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### **Postsocialist Gender Failures: Men in the Economies of Recognition**

Focusing on unemployed men who bear their personal failures as an identity, this paper explores the complexity of the issues of failure and success in a Lithuanian society dominated by neoliberal rhetoric. The paper argues that the positive thinking and perennial optimism of socialism led to ideologically or materially manufactured success as the main measure of masculinity in postsocialist economies. Therefore, coming to terms with failure is a poignant reminder of the violence of normativity and the ordinariness of toxic optimism in both ideological regimes.