Chapter 9: Work

Key Concepts

capitalism: A capitalist society depends on creating and maintaining a culture where people value materialism and purchasing power

Examples: Cartoon of a 1950s era woman standing in a kitchen admiring her appliances with a man visible outside the window washing a car. See: <http://2.bp.blogspot.com/-HGGHovZTqvI/UF2sjBtufOI/AAAAAAAAAxE/S8_DeaTl_ds/s1600/womengotitall.jpg>

\*Cartoon of a woman standing surrounded by things and saying she wants more. See: <http://i58.photobucket.com/albums/g244/dantemachiavelli/1711.jpg>

\*Jay Leno’s personal car collection. See: <http://www.ripleys.com/weird/files/2012/08/jay_lenos_garage_48.jpg>

critical organizational communication: This approach to the study of communication works to correct one of the “great blind spots, and errors” of organizational theory: the assumption that organizations are gender neutral by researching communication on a range of levels, from an individual’s “engrained personal communication habits” to daily interactions, to the form of an organization, to the social narratives about work

Examples: A cartoon of a woman realizing that she is surrounded by patriarchy including at home, school, and work. It points out that organizations like work, school, and “traditional” marriage are not gender/sex neutral. See: <http://25.media.tumblr.com/tumblr_lst5jg9qFc1r0ov34o1_500.gif>

emotions: The expression of emotion at work is considered inappropriate. Men (and women) are expected not to cry or to show fear, sadness, or joy; it is more appropriate, however, for men to show anger. Ultimately, though, it is impossible to compare and contrast women’s and men’s emotions because emotions considered organizationally appropriate when expressed by a man tend to be perceived as inappropriate when expressed by a woman (Hearn, 1993; Martin, 2006).

Examples: Ashort article on how jokes in the business setting are better received if a man tells then verses a woman.

Wong, Venessa. (2012, May 23). Women are less willing to be funny at work, report says. Bloomberg Businessweek. Retrieved from: <http://www.businessweek.com/articles/2012-05-23/women-are-less-willing-to-be-funny-at-work-says-report>

girl watching: A form of harassment that tends to be labeled as such by women, but is defined as play by men who engage in it. In the activity, the woman being watched may be unaware, although other women may not be. Thus, it seems that the target of the action may not be the particular woman being watched but may be other men and, indirectly, other women in the organization.

Examples: An Arby’s commercial where three men are sitting and girl watching and then they start to cheer for someone who is walking up and it turns out to be a man holding an Arby’s bag. This shows that girl watching is such a common thing that we don’t think anything about it, and when they start to cheer it turns out to be a literal piece of meat instead of the women they’d just been staring at. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dUA1PICL8qs>

\*An image of two men staring at a female coworker. <http://employment-law.burgsimpson.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/01/sexual-harrassment-quid-pro-quo-hostile-work-environment.jpg>

\*Responses to harassment. See: <http://www.buzzfeed.com/hnigatu/kickass-illustrated-responses-to-street-harassment>

hostile work environment: One type of sexual harassment recognized by the law where unwanted behaviors create a negative culture where work becomes impossible.

paid care work: Domestic service usually occurring in the private sphere of the home, e.g. maids and kitchen workers, but it also includes nursing, home health care providers, maids, etc.

quid pro quo: One type of sexual harassment recognized by the law where there are pressures to provide sexual favors in exchange for job security.

Examples: Scene in Legally Blonde where Elle’s professor hits on her and basically promises her that he’ll advancer her career if she sleeps with him. See: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NTRFyAObyzQ>

sexual harassment: Repeated, unwanted verbal or nonverbal communication of a sexual nature

Examples: Scene in North Country where Charlize Theron’s character is sexually harassed by a coworker. See: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CArFMPcXrUc>

work/family tensions: The institutions of work and family generate tensions in people, causing many to feel they must choose one over the other. These choices are gendered, raced, and classed.

Examples: This is one of the scenes in *Liar Liar* where Jim Carey’s character forgets that it is his son’s birthday and refuses to talk to his mother. It starts at about 0:55. See: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zh6NzOHOU8s>

\*A heterosexual couple covered by the *BBC News and Business*, discuss their decision to work from home and make more time to care for their daughter. See:

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-21302969>

\*For examples of people productively working through work-life tensions, see a recent front page article from USA Today: Cauchon, Dennis. (2013, March 25). An American role reversal: As women gain strength, and money, in the workplace, many households are now taking on a whole new vibe. *USA Today*, A1. Retrieved from: <http://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation/2013/03/24/female-breadwinners/2015559/>

The article described four different families that have worked through the tensions in distinct ways.