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Leonie V. Still (Ed.)

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EDITORIAL ADDRESS:
Leonie V Still, Editor,
International Review of Women and Leadership,
Edith Cowan University,
Pearson Street,
Churchlands,
Perth, Western Australia 6018,
Australia
Telephone: 61 9 273 8136
Facsimile: 61 9 273 8181
Email: irwl@cowan.edu.au

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Editorial

A new journal has an air of excitement and tension about it because the editor can never be sure of the particular mix of articles, or the flavour of the issue, until almost printing time. Such atmosphere surrounded this issue. The first issue was bedded down and has had international acceptance. But what of the second issue? Having commenced with a promising start, and a distinguished cast of contributors, could a similar issue, with the same recipe for success, be produced?

As all those in the field know, editors, and editorial committees, have to wait patiently for an issue to form. First, there is the sense of anticipation as the prospective articles arrive in the mail. Is there a gem amongst them? Are they all gems? Or will the editorial committee begin to despair as articles are reviewed, rewritten and resubmitted only to end in final rejection? Will there be enough successful articles to form an issue? Will the mix of international and local authors be right? Is there a consistency in the themes? Or is the issue so eclectic because of the nature of the articles that no theme or integration is possible? Such questions ran through our minds as we waited for the 'pot to boil'.

A glance at the titles in this issue quickly reveals that the contents bear little similarity to the articles in the first issue. And this is how it should be. If journals are to push the frontiers and boundaries of thought and research they should be open to considering and reflecting upon all points of view, controversial or otherwise. They should also act as vehicles for the dissemination of new avenues of thought so that reasoned debate can begin and researchers can assess the likelihood of pursuing new areas of endeavour. Moreover, they should conduct critical assessment of issues and positions so that horizons are widened. Finally, they should not constrain themselves by slavishly following traditional norms as to what constitutes 'good' or 'bad' publishing. If the article has merit, and is endeavouring to explain social circumstances in language which is understandable but not necessarily polished, then it should also have an airing for discussion. This has been the editorial policy followed in this issue. The editorial committee hopes that international researchers and authors will view this journal as an adventurous vehicle which is prepared to publish well-reasoned articles, sometimes outside the mainstream, with the aim of contributing to knowledge, critical thought and debate.

David Collinson and Jeff Hearn, two well-known British researchers, provide the lead article. In it they analyse one of the management field’s great icons, Kanter’s (1977) Men and Women of the Corporation. Their paper is an empathetic analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the thrust of the book, as well as a critical analysis of leaderships and managements by highlighting the historically deep-rooted association of managers and organisational leaders with men and masculinities. In more than one way, then, this is a ground-breaking article, similar to Alex Carey’s radical analysis of the famous Hawthorne studies which was published by the American Sociological Review in the 1970s. The ideas contained in this article are likely to be seen as radical and contentious in some quarters; and refreshing in others. The authors challenge us to rethink propositions and assumptions in our quest to gain real understanding of the processes of leaderships and managements.

Amanda Sinclair follows on by challenging us to examine a taboo subject: the issue of sexuality in leadership. As she explains, the study of leadership, in general, has been blind to sexuality. She explores meanings of sexuality for executive women,
and proposes a model which maps two determinants of positions that women can adopt in reconciling sexuality with leadership roles. Her thoughtful, and provocative, insights explain some of the confusing messages women often receive in management and to which there is often no ready defence, even in these days of equal employment opportunity and affirmative action. She argues for a woman-centred discourse of sexuality in leading in order that women may bring their sexual, as well as their intellectual selves, to their leadership roles.

Jan Currie, Trish Harris and Bev Thiele deal with career planning and career satisfaction aspects within an organisation. Undertaking a gender comparable study, they find that women are less likely to plan their careers and may even question the appropriateness of traditional notions of a career to their work histories. On the other hand, managers, who are mainly men, hold more power and influence and feel more challenged and excited by their work. They raise the issue of senior management being a ‘peak culture’ which is often divorced from the rest of the organisation.

Ronald Burke then examines the reasons behind the lack of women corporate directors in Canada. His findings mirror other evidence from the United States, the United Kingdom and Australia that women do not always seem to have the ‘appropriate’ skills, experience or qualifications for board appointments. As women are endeavouring to overcome this last bastion to success, his findings provide sober food for thought. Interestingly, there was little agreement between male and female directors in the study. This gender comparable result is becoming a common finding in a wide range of research areas.

Finally, and mirroring the sentiments of the lead article, the issue concludes with a thought-provoking analysis of Amanda Sinclair’s book *Trials at the Top: Chief Executives Talk About Men, Women and the Australian Executive Culture* by Liz Fulop and Fran Laneyrie. Originally intended as a book review, the analysis evolved into a commentary on approach and current development of management thought. The commentary is offered as a reflection on our evolutionary understanding of the various dimensions of organisational culture.

Leonie V. Still,
Editor
Men Managing Leadership? *Men and Women of the Corporation* Revisited

David L. Collinson, University of Warwick and Jeff Hearn, University of Manchester, United Kingdom

**ABSTRACT**

This paper seeks to contribute to the critical analysis of leadership and management by highlighting the historically deep-rooted association of managers and organisational leaders with men and masculinities. It presents an empathetic analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of Kanter's (1977) *Men and Women of the Corporation*, one of the few studies to attempt an integrated approach to men and management. Exploring subsequent feminist and labour process perspectives, the paper argues that, although providing a broader view of power relations, these studies tend to reproduce a dualistic focus either on gender without management or management without gender, respectively. Accordingly, we examine critically the complex and interwoven ways in which managerial and male power may be reproduced and persist in organisational practices. We conclude by considering the implications of this analysis for the practices, analyses and theorising of leadership and management.

**INTRODUCTION**

One of the most significant features of leadership in modern society has been the growth of management and large-scale organisations. In many Western societies over the past fifteen years, senior managers especially, or 'captains of industry' as they are frequently called, have been hailed as heroic and charismatic leaders. Indeed, within most contemporary organisations it is managers who exercise authority and enjoy considerable status and material benefits. Whether decisions concern strategic questions of capital investment, product development, market position, or human resource issues such as recruitment, supervision, promotion, appraisal and training, management's influence over these matters remains generally unchallenged. While it is evident that not all managers are leaders, it is also the case that most managers and corporate leaders are men. It is the conditions, processes and consequences of these persistent and largely taken-for-granted relationships between men, masculinities, managements and leaderships which are the foci of this paper.

The emergence of management as the central organisational activity of modern corporations is reflected in the burgeoning mainstream literature that seeks to examine the assumptions, responsibilities and practices of contemporary managements (Child, 1969; Drucker, 1979; Kreitner, 1989; Lawrence & Lorsch, 1967; Mintzberg, 1973, 1989; Stewart, 1986). Yet these prevailing discourses rarely question managerial power and its effects, the elitist nature of decision-making in many
organisations, or the terms, conditions and benefits of managerial employment. Neither do they critically examine the ways in which gender relations and managerial and leadership practices can often be mutually constituting and reproducing. The neglect of gender considerations, in particular, can be seen in the historical development of mainstream management theories, such as scientific management, human relations, organisation psychology, systems and contingency theory and job design and job enrichment (Calás, Jacobson, Jacques & Smircich, 1991; Hearn & Parkin, 1983; Sheriff & Campbell, 1981).

Even when men are named in the title of books such as Men Who Manage (Dalton, 1959), Men at the Top (Elliott, 1959), or Men in Mid-Career (Sofer, 1970), they are not subject to analysis. This literature tends to take for granted that leaders and managers have been predominantly men (Hearn & Parkin, 1988; Parkin & Hearn, 1994). Of course, this assumption has some plausibility given the historically gender-typed nature of the role of corporate leader and the occupation of management. However, to assume that gender is not an issue simply because women are rarely in evidence is to confuse and conflate 'women' with 'gender' and to neglect the ways in which specific masculinities are reproduced within and between the senior hierarchical ranks of contemporary corporations. The neglect of masculinity by one of the gurus of leadership studies, Warren Bennis (1989), in his analysis of how to become a leader, merely highlights the pressing need to address these persistent and frequently taken-for-granted relationships between gender, hierarchy and power in contemporary organisations (Collinson & Hearn, 1994).

One attempt to overcome this 'malestream' neglect of gender can be found in the women in management literature. Influencing much of the debate on gender and organisations, this approach tends to focus on the continued under-utilisation of women's skills and experience in management and leadership and to advocate the need for more women managers and for 'gender responsible leadership' (Gordon & Strober, 1975; Jelinek & Adler, 1988; Sekaran & Leong, 1992; Van Nostrand, 1993). It concentrates either on developing women's skills so that they can more easily fit into contemporary managerial hierarchies or on highlighting the potential contribution and differentiated nature of women's skills in management. Yet this primarily prescriptive perspective is always in danger of either blaming the victim and/or essentialising women's difference (Calás & Smircich, 1993). Although it considers gender issues, this approach provides at best a very partial critique of the foregoing 'malestream' literature, while remaining very much within a 'managerialist' paradigm. In particular, there is generally no critical examination of the power and practices of either men as managers and leaders, or managers and leaders as men.

In this paper we seek to outline a much more critical analysis of managerial power and practices and leadership than that available in the foregoing mainstream perspectives. Drawing upon critical work on management, gender, men and masculinities, and developing our own earlier arguments (Collinson & Hearn, 1994), we consider new possibilities in conceptualising the power and practices of managers and corporate leaders. In contemporary theorising on management and leadership, we believe it is important to ask questions about the gendered and hierarchical power relations of organisations, their interrelations and practices, such as: Why do men continue to predominate in managerial hierarchies despite equal opportunities legislation? What part does masculinity play in sustaining the elite power of managers in organisations? Do these masculinities significantly shape managers' strategic thinking, decision-making and their organisational legitimacy? and, if so, With what consequences for organisations? Despite their potential
significance, questions such as these have not been fully explored in the critical literature on leadership, organisations and management.

In what follows, we develop an empathetic critique of Kanter's (1977) landmark study, *Men and Women of the Corporation*, one of the very few texts to address the relationship between men and managerial work. Recently republished, this study usefully describes some of the processes sustaining men's power as managers and managers' power as men. In our terms, it demonstrates the complex unities and differences between men, masculinities and managements through which gendered and hierarchical power relations and networks are routinely reproduced in specific organisational practices. However, Kanter tends to neglect the asymmetrical power and domination of managers and men. Accordingly, we seek to deconstruct Kanter's analysis by examining the way that power in organisations is frequently hierarchical, gendered and masculinised. Deconstruction reveals "power operating in structures of thinking and behaviour that previously seemed devoid of power relations" (White, 1986, p421). Problematising and articulating that which is often unsaid or marginalised by available discourses, deconstruction exposes conflicts, disruptions and contradictions, and reveals the power asymmetries in discursive practices. It is used to "explore precisely what the text has neglected and to show that what is excluded is necessarily implied in the categories the text includes" (Kilduff, 1993, p15).

We develop our argument by reviewing feminist and labour process literatures which, in the main, display a greater critical sensitivity to power asymmetries. Rather than address Kanter's simultaneous focus upon men and managers, these studies have tended to diverge into two separate themes exploring either the gendered or managerial/hierarchical aspects of organisational power relations. Drawing on that which is valuable in these different approaches, we seek to develop an analysis of organisational power relations and practices that can critically examine management and gender, particularly by highlighting the unities and differences that can simultaneously characterise management, leadership, men and masculinities. Our primary aim is to signpost the need, potential and possibilities for new ways of exploring these gendered workplace power relations. In particular, we are concerned to examine why, how and with what consequences various unities, differences and interrelations between men, masculinities, leaderships and managements can persist in the asymmetrical relations and routine practices of contemporary organisations. We begin by discussing some of the assumptions and perspectives that inform our approach to understanding gender, men and masculinities.

**GENDER, MEN AND MASCULINITIES**

We see gender as socially constructed, historically and culturally variable and a relational phenomenon, or set of phenomena - hence the term, gender relations. Furthermore, gender relations are always relations of power that are frequently asymmetrical. The power relations of gender are both material and discursive. They are constructed in and through discourses, and they are also constructed in the material world, in practice and in practical situations, not just in people's heads. When we say 'material', we are thinking of both the operation of the economy and economic relations, and other human relations, such as those concerning the body and sexuality. The shorthand 'discursive practices' may be used to refer to this simultaneously material and discursive reproduction of gender.

The theoretical inspirations for our approach to gender are diverse. They include feminist theory, particularly materialist feminism, radical feminism and
Men Managing Leadership? Men and Women of the Corporation Revisited

postmodernist feminism (Flax, 1990; Friedman & Sarah, 1982; Hanmer, 1990; Weedon, 1987), discourse analysis, poststructuralism, postmodernism and those critical studies on men and masculinities that are themselves influenced by these intellectual traditions (Brittan, 1989; Brod & Kaufman, 1994; Chapman & Rutherford, 1988; Kimmel, 1987; Morgan, 1992). Our understanding of gender is informed by an analysis of power relations and their reproduction in particular practices (Connell, 1985). We are concerned to examine the asymmetrical nature of gendered power relations in organisations, the practices through which these relations are often reproduced, sometimes challenged and occasionally even reversed and the ways in which these gendered asymmetries and practices can become interwoven with hierarchical power relations and processes.

Similarly, we see men and masculinities as socially constructed and hence as varying historically and between and within cultures. We reject the views that men and masculinities are biologically or naturally determined, or that ‘masculinity’ is a singular ‘sex role’ mechanically inscribed in men by their early social experiences (Connell, 1985, 1987) or other cultural patterns (Eichler, 1980). Men and masculinities are also relational phenomena; they exist in relation to women, femininities and other gendered phenomena. These relations involve power, both between women and men, and between men, as well as between men, children and young people. Such power is simultaneously material and discursive. While men are particular gendered people, masculinities can refer to institutional rules and practices, ideologies, discourses, identities, subjectivities or sets of signs.

These social, historical and cultural constructions of men and masculinities are, however, far from random. In particular, men may have (and/or perceive that they have) collective interests which could be opposed to women. This is most obviously so in terms of sexuality (MacKinnon, 1982); procreation/biological reproduction (O’Brien, 1981); work in the family (Delphy, 1970) and nurture and violence (Hearn, 1987). Thus, we are pointing to the unities, networks and commonalities between men that may be embedded in the structural relations of the gendered division of labour in both paid and domestic work. In addition to this concern with unities and asymmetries, we also emphasise the differences and multiplicities that can simultaneously characterise men and masculinities. As we elaborate later, since both men and masculinities are not fixed, homogeneous and unchanging, but highly diverse, differentiated and shifting, we prefer the term masculinities rather than just masculinity (Carrigan, Connell & Lee, 1985; Connell, 1987, 1995). A key point in this emphasis on unities and differences is that masculinities are as much about relations between men as those between women and men (Collinson, 1992; Hearn, 1992b; Hearn & Morgan, 1990; Kimmel & Messner, 1989; Segal, 1989). Our approach thus draws upon feminist and pro-feminist perspectives to address both the unities and differences between men, women and masculinities as they are reproduced through organisational power relations and practices. We now seek to develop our analysis of gender and men in the context of management and corporate leadership. An important basis for our work is Kanter’s (1977, 1993) path-breaking study, to which we now turn.

MEN AND WOMEN OF THE CORPORATION REVISITED

Most interpretations of Kanter’s study have concentrated on its implications for women’s opportunities in modern corporations to become leaders and managers. Less attention has been paid to the important insights it also provides into the relationship between men and management. Kanter argues that both scientific management and human relations theories are imbued with a highly "masculine
The ethic (1977, p.22) of rationality which throughout the twentieth century "dominated the spirit of managerialism and gave the manager role its defining image" (1977, p.25). Her ethnographic analysis of Indsco reveals some of the organisational processes through which the power of men and managers can be reproduced. She refers to 'homosexual reproduction' (1977, p.48) to describe the processes that exclude women from managerial posts and 'homosocial reproduction' to characterise the ways by which certain managers and men are selected and differentiated according to their ability to display appropriate social credentials. Although these labels are somewhat problematic (Morgan, 1981), their underlying meanings do emphasise some of the unities (homosexual) and differences (homosocial) between men and managers through which organisational power relations can be simultaneously reproduced.

When discussing 'homosexual reproduction', Kanter highlights the sense of masculine unity, mutual identification and shared commonality between men managers. In selection practices, she contends, senior managers frequently appoint in their own image. Men are selected for managerial positions because they are perceived, particularly by male selectors, to be more reliable, committed and predictable. This widespread gendered perception of men's greater loyalty, dedication and commitment is informed by their perceived willingness to work excessively long hours, take work home and relocate house and family at the behest of the company. Kanter demonstrates how the corporate expectations of managers reflect and reinforce preconceived assumptions that managerial job-holders will be male breadwinners. Men can identify with other men who are family breadwinners. By contrast, women will be excluded from senior management because they are deemed to be less able to comply with these selection criteria, especially because of assumed conflicting loyalties between home and work.

When discussing 'homosocial reproduction', Kanter suggests important differences and divisions between men in management. She reveals how the extensive pressures on managers to conform to corporate expectations and demands can exclude not only women but also many men. Emphasising the difficulty of formally identifying the necessary criteria for effective managerial performance, she notes that in practice, the typical profile of managers is "invariably white and male, with a certain shiny, clean-cut look" (1977, p.42). Drawing upon Dalton's (1959) study, she argues, American managers are usually Protestant, from an elite school, often members of a masonic order and members of prestigious sports and country clubs, Anglo-Saxon or Germanic in origin, and Republican. Kanter suggests it is only particular types of men that are seen to display the necessary commitment, trustworthiness and managerial potential. Emphasising the 'social homogeneity' of these male managers and the way in which they are selected on the basis of social similarity and acceptability, she concludes that social credentials are common substitutes for ability measures in management positions.

