

PRINT: ISSN 0973-7189
ONLINE: ISSN 2456-6780

HOME AND COMMUNITY SCIENCE

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Stud Home Com Sci, 11(2): 140-149 (2017)
DOI: 10.31901/24566780.2017/11.02.10

Women with Knives in Their Boots: How Brazil's Gaúchas Turn 'Machismo' to Their Advantage

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KEYWORDS Anthropology. Gender. Masculinity. Patriarchy. Rio Grande do Sul

ABSTRACT This article poses the question of whether a 'Culture of Equality' might emerge through a progression of moves which bring greater equality to existing structures of gender inequality, or if something altogether more radical is necessary? Considering *machismo* in the south of Brazil, it moves beyond an analysis of women's resistance to *machismo* and towards a focus on the ways in which women use *machismo* productively, even turning it to their advantage. In this formulation *machismo* becomes a productive site within which women who understand the rules of this folk model of patriarchy are able to not only play its games successfully, but also construct their own gendered, and in their view 'modern', lives. This however leaves us with the unanswered question of whether this is sufficient, or just a beginning?