

GENDERING THE AGRICULTURE INDUSTRY

A MARISSA MARTZ PRODUCTION

GC495: GENDER AND THE ENVIRONMENT

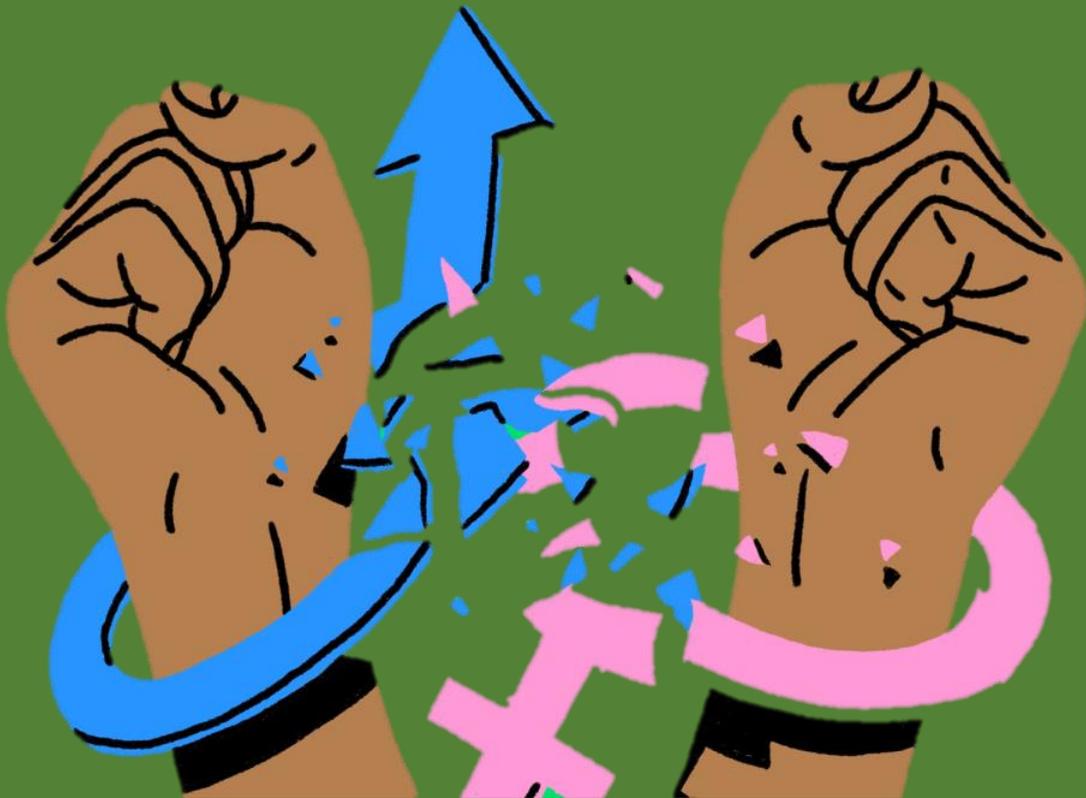


CAN WOMEN TAKE
OVER A TRADITIONALLY
ANDROCENTRIC
INDUSTRY?



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Gender Gap In Agribusiness



Brazil is known as a global hotspot when it comes to agriculture. Brazil is responsible for supplying much of the globe with key crops such as: soy, coffee, beef and oranges. Although much of the industry is still androcentric, the number of female owned farms in Brazil is steadily on the rise. According to Brazil's Agribusiness Association the number of female managed farms has nearly tripled since 2013, towering at a record breaking 31%. There are several things that determine whether or not any person of any gender will be successful in the agriculture industry. Land is undeniably and obviously the most crucial asset for anyone who depends on agriculture for their livelihood. The last agricultural census for Brazil was conducted in 2006, which is quite a bit of time ago. But, according to Brazil's Agriculture Census only 12% of land owners in the entire country were considered female, and of that 12%, only 5.5% is land used for agricultural purposes. This miniscule percentage goes

to show that the overall plot sizes of land owned by women is extremely disproportionate compared to plots owned by men. Historically speaking, women of Brazil (and frankly women in general) suffer in terms of land ownership. Globally, there is a colossal gender asset gap, meaning there is a disproportion in terms of wealth and property between males and females. Brazilian culture has deep rooted male biases when it comes to men in positions considered to be powerful, owning land being one of those positions. Women farmers typically bring in yields 20-30% smaller compared to the yields of men farmers. As previously mentioned, the plots of land owned by women are notably smaller than the plots owned by men, which plays a sizeable role in the difference of yield sizes achieved by each gender.