Kanter's notions of 'homosexual' and 'homosocial reproduction' usefully describe some of the ways that the power of men as managers and managers as men may persist in organisations. These terms reveal the unities between men in contrast to women ('homosexual reproduction') and the differences between men themselves ('homosocial reproduction') that can simultaneously characterise the frequently gendered discourses, networks and practices of management and organisation. In its concern to describe the interwoven nature of management and men in contemporary organisations, Kanter's study is exceptional. However, as the following section elaborates, it is when Kanter moves from description to explanation that problems in her analysis begin to emerge.
DECONSTRUCTING KANTER

Kanter seeks to explain 'homosexual' and 'homosocial reproduction' with reference to the nature of management itself, namely, its inherent and pervasive uncertainty. She argues that conditions of market uncertainty reinforce the corporate need for trustworthy employees, particularly those in positions of high discretion. It is the 'uncertainty quotient in managerial work' that leads managers "to develop tight inner circles excluding social strangers; to keep control in the hands of socially homogeneous peers; to stress conformity and insist upon a diffuse, unbounded loyalty" (1977, p49). Her explanation tends to neglect any consideration of the asymmetrical power of men as men and managers as managers. She subscribes to a Weberian conception of power that focuses upon the micro-politics and practices of organisational relations and explicitly rejects any concern with the asymmetrical structural properties of power relations, as she writes (1977, p166):

I am using 'power' in a sense that distinguishes it from hierarchical domination...Power is the ability to get things done, to mobilise resources, to get and use whatever it is that a person needs for the goals he or she is attempting to meet.

While this emphasis on the positive aspects of power as agency is valuable, it is somewhat one-sided and partial. It fails to appreciate the negative impact of domination and asymmetrical power relations as recurrent conditions and consequences of organisational culture, agency and practices. Equally, by explicitly separating 'sex' from 'power', Kanter's notion of power is de-gendered. In contrast, more recent critical organisational studies of gender and management have shown greater interest in examining power relations as forms of asymmetrical domination in contemporary organisations. Accordingly, the following two sub-sections extend our approach to men, masculinities, managements and leaderships by considering the asymmetrical organisational power of, first, men (drawing upon the post-Kanter (1977) feminist literature) and, second, management (reviewing recent labour process studies). A common feature of these critical perspectives is an increasing recognition that power asymmetries in practice are neither monolithic nor all-determining, but are rather inherently diverse, multiple and ambiguous (Martin, 1993). These critical studies increasingly combine a focus on power asymmetries with one that simultaneously seeks to analyse their mediation through differences, practices and identity construction. They suggest that to explain 'homosexual' and 'homosocial' reproduction, we need to examine asymmetrical power relations and the subjectivities and cultural practices through which they are constituted; in short to examine the way that structure and action are mutually constituting (Giddens, 1984; Willmott, 1987).

(i) Men and Masculinity (Without Management)

Given Kanter's impact on subsequent feminist analyses, it is paradoxical that she fails to consider the gender dimension of senior managers' preoccupation with control over more junior managers. While other recent studies have criticised Kanter's general approach to gender relations (Acker, 1991; Cockburn, 1990; Hunt & Emslie, 1996; Pringle, 1989; Thompson & McHugh, 1995; Witz & Savage, 1992), our particular concern is with men as managers and managers as men (Collinson & Hearn, 1996a). In our view, for example, the masculine discursive practices of senior managers are equally as important as the unpredictable organisational and market forces outlined by Kanter in explaining the managerial preoccupation with control, predicability and order. Within patriarchal organisations, men may seek to exercise power and control over other men as much as they try to control women. Yet Kanter
fails to present any explicitly critical analysis of men and masculinity(ies). This is also reflected in her artificial separation of power from sex (1977, p202) since, “power wipes out sex” (1977, p200). Kanter is concerned to argue that what appear to be differences between men and women in organisations are related not to gender, but to differences in work position and the structure of opportunity. In seeking to deny difference, she fails to recognise how power in organisations is frequently heavily gendered. Her concern to separate sex from power neglects the way that particular masculinities may be embedded in and might help to reproduce and legitimise homosexual and homosocial reproduction.

The post-Kanter (1977) feminist literature has been particularly concerned to examine the asymmetrical structure of gendered power relations, men’s preoccupation with control and their systematic domination of women. Focusing upon patriarchy as a separate system of men’s control over women, writers have revealed how organised groups of middle and working class men workers have historically been able to secure labour market closure (Cockburn, 1983, 1991; Hartman, 1979; Walby, 1986, 1990). These groups have opposed the entry of cheap female labour by demanding the ‘breadwinner wage’ and by controlling both the provision of training and the definition of skill (Baron, 1992; Cockburn, 1983). Highlighting the way that “skill has become saturated with sex” (Phillips & Taylor, 1980, p85), feminist studies have critiqued men’s routine association with skilled work and the downgrading of women’s labour as unskilled (Legge, 1987; Walby, 1986; Witz, 1986). Accordingly, it can be argued that managerial ‘skills’ are also often saturated with deeply rooted assumptions about masculinity. In contrast with Kanter, more recent feminist studies also contend that women’s subordination is not determined exclusively by workplace processes. Hence theories of patriarchy highlight men’s shared interests or unities in subordinating women within both paid and domestic work.

Recently, feminist analysis has developed more complex accounts of gendered power relations through a growing concern with difference and the shifting nature of discourses and identities (Ferguson, 1984; Kondo, 1990; Martin, 1990; Pringle, 1989). Theories of patriarchy have also been criticised for treating ‘men’ and ‘women’ as unified groups and undifferentiated categories (Gherardi, 1995). Connell (1985, 1987) argues that this one-dimensional approach neglects differences between men and between women and also fails to recognise how these differences and relations can shift over time and place. For Connell, such “categorical” (1987, p54) theories about patriarchy are trapped in a structural analysis of gender relations which caricatures men’s power and women’s subordination and ignores the analytical significance of the organisational practices through which these categories are constituted.

Post-structuralist feminism and pro-feminism have increasingly recognised people’s diverse, fragmented and gendered lives in and around organisations. Attention has focused upon (gendered) subjectivities and their ambiguous, fragmented, discontinuous and multiple nature. In deconstructing or decentring ‘the subject’, some writers have argued that all subjectivities are frequently non-rational and contradictory (Henriques, Hollway, Urwin, Venn & Walkerdine, 1984). Various studies highlight men’s apparent subjective preoccupation with the construction and maintenance of masculine identities in the workplace (Cockburn, 1983, 1991; Collinson, 1988, 1992; Hearn, 1985). Frequently characterised by tension, uncertainty and ambiguity, men’s search to validate a masculine self (or selves) seems to be ongoing and never-ending (Collinson & Hearn, 1994). Indeed, the more individual men seek to secure themselves in particular gendered identities, paradoxically the
more concerned and anxious they often seem to become about their sense of self/selves (Collinson, 1992; Kerfoot & Knights, 1993).

Such analyses suggest that instability and unpredictability are not merely the result of market fluctuations, as Kanter contends. It is not only managers therefore who are exposed to unpredictability. In social relations all human beings experience considerable uncertainty, ambiguity and insecurity which they may seek to manage in diverse ways. One common approach is to try to eliminate uncertainty by seeking to establish a stable and well-defined sense of identity. For men, this 'identity work' (Thompson & McHugh, 1995) can involve them in attempting, however inconclusively, to define themselves and their masculine difference, status and power through the subjective processes of identifying with some men (e.g. with a specified group or with individuals), while simultaneously differentiating themselves from others (e.g. from other men and from women). Subjective processes of identification and differentiation can often characterise men’s routine relations, discourses and practices as they are embedded in the reproduction of asymmetrical organisational power relations (Collinson & Hearn, 1994). Selecting new managers in one’s own (gendered) image constitutes an important way in which ‘identity work’, however uncertain, may characterise organisational practices.

Informed by this growing interest in gendered subjectivity and agency as key aspects through which asymmetrical gendered relations are reproduced, recent critical studies on men highlight not only male power, but also multiple masculinities, i.e. the material and symbolic differences through which that power is reproduced in organisations. Accordingly, it is possible to identify a wide range of particular masculinities in specific situations at different historical times in various cultural milieux. Masculinities can themselves be internally divided and in tension. Hegemonic masculinities (e.g. white, heterosexual, dominant) often dominate other masculinities (e.g. black, gay, subordinate). Particular masculinities (e.g. white, gay masculinities or black, middle class masculinities) may carry internal contradictions between elements confirming or undermining power. No longer seen as homogeneous, unified or monolithic, men and masculinities are therefore characterised by vertical and horizontal differences according to, for example, age; class; ethnicity; bodily facility; sexuality; world view; region; nationality; appearance; parental/marital/kinship status; leisure; occupation; size; and propensity for violence (Collinson & Hearn, 1996b; Hearn & Collinson, 1993). Yet it is possible for this growing interest in ‘difference’, diversity and heterogeneity to result in the neglect of structured patterns of gendered power, control and subordination. Indeed, following Cockburn (1991), we would caution against a focus upon men’s differences that may “deflect attention from the consistency in men’s domination of women” (Cockburn, 1991, p.225).

Kanter’s analysis is explicitly concerned to deny women’s difference from men and to argue for equal treatment and opportunity. Accordingly, she is less able to develop a critical analysis of men, masculinities and managements precisely because this might involve acknowledging ‘difference’. Powell (1993) follows Kanter in concluding that there is an absence of sex differences in the behaviour and motivation of men and women managers. Similar findings have also been recorded in relation to leadership styles (Dobbins & Platz, 1986). By contrast, Rosener (1990) contends that women are progressing into management, not by adopting the style and habits associated with men, but by drawing on the unique and differentiated skills and experience they acquire in early socialisation (Helgesen, 1990; Loden, 1985). According to Rosener, women are progressing precisely because of their different, more feminine ‘interactive’ leadership styles. Hence within these two
contrasting perspectives, gender difference is either denied or essentialised. Neither approach presents a critical analysis of men and masculinities in management or leadership.

Bacchi (1990) has criticised the sameness/difference framework for placing “unacceptable boundaries on the possibilities for change” (1990, pxv). Proposing a “new model which acknowledges the importance of living arrangements without assigning them on a gender basis”, she challenges the view “which says that men can ignore these arrangements” (1990, pxiv). For Bacchi, the sameness/difference debate tends to view women as ‘the problem’ and consequently fails to put pressure on either men or organisations to develop a more radical restructuring of relationships between home and paid work. Equally, such arguments tend to neglect important differences between men and between women (Gherardi, 1995). Drawing on the general tenor of these arguments, we seek to prioritise neither unities nor differences, but instead to recognise their mutual importance and simultaneous involvement in the reproduction of managerial and male power in organisational practices.

In sum, feminist contributions that postdate Kanter’s (1977) work have valuably developed understandings of the complex gendered nature of asymmetrical power relations, discourses and identities. By treating gendered power as not only asymmetrical, but also multiple, differentiated and shifting, post-Kanter (1977) feminist studies have developed our understanding of the complex, gendered nature of asymmetrical power relations, discourses and identities. They reveal the importance of masculinities in reproducing men managers’ power, culture and identity through ‘homosexual’ and ‘homosocial reproduction’. Yet, while post-Kanter (1977) feminist studies have increasingly named and examined men as men, they frequently fail to analyse managerial processes. Writers on patriarchy have revealed the exclusionary practices of trade unions and the ideologies which are their condition and consequence, with little regard to the possible exclusionary practices of managers and their justifications and rationalisations. Indeed some feminist writers seem to overestimate the power of organised labour and underestimate that of management in the selection process (Brenner & Ramas, 1984; Thompson, 1989). This takes us to our second and interrelated critique of Kanter’s study. She does not seem to acknowledge that the senior managerial concern with predictability and control of subordinates may also be, at least in part, related to the highly competitive and contradictory nature of capitalist organisations and the preoccupation with appropriating private profits through socialised production (Giddens, 1979). It is to this argument that we now turn.

(ii) Management and Control (Without Gender)

In order to examine the managerial preoccupation with predictability and control, it is necessary to refer to labour process theory, a perspective that Kanter explicitly rejects because, she contends, its notion of power is “too simple” (Kanter, 1977, p260). While we would concur that an exclusive focus upon structural forms of asymmetrical power is insufficient, because this would ignore the complex processes and consequences of its reproduction, a complete neglect is equally problematic. In Kanter’s work it results in a very partial explanation of ‘homosexual’ and ‘homosocial reproduction’. By contrast, critical discourses on management seek to make explicit and then to deconstruct management’s extensive power and control in organisations. Inspired by Braverman’s (1974) critical analysis of the labour process, writers such as Burawoy (1979, 1985), Edwards (1979), and Friedman (1977) have developed a political economy of managerial practices in capitalist organisations.
Highlighting the structural economic imperatives of capitalist production, these writers emphasise how managerial practices are shaped by a primary concern to control the labour process. Managers are regarded as the bearers of an economic logic in which labour is controlled and directed for the benefit of profit and sectional interests (Reed, 1989, p11). Seeking to render employees predictable (no matter how problematic this becomes in practice) is therefore central to the managerial preoccupation with control. Charismatic leadership styles and corporate culture initiatives have been identified as important aspects of these control processes (Willmott, 1993; Woolsey-Biggart, 1989).

Increasingly, some labour process analysts have recognised that structural theories of organised power asymmetries tend to attribute a one-dimensional unity, homogeneity and omniscience to management that fails to capture the complex realities of organisational relations and practices. In some ways paralleling current feminist concerns in relation to gender, a debate has developed over whether managers are best seen as a united class in opposition to workers or whether it is more important to focus on the extensive differences that arise between and within managerial functions. Recent critical studies on management highlight the heterogeneity and contingent power basis of management, once treated as an all-powerful and homogeneous function by early labour process writers. They reveal the diversity, discontinuities and differences that can undermine or strengthen relations within and between managerial functions. Vertical and horizontal differences, such as the following, have been shown to be important conditions and consequences of power relations and practices: discipline and function (Armstrong, 1989, 1993; Reed, 1989); hierarchical position and status (Child, 1985; Collinson, Knights & Collinson, 1990; Hyman, 1987); region and country (Clegg, 1990); identity interests and orientations (LaNuez & Jermier, 1994) and biographical and personal characteristics (Nord & Jermier, 1992).

While early labour process studies tended to emphasise the unity and shared interests of managers in the imperative to control labour and extract production and profit, more recent critical writers highlight the vertical and horizontal differences and fragmentations within management. Although such arguments remain unresolved, they demonstrate the importance of examining asymmetrical power relations, managerial control practices and their complex, ambiguous and multiple conditions, processes and consequences. These more sophisticated accounts of hierarchical power relations in many ways undermine Kanter’s earlier critique, revealing the contradictory character of managers’ concern with control and predictability as it is frequently embedded in ‘homosexual’ and ‘homosocial reproduction’. They also demonstrate that the managerial concern with predictability, as outlined by Kanter, is frequently unsuccessful, not least because elitist forms of management (in a gender and class sense) may well have unintended consequences, for example in reinforcing employee resistance (Collinson, 1992, 1994) and hence rendering the workforce even less predictable. Yet, what has frequently been missing from these critical perspectives on management is any correspondingly critical analysis of gender and/or men and masculinities.

To summarise, Kanter’s descriptions of ‘homosexual’ and ‘homosocial reproduction’ enhance our understanding of the unities and differences between men, masculinities, managements and leaderships. However, her reluctance to examine the asymmetrical structures of male and managerial power as forms of domination and control results in an inadequate explanation for men’s continued predominance in management. Unpredictability is a part of all social life. As it is not exclusively a feature of management, it cannot constitute a full explanation for the
persistence of men in management through ‘homosexual’ and ‘homosocial reproduction’. Unwilling to examine organisational forms and processes of domination, Kanter is precluded from considering the way in which masculine and capitalist strategies and practices can both reflect and reinforce senior managers’ concern with employee conformity and predictability and indeed shape their belief that these objectives could be achieved by selecting only men for senior positions.

In the aftermath of Kanter’s work, feminist and labour process literatures have focused specifically upon asymmetrical power relations regarding gender and management respectively. The former have developed relatively sophisticated analyses of the way in which gender divisions and inequalities are reproduced in organisations, but have tended to neglect any consideration of managers’ hierarchical and elite power. Conversely, the latter have critically examined the hierarchical and elite nature of managerial power in twentieth century organisations, but have often failed to consider the interrelated issues of gender and/or men and masculinities. Each of these more critical perspectives is also characterised by unresolved internal debates concerning the analytical significance that should be attributed to the unities or differences between men and managers respectively. While the post-Kanter feminist literature has failed to analyse management, and many labour process critiques of management ignore the gendered character of organisational processes, it is Kanter’s study that reminds us of the importance of an integrated analysis of both men as managers and managers as men.

RECONSTRUCTING KANTER

Although the perspectives of Kanter, most subsequent feminist analyses, and labour process studies neglect important questions, we believe that future research on leadership and management could draw upon their respective insights in a number of important ways. In particular, we see them as useful in highlighting the ambiguous, multiple and contradictory processes through which hierarchical and gendered power asymmetries are reproduced in particular unities (homosexual) and differences (homosocial) within and between men, masculinities, leaderships and managements. Against this background, we emphasise the need to develop understandings of men, masculinities, leaderships and managements through analyses of power relations that incorporate both structure and practice and their interrelations in particular contexts (Connell, 1987; Giddens, 1979). While the hierarchical and gendered power of management should not be underestimated, neither should it be treated as homogeneous or monolithic. It may be frequently more contradictory, precarious and heterogeneous than often it at first appears. We need to take account of vertical and horizontal differences between men, between men and women, and between managers and between leaders, to examine how these differences can be mutually reinforcing as well as in tension, and to explore how they might simultaneously overlap with various commonalities, unities and networks. However much characterised by dominance and subordination, power relations are fragmented, shifting, partial, incomplete and reproduced through multiple subjectivities, disjunctures and contradictions (Kondo, 1990). It is important, therefore, to examine the multiple, ambiguous and indeed fluctuating character of subjectivities as they are reproduced through particular power relations and practices, and thus particular leaderships.

While broadly supporting Kanter’s descriptions of the gendered exclusion of managerial selection practices, we suggest that analyses of contemporary workplace practices need to examine the asymmetrical, differentiated and shifting character of power relations. One important means of revealing the asymmetrical power of men managers and their persistent domination of leadership and senior managerial
positions is to examine the *gendered* nature of women's experience in management. Recent examples here include Martin's (1990) study of a woman manager who is forced to organise a caesarean operation to fit in with both the launch of a new product and the highly masculine expectations of senior management, and Sheppard’s (1989) analysis of women managers' fundamental difficulties in seeking acceptance within contradictory male-dominated managerial hierarchies. Similarly, in examining why women leave managerial jobs, Marshall (1995a, 1995b) found that disillusionment with senior male managers was a primary influence on their decision. Feeling isolated, excluded, placed under attack and/or continuously being tested, women managers complained about the male-dominated nature of organisational cultures, characterised by hostile, tense relationships, isolation and stress, unbalanced lifestyles and highly aggressive, sometimes vindictive territorial and status-conscious processes (Jackall, 1988). Examining the multiplicity of women's organisational experience, Gherardi (1995, p11) highlights the interrelationship between male domination and militaristic metaphors in many business practices which reverberate with "the great male saga of conquest (of new markets) and of campaigns (to launch new products)" with men managers defining their potency through performance figures. Together, these studies disclose women's experience of the frequently persistent and interwoven asymmetrical gendered and hierarchical power relations within management.

