

# WORKING CLASS SINGLE MOTHERS: Performing Middle Class Identity

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## ABSTRACT

Much of the literature on single motherhood has been devoted to poor or middle class single mothers. In this study I interviewed working class single mothers. Their unique position between the poor and the middle class leads to interesting observations about how women at the boundaries do and perform class. These women, while aware of the contradictions between their material realities and their symbolic realities, attempted to establish a middle class sense of identity through consumption, concerted cultivation and associational distancing strategies. These findings indicate that class is a salient feature in the life of working class single mothers and that they invoke strategies to maintain a sense of class identity and dignity.