Women Who Farm in Brazil



Women are considered to be the “backbone of the rural economy” (FAO UN) According to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO UN) women worldwide receive significantly less land, credit, inputs (fertilizers and seeds) and agricultural training compared to men. In rural Brazilian communities more women claim to be employed in agriculture opposed to the cultural norm of engaging in unpaid family work. (FAO UN) Women in Brazil are fighting resiliently to combat the gender inequality and gender gaps they’ve been facing every day in their regular lives. Women are important and very much so needed in all industries alike, gender inclusion is crucial in all work fields and work environments. There should be no job considered that of a man or a woman. We are all full-functioning, capable and willing beings, none better than

the next at performing any skillset a job may entail. Women all across the globe suffer from being considered second citizens next to men, society has really portrayed an ugly and untrue picture of women and their worth for far too long. The women of Brazil are taking an enormous step in the right direction in order to achieve the gender equality they’ve sought after for so long.

**“GENDER
EQUALITY IS A
HUMAN FIGHT,
NOT A FEMALE
FIGHT.”**

-FRIEDA PINTO-

A Dangerous Industry



DID YOU KNOW?

Women of Brazil who choose to lead a life into the agribusiness world are considered to be at high risk of *failure, discrimination*, and in some cases even *violence*. This long run male chauvinist work force aims to keep women out of what has always been known traditionally the man's industry. Nearly 80% of women cultivators in Brazil have experienced some sort of discrimination. (The Washington Post) On a regular basis Brazilian women in agriculture suffer from harassment and even violence from not only their male counterpart competitors but from old-fashioned community members who also believe farming is not meant to be done by a woman.

Ticiano Figueiredo, the author of *Agro Women* a book about female farmers in Brazil, tells her readers "As the number of women in the industry grows, they also face the growing rates of violence." (Figueiredo) According to The Washington Post, in 2018 there were 482 women that were victims of violent crimes in rural conflicts agitated by disputes over agriculture which is four times the number from 2017. It seems to be that the number of women entering the agro field and the number of agitated men raise roughly at the same rate. "When you are demanding gender equality in what has traditionally been a masculine space, men get threatened and think that you are trying to destroy them." Says Figueiredo, "Since men are still the ones in a position of power, if they don't let us in, we will break the glass ceiling."



Disparity By Design



Questions to Ask Yourself

In a world full of deep-rooted and outdated traditions, it always seems as if women get the short end of the stick. For decades it seems as if men have been doing, well quite frankly, whatever the hell they want all whilst women had to seek permission for their every movement. But ask yourself why society has been this way for seemingly ever? Regardless of which gender you choose to identify as, why should anyone be treated any differently than the person who sits next to them? Thanks to stereotypes we can also ask ourselves why certain jobs are thought to be “those of a man or those of a woman?” I doubt I even need to give examples of these said jobs because society has painted such an incredibly detailed picture to be burned into our minds since basically birth about gender roles. From a very

young age we are told time and time again by our elders that we can be whatever we want when we “grow up.” But in most cases this is not true, societal norms have set up complications for women to thrive in certain work environments; the agriculture industry being just one of those environments.



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Break the Chains



Although the agriculture industry is the main focus of this zine, gender inequality can be found almost everywhere. In classrooms, work places, one's home life, and seemingly and social setting. The places where we are supposed to feel the safest tend to make us feel the most unwelcomed. "Men can't step back and leave it to women alone to clean up the mess we've made and are still making" – Bono

No one is to blame for the way society has grown to naturally oppress women in nearly every setting, but if the human race as a collective whole could come together to stand up and f

fight against gender inequality in all settings; maybe there would be a day where we saw men and women treated the same. Let's erase those outdated stereotypes of both genders and let's become the architects of our future and pave the way to equality for all genders.



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