These gendered power relations can also be addressed through a critical examination of the authority, networks and practices of men in senior positions. There are a multiplicity of differences between men and management which often reflect and reinforce both the unities of homosexual reproduction and the potential competition and conflict of homosocial reproduction. First, we need to recognise the multiplicity of leaderships and managements. There are many levels of management from junior trainees to senior executives and boardroom directors. Second, leadership and managerial masculinities can also take a variety of forms, such as: authoritarian/autocratic; entrepreneurial; bureaucratic; charismatic; paternalistic; participatory and/or highly informal (Collinson & Hearn, 1994). Similarly, Kerfoot and Knights (1993) contend that paternalism and strategic management are concrete manifestations of historically-shifting forms of masculinity in operation. They suggest that 'paternalistic masculinity' and 'competitive masculinity' have the effect of privileging men vis-à-vis women, ranking some men above others, and maintaining as dominant certain forms and practices of masculinity.

Empirical research undertaken by one of us on sex discrimination in selection (Collinson, 1987, Collinson *et al.*, 1990) supported many of Kanter's observations. Men as managers frequently invested in a diverse range of masculine managerial discourses through which they simultaneously united with other men (colleagues, superiors and candidates) and differentiated themselves from women. Managers frequently associated men and masculinity with production and rationality. For example, male managers who articulated a 'hard nosed' entrepreneurial approach to business which prioritised profits, production and costs often preferred to appoint or promote men because they believed that women could get married, pregnant and/or leave to follow their husband's career. Many of these male managers treated pregnancy in particular as a deep-seated 'threat' to their entrepreneurial business practices. For them, it simply seemed 'rational' and 'good business' to select men whenever possible. In reflecting and reinforcing their sense of gendered difference from women and shared identification with other men, these masculine entrepreneurial assumptions and practices were a crucial source of identity and power for some men managers. They embodied deeply held cultural beliefs that
management is intrinsically a masculine function requiring ‘hard’ decisions and ‘tough’ actions.

Paternalism was an equally prominent, but less overtly entrepreneurial, masculine managerial practice of control found in the research. Emphasising the personal, moral and interdependent nature of work relations, paternalism draws on the familial metaphor of the authoritative, benevolent and wise father figure. For example, paternalistic men managers would try to justify sex discrimination on the grounds that they were ‘protecting’ women. Typically, these managers argued that it was ‘unfair’ to subject women to the ‘dangers’ of sales, particularly in dealing with male clients ‘whose minds would not be on business’. Paternalism constituted a gendered form of managerial control that used the disguise of welfarism. It not only united men managers and resulted in the exclusion of women, but also often facilitated a bond or identification between male selectors and men job-seekers.

Extensive informality was also found in the routine interactions between men managers, which often focused upon non-work issues such as sexuality, sport, entertainment and drinking alcohol. Frequently articulated through explicit and sexist humour and joking (Collinson, 1988, 1992), these informal dynamics were especially important in uniting men managers. In several cases, line managers expected women personnel managers to conform with and even engage in their quite explicit double entendres and informal joking practices. We have discussed elsewhere how men’s sexuality is often pervasive and unchallenged in contemporary organisational practices (Burrell & Hearn, 1989; Collinson & Collinson, 1989; Hearn & Parkin, 1995). Equally, research suggests that men managers can mismanage cases of sexual harassment as well as engage in the sexual harassment of women colleagues (Collinson & Collinson, 1992, 1996). Further analyses need to examine the discourses and practices of men managers in relation to workplace sexuality and sexual harassment. These informal masculine discourses, networks and practices can also unite men managers across as well as within particular organisations. Managers and salespeople spend a great deal of time negotiating with the buyers and sellers of supplies, components and products in other firms along the supply chain. The informal dynamics in these negotiations can be as influential in securing good deals as price-fixing. Managers’ informal social skills and the perks they can offer could be an important competitive advantage. For example, it is common for the sales process to include the provision of complimentary tickets to major sporting events and to involve ‘away days’ to country clubs. Such attempts to integrate sport with business, reflect and reinforce specific shared masculinities that can unite many men in management while excluding women.

Hence, while Kanter highlights an important organisational dynamic sustaining men as managers and managers as men, ‘homosexual reproduction’ is perhaps more complex, multiple and indeed gendered than she acknowledges. Managerial styles and masculinities are diverse, differentiated and might well shift over time. Equally, they are likely to overlap in practice. Specific managerial masculinities, such as paternalism, may not only reinforce the power of those men concerned but also confirm the ‘rights’ of both management and men to manage and to lead. Yet, the organisational power of men, leaders and managers may also be highly contradictory and more fragile than it at first appears. Here again, Kanter’s arguments regarding ‘homosocial reproduction’ perhaps do not go far enough in addressing the complex, multiple and gendered nature of these processes. We emphasise the importance of differences between men and management particularly in reflecting and reinforcing inter and intra-managerial tension, competition and conflict (which in turn can strengthen unities between certain men). Kanter seems to
underplay the level of hostility that can exist within male-dominated managerial hierarchies. We argue that the depth and extent of the unities between men managers should not be overstated, for in many cases they may be more precarious, shifting, superficial and instrumental than they at first appear.

Differences between men, masculinities, managers and corporate leaders are not merely concerned with the 'homosocial reproduction' of men with particular social backgrounds. They may also be based on economic, political, functional and strategic differences, divisions, conflicts and competition within organisations. Several studies have discussed the extensive nature of intra-managerial competition and functional rivalry. Armstrong (1984, 1986) explores the conflicts and tensions between the managerial professions of accountancy, engineering and personnel to secure ascendancy for their own approach to the control of the labour process. In Anglo-American companies, it is common for specialists in finance and accountancy to predominate in management, while in Germany it is engineers who frequently occupy senior positions. These inter-functional struggles might also reinforce gender divisions and subordinate women, as Legge (1987) illustrates in her historical analysis of the development of personnel management in the UK as 'women's work'. Similarly, the previously mentioned research on sex discrimination (Collinson et al., 1990) also identified considerable tension and conflict between personnel and line managers regarding the implementation of both particular selection procedures and equal opportunity practices (Collinson, 1987). Such inter-functional tensions were usually reinforced by gendered assumptions of the line manager as 'producer', 'provider' and breadwinner for the organisation and the human resource manager as dependent, domestic and organisational 'welfare worker'. Hence managerial differences and tensions are often both horizontal and vertical. Pecking orders and status inequalities, which may well be shaped by gender dynamics, frequently exist in the managerial division of labour.

One of the primary reasons for the fragility of these unities between men managers is the extent to which a more individualistic careerism can also simultaneously characterise their practices and reinforce these status differences. Managers are frequently found to be highly sensitised to career advancement. For men in particular, careerism is often seen as synonymous with the gendered notion of the family breadwinner. This dominant orientation to paid work almost inevitably creates tensions for managers between their contradictory concerns to both cooperate and compete with one another (Offe, 1976). Excessive personal ambition may reinforce a highly instrumental and calculative orientation to workplace relations, a tendency to engage in impression management (Giacalone & Rosenfeld, 1991), and a preoccupation with competitive strategies intended to differentiate and elevate self while negating others. In turn, this can reinforce differences and divisions between older men managers who seek to retain the status quo, and their younger male counterparts who may be pressing for change (Roper, 1994). Accordingly, men managers' relationships with other men can be characterised by antagonism, suspicion and competition.

In the 1990s especially, managers may also be highly concerned with retaining a job and/or their elite status and fringe benefits (Smith, 1990). Processes of 'delayering' have dramatically reduced levels of middle management, intensifying the insecurity of those who remain (Cascio, 1993). In cases where managers have retained employment despite their job disappearing, many have suffered demotions and reductions in material and symbolic compensation (Collinson & Collinson, 1995). Surviving managers are increasingly subject to more tightly controlled performance targets, work schedules and fixed term, insecure contracts. In the
context of shrinking opportunities in managerial hierarchies, the progress of one manager may well be purchased at the cost of another. The flattening of hierarchies in the 1990s may have intensified differences and divisions between those managers in very senior, leadership/strategic positions and those lower down whose performance is increasingly monitored and evaluated and whose jobs are increasingly vulnerable. Hence, the changing nature of organisations and managements in the 1990s requires more sophisticated analyses that incorporate the contradictory and ambiguous practices through which are often reproduced the authority and status of men as managers and leaders, and managers and leaders as men. While Kanter highlights conformity pressures on management, her account seems to underplay the tensions that can characterise inter- and intra-managerial relations. By developing a deeper analysis of asymmetrical power relations, the pecking orders and status tensions within management and between managerial functions become more evident.

For ambitious (male) managers and would-be leaders; such tensions are not confined to employment. The workplace pressures to conform and to compete can also create deep-seated divisions between paid work and home life. The corporate expectations that (men) managers will make 'breakfast meetings', work long hours, meet tight deadlines, travel extensively away from home and move house when required inevitably 'distance' men from their families. Conformity in management may be at odds with domestic responsibilities. These increasingly unrealistic corporate expectations reinforce men managers' dependence upon the support of wives to manage all domestic and familial matters, which in turn can lead to stress, illness and even death for both men and women. Hence although managers are employed to control the labour process, it seems that they can also be controlled by it, particularly where they invest heavily in gendered and hierarchical identities that differentiate and confirm them as upwardly mobile 'successful' men.

CONCLUSION

This paper has highlighted the importance of examining leadership, management, men and masculinities. It has sought to challenge mainstream/malestream perspectives by revealing their neglect of gendered and hierarchical power relations and their mutual embeddedness in managerial discursive practices. Examining the work of Kanter (1977, 1993), we emphasised the analytical importance of the unities and differences between men, masculinities and managements. In mutually reproducing and constructing one another, these unities, differences and their interrelations often simultaneously characterise organisational power relations and practices. Reviewing more critical studies of gender and management, we also revealed explanatory weaknesses in Kanter's argument, particularly by examining the interwoven significance of the asymmetrical power of men and managers and its mutual reproduction in organisational practices. Yet these critical studies parallel mainstream perspectives in their failure to examine specifically the interrelations between men, masculinities and managements. This neglect is a condition and consequence of a dualism in the critical literature between those studies that examine the power of either men or management but not both. The persistence of this dualism inevitably limits understanding by excluding central dimensions of power relations from consideration. A similar critique could be developed from the standpoint of race and ethnicity (Bell & Nkomo, 1992; Nkomo, 1992). Seeking to develop an analytical framework for future research, this paper has therefore explored some of the vertical and horizontal unities and differences between men, masculinities, leaderships and managements as they can be reproduced in organisational power relations and practices.
Our challenge to dominant analyses of leadership and management raises a whole series of further issues to be addressed (Collinson & Hearn, 1994, 1996a). First, there are important questions regarding men’s domination in social relations more broadly. For example, how is men’s power in management and corporate leadership maintained by the gendered structuring of largely unpaid domestic work and childcare? What are the implications for both women and men of the growing encroachments of organisational business into personal and domestic time? How does men’s domination of management assist in the reproduction of patriarchy and the persistence of job segregation? Second, increasing attention to international leadership and management practices (Hickson & Pugh, 1995; Hofstede, 1993) not only confirms men’s global domination of the function, but also re-emphasises the importance of differences (and unities) between various forms and meanings of management in diverse countries and cultures (Hickson, 1993; Hofstede, 1989). Anticipating future trends towards globalisation, Calás and Smircich (1993) predict that women’s entry into managerial positions will be confined within the national level of organisations while men appropriate the more powerful and prestigious managerial posts at a global level. Such potential developments require further analysis.

Third, our arguments raise important issues regarding women’s experience of leadership and management. Do women continue to be treated as tokens? And/or will they be able to challenge conventional malestream and hierarchical notions of the meaning of leadership and management? Organisational power relations and the career orientations of individual women could operate in such a way as to reduce female managers’ willingness to resist dominant workplace masculinities. As Calás and Smircich (1993) imply, the presence of ‘women in management’ may not, in itself overcome, and could help to legitimise and even reinforce, the deeply-entrenched middle class masculinities that so often seem to characterise managerial discursive practices. Fourth, our approach also raises the question of whether it is possible for men leaders and managers to reformulate their practices in ways that respond to feminist critiques (Hearn, 1989, 1992a, 1994). For example, there are important connections within management hierarchies between particular masculinities and claims to professional expertise that may be deeply embedded and difficult to change (Burris, 1996; Lehman, 1996). Discourses of professionalism frequently reflect and reinforce masculine power, identity and conflict within and between managerial functions. Similarly, the current vogue of Total Quality Management requires (men) managers to ‘empower’ employees in ways that might be antithetical with their conventional masculine and managerial practices. Quality programmes also demand a greater time commitment from employees, thereby reinforcing their distance from family and domestic relations (Collinson & Collinson, 1995).

Finally, we believe that these issues suggest major changes in leadership and management scholarship itself (Morgan, 1981). Paralleling the managerial function in modern corporations, theorising and teaching on leadership and management until recently has remained very much a domain of men. This, in turn, raises important questions: what perceptions and priorities are emphasised by men teachers and theorists of leadership and management (Sinclair, 1995)? What issues are thereby neglected? What are the implications of seeing Business Schools as another sphere of men’s domination? Why do men as leadership gurus and management scholars (in various sub-disciplines) find so many ‘good reasons’ for avoiding these issues? To what extent are theorists thereby reproducing precisely the same, highly instrumental careerist practices that are so evident in corporate
business? These self-reflexive questions speak to the very heart of leadership and management practice, teaching and theorising. Not least, they critically examine what counts as ‘theory’ and ‘knowledge’ and how these are developed, written, refereed, published and circulated. The practice of academic critical self-reflexivity, we argue, is an important precondition for the development of our understanding of leadership. The deconstruction of power in organisations is inextricably linked to the more reflexive processes involved in the deconstruction of self. For all these reasons, it is important to develop a critical analysis of the enduring dominance and interrelations of men, masculinities, leaderships and managements. The power and practices of leaders and managers as men and men as leaders and managers constitute a persistent, but frequently neglected, feature of organisational life that requires further critical attention. Such a critical focus on men and leadership is necessary in changing the relationship of women and leadership, not only theoretically, but also politically and practically.

Footnotes

1 Parallel arguments have underpinned recurring policy disputes within feminism about the relative merits of treating women as similar to or different from men (see e.g. Banks, 1981; Gilligan, 1982; Liff and Wajcman, 1996). This ‘sameness/difference’ debate has focused upon the strategic implications of campaigning for equal or special treatment in the workplace.

2 While deterministic arguments that give analytical primacy to structural dimensions of organisation can be heavily criticised, particularly for neglecting culture, agency and subjectivity, it is equally important to try to avoid collapsing into the other side of this dualism, namely a form of voluntarism which seeks to deny the asymmetrical nature of hierarchical and gendered power relations.

3 Moreover, the numerous American and English scandals in the 1980s involving senior executives and finance capitalists suggest that the gendered selection processes described by Kanter are rather ineffective even on their own terms in securing stable and trustworthy employees.

4 For example, in an otherwise insightful article, Willmott (1987) criticises several influential empirical studies of managerial work (Dalton, 1959; Kotter, 1982; Mintzberg, 1973) for their neglect of the institutional conditions and consequences of managerial work. Yet there is no consideration in this critique of gender relations or men and masculinities. Failing to acknowledge that the ‘politico-economic relations of power’ could be gendered in crucially important ways, this analysis exemplifies the wider neglect of gender in much of the labour process literature and other more broadly critical studies of management (Linstead, Grafton Small & Jeffcutt, 1996; Reed, 1989).

5 This, in turn, raises questions about managerial commitment and loyalty to employing organisations vis-à-vis the profession and professional associations. Here again, the relevant literature on the changing nature of professions in late modernity, notions of ‘expert power’, ‘knowledge workers’ and ‘the politics of expertise’ largely neglects gender issues broadly and questions of men and masculinities particularly (Reed, 1996).

REFERENCES


Sexuality in Leadership*

Amanda Sinclair
University of Melbourne, Australia

ABSTRACT

This article argues that embedded in understandings of effective leadership are assumptions of sexuality. For many men, ‘doing’ leadership also accomplishes sexual identity, specifically a tough heroic masculinism. Drawing on research and interviews with women and men executives, I seek to make visible the equation of leadership and a particular masculine heterosexuality and the ways women’s sexualities are censored by current constructs of leadership. The paper explores meanings of sexuality for executive women and proposes a model which maps two determinants of positions women can adopt in reconciling sexuality with leadership roles. Interview data is used to elucidate these positions. The paper concludes by arguing the need to develop a woman-centred discourse of sexuality in leading. Instead of women struggling to assert their leadership against a norm of masculinism, they may then be able to bring their sexual as well as their intellectual selves to their leadership roles.

The study of leadership has, in general, been blind to sexuality. Although increasing attention has been paid to gender in, and gendered constructs of, leadership (Calas & Smircich 1991; Loden 1985; Rosener 1990), theories of leadership have largely ignored sexuality. For example, Bass and Stogdill’s (1990) Handbook of Leadership, which runs to over 1000 pages and accommodates modest entries on gender, masculinity and sex-role stereotypes in leadership research, fails to include any mention of sexuality.

Research into the Australian executive culture reveals that, for some men, being a leader and being powerful is also an accomplishment of sexual identity (Sinclair, 1994). Enacting leadership behaviours also produces an heroic heterosexual masculinism. Though both sexuality and leadership have been the subject of exhaustive separate research, the connections between the two remain largely neglected (sexuality, organisation and management have been researched by Burrell 1984; Burrell 1987; Collinson 1992; Hearn & Parkin 1987; Hearn, Sheppard, Tancrid-Sherif & Burrell 1989; Pringle 1988, among others).

This article explores evolving conceptions of sexuality and leadership, defining sexuality more broadly than sex, sexual preference or physiology, to include the “physical, emotional, social and intellectual characteristics...that are manifest in (a person’s) relationships with others” and that reflect gender orientation. Sexuality is argued here to be potentially pivotal to leadership, because it combines conscious and unconscious elements in an expression of who one is. Exploring sexuality in leadership

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Sexuality in Leadership

reveals one reason the relationship between them has been neglected in management theory is that men's sexual behaviour has been assumed and normalised in organisational life. It has been the entrance of women managers into male executive domains which has made visible and problematic the production and perpetuation of sexualities in organisational life. Correspondingly, sexuality as a 'problem' has been seen as one which women bring to organisations and which women need to manage.

Gutek argues that, from an organisational standpoint, "sex at work has little to recommend it" (1985, p124). However, as she explores, whether sex is bad depends on by whom and how sex is defined and initiated. If sex is defined as sexual harassment and it occurs in a sexualised workplace where women are scarce but employment opportunities are few, then sex is bad for the work of these women. It lowers their job satisfaction and affects other organisational outcomes such as productivity. However, in this article I seek to show that sexuality has always been effective for leadership when it has been combined with power and it has legitimised male sexuality.

Further, the way forward lies neither in banishing sex from work, nor in banishing sexuality from leadership. As noted by Burrell and Hearn (1989), the belief that sex can be eradicated from workplaces, 'like scurvy', is a dangerous view which equates sex with sexual harassment and interprets disruptive sex as women's sex. The solution of minimising or camouflaging sexuality in leadership is also the wrong one - for women, and for the future of leadership and organisations. The article concludes with the need to help women redefine and reposition their sexualities as a legitimate facet of their work of leading organisations. This entails the creation of a women-scripted discourse of sexuality - one which recognises the multiple and different meanings of sexuality for women. It requires understanding how women executives connect their womanly, sexual selves to their leadership selves, and how power shapes that process.

RESEARCH APPROACH

The ideas presented in this article are based on interviews with eleven senior executive women, in addition to the interviews with eleven male chief executives for Trials at the Top (Sinclair, 1994). About one third of the women are chief executives of small or medium sized organisations. The remaining two thirds are women working, or until recently working, within the top two to three layers of corporations, and who have 'had the ear' of the Chief Executive Officer if they needed it. Apart from this in common, there is considerable diversity in the sample. The women are spread in age from mid-thirties through to their fifties. Seven have children: in several cases still young children requiring care; in other cases teenagers; and, in the remaining cases, independent though still important and influential in mothers' lives. Six are married or in stable relationships, with men or women, while others live alone though surrounded by a network of friends, family or both.

The overall research explores the ways women bring their sense of themselves, as women, to executive roles. For this article, specific questions of sexuality are investigated, how women interpret the meaning of sexuality within the framework of their executive personas. They offered a wide range of responses - from anecdotes about children to incidents of sexual attraction; accounts of harassment and affairs; images of circumstances in which they felt good about themselves; circumstances in which they had observed, or overstepped, a sexual boundary which they or others had erected at work. When asked, they inserted sexuality into their pictures of themselves and their workplaces in very different ways - and this was what I was interested in exploring. It is important to note that this is a small sample. The findings which are
drawn should be treated as suggestive and an invitation to further testing and analysis, rather than conclusive.

My interest in how other women enact their sexual selves when in leadership roles has also been nurtured by my own experience and informed by a broader research agenda than the one described here. It has grown out of a sense of frustration at having, I perceived, to become somebody else in order to be taken seriously as myself. I felt I had to hide much of the person I was in order to operate at a 'leadership' level. A retired male Chief Executive Officer, who had read something of mine, said when he met me, "I thought professors had to be old and big". I have found myself defending my achievements as proof of leadership, aware that it rarely consoled those feeling a discrepancy between me and their image of leaders.

This experience has fuelled a commitment to illuminating the diversity of ways in which women express who they are, as women, in leadership roles. It involves making explicit the sexualised way leadership is defined. I hope it will also create space for women to be leaders in a much wider range of ways than they are able to be at present. Instead of women struggling to assert their leadership against a norm of masculinism, they may be able to be themselves in the fuller sense, bringing their sexual as well as their intellectual selves to their leadership roles.

SEXUALITY

A common complaint is that contemporary society and social theory has sexualised everything. This might have been a reason to keep the study of leadership free of inspection from a sexual perspective. But leadership's escape from being sexualized should not be construed as comforting reassurance that sexuality is not important in leadership. On closer examination, what is revealed is that the concept of leadership is not neutral to sexuality, but sexuality-blind.

However, because of the prevalent commodification of sexuality with all its damaging consequences, we need to recognise the dangers of launching into this intricately-theorised terrain. Social theorists and feminists have revisited and reconstituted psychoanalytic understandings of sexuality (Chodorow, 1994; De Beauvoir, 1953; Foucault, 1981; Irigaray, 1993; Lacan, 1966; Mitchell, 1975). I draw only on the fundamental insights of that work in this article. Mitchell (1982, p2), in introducing Lacan's work, argues that sexuality should never be equated with biology or genitality. Rather sexuality is "always about psychosexuality" - an expression, conscious and unconscious of who one is, with particular emphasis on physicality, gender identity, aspiration and fantasy. Connell's (1987) useful construct of sexual character as a bundle of "temperaments, characters, outlooks and opinions" also locates sexuality in the mind, as well as the body, and anchored to identity. Expressing one's sexuality is a source of satisfaction. However, this can arise in many ways and from various sources - some of which are legitimised, while others are not.

This definition of sexuality accommodates a multiplicity of meanings: sexuality as simultaneously good and bad; as willed and as imposed; as imprisoning and potentially liberating. The definition is purposefully wide: a loose web, to capture obscured or delegitimised meanings of sexuality. It enables us to surface the link between an assumed sexuality and hegemony in leadership theory and practice, and reveal the suppression of other sexualities. As Pringle (1988) so powerfully explored in her study of secretaries and their bosses, while male heterosexuality is assumed and coterminous with organisational interests, women's sexualities at work are often viewed as disruptive (1992, p99):
Men are seen as rational, analytic, assertive and competitive, but not as sexual beings. Women, on the other hand, are seen in almost exclusively sexual terms and it is they who are assumed to 'use' their sexuality at work.

Gutek's research (Gutek, 1985; Gutek & Morasch, 1982) also reveals the extent to which men's sexual behaviour in organisations is taken-for-granted, labelled and understood as normal boisterousness. Sexual behaviours by men will thus be described as 'boys being boys', 'letting off steam' or 'being part of the team' - and are therefore constructed as conducive to organisational performance. These behaviours then become entrenched in cultural rituals, symbols and practices (Collinson, 1992; Sheppard, 1989). Separating hegemonic and marginalised sexualities encourages us to contest the solution that requires women to manage their sexuality, by camouflaging and keeping it 'under control' or, in the final instance, removing themselves altogether from any position of power and influence.

A further part of my purpose in retrieving the concept of sexuality was to find a way around what might be called the femininity-feminist impasse. In the context of management, masculinity and femininity are not equally balanced opposites. Masculinity is valorised and reinforced when associated with management. Femininity, on the other hand, is so out of place when we think of management that it borders on the absurd. As Swan (1994, p106-7) notes:

To distinguish between managers of different genders, we talk of managers, and women managers. The concept man manager makes little sense... A woman must disassociate herself from those features which define her femininity in other spheres...(women) have to reproduce a management self which is symbolised by the opposite of what they are supposed to be.

Femininity remains a pejorative term among most managers because it conveys the opposite of leadership. If there is one thing which has often united feminists and liberal women managers it is the desire to avoid the label 'feminine', because it simultaneously defines one as ineffective. At the same time, women's reluctance to be labelled 'feminist' (Weiner, 1995) has also been widely noted, because of its connotations within patriarchal discourse. Thus the conversion of femaleness within the dominant discourse into radical extremism (feminism) or frivolous ineffectiveness (femininity), leaves women with few ways of describing their womanliness that are not liabilities from a leadership perspective.

Marshall found that "(m)any women now consciously want to take who they are as women into organisations" (1984, p232). The women interviewed in my research similarly endorsed the importance, to them, of a kind of powerful womanliness, a strong sense of self anchored to physicality and identity, for which I propose the concept of sexuality.

LEADERSHIP

One of the most distinctive things about the study of leadership is that it is densely studied, yet poorly understood. The more we seek to know it and have it, the more elusive it becomes. Our passion about leadership is fuelled the more it plays hard to get. Calás and Smircich (1991) have neatly demonstrated how this seductiveness permeates male writing about leadership: perhaps pursuing leadership is the ultimate romance for some men.

Within this context of a vast industry since classical times of male entrancement with leadership, it is all the more striking that the study of women and leadership is a new endeavour. As Nieva and Gutek note (1981, p83), "leadership research has been
concerned with men leading other men". Although there has been passing attention given to men leading women, it has been men in charge of other men that has captured the imagination of researchers and biographers and spawned their predilection for military and sporting exemplars. The twin tests of leadership have surely been the capacity of men to stand above other men.

Few women have been recognised as political leaders. Adler (1995) has recorded around twenty female presidents and heads of state since 1960. Further, the contributions of these women have often been marginalised in political commentary which portrays them as agents of their fathers or husbands and therefore leaders by default. In business, there is a similar process at work whereby women's performance in leadership roles is frequently redefined as something less than leadership.

Why have there been so few women leaders? Some research concludes that how men and women behave as leaders is not very different (Powell, 1988) and that women, therefore, have 'what it takes' to lead. An alternative explanation is that men and women are perceived differently as leaders. Summed up as 'think manager-think male', Schein's (1973, 1975) research demonstrates that effectiveness as a manager is attributed, and is attributed more readily to men by both men and women. Women exhibiting the same behaviours as men are not judged as equally authoritative nor as having 'leadership' (Nieva & Gutek 1981; for a summary of recent studies see Wilson, 1995).

Research thus indicates that leadership, as well as management, is sex-typed. Leadership is an attribute that observers readily associate with men but often only through a conscious act of counter-intuition, with women. The masculinity of leadership then becomes perpetuating - the more men are seen to possess leadership qualities, the more status and influence they are accorded, the more they can command resources, the more formal opportunities as leaders they are offered, and the easier it is for other men to be recognised as having 'leadership potential'. This self-perpetuating loop puts great pressure on women to be like men in order to be judged as 'real leaders'.

Leadership, sexuality and self-esteem

Leadership theory has been built on a bedrock of association between constructs of achievement and masculinity. Masculinity was measured and operationalised in psychological tests, such as the Bem Sex Role Inventory (1974), in opposition to femininity. Further, psychological research indicates a strong correlation between individuals' self-esteem, masculinity and achievement (Bem, 1974, 1981), on the one hand, and between self-esteem and leadership on the other. For men, sexual identity as masculinity and self-esteem have the potential to be correlated and mutually reinforcing in leadership (Figure 1).

In contrast, a strong sense of sexual identity can be a liability for women in leadership roles. Schein (1973, 1975) has noted that attractiveness tends to increase the likelihood of a woman being sex-role stereotyped as frivolous, as tokens or as sex objects (Kanter, 1977). Further, Gutek and Morasch (1982) explain how sex and sexuality for women who are a minority in job-roles can prompt sexual harassment. They use the concept of sex-role spillover to show that when there are one or two women among many men (as is commonly the case in management roles), the sex of the women, rather than other attributes, becomes salient. In contrast to many men, who experience a reinforcing relationship between sexuality, self-esteem and leadership, women may have to work to establish leadership by decoupling their sexual identity from their leadership persona or minimising the salience of their sex. Traditionally women have accomplished this by, for example, dressing innocuously or
cultivating an androgynous demeanour, by rarely referring to or allowing themselves to be typecast as representing 'women's issues' or 'being one of the boys', by repressing emotion or by selectively absenting themselves from executive rituals (see Sheppard, 1989 for further examples). Through this process the woman leader may be systematically deprived of sources of self-esteem and confidence which would naturally tend to accrue to men in their position.

**Figure 1 Sexuality and Leadership for Men and Women**

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**SEXUALITY AND POWER AMONG EXECUTIVE WOMEN**

In this section a model is introduced which sets out the ways women respond to the complex pressures of leadership and sexuality described above. The model (Figure 2) consists of two dimensions:

1. the extent to which sexuality and sexual persona is recognised as an important part of work self;
2. the extent to which women have some power in how that sexuality is expressed.

The significance of power in shaping sexual options was identified by Kanter (1977) in her seminal *Men and Women of the Corporation*. The way in which women express their sexual selves is negotiated within a cultural and political system, determined by their power (for example, whether they are chief executives), their characteristics, and how they are seen within the organisation (older women's sexuality was seen as more benign in my sample). In contrast to Kanter, however, I
want to suggest that the positions adopted by women are a matter of both power and sexual awareness.

**Figure 2 Women’s Responses to Complex Pressures of Leadership and Sexuality**

![Diagram](image)

Around the two core dimensions are four quadrants. A path through the four quadrants can be portrayed as a path of developing consciousness and accompanied by increasing power. In their account of their careers, women often start out expecting that sexuality will not be an issue at work; they then become more aware of sexual meanings at work while operating within the constraints of male-defined rules of sexuality; thirdly, accompanying the increase of power is often the belief that sexuality can be left behind; and, finally, with power, some women exhibit greater forthrightness in the expression of their sexuality at work. This fourth stage includes examples of sexuality expressed in dress; speaking about different things; speaking in a different way; allowing personal lives and family greater expression at work. In this quadrant women are using power and sexual awareness to write the scripts of how they will be as leaders. The next section draws on the eleven interviews, and, where specified, other research to explore the four relationships of power and sexuality.

1. **Denial of Sexuality/Low Power**

When surrounded by the sexual degradation of women in the construction of masculinism, managerial women often feel they have few choices. They separate themselves from administrative women, which in turn reduces their support base and undermines their managerial effectiveness. Putting together a network - particularly if it includes other women - is often a covert activity to avoid the derision of male colleagues about 'scheming women'. The denial of femaleness is accomplished through dressing to disguise, as well as never mentioning one’s private life, to the point of hiding the fact of having children.

Gordon's (1991) research of American women executives is replete with examples of women learning, and, more frighteningly, being trained, to subjugate any trace of womanliness. Women are counselled to avoid photographs of children on desks, or taking parental leave, for fear that they will be perceived as less than fully committed to their job.

2. **Low Power/ High Sexual Awareness**

In the second quadrant of Figure 2 are experiences of women in sexualised workplaces who adopt, or are compelled to take, a stance of greater sexual awareness. My interviews include examples of women’s sexuality being illuminated and constructed in ways designed to humiliate them or compromise their professional effectiveness. In such cases the ambient culture, and women’s comparative lack of power, control the sexual meanings extracted from the exchange.
Sexuality in Leadership

One woman described a presentation to senior directors in which she argued the need to get more emotions into the way customers were managed. A male colleague suggested she look under the table and between their legs if she wanted to see passion. In another example, the process of women participating in a supposedly objective and 'merit-driven' interview process was transformed into a sexualised beauty pageant by male interviewers, with applicants given a ranking on a sexual scorecard behind their backs.

According to one woman, there is acceptance of a certain sort of sexuality in the workplace:

*There have always been affairs between bosses and their secretaries, and that has been o.k., because it is in the interests of the person with power...sex always comes back to power, well certainly in the workplace.*

Others also describe encountering early in their career a prevalent ethos of affairs between powerful men and subordinate women. When women enter the organisation in managerial roles, the expectation is that they will submit to the same sexual norms. Another interviewee described an environment in which she, along with other unattached women, was assumed to be 'fair game':

*Of course there is a huge amount of that going on...women like me were always sort of fair game, considered to be fair game...my perception was I was considered to be a desirable candidate for an affair, particularly by senior married men, because I was unattached, enigmatic, those sorts of things. I am not saying that about just me in particular. Any intelligent woman in the corporate setting who appears to be unattached is considered to be a candidate for an affair.*

For a number of other women, awareness of sexuality was expressed in a special sense of closeness with senior male colleagues. Although rarely accompanied by physical relationships, women describe times of extraordinary intimacy when they feel 'privileged' and 'moved' to see sides of powerful men which few others see, either men or women. 'Passion' and extreme vulnerability is witnessed. Women's lack of significant power can also earn them special status as confidante:

*They often haven't got anyone to talk to - it is so closed...you know you might be equal in power, but you are not really, because you are a woman...so therefore you are not a threat...So yeah, yeah, a lot of men talk about their lives, and their lives of quiet desperation, about how they hate the games. You are privileged to see the insights of people's lives in a way that not many people do.*

Women describe their own various responses to this magnetic intimacy from getting 'too entangled', to trying to 'keep a little distance'. The challenge is to ensure that one is not stereotyped as 'mother', 'daughter', 'super-bitch' or 'lover' - literally or metaphorically. The risks are high and the experience of conforming to a sexualised role over which one has little control is ultimately an unsatisfying one for women. Although they have a sense of themselves sexually, the scripts available are limited and their power is fragile. One interviewee admitted growing very bored with the role of coaching men "to be a good lover, a good leader, a good this and a good that", and another, tired by the burden of defining the relationship said "you always spend so much energy setting the boundaries".

### 3. High Power / Low Sexuality

In the third quadrant are the experiences of women who have acquired power, but by muting and submerging their sexuality. The research shows that this has typically been
accomplished either by protesting that femaleness is irrelevant to success, or by conforming to a sex-role stereotype, rather than being assertive of one’s own sexual identity.

Examples of this behaviour in this research come from interviewees talking about other women. One describes her devastation when joining a large organisation and approaching the only other senior woman as follows:

I went to see her and walked out of the room in shell shock. I asked her what she thought of equal opportunity. She said it was a load of crap basically. She said that she had been successful ‘because I am a very intelligent capable woman. I have had no privilege because I was a woman’. The worst thing I could have done was go and speak to her, because then she lined me up (as an opponent and to be got rid of)...she has had to give away her female qualities to be successful. Then she looks at me and sees me - what she has had to give up to be where she is - of course she wouldn’t want me around.

In this space women remain predictable and unthreatening to male peers despite their power. The stereotypes encountered in this research include the principled ‘schoolmarm’ (who shades into mother); the thoroughly business-like specialist (whose advice is quarantined to specific fields such as the law); the dutiful daughter prepared to learn from older men; the tomboy ‘kid sister’ who plays along on the fringe of the ‘boys’ games’.

An interviewee conveyed her observations and reservations of other women moving around this troublesome territory:

You are a little bit unsure about how to handle relationships...if you look at, if you like, other women as role models, you see a range of behaviours. So I am very uncomfortable with, or perhaps disapprove of the sort of, you know the kind of dumb blonde kind of stuff. People clearly trying to use feminine wiles...sort of burst into tears to sort of cover up clearly where they haven’t done enough work or you know, up to the mark - that makes me feel very uncomfortable...But equally some sort of professional women are quite flirtatious and seem to get away with that. Some do it very warm... warm to the point almost if you like being flirtatious, but they get away with it...I probably err on the more conservative side...in order not to be offensive, I suppose, so perhaps as I get more comfortable in myself I’ll... it is a matter of relaxing a bit more ...

Interviewees recognised the pull of stereotypes and the difficulty of expressing ones sexuality and womanliness in a way that both repudiated the most oppressive of stereotypes. For some, the way forward lay in self-consciously assuming roles for particular purposes, in making use of the types of influence that stereotypical roles afford (see also Porter, 1994). For other women it lay in selective resistance, occasional assertions and interposing aspects of themselves, to mitigate the impact of the sex-role stereotype foisted upon them. The risk of this approach, as one of Gordon’s (1991, p209) executives described, was that she “eventually became the character she had invented in order to succeed...after a while you become what you’re behaving”.

Another of my interviewees argued that women are leaving senior positions:

not only because they don’t think they are getting the big jobs and the rewards they deserve, but also because they think there is too much bullshit and they are not prepared to prostitute themselves to the extent that they become part of it - that they collude with that game.
A number of women found that enacting a stereotyped sexuality offered short-term influence, but ultimately perpetuated powerlessness.

4. High Sexual Awareness/High Power

The research finally records examples of women combining being powerful and constituting their own meanings of sexuality as part of asserting themselves as women. Images included going to work “and putting the baby under the desk”; sitting up in bed (after delivery of a baby), surrounded by papers; working intensely on a project and relishing the power of being in demand and in control; deflating a stiff and formal process by injecting humour and quirkiness; using physical presence to stand up to a bully in a public forum and enjoying a new respect for doing so.

Particularly for women working in advisory or internal consulting roles to executive teams, a frequent strategy involves being courageous and naming what is going on:

I enjoy being in a position where I can challenge and confront (Why do you like it?) “I think it is stimulating...um...I mean I enjoy provocation... basically say to people I don’t think you are serious about changing anything, in fact I think you are all dead from the neck down”.

In other cases, sexuality was expressed as sexual energy or a sense of ‘being together’, being yourself and whole:

I see sexual identity as sort of sexual energy for me...when I have a decent night’s sleep, which is the sort of thing I pray for...I’ve been for a swim, you know, I’ve had my swim or done some exercise and I’ve eaten reasonably healthily...it raises self-esteem. Then my libido starts to get itself together a bit more. It can’t until I’ve done those things and then I feel like I interact with people with good humour and warmth and you know, sometimes flirting, but sort of with a good energy that can have a sexual overtone and that’s what I think and I think it’s fun and I’ll wear nice things that make me feel good that are never provocative...

Expressing oneself sexually also involved outbursts of assertion, anger, even physical aggressiveness. In her study of anger among women principals, Court (1995) cites accounts of women learning how to vent anger. Among my women interviewees there were also stories of women, locked into a bitter encounter with a male colleague, who found strength in their stature, their voice, their groundedness. In accounts of these stories it is not just mental toughness but a sense of physicality which asserts itself.

Women were attuned to misusing their power in a sexual sense, particularly when a junior colleague or subordinate was involved. In contrast to Pringle’s (1988) findings of men supervising secretaries, powerful women tended to be cautious in situations of attraction. As one interviewee noted: “You just cannot be so close with somebody without some kind of attraction developing”. Another remarked: “Look, you can’t deny sometimes you think, you know, so and so guy is good looking or those sort of fleeting fantasies”. The desire for, or the reality of, sexual relationships with work colleagues is a significant dimension of sexuality for some women, but an aspect of work life which remains taboo.

One woman reflects, with the tinge of regret echoed by a number, on her ‘ethic’ not to become involved:
I have thought a lot about it because as most women I have got myself into really deep relationships at work and it is hard to handle that... we enjoyed each other's company, never touched each other, all the traditional things you do to avoid an intimate sexual encounter with somebody - you know it's dangerous.

Another talks about the 'rules' which she formulated in discussion with a female friend, also a chief executive:

There are a couple of things I have as rules and one is to be very watchful about any sort of overt, any sort of sexual connotation at work...People who work for me have much less power than me, you know...(Another woman Chief Executive Officer) told me this...she said that first of all she thinks it's unforgivable to tantrum and shout and yell at staff. What can they do? I mean they can't do much because you're the boss and I thought she was absolutely right...and the second thing is you can't be sexually provocative or flirty...because they can't do much. They can't say "Look you were a bit revolting or that offended me."

Sexuality also flowed into, or was expressed through, a sense of sexual attractiveness and sexual attraction. Rarely was sexual attraction expressed to the person concerned. Yet a shared victory or special understanding inevitably creates familiarity and intimacy. Occasionally power and influence at work prompted a reappraisal of sexual identity and sexual preference. In other cases, women's experience of power and leadership reflected back into relationships with husbands and partners, acting as a prompt to redefine these relationships (for examples see Marshall, 1995).

CONCLUSION

At the heart of leadership lies an assumed heterosexual masculinism - unexamined but the norm. Women often work in environments in which traditional leadership is supported by, and reinforces, a masculine heterosexual identity. Against this powerful, yet undiscussed ingredient of leadership, women's sexualities have been experienced and cast as a problem - requiring resources and legislation to control in the cases of discrimination and harassment.

Drawing on psychological research, this article advances the proposition that, for some men, strong sexual identity is associated with high self-esteem and confidence, in turn related to leadership. Revealing the connection between masculine heterosexuality and leadership makes visible the ways women's sexual identities are excluded from, or censored by, constructs of leadership.

Leading is, at least partially then, a sexual activity. The implications of this finding are unproblematic for those men who enjoy the self-esteem accruing from a coincidence of a sexual identity and leadership behaviours. In contrast, for many women, leading requires active management of the salience of their sexuality. To this end, this research indicates that some women camouflage their sex or are content to conform to a stereotyped sex role. Such strategies, however, deprive women of a source of self-esteem, the expression of a confident sexual identity.

However, other women seek to enact a broad range of sexualities in their work. In order to capture these meanings a model is proposed which asserts that both women's power and their forthrightness about their sexuality determines how they respond to the complex pressures encountered in leadership roles. For most of the women in this small sample, sexuality is an important aspect of who they are and, under optimal circumstances, an ingredient of their leadership. When they talked
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about their own sexuality and those of other women with whom they worked, they were clear that a sense of one's sexuality was associated with feeling good and being effective. On the other hand, leadership which was contingent on conformity to sex role stereotyping was widely regarded as unsatisfactory.

This article argues for a new discourse of women in leadership - one which introduces notions of womanliness, sexuality and physicality while bypassing the marginalised minefield of femininity. It is hoped this will mandate and strengthen the efforts women are already making to assume leadership roles in more fulfilling ways than is currently possible.

Identifying and valuing women's sexualities as a source of strength and effectiveness in leadership does not only serve women's purposes, though this would, of course, be sufficient justification. Examining the scope of sexuality might also invigorate increasingly arid constructions of leadership and create more space and tolerance for divergent sexualities among men as well as women (Connell 1994). Many researchers and organisation members despair of what Upadhyaya (1995, p42) calls the increasing “desiccation of organisational life”. Fostering a broader understanding and discourse of sexuality in leadership may be a fertile source for the regeneration of organisation.

Footnotes

1 Pringle (1992) has observed that gender and sexuality have been conflated into one concept, or alternatively, that gender studies often ignore sexuality, while those which purport to focus on sexuality ignore gender.

2 In a recent much publicised Australian case, commentators drew the conclusion that sexual affairs were an inevitable outcome of having women working at senior levels and further, that because this situation was created by a woman's presence, they needed to either 'cop it' or 'fit it'.

REFERENCES


Tales of Work: Challenges and Misery

Jan Currie, Trish Harris and Bev Thiele
Murdoch University, Australia

ABSTRACT

Reported here are findings related to career planning and career satisfaction aspects of a larger study conducted into gender and organisational culture at a public university in Western Australia. Women were found to be less likely to plan their careers, while more women questioned the appropriateness of the notion of a career to their work history. Also, while there are those within the university who have power and influence, feel satisfied with their positions of responsibility, and find their work challenging and exciting, this is predominantly a management view. Many staff are far more ambivalent about their careers, and some feel marginalised and unappreciated. None of these staff are in senior management and very few of those who have power and influence are female.

INTRODUCTION

Rothschild and Davies (1994, p589) argue that “organisations need to be seen through a lens of gender, and that a gender lens brings into view fundamental questions about the very structures and process that organisations employ”. This study was grounded in that proposition. It also followed Gherardi’s (1994, p594) argument that “gender is not just located at the level of interactional and institutional behaviour (the gender we do), but at the level of deep and trans-psycho symbolic structures (the gender we think)”. For this reason, the research worked through the voices of women and men positioned at different levels in the university. It attempted to write from the experiences of the actors in a particular situation (Marshall, 1995). As a result, this article deliberately adopts a narrative style when describing participants’ responses.

The research was designed to probe what individuals in the University were thinking about gender and power and how the institution could be transformed. This brings into play Marshall’s (1995, p5) reminder that “gender researchers need as resources complex and subtle theories of organisational and social change which are appreciative of resilience, systemic dynamics and covert and overt power processes”. We found that insights into that complexity were generated by the responses themselves: responses which constantly prompted a re-evaluation of existing theoretical schema.

One measure of the overt power processes is given by the statistics on rank above a certain level in the public universities in Western Australia. The Equity Reports from these four institutions in 1994 showed that general staff women comprised less than 22 per cent of Level 6 and above employee classifications, or earned more than $50,476 per annum. The figures for academic staff revealed that less than 6 per cent held the rank of senior lecturer or above.
These statistics match those from many countries. Lie and Malik (1994), investigating 17 different countries, found that women are still underrepresented in positions of prestige and power in most higher education systems. In some countries, notably the United Kingdom, women now hold fewer senior university posts than they did a decade ago. Leather (1993) comments that in universities women are hardly ever appointed to the very senior positions.

Given this context, the article concentrates on one of our main interests: namely, how women and men, across the university and in different positions, view their careers within the academy. The research was intended to be proactive as well as carrying academic interest in relation to gender and organisational culture. It was designed to suggest ways in which the University could be more conducive to women and thereby improve the overall quality of the working environment for both genders.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Pringle (1995) remarked that women's careers are just 'messier' than men's. They are more dynamic and do not fit into the traditional conception of careers as 'orderly and linear'. In a review of career development literature, Still (1993) concurred that many women do not have the traditional and accepted linear careers that follow a systematically upward trend. Still (1990) also found that Australian women managers and entrepreneurs had mainly 'random' careers with little career planning and a sense that a career arose mainly through chance and opportunity.

Pringle (1990) found that active career planning had not been important for either female or male managers. Likewise Pringle and Gold (1989) found only 20 per cent of females and 28 per cent of males had any sort of career plan. Lack of a career plan is often coupled with a lack of a career path for women in their organisations (Bellamy & Ramsay, 1994; Morrison, 1992). Male managers generally embark on career planning tactics earlier than females (Makin, Cooper & Cox, 1989), and many women managers never set themselves a career life plan (Davidson & Cooper, 1983). Freeman (1990) reported that a large number of women just drift into senior positions without clearly planning their career strategy.

There is evidence that women do not often think of their work as a career (Ellis & Wheeler, 1991), and do not place as much priority as men on getting to the top of an organisational hierarchy (White, Cox & Cooper, 1992). Women tend to be more job - rather than career - oriented, focusing on intrinsic rewards rather than long-term benefits (Hede & Ralston, 1992; Scase & Goffé, 1989). Marshall (1984) found that the female manager’s main ambition was to ensure further opportunities for personal satisfaction. What was important was that each job was meaningful and appropriate within their whole life context.

Smith and Hutchinson (1995) noted that gender differences in career attitudes resulted in markedly different work histories for men and women. Women are more intrinsically motivated (Davidson & Cooper, 1992; Hirsh & Jackson, 1989; Nicholson & West, 1988) and concerned about relationships with people (Bardwick, 1980). In contrast, men's career orientations are more materialistic, status-oriented and goal directed (Nicholson & West, 1988). Women's careers have been described as 'contingent' and the importance of family responsibilities for women has been remarked on by numerous writers (for example, Davidson & Cooper, 1992; Gutek & Larwood, 1987; Smith & Hutchinson, 1995; Still, 1993). Finally, most obstacles to women's careers are seen as lying outside women themselves and in the external environment (one of these being the attitudes of colleagues) and a hostile work
In the academic realm, American studies report that women academics are more intellectually and socially isolated within their institutions than their male colleagues (Johnsrud & Atwater, 1991; Yoder, 1985). They have greater difficulty in obtaining resources to support scholarly activities required for tenure and promotion (Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, 1989). The women are often noted as being good campus 'citizens' but their activities are less valued than their male colleagues (Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, 1989; Jackson, 1990; Strathan, Richardson & Cook, 1991).

METHOD

Our study interviewed a total of 111 individuals, either in small focus groups of between 2-4 people or individually. The interviews were taped, transcribed and entered into NUD.IST for analysis. The individuals comprised a cross-section of the university by rank (senior and junior academics), position (senior managers, middle-level managers, administrative officers, technicians/research officers and secretaries), by areas (Schools, Units and Chancellery) and by gender. A total of 54 academics were interviewed: 23 males and 31 females; 12 senior managers (including members of the senior executive group and Deans, only one of whom was a female); and 45 general staff (13 males and 23 females). More females than males were interviewed because the research was primarily designed to gain greater insight into how women were experiencing their careers within the university. An attempt was also made to interview representatives of the different areas within the university: the sciences and humanities/arts and professional schools, as well as staff from a number of units, such as computing, library and the academic service unit.

The interviews took place in focus groups to generate a dialogue among staff members. They lasted up to one and a half hours and covered the following issues relating to organisational culture: participants' perceptions of the distribution of power and influence; the barriers placed in the way of individuals; networks; job satisfaction; and male and female styles of working. This article deals with the responses relating to career planning and career satisfaction.

The transcripts of the interviews were examined by the research team who developed a set of codes. The three project leaders then analysed the material on a question-by-question basis and coded the responses of individuals within the context of group answers. This was undertaken to develop a thematic understanding of the cultural context from which individual staff viewed the university. Matrices of responses by position and gender were then developed.

RESULTS

Planning for a Career

The notion that a career is, or should be, planned is widely held; even germane to the very etymology of career. The growing influence of corporate management discourses accentuates this idea. Successful, and sensible, people plan. But the practicality of planning - as well as the will to do so - are likely to be influenced by position in the organisational hierarchy, gender, as well as personality. The research team was therefore interested in determining whether staff had planned or did plan, who actually planned, and the influence of gender and position on career development.
Early in the focus group discussion staff were asked whether they had ‘ever sat down and planned their career’. This question was changed slightly for managers and put at a later stage of the interview. They were asked whether they had ever ‘consciously planned’ their career. The responses fell into two groups. There were those staff who, for one reason or another, had not planned a career or did not expect to. In contrast, there were the voices of the ‘planners’ - of staff who had planned in the past or who were now starting to do so.

Staff who questioned the practicality or value of planning outweighed the planners more than two to one (73 ‘problems with planning’ versus 31 ‘planners’). In both groups, however, there was a variety of responses. Four main themes emerged for non-planners. These centred on the influence of family obligations, the question of luck, an ambivalence toward the very idea of planning, and barriers imposed by institutional factors. They can be approximately paraphrased as follows:

- I’ve only been reactive; proactive planning isn’t possible; my family or partner has taken precedence (30 responses).
- It’s mostly a matter of luck or being in the right place at the right time (10 responses).
- Planning is not what it’s all about; it’s too calculative; it’s more important to be responsive (23 responses).
- There are institutional factors which mean I can’t plan for my future; things are too uncertain (10 responses).

The responses of the planners were less diverse, and could be plotted along a spectrum from those who were just starting to plan (13 responses) to ‘strategic’ (12), ‘detailed’ (3), and ‘ruthless’ (3) planning.

Both position and gender affected the pattern of responses. General staff were the most likely to voice doubts about planning (17 ‘doubters’ to 2 ‘planners’); academics were more evenly matched, but still weighted toward the doubters (48 to 27), and managers stood somewhere in between (8 to 2). It was also apparent that within each group, women had a more doubting profile than men.

Approach of General Staff

A member of the general staff - a research officer - most clearly put the case for ‘luck’ as opposed to planning:

I think, well most of life’s really important decisions were made by accident. So no, I’ve never done any planning.

Other general staff spoke of institutional and familial barriers to planning. The main institutional factors were job insecurity and inadequate staff development. A male technician represented a number of others when he said:

I don’t think that there is any real dialogue. There is for academic staff because of staff development and the kinds of relationships that are built up in the school. In terms of general staff there is nowhere you can go to. On contract positions it is sort of difficult even to plan for yourself.

The difficulty of planning a career when there were dependent children to be cared for and/or partners to be considered was raised by a number of general staff. These factors were most often (but not invariably) identified by women. Related sets of traditional expectations, in which class and gender intertwined, made career planning a precarious possibility for others. A female secretary said:
I think that perhaps for our generation that the expectations of what women would do when they work were so different from now. Certainly I can't remember any stage when...anybody talked to me about a career, it was never an option.

Sometimes these traditional barriers translated into a determination to plan: to plan to escape, to find a way out. A male technician reflected that:

When I matriculated from high school...my father believed that the wife should stay home and the boys should have a trade...I had to break away to study...met with much resistance from my family. I spent several years on temporary contracts before...going into mainstream work...(an Australian) University. I planned it that way. I went through quicker because of the interesting jobs I had.

Approach of Managers

Contrary to what one might have supposed, the small group of managers did not emerge as planners (the sceptics actually outnumbered the committed four to one). The managers' reservations centred more on the very idea of planning, less on its associated barriers, and in this way contrasted with the narratives of the general staff. The managers' accounts were weighted toward questions of chance, responsiveness and opportunity. In this vein they argued that careers were/should be formed by 'following interests' or 'responding to opportunity' rather than by systematic planning. The following comments are characteristic of this group:

The only plan that I should ever make is to do something that is a challenge and I enjoy doing.

I don't think you can plan the opportunities but I think that you can plan to be exposed to a certain set of opportunities.

In some instances reservations about the current planning culture were expressed. A male dean reflected that:

It has been very important for me to be involved in what is interesting and not too concerned with the consequences. That may not square well now.

When planning was embraced it was as a necessary imposition, although successful in outcome. One of the deans remarked that:

I think there are various stages where you sit down and make a concentrated effort for various reasons. Certainly on the way up the academic ladder I was told that publications were the name of the game, so I did it. It was as simple as that. It works.

Approach of Academics

While the weight of the academics' responses was still on the side of the doubters (27 planners against 48 voicing difficulties and reservations) the balance was less uneven than it was for either general staff or managers. Indeed, male academics tipped the scale in the other direction (17 planners against 14 doubters).

Most of the doubting voices (21 of 48 responses) were directed toward the 'obligations to families and partners'/reactive' category. Of these 17 came from women. A senior academic female commented that:

I've never looked at the paper and said - well maybe I should apply for this professorship or this job. Partly it's because family is seen by me as more
important and I don't want to disrupt and move and all of those things. So I haven't ever strategically planned.

The next largest group of doubters (13 responses) belonged to the 'ambivalent' category. Here some staff - both male and female - suggested that planning did not square with their idea of academic life. For one senior academic male:

...the culture shift will mean that academics will now take a more careerist approach, whether that is consistent with my model of professional life I don't know.

Finally, questions of 'luck' and 'institutional barriers' were each nominated by academics (7 responses in each instance). In the case of institutional factors the respondents were women, who mentioned the difficulties in obtaining tenure, the PhD struggle, and sparse encouragement. Here female academics joined the general staff (both male and female) who felt that there was a marked lack of institutional support:

All my university teachers were male and nobody presented me with any options.

There hasn't been a forum to help women or Aboriginal women; the structures of professionalism have not been thought out; we have to do it ourselves.

Among the academics classified as 'planners', the greatest number fell into the early or 'milder' stages of the planning spectrum with only a few at the 'determined' end point. Some notion of the range of responses can be gleaned from the following quotes:

I tend to sort of sit down and plan strategically how I am going to manage the next semester, rather than sit down and plan what I'm going to do over the next ten years (Male academic).

Over the course of my career I have sat down and done some quite detailed planning, and that was part of my decision to enter academia and leave industry and part of a very complex career choice (Male academic).

Absolutely no planning until right into a tenurable job and then I did plan. I planned it fairly ruthlessly, I had a lot of ground to make up (Female academic).

Men and Women: Reflections across Position

Gender differences influenced attitudes to planning and were held across position. The profile of female responses was consistently weighted more heavily toward non-planning/doubt than was the profile of men. The ratio of female responses was four to one in favour of the doubters (49 doubters to 12 planners). In contrast, male responses (24 doubters to 19 planners) were more evenly weighted. However, these quantitative differences hide other factors which both united and distinguished men and women. In brief, the responses from women showed that:

• A minority of women (12) were among the ranks of those who were 'beginning to plan' or to 'think strategically':

Yes - my decision to do honours was definitely to do with the idea that I wanted to have a particular career trajectory (Junior female academic).
• Ties with families and partners make planning difficult or impossible for many:

I never have (planned my career) but that's because for 7 years I was...following my husband around the world...I just ended up with temporary contracts for the first part of my career which was already late (Senior female academic).

• Some women planned for balance to provide space for social and community life:

If I could plan, what I would try to plan would be to cut down on different activities, but what I've actually done is to cut down on almost all outside activities. I often think I should be more involved in the Greens...and all these things that I want to contribute to but can't because work tends to take over (Senior female academic).

I never planned a career. I have probably taken a conscious decision not to sacrifice my social life and am somewhat involved in the community because, apart from anything else, you can't remain in touch with the people you are talking to in cultural studies, or whatever, unless you are in some way experienced and connected to such things (Junior female academic).

As already indicated, the responses from men revealed a less ambivalent attitude to planning. Most of the male planners (19 responses in total), however, were in the 'beginning' or 'strategic' categories, and many of them did not welcome the new climate. This group of planners often took planning on board as a political, or even business, necessity:

I think that there has been a bit more planning going on in the last few years particularly since the increased sorts of administrivia...and expectations of what a course would look like...I had to sit down, if you like, and plan...ways in which I could escape these onerous duties. And the ways of escaping this, I decided, was to get research grants (Senior male academic).

I'm thinking of making a business plan out of my career (Senior male academic).

It must be emphasised that such responses were in a distinct minority. Overall, there existed considerable ambivalence toward the very idea of planning, as well as the presence of structural barriers that made planning difficult or impossible for many women and for many general staff, both male and female. In the majority of cases careers twist and turn: they do not run smoothly. This fact appears to have influenced the responses to the parallel set of questions concerning career satisfaction.

Career Satisfaction

Staff in the focus groups were asked to 'think about their career' and to consider 'how satisfied' they were now. The question was again changed slightly for the managers, who, at the end of their interviews, were asked: "Has your career been worthwhile? Overall, how satisfied do you feel? What is the most satisfying thing for you?"

Questioning the notion of a career /career uncertainty

On a number of occasions staff in the focus groups queried the meaning of 'career', questioned whether it applied to them, and whether it was desirable (14 responses in
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All). Such discussions tended to take place spontaneously and precede more direct responses on satisfaction and dissatisfaction. These reflections were influenced by position, level and gender. They were most frequently raised by general staff (8). None of the managers questioned the notion of a career or felt any uncertainty about their future, despite the fact that several were on contracts. The responses fell into the following categories:

- **Questioning Notion of a Career (14)**
  - Not self-evident (9)
  - Higher status? (5)

- **Uncertainty (14)**
  - Instability (7)
  - Contract/No Ph.D (4)
  - No Future (3)

Six responses from female general staff fell into the category of directly questioning the notion of 'career'. The women who talked in these terms did not feel that it was self-evident that they had a career. An answer from a female librarian described this feeling:

*I've been at the same level for thirteen or fourteen years. I've changed my position but not my level. So do I feel satisfied? I feel in a state of flux again because I feel anxious that I could be moved again. There are limited prospects for advancement.*

A female secretary questioned the idea that secretaries can be career-orientated:

*I don't think that any of us are very career orientated. I don't feel career orientated at all. I am quite happy doing what I am doing but I have got lots of other things that I want to do with my life. We would all go do something else if we could easily get paid. There really isn't much future in jobs like this.*

Female general staff also voiced concern about their jobs and their future within the organisation. Yearly contracts were particularly problematic. Two research officers, one female and one male, expressed similar feelings on this score.

*A career? I don't know from year to year whether I have a job the next year. It has been going on like that for nine years. Yes, so career has other kinds of connotations. I just wonder about my future. I would probably like something a bit more stable (Female).*

*There is a trend in the university just to add contract positions, so there is no security at the end of your contract. At any moment funding can end, the mood can change, or the administration can change so that any Dean can restructure the offices and completely shift you around (Male).*

Other staff (14 responses) expressed concerns about having no PhD and being on contract, about completing their PhDs, and facing a future without one.

As well as the 'uncertainty' factor, a few staff (slightly more females than males) questioned the connotations of 'progression to higher status' often implicit in the notion of career. In some instances it was argued a 'job', which might not lead to greater advancement, could be equally rewarding or be seen as a career. For one male academic:
It's difficult to describe what I do here as a 'career', it's more like a 'vocation'. I'm reasonably satisfied with my career because I haven't addressed my career as a career. I do not see it as a part of a career structure whose primary objective is to ensure that I reach higher and higher stages within a hierarchy. I've seen it as an activity in itself. However, increasingly the things that I enjoy doing will be taken from me and replaced with more trivial duties. I project a decline in satisfaction in the future.

There was considerable ambiguity about the notion and possibility of a career. These responses fed into more direct discussions of satisfaction/dissatisfaction.

The satisfaction/dissatisfaction axis

Expressions of dissatisfaction accounted for 87 of the responses; expressions of satisfaction, 64, which fell into the following categories:

- Dissatisfied (87)
  - Petty Work (35)
  - Stress (14)
  - Limited Opportunities (13)
  - Lack of Appreciation (10)
  - Discrimination (9)
  - Out of the Group (4)
  - Dissatisfied but no expressed reason (2)

- Satisfied (64)
  - Intrinsic (25)
  - Exciting/Challenging (12)
  - Opportunities (12)
  - Satisfied but no expressed reason (15)

Prior to a closer examination of their components, three brief comments are offered on the distribution and nature of these responses:

First, expressions of satisfaction or dissatisfaction were influenced by the intersection of gender and position. This was most clearly illustrated in the case of management, both a peak and a male group. Only one manager expressed any kind of dissatisfaction with his career. In contrast academics and general staff voiced dissatisfaction as often, or more often, than satisfaction. Women had a more dissatisfied profile (44 dissatisfied to 20 satisfied responses) than men (42 dissatisfied to 44 satisfied responses). When management is excluded, the ratios come closer (44 to 20 in favour of dissatisfaction for women, and 41 to 29 for men). Over and above these gender/position intersections, there were some categories where either more female responses were identified (discrimination and limited opportunities) or more males were noted (petty work, out of the group and opportunities to build).

Second, satisfaction existed alongside and despite dissatisfaction, and the two feelings were often expressed by the same staff member. Academics predominated here, with their responses pointing to the intrinsic satisfaction obtained from teaching and research notwithstanding the progressive accumulation of administrivia, restriction and 'petty work'.

Third, feelings of satisfaction and dissatisfaction both encompassed a host of interlocking factors. They are reported thematically to provide some sense of the rich and varied picture that emerged.
Dissatisfaction

Among academics, expressions of dissatisfaction outweighed feelings of satisfaction almost two to one (60 'dissatisfied' to 29 'satisfied'). For general staff, expressions of dissatisfaction/satisfaction were more equally matched (26 'dissatisfied' to 19 'satisfied' responses). For management, feelings of satisfaction far outweighed those of dissatisfaction (1 'dissatisfied' to 16 'satisfied' responses).

Stress

This category encompassed a variety of responses (14 in all) relating to lack of time, difficulty in finding balance, pressure of work and feelings of anxiety or 'chaos'. More of these responses (6) came from female academics than from any of our other groups. Such feelings are illustrated by this amalgam of quotes from several senior academic females:

But there's this tremendous panic. I sometimes quite literally feel sick...really trebly, like on the verge of an anxiety attack, even though I know I'm not. I say to myself it doesn't matter...but it's always there. Our jobs are just getting too intensified; the work is too intensified. I come back to my office and it's just a mess and that is very dissatisfying...I have the feeling my office is never going to get straightened up. You have this feeling of doom that you're just going to have to live with this kind of office...and impending chaos. I've got all these things I've got to do; all these phone calls that have built up; all this mail has built up. I still have this panic feeling of so many things to do and that despite knowing that if I don't do it today, it's OK.

An academic male expressed similar feelings due mainly to time pressures:

There is a time crises for most people. We need a minimum of 60 hours a week to cover the work that you are expected to do for the university and it creates enormous strain both within and outside the university. I'm dissatisfied in that I can't do everything that I'm supposed to do, it's just impossible. So I'm constantly treading water just to stay afloat, it seems to me.

Petty work

A number of staff talked about the erosion of their work conditions. In this instance, male academics were the most vocal group (21 responses). Two typical responses, both from male academics, are given below:

I'm frustrated with the ever decreasing resources, and ever increasing garbage that comes down from the powers up the hill...the increasing administrative trivia. I look at what I have to do now compared with even three or four years ago and it's cumulative. I still enjoy teaching and research, but I have far less time to do it and therefore overall I'm less satisfied than I used to be. I'm just frustrated a lot of the time.

I can see a lot of things wrong with this joint that makes me say that I'm dissatisfied. There is a trend and it is a negative trend. We're bargaining away all our conditions. I'm sure next it will be clock in and out and all the rest of it. Since I've been here the administration building has grown in enormity and I'm doing more and more administration as every year passes. Our conditions are eroded every year and we have to increase our output all the time but we don't actually benefit much from increasing that output. More and more is expected by the university for less and less.
Discrimination

None of the managers or male academics and only one male general staff member talked about maltreatment or discrimination of any kind. Allegations of direct discrimination were also relatively low among women (four female academics and four female general staff). While these women cited a number of ways in which they felt they had received biased treatment, some complained specifically about a recent appeal regarding a re-classification case. A female administrative officer said:

I was very dissatisfied with the results of the appeal. I felt that school administrative officers had been dealt with harshly by the external arbitrator and this university. I felt very demoralised.

For one junior academic female, the answer to discrimination and lack of support was resignation:

I feel fairly satisfied now that I've made the decision to resign. Expecting people to teach and do a PhD at the same time, it's so hard to do. There hasn't been enough support for me at this university and there have been subtle ways that I've suffered discrimination.

Lack of appreciation

Ten responses centred on lack of appreciation and/or feelings of disempowerment. Among academics, these were equally divided between males (4) and females (4). Both of the following responses come from senior academic females. They demonstrate these women's views that they were not going to get much further within the university as well as their sense of being unappreciated:

I feel I've left my run too late and I'm running very fast. This university was so late in being willing to acknowledge what I had contributed.

I have a deep sense of frustration that my work is not adequately appreciated and see no way of advancing to Associate Professor. Some of the senior staff would rather see me gone than get promoted.

While only two female general staff talked directly about lack of appreciation, their responses were cast in strong terms. One female administrator said:

It's clear to me that this university doesn't see me as somebody who needs to be nurtured or that I'm 'foreman material' I suppose.

Limited opportunities

There was a feeling that there were limited opportunities for advancement within the university. This was expressed by both academic (6) and general staff (7). It was, however, of most concern to female general staff (5) who face barriers either at the secretarial or the higher administrative levels. One of the most common barriers mentioned was a lack of a university degree. Without such a qualification, women could not move to higher levels within the university. Another problem within a relatively small university was the limited number of higher positions. A typical response came from a female administrative officer:

Administrative positions have very little future. I would have to go outside this university for job satisfaction.
Out of the group

Four male administrators felt that they were not included in the favoured clique and could not advance because of their ‘outsider’ status. One of them expressed it this way:

There appeared to be a favoured clique. I don’t know that I can pin it down. A number of us in my area have been quite frustrated.

Taken together, these and related responses (87 in all) indicated considerable angst on a variety of scores among both academics and general staff. At the same time, and as already indicated, satisfaction co-existed alongside discontent.

Satisfaction

Overall, 64 responses expressed satisfaction in some shape or form. There was, however, a broad difference between those who talked of intrinsic satisfaction (25) and those who described their work in terms of opportunity (12) and challenge (12) as ‘the best years of their lives’, presenting them with ‘opportunities unrivalled by other jobs’ they had held. The first kind of response was more likely to come from academics (19 responses) with only one manager expressing satisfaction on this score. The second was more likely to came from managers (14) and general staff (7) with only three male academics and no female academic voicing satisfaction in these terms.

Intrinsic factors

An approximately equal number of male (10) and female (9) academics, and male (2) and female (3) general staff, said that they gained intrinsic satisfaction from their work. A junior academic male said:

I quite enjoy what I’m doing now. I feel quite satisfied with the treatment I get from the department. They encourage me to do research and I like what I’m doing.

Another male, a senior academic, expressed similar satisfaction. He was located in one of the special research centres and thus protected from the declining resources and erosion of work conditions faced in many parts of the university:

I’m fundamentally employed to do research and I get excellent support from the research centre to undertake that, so in terms of the nature of my work and how that relates to my career, I’m very satisfied, I couldn’t get better conditions in any other university in Australia and possibly for the sort of work I want to do, anywhere else for that matter. So I’m quite satisfied that at the moment my career is as rewarding as I hoped it could be.

In contrast, a senior academic female - who worked in a school with fewer resources - voiced discontent and satisfaction in one breath:

I’m satisfied that I have got to a level in the career that I should be at. I don’t think that I got here fast enough in terms of the kinds of things that I’m doing. I’m interested in the things that I’m doing.

Differently again, a female secretary expressed the satisfaction of enjoying the work she did without feeling any desire to climb higher within the university:

I’m OK, because what I am doing is giving me satisfaction, I’m quite happy with what I am doing. I’m not looking to go a lot further you know...I like the sort of work that I am doing because I have learnt a lot of things and enhanced
my skills and, yes, I am quite happy where I am. I haven't any ambition to be a full-time worker at this stage of my life.

The single senior manager who talked in terms of intrinsic factors spoke of the pleasures of problem solving and of feeling that his abilities were being fully utilised:

I've found my niche. I'm doing a job that I like now. It's a job I'm suited for and am able to do well. It's a combination of things...being able to develop policy and being able to resolve problems. You can address problems and do something about them.

Challenge/Opportunity

As already indicated, senior managers (14) and administrators (7) predominated with these types of responses. None of the academics spoke of 'challenge and excitement' in quite the same way. Some typical responses from this group were as follows:

I've never worked so hard in my life. I just love the challenge. It's the old Chinese curse: may you live in interesting times! I wouldn't want to live in any times that weren't interesting (Male senior manager).

As a relative newcomer to this university I'm enjoying my work and the many challenges ahead give me impetus to work hard. (Male administrative officer).

There is a huge range of things that you get involved in like dealing with personality interests, dealing with the outside world, ministers, and national bodies and that's enormously interesting and exciting. The most satisfying thing for me is if the energy and enthusiasm that I bring to it, lives on after I do (Male senior manager).

The theme of 'opportunities' was taken up by Deans in particular. They talked of opportunities to build programmes and the excitement it brought to them, of the 'best years':

I guess it has been the best ten years of my life. I came and started a programme from nothing and watched it grow into the largest programme in the university. It has been a really exciting time.

It's been overall the most satisfying five year working period in my life so far. It's also a period I could not replicate in my life in any other way that I could imagine.

CONCLUSION

Like others of its kind, this study found that women were less likely to plan their careers and more women questioned the notion of a career. It also indicated, as Pringle (1990) notes, that staff are more likely to question the practicality of planning when their careers are 'contingent' ones and when there is a risk of their positions being terminated.

