Indiana University in 2002-4.

18 Sex differences have been found in EPA values, especially for identities, behaviors, emotions, and settings that relate specifically to men and women. For example, females tend to view the identity "woman" as slightly nicer, more powerful, and more active than males do. Gender differences in EPA values also tend to be more pronounced in more traditional societies (Smith, Umuno & Matsuno, 1998).

19 See Harlow (2003) and Wingfield (2010) for similar discussions of the emotional lives of African-American professionals working in predominantly white settings.

20 According to Heilman and Okimoto (2007) it is not necessary for women to actually behave counter-normatively - that is, engage in agentic behavior that demonstrates dominance, competitive, and achievement orientation. Indeed, "the mere knowledge that a woman has been successful in a male domain produces inferences that she has engaged in stereotype-violating behavior resulting in social penalties" (Heilman & Okimoto, 2007, p. 82).

21 Evaluation-Potency-Activation values associated with home are considerably more pleasant, less powerful, and less active than those associated with more workplace settings. Thus, all actors (male or female) are expected to experience and exhibit more pleasant, less powerful, and less active emotions at a home than they would at a workplace setting.

22 The survey, one of the largest of its kind focusing on single men and women, was conducted by biological anthropologist, Helen Fisher, who helped develop the survey with social historian Stephanie Coontz and Justin Garcia, a doctoral fellow with the Institute for Evolutionary Studies at Binghamton (N.Y.) University.

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Gender Effects on Emotional Labor


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