However, there were those within the university who had power and influence and felt satisfied with their positions of responsibility. They found their work challenging and exciting. Yet equally there were staff who felt marginalised and unappreciated. None of these staff happened to belong to management. Very few of those with power and influence were female.
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The marginalised were not a distinct or distinctive group. They comprised both general and academic staff, and males and females. The variety of their responses, traversing and escaping the boundaries imposed by gender and position, bore witness to their heterogeneity. The unity which existed was imposed by a shared feeling of being ‘on the outer’, relatively powerless, and not adequately acknowledged. It also lay in common expressions of stress, consequent on the general decline in working conditions, increasing workloads and burgeoning administrivia.

What might be called the ‘peak culture’ - the senior management - were separated from the ‘rank and file’ in at least two respects: first, in the managers’ discourse, which was cast in terms of excitement and challenge, and second, in the fact that the managers comprised a specific and separate group, sharing common patterns of speech, aspiration, and political interpretation. They were sharing a culture so distinct as to be almost tangible. It was also, of course, a learned culture which recruited new members. The question, then - and one that can only be posed here - is why, how, and with what consequences it seemed to have become so separate from the rest of the university?

Footnotes

1 In 1995 the authors, together with James Bell, Anne Butorac, Annie Goldflam and Harriett Pears, investigated a slice of the organisational culture at a public university in Western Australia to discover the ways in which women and men interacted in that culture. They also sought to discover whether there were differences among academic, general and managerial staff in how they viewed the university culture and their place within it. The study was supported by an Australian Research Council Small Grant.

2 At the time of interview this woman had recently concluded her term as Dean.

3 Responses to questions may result in multiple responses per person so the totals mentioned in the results sections may vary from the number of individuals who were interviewed.

REFERENCES


Research Note

Why Are There So Few Women Corporate Directors?
Women and Men See It Differently

Ronald J. Burke
York University, Canada

ABSTRACT

Women currently comprise only five per cent of the members of Canadian corporate boards of directors. A total of 278 female directors and 67 male Chief Executive Officers and board directors indicated their opinions as to why more women were not directors of Canadian private sector companies from eight reasons that were provided. There was little agreement between the female and male directors. In addition, female directors portrayed a significantly more negative picture. Implications for increasing the number of qualified women on boards of directors are offered.

Corporate directors have been almost exclusively white males. Beginning in the 1970s, a few token women were appointed. Women continue to be appointed to corporate boards, but, given the short period of time that has elapsed, the absolute number of women directors is still very small. Leighton and Thain (1993, p24) refer to corporate boards as ‘old boys’ networks’. They write: “Many corporate directors are members of an ‘old boys’ network and appear to have been cut out with a cookie cutter - they are male and white”.

Women have been found to comprise less than five per cent of corporate directors in a variety of studies (Elgart, 1983; Gillies 1992; Kesner, 1988; Lorsch & MacIver, 1989; Sethi, Swanson & Harrigan, 1981). About the same percentage of women are in senior corporate management (Burke & McKeen, 1992). Several reasons have been put forward to account for the relatively small number of women serving on corporate boards of directors. Most involve attitudes of men who control the director selection and nomination process (Leighton, 1993; Mattis, 1993).

The absence of women serving on corporate boards of directors should come as no surprise to anyone familiar with the larger body of literature on women in management. Both Kanter (1977) and Ibarra (1992, 1993) have identified the homophilous nature of organisational relationships and networks. Thus men directors are likely to be recruiting in their own image. In addition, other aspects of gender bias and discrimination have been found to be widespread in organisations (Auster, 1993). These include recruitment, selection, task assignment, performance appraisal, and salary allocation, among others.

This study, part of a larger project dealing with the experiences of women serving on corporate boards of directors, compares the reasons women and men
directors offer to explain why more Canadian women were not directors of Canadian corporations. Do they agree to disagree? Do they offer similar or different reasons? And what are some of the implications of these findings for increasing the number of qualified women on corporate boards?

METHOD

Women Directors

The names and addresses of Canadian Women directors were attained from the 1992 Financial Post Directory of Directors (Graham, 1991). Each was sent a questionnaire. The final response (N=278) represents about a fifty per cent response rate.

Men Directors

Data was collected from 67 male Chief Executive Officers of Canadian corporations that had at least one woman on their board. These men were also Directors of their companies. Their names were also obtained from the 1992 Financial Post Directory of Directors (Graham, 1991). The response rate was twenty-five per cent.

PROCEDURE

Women Directors

An eleven page survey to be completed anonymously, accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed return envelope, was sent to each woman at either their home or office address, depending on the listing in the Directory of Directors. A cover letter explained the purpose of the research. A post card follow-up reminder was mailed out about one month later. All responses were received within slightly over two months of the date of initial mailing.

Men Directors

A three page questionnaire, accompanied by an introductory letter, was sent to 280 potential respondents, accompanied by a stamped, addressed return envelope.

Measures

The same measure was used in both surveys. Both women and men directors indicated their opinions as to why more women were not directors of Canadian private sector companies. Eight reasons were provided and respondents could indicate more than one response. The specific items were: companies don't think that women are qualified for board service; there are not enough qualified women for board service; companies are afraid to take on women who are not already on boards; companies didn't know where to look for qualified women; companies are concerned that women will have a 'women's issues' agenda; qualified women are not making it known that they are interested in board service; and qualified women are not interested in board service.

RESULTS

Let us first consider the data provided by women directors. The most common reason given was that companies do not know where to look for qualified women (N=143, 51%). This was followed in turn by: companies are not looking to put more
women on boards (N=134, 48%); companies don’t think women are qualified for board services (N=126, 45%); companies are afraid to take on women who are not already on boards (N=121, 44%); qualified women are not making it known that they are interested in board service (N=109, 35%); companies are concerned that women will have a ‘women’s issues’ agenda (N=98, 35%); there were not enough qualified women for board service (N=70, 25.2%); and qualified women are not interested in board service (N=10, 4%).

Let us now consider the data provided by men directors. The most common reason they identified was that there were not enough qualified women for board service (44.5%), followed in turn by companies not knowing where to look for qualified women (40.3%), qualified women not making their interests known (40.3%), and companies not looking to put more women on their boards (32.5%). Less common reasons for the absence of more women on boards of Canadian private sector companies were: companies being afraid of taking on women who are not already on boards (26.9%); companies thinking women are not qualified for board service (23.9%); companies concerning that women will have a ‘women’s issues’ agenda (23.9%); and qualified women are not interested in board service (6.0%).

Differences between women’s and men’s percentages were statistically significant on four of the eight items. Significantly more women directors indicated that companies thought women were not qualified; that companies were afraid to appoint women not already on boards; companies were not looking to put more women on boards; and significantly fewer women directors thought that there were not enough qualified women directors available. Two other differences were large enough to suggest a trend: more women directors believed that companies did not know where to look for qualified women, and more women directors believed that companies were afraid that women may have a ‘women’s issues’ agenda.

Finally, the correlation between the women’s and men’s rankings of the eight alternatives (Spearman’s Rank Correlation) was computed. This correlation was .02, indicating little agreement in the two rankings.

DISCUSSION

The following conclusions were warranted, based on the specific findings obtained in the samples of women and men directors. First, women and men directors showed little agreement as to the reasons why so few qualified women currently sit on the boards of directors of Canadian private sector companies. Second, women directors portrayed a significantly more negative picture of the reasons why so few women were directors than did men. This is all the more surprising since the women in the sample have successfully made it to corporate board membership and the men in the sample represent companies with one or more women already on their boards. Imagine the differences if the women’s sample comprised directors sitting on boards with no women members! Third, since men represent ninety-five per cent of board memberships, the future may continue to be a bleak one as far as increasing the percentage of women on corporate boards.

Bringing About Change

There are two complementary approaches that might be considered to expedite the number of qualified women serving on corporate boards. One outlines actions women could take to increase their numbers (Leighton, 1993). The second outlines initiatives that organisations might undertake (Mattis, 1993; Schwartz, 1980).
What Women Can Do

Leighton (1993), surprised by how little progress women have made - particularly in the light of an optimistic prediction he made a decade earlier - offered five observations in the form of advice to aspiring women board members. These were: understand the political nature of the board nomination and selection process and how to position yourself accordingly; do not lobby overtly; have at least the minimum requirements and do not expect any advantages because you are a woman; get noticed; and target the boards of high-profile companies that have a large female clientele. Leighton adds that this guidance still does not guarantee anything; it really should not be necessary for women to have to do anything differently from men - but it is better for women to be realistic than to have their hopes dashed.

Leighton's advice may have some value, since about forty per cent of both women and men directors indicated that qualified women were not making their interests known. But, given that half of the women directors and one third of the men directors believed that companies were not looking to put more women on their boards, that about half the women and forty per cent of the men indicated that companies did not know where to look for qualified women, that one quarter of women and almost half the men thought that not enough qualified women were available, and about half the women and a quarter of the men believed that companies thought that women were not qualified, much more needs to happen if the picture is going to change, even modestly.

Changing the Corporation

This research agrees with Leighton and Thain (1993) that the director selection process is fundamentally flawed. The director selection and nomination process is an informal arrangement which has resulted in a group of educated established white men over 55 inviting other white men whom they usually know to join their boards. There are some possible benefits in electing fellow boards members similar to themselves (Lorsch & Maclver, 1989). Board members are likely to feel more comfortable with others like themselves. In addition, most board members, being Chief Executive Officers of other companies, are able to understand and respond to issues facing other organisations. Finally, homogeneity in experience, background and values may contribute to an efficient board deliberation process (Gilles, 1992).

There are some difficulties created by the traditional directors' election and nomination process. Directors are unlikely to 'rock the boat' (Mace, 1971; Patton & Baker, 1987). Boards and directors have come under increasing scrutiny and criticism for ineffective performance during the 1980s. Decisions were more likely to be made using narrow criteria and be lacking in innovation. There were not enough qualified male board members to go around. Men who serve on several corporate boards may not have sufficient time to devote to their board responsibilities. White males over 55 might not be able to reflect consumers and organisational employees who are becoming increasingly diverse. As a consequence, there are a variety of potential benefits to organisations by the selection and nomination of qualified women directors (Mattis, 1993).

But this means an end to 'business as usual'. It goes without saying that board appointments must involve qualified individuals. In addition, the appointment of more women directors will require some different initiatives by organisations. First, a commitment must be made to broaden the search and selection process. Second, organisations should seriously consider the use of professional
search firms, since many do not know where to find qualified women. Third, organisations may need to reach an organisational level just beneath the Chief Executive Officer, since few women have reached Chief Executive Officer-levels at present. Fourth, organisations need to undertake long-range planning of board composition (Barrett, 1993; Leighton & Thain, 1993) in order that capable women can be introduced as vacancies become available.

Footnotes

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Commentary

Trials at the Top: Chief Executives Talk About Men, Women and the Australian Executive Culture, by Amanda Sinclair

Reviewed by Liz Fulop and Fran Laneyrie, University of Wollongong, Australia

This short monograph (cum booklet) is the result of a study undertaken by the Australian Centre Foundation, The University of Melbourne, whose charter "...is to foster multidisciplinary and dispassionate enquires into aspects of contemporary Australian life" (Sinclair, 1995, p1). In commissioning the work, the Centre explicitly intended to bring "...a range of intellectual perspectives and innovative ideas to the important issue of women and the Australian executive culture" (Sinclair, 1995, p1). Amanda Sinclair is the sole author of the work, although her research was conducted under the guidance of a Steering Committee from the Foundation’s Board.

Significant virtues of the publication are its readability, layout and length. These characteristics will make it very appealing and essential reading for Chief Executive Officers, Master of Business Administration students and others interested in knowing how organisations are gendered.

Trials at the Top uses different levels of discourse to convey its message - popular accounts of what happens in certain companies as seen by Chief Executive Officers in an interview situation, and the author's academic commentary which draws on popular management themes to deal with the issue of the executive culture (Rifkin & Fulop, 1996; Sewell, 1553). There are no accounts of everyday practice in this book as we are not made privy to conversations amongst Chief Executive Officers and other managers and their "lives, loves, feelings, desires, jokes and drinking habits" (Sewell, 1995, citing Watson). These conversations would give us different and richer insights into how gender relations are constructed and represented in organisational discourses.

It is unlikely the author intended this book as a scholarly contribution to the debates on gender and sexuality in organisations. Its intention seems to be to raise debates and controversies about women's struggles to gain the top jobs in top companies and the men who might play a role in changing this situation.

The book is presented in six parts, which include an Executive Summary and Conclusion. Chapter One describes the main aims of the study which were to identify the defining features of the Australian executive culture, to explore the cultural construction of 'the successful executive' and to ask Chief Executive Officers how changes might occur in organisations (we presume to gender relations) (Sinclair, 1995, p1). Eleven Chief Executive Officers were interviewed, and they were selected on the basis of several criteria, including their reputation for being thoughtful and
Commentary: Trials at the Top

visionary on issues of diversity in the workplace. We are not told how each executive’s performance was deemed to fit these criteria.

What is perhaps disappointing about this section is the lack of personal information given about the Chief Executive Officers. Are they all married? Do they have daughters (an issue taken up later)? How many are into their second marriages and have young families? Are their partners working and what types of jobs do they have? What are their ages and have they been through the ‘mid-life crises’? (even Fortune magazine has run an article on menopause (Rice, 1994)). What type of friends do they have? In other words, it would have been useful to get a glimpse of the Chief Executive Officers as fathers, partners, lovers and friends.

Chapter Two explores the ‘Australian executive culture’ - represented as a culture imbued with an heroic leadership ethos. Although Sinclair concedes that ‘culture’ is a controversial and contested concept, she chooses a fairly traditional, functionalist approach to define it. She sees it as: “...values and beliefs a group shares about the way things work, and the behavioural and symbolic outcomes of those who believe”; or as a “...layered construct” and as “initially adaptive” (pv). Sinclair notes that culture is not a unifying ‘thing’ but can contain sub-cultures, yet no mention is made of sub-cultures anywhere in the book. What Sinclair seems to describe as the executive culture is tantamount to a patriarchal culture of excessive male domination. In choosing a stereotypical presentation of culture, Sinclair deprives herself of the culture/gender debate (see Linstead & Grafton Small, 1992; Linstead, 1995; Harlow & Heam, 1995). At page 6 Sinclair introduces some post-modernist terms or language but does not affirm or follow it through.

The consequences of Sinclair’s approach are far reaching. First, one never gets the sense that gender, let alone sexuality and violence, is itself constructed as culture and is therefore not solely explicable as culture (Harlow & Heam, 1996, p186; Linstead, 1995, p202). Although Sinclair would wish to do otherwise, she ‘buys into’ a dominant patriarchy thesis. This gave her little room to manoeuvre in making recommendations for change. Second, Sinclair excludes discussion of sexuality and violence in organisations because these are not part of the dominant male discourse as presented in Trials at the Top. Sexuality and issues of desire, lust, rape, and seduction are only alluded to. Violence, and the many manifestations of abuse and battery, are left out altogether as dimensions of workplace human relations. Last, the stereotypical, heroic image and myths that underscore Sinclair’s cultural analysis are presented with no alternative or viable counterfactual images or myths that might become the basis for alternative representations of women in general.

Sinclair’s depiction of the executive culture, or at least as seen by some of the Chief Executive Officers, is colourful, but would not be surprising to many readers. This culture is seen as a mixture of “…an older patrician elitism and a more youthful locker room larrikin-like boyishness”; or “…something closer to thuggery and bully-boy tactics, at its worst” (p7). We are told some Chief Executive Officers feel ambivalent about this culture and others find it repugnant, and “…[s]ome see women providing a welcome respite, a brake on rampant masculine excess” (p8). Sinclair does not attempt a serious deconstruction of this image of women - as a myth or ‘safe haven’. As Linstead, quoting Golding, says, “[m]asculinity is typically displayed as a concern for strength, physicality and sexual prowess and associated with horseplay, ritualised degradation, humiliations and put-downs which importantly does not diminish as the stakes get higher and one moves up to hierarchy” (1995, p201). Linstead goes on to argue that masculinities are multiple and entail ongoing struggles over the ‘possession of signification’ or what it means.
to be a ‘real man’, ‘a man’s man’ and a ‘ladies man’. He says these become defined in the context of multiple femininities and in power relationships that are embedded in organisational discourses and practice (Linstead, 1995, p201).

This point becomes important when considering how Sinclair presents the executive culture in transition. According to her analysis, there are “four discernible phases or ‘waves’ of evolution…”: denial (or a belief that lack of women at the top is not a business or management issue); recognition of the issue, but still seen as a problem with women themselves; managing the problem, usually through tokenism; and lastly, leadership into a new culture, or top down change through self-reflection (enlightenment?) on the part of the Chief Executive Officer (page 9). The latter represents the ‘hope’ for women’s advancement in the corporate world. In this ‘enlightened view’, the problem is seen as a cultural one with some Chief Executive Officers trying to take other senior managers through a transition that is also compatible with the Chief Executive Officers’ agenda (‘outside change’). This transition is reinforced by experiences Chief Executive Officers have had with daughters and ‘significant other’ women (‘inside out change’). In Sinclair’s views, change is about accessing the more subliminal (primal?) layers in executive thinking arising from concerns about their daughters’ futures.

Sinclair does see interruptions in the imminent transition to ‘leadership into a new culture’. Business cycles, rationalisations, and contracting out all take their toll on change. What perhaps is more relevant is that the ‘four phases’ are really nothing more than different forms of rationalist/managerialist discourse. ‘Leadership into the new culture’ is a part of the popular fads and fashions of heroic leadership, which are now being questioned by the post-heroic leadership literature (Huey, 1994). Much of Sinclair’s representation of the ‘leadership into a new culture’ resembles what Linstead terms ‘self-exposure and manipulation’ by Chief Executive Officers of their public image in the face of public controversy over the ‘glass ceiling’. It also smacks of the ‘new age man’ appropriating the acceptable images of caring and sharing but not their power or positions (Linstead, 1995, p203).

The final section of Chapter Two is also disappointing. Anyone who is immersing themselves in the debates about diversity and differences in society and organisations will find it peculiar to read of Chief Executive Officers having a shared historical past - a white male/Anglo-Saxon history of mateship, cricket clubs and soldier settlements. This ‘stereotypical’ image of Australian executives or society is at odds with the recognition of differences amongst and between men and women and the complexities these present of managing change (Meekosha, 1992).

Chapter Three sees Sinclair arguing that the “quest for membership of the executive culture traditionally has been a Ulysses-like journey”. She mixes myth with metaphor to conjure an image of the Chief Executive Officer as hero. The perils confronted and overcome by Ulysses are equated, to quote, with “the trials and suffering” of the modern day executive. It is evident in the book that the executives’ reconstruction of their own reality equates with this heroic myth, with quotes of interviewees including such statements as: “I spent my first three years out in the swamps of Nigeria” (page 15). These Chief Executive Officers represent themselves as a heroic ‘elite' - ‘the best in the world’, ‘men at the top’, ‘having to be better than locals’, where ‘only the most courageous and capable succeed’ (p16). An important theme in the book is that these trials and sufferings of the hero are cast as including the waging of an eternal struggle to overcome the various temptresses who try to avert or seduce him from his path. Sinclair carries this heroic construction of masculinity into a discussion centred around Chief Executive Officers who have begun to question this construction of the masculine identity and suggest that
change is essential. She presents two opposing paths or possible scenarios for change: (1) the establishment of identity around such “fading male icons” and emblems (the heroic myth) resulting in exclusion of women, or (2) a “path that constructs masculinity not in opposition to women, where masculinity will be reshaped”. Sinclair claims here that “women and concepts of feminism will help elicit depth and complexity” in more varied constructions of masculinity.

The ‘Catch 22’ that emerges here is that ‘feminisation’ creates real tensions in management which is a sex type occupation (Wilson, 1995) where we have already seen that there are negative representations of women (Laneyrie, 1995; Olsson, 1995). Olsson (1995) suggests that only “selected feminine stereotypes and repertoires” will be assimilated into dominant organisational discourses. Laneyrie (1995) suggests that in traditional mythology, apart from the position ‘mother’, all powerful images of women are equated with ‘evil’ in the feminine. Sinclair’s first path openly acknowledges ‘other’ as stereotypes. We suggest that if the second path is to be followed it needs to acknowledge the gaps and tensions in dominant organisational discourses that can lead to a questioning of conscious and unconscious assumptions that a stereotypical ‘good’ feminisation might imply. To do this, Sinclair and her Chief Executive Officers must deal with sexuality and violence.

Bradley (1987) has created a powerful image of the hero in contrast to Sinclair’s hero. Bradley creates heroes as objects in the life journey of virgin/priestess/wise-women characters. She re-creates the hero Ulysses as a sadistic bully, whose joy in plundering and raping and pillaging others is far from heroic (i.e. violence is a part of the representation). Such a recreation of traditional sources of heroic myths can help ‘unpack’ assumptions about stereotyped relationship patterns and behaviours that leave real actors (real people) little rhetorical space in which to move. Revisioning mythology can allow a writer to honour and explore the intuition, feeling and creativity of an original impulse (Stone, 1990), rather than the socially constructed ‘meaning making’ that reinforces traditional paradigms that defend against ‘fear’ and ‘surrender’ (to sex, and violence...). This impacts on the feminine subject in particular who can only be ‘other’ in the journey of the hero as presented in Trials at the Top.

In sum, in attempting to draw on mythology, Sinclair does create a wonderful opportunity to use storytelling to evoke an understanding of archetypes. Unfortunately, her choice of one masculine image from traditional mythology, rather than multiple masculinities (Collinson and Hearn, 1994) or multiple or revision (Laneyrie, 1995) mythology, leads Sinclair into polarised conclusions or modernist binaries. Sinclair’s archetypal representation constitutes a traditional re-write of a patriarchal system that fails to grapple with deeper issues, including sex and violence (Hearn, 1994); multiple masculine realities (Collinson and Hearn, 1994); or ironically with the stereotypical ‘others’ absent in the interviews and therefore in the text. The issue of these men’s power over others is also glaringly absent. Power is ‘sexy’ and power for these Chief Executive Officers is part of their identity and their sexual identity.

Chapter Four deals with the executives’ representations of ‘women’. In the first section, Sinclair attempts to address taboos and fears. Here Sinclair senses the silence and absence of women’s voices represented by the Chief Executive Officers as a fear of anti-discrimination legislation and moves to discuss a “more primitive unease with what women represent”. Sinclair does not deconstruct the Chief Executive Officers’ representations of typical successful women as ‘strong’, ‘smart’, ‘straight’ with ‘esprit de corps’ and ‘strangely as physically attractive’ (p23-4).
Unsuccessful women are seen as (1) “trying to be one of the boys” or (2) “too different”, or as (3) women who have been scapegoated by the system (i.e. victims). Here it is underlined that the critical criterion for success is being seen to have the above four “s” characteristics (Sinclair, pxi).

The images of women represented by these Chief Executive Officers are combinations of ‘good mother’ and ‘good virgin’, with a clear sense of who they (women) are and what they want to do, having “superior knowledge of detail” and with the determination to succeed through their own efforts. These successes are achieved in a non-relating style that tends to undermine the notion of women as relaters, with quotes such as, “she is where she is by virtue of what she has been able to achieve herself”, and “(women) are less likely to make excuses for each other”. The Chief Executive Officers talk about a directness of action, but directness that cannot apply for ‘selfish gain’ (women as virtuous?), and hints at the old saying that women do not like each other. It suggests that women’s power bases come from expert knowledge, but with a ‘pinch of temptress’ because it helps if they are physically appealing.

Sinclair’s recommendations of change depend upon her ‘layered concept of culture’ (p31). She concludes that the “...executive culture does not require fundamental challenge - to [the] process of masculine executive identity construction or the identity itself”. Rather, she argues that it needs the dismantling of the maladaptive outer layers (the executive is now no longer subject, but object of gender construction), such as rites and rituals associated with things such as work on the golf course, and mobility of families. Sinclair notes, that not surprisingly, the Chief Executive Officers were against legislative pressures to enact Equal Employment Opportunity, and Sinclair seems to side with the ‘leadership’ view that an enlightened Chief Executive Officer achieves more than legislation can. Sinclair ignores the power and political issues this raises. In her conclusion, Sinclair even declares the ‘glass ceiling’ metaphor is depleted of meaning and has become an excuse of inaction (p41). Again, she misses the enormous mobilising effect this metaphor has had in changing the political discourse of inequality and that a whole range of people in marginalised groups have identified with it. For aboriginal, ethnic and disabled women, as well as less professionalised groups, the metaphor might well carry meaning and mobilising potentials (Still & Cupitt, 1995). Sinclair wants to put her faith in change in the hands of Chief Executive Officers, especially ones like those who participated in her study (p41). Sadly, she gives us no information on how these Chief Executive Officers have helped the lot of women at the top, let alone others.

Two forces for change are offered to dismantle the so-called ‘outerlayer’: change from the outside in and change from the inside out. The former entails: (1) fostering a people-oriented culture; (2) ‘removing roadblocks’ that deny women opportunities to progress to senior levels; (3) normalising and mainstreaming issues such as recruitment, career development and promotion of women as well as creating measures of outcomes; (4) using the issue of women executives as an opportunity for organisational learning; (5) avoiding tokenism; and (6) supporting women’s networking activities. Change from the inside out focuses on self-reflection and showing leadership, i.e. modelling new values and enlightening others (p36-37). This reflexivity depends on the role played by daughters, wives and other women. One can only wonder what this spells for the Chief Executive Officer who is neither married, nor has a daughter, and might be homosexual. Can they ever be ‘enlightened’?
Sinclair believes many of these issues will become part of what is popularly termed 'organisational learning'. Organisational learning is an extremely complex issue (Fulop & Rifkin, 1996; Rifkin, Fulop, Couchman & Badham, 1996) and not one that should be left to a selected group of Chief Executive Officers to determine. It might be appropriate to conclude the review with an insightful comment about organisational learning (Marsick, 1994, p24):

In a changing world, the challenge to managers is to learn to first ask the right question. Managers seek a broader understanding of the shifting socio-political-economic-cultural context for clues to the right questions. For example, Schwartz (1992) shows that few companies utilise the abilities that women bring in large part because of a "conspiracy of silence" between managers who are afraid of litigation and "women who don't want to be seen as different from men" (1992, p106). This right question is not whether the company is hiring and keeping women, or even whether they are promoting them, but how the company can unleash the capacity that women bring to build the business".

The right question might also have little to do with the culture alone, however it is constructed.

References


"Leader's Companion: Insights on Leadership Through the Ages", by Thomas Wren (Editor).
Published by Free Press, New York, 1995.

This is a book of edited selections. Wren has produced a useful collection of readings, sixty four altogether, that samples a great deal of what has been written about leadership. Wren's own background is in law and history, yet the reader may find his title somewhat misleading. While all of the selections are reprinted from previously published works, all but 11 bear copyrights from the past 25 years. Lest the reader think the title of the book to be totally inappropriate, there is a section of nine readings that do reach back well before Wren was born. Chronologically, we begin as far back as the sixth century BC with the perspective of the Chinese sage Lao-tzu. Moving forward a couple of hundred years, we get selections from classic Greek literature by Plato and Aristotle. After jumping ahead 18 centuries, we get a taste of Niccolo Machiavelli, and travel forward in time to Thomas Carlyle, Leo Tolstoy, and W.E.B. Du Bois.

The bulk of the work collected here, then, presents neither particularly new nor particularly old analyses of leadership. Rather, most of the selections present major contributions to mainstream thinking on leadership within the last quarter-century. The collection fairly represents the variety of perspectives from which contemporary writers approach the topic of leadership, so few readers would actually be familiar with all 64 selections. Although the majority of the selections come from the works of managerial psychologists, there are also papers included here that draw from the fields of political science, history, education, sociology, communication, philosophy, as well as the reflections of corporate managers. Thus the reader will be exposed to the analysis of notable writers such as John W. Gardner, James McGregor Burns, and Bernard Bass in addition to the observations from the experience of Max De Pree and Roger Smith.

The 64 pages are organised into 13 topical sections. Focal topics include basic definitions, history, personal characteristics of leaders and of followers, individual and group behaviour, leadership skills and practice, and moral leadership. Issues centring on women and leadership are not one of the 13 topics, but several selections explicitly focus on women in management and leadership roles.

The topical organisation provides a clue to Wren's overall conceptualisation of leadership, but he includes no more than a three-page preface for explaining this organisation of the material. Wren also wrote an introduction for each of the 13 sections, but these provide only the most brief rationale for the chosen selections, as they rarely exceed a single page. Perhaps the most glaring example of how the reader is left to divine the relation of the ideas in the book comes from the section on leading groups. Only two selections are included. Both represent classic contributions to the literature of group dynamics, i.e. Tuckman's analysis of group development and Janis's analysis of groupthink, but neither author directly addresses leadership.

This begs the question of the intended audience of this book. Those who have previously engaged in the systematic study of leadership will find little new here, save the likely broadening of perspective for those whose study has been confined to
a single discipline. Those experienced managers who have been engaged in the practice of leadership may also find something new from the breadth of perspective, but will otherwise likely find again that much of what is in the book is already familiar. This book is unlikely to fill the shelves of college bookstores as required reading for students of management, for required textbooks for university courses typically need to provide a great deal more explanation of how all the ideas presented fit together. That leaves us with aspiring leaders in work organisations. If they take the time to pick up this book and read from it, they will be well served by this collection, as it does fairly represent mainstream leadership thought. It is not a primer, but it does allow the reader to grasp the conceptualisation of leadership from many different perspectives. The references from the original publication of the papers have been included at the end of the book, so the interested reader has plenty of leads to follow for additional reading.

Anson Seers,
University of Alabama, United States of America


Recent years have seen an increase in the literature and research on the subject of mentoring as well as a reappraisal of the role mentoring plays in organisational advancement. More importantly there has also been recognition that women in particular often face considerable difficulty in developing and maintaining effective mentoring relationships.

To some extent one’s perspective on mentoring, and in particular its value to women, depends on how the mentoring experience is defined. Mentoring as a term is derived from Greek mythology and implies a relationship between a young person and an older, more experienced person who guides and supports the younger person into the world of work. The essential difference between more traditional views of mentoring and those of recent years has been in terms of whether the relationship is seen as one that spontaneously develops, one that is derived from a conscious decision to seek a mentoring relationship or even possibly one that is engineered by a formal mentoring programme. McKenzie’s book is written largely from the perspective of the latter two views. She argues that unplanned or informal mentoring is disadvantageous for women and other EEO groups because “it may not happen, people may not clarify expectations with one another and only candidates with obvious potential may be chosen.” As the title states, the book largely takes the form of a guide. The introduction states the book is designed to help women think through their work needs and expectations and gain the support they need to help them achieve their goals through the development of a mentoring relationship. It utilises research that McKenzie and her colleagues undertook with 500 women in Australian organisations and overseas research on mentoring. A number of chapters include activities designed to help the reader identify the kind of mentoring activity they might wish to experience. These include activities such as identifying past mentors in your life, a needs analysis - called a NICE analysis, a checklist for selecting a mentor and a checklist for potential mentors. Each chapter contains quotes from the author’s research to illustrate its contents and ends with a summary of the chapter’s key points.
The early chapters define the concept of mentoring and outline the benefits of mentoring to both the individual who is seeking to be a mentoree and those who are seeking to be mentors. The author then discusses the pros and cons of both formal and informal mentoring relationships and sets the agenda for the formal mentoring programme she favours. The design and implementation of a formal mentoring relationship, including preparation for the relationship, and the choice of mentor with regard to issues such as gender, cultural difference and number of mentors is subsequently examined. The basis of the later chapters of the book is McKenzie's model of five phases of the mentoring relationship described as the transition phase in which the individual seeking the mentoring relationship becomes aware of the need to change, the recognition phase which involves the mutual recognition of potential, the testing phase which tries out the mentoring relationship, the development phase which builds the relationship and the redefinition phase which changes or ends the relationship. Finally, the training of both mentors and mentorees, which the author regards as fundamental to the success of formal mentoring programmes, is discussed in relationship to both women in both non-managerial and managerial positions.

From the perspective of the executive women and its potential in this regard as a guide for career progression, I found the book paradoxical. On one hand the title of the book suggests it is a guide for executive women, yet much of the content, particularly that relating to the role of the mentoree in the mentoring relationship, seems to be more applicable to women who are seeking executive status in organisations rather than those who have actually achieved it. The guidelines the author suggests for developing a successful mentoring relationship are targeted more at the middle manager or supervisor and women who have yet to enter management. Possibly the book would have benefited from a title which better reflects its application to a wider audience.

In all, I found the contents to be largely prescriptive and as such the book often tends to oversimplify the complexity of the mentoring relationship. A particular example of this is the author's unquestioning dismissal of what is known in the organisational literature as the 'queen bee syndrome'. She states that it is a label “often perpetuated by women themselves”, and comments that it is both outdated and unhelpful. I find myself in total disagreement with McKenzie. My own recent research among senior women in the public sector found the 'queen bee syndrome' exists and can act as a significant impediment to the career advancement of more junior women in organisations. It is an issue that needs to be seriously addressed, not dismissed, as increasing numbers of women enter the ranks of senior management.

The two mentoring relationships that have provided the foundation and subsequent guidance for my own career development as an academic have not been part of any formal arrangement, and one, in particular, emerged from a relationship outside my own organisation. Both have provided me with a strong belief in the value of having a mentor, male or female, and have certainly been crucial to the advancement of my career. Reflecting on my own experience, it seems that the author too readily undervalues the true satisfaction for both parties that is derived from a mentoring relationship that spontaneously develops rather than one that is formally set up. Although McKenzie's book is timely, its 'one best way approach' to mentoring oversimplifies the complexities associated with developing a mentoring relationship which is valuable and rewarding to both the mentor and mentoree. Despite this, and in consideration of recent suggestions that mentoring is in itself basically elitist and at best can only benefit a few women rather than the interests of
women as a whole, this book, which is derived from research undertaken in
Australia and draws attention to the importance of mentoring in women's career
advancement, contributes to the ongoing struggle to achieve the equity in the
workplace that women have been granted by legislation but which is still far from
being realised.

Anne Ross-Smith,
University of Technology, New South Wales, Australia

"Organizational Behaviour and Gender", by Fiona M. Wilson.

Recent years have witnessed a burgeoning literature focusing on gender issues
associated with academic disciplines such as economics, law, industrial relations and
management. Wilson's book represents a long overdue but welcome addition to this
literature. She argues that male dominance has traditionally underpinned the
familial, economic, political, religious and legal structures of society, and that
"[s]ociety is like a gigantic prison of already constructed dimensions" (p100).

Wilson illustrates how the subject of organisational behaviour has
traditionally been presented as evaluatively neutral and apolitical while, in reality,
organisation studies have overwhelmingly been pursued from male-oriented
perspectives. Consequently, textbooks on organisational behaviour have almost
universally been 'male-stream', and have ignored the gendered nature of
organisational life. Organisational theory has done little to acknowledge research on
women or other minority groups. As a result, the dominant value system assigns
greater importance and prestige to the masculine than to the feminine, and literature
on women is considered as something separate rather than of mainstream
importance. The author contends that, because men and women differ in life
experiences, resources, power and reproductive processes, it is not safe to generalise
from the male standard to all women.

As clearly indicated by its title, this book takes a fresh look at some
traditional topics of concern in organisational theory by adopting a different focus -
namely that of women in relation to behaviour in organisations. The author has
succeeded admirably in her aim, "not just to make organisational behaviour more
comprehensive but to begin to pose new questions and render suspect our pre­
existing knowledge on the subject" (p7).

The book's seven main chapters cover: women's place at work and home;
perceiving women in organisations; learning and socialisation; motivation;
leadership; personality; and sexuality in organisations. The text is interspersed with
thought-provoking cartoons, exercises and discussion points. Review questions are
provided at the end of each chapter, together with comprehensive references which
illustrate the extensive range of international literature now available in this area.

The book begins by offering alternative definitions of work from a female
perspective, and by counteracting myths surrounding women's work opportunities,
roles and commitment. Throughout the text, traditional assumptions and
interpretations of perception, learning and socialisation, motivation, leadership and
personality are challenged, and alternative perspectives provided. Using statistical
data, Wilson undertakes a rigorous re-examination and re-evaluation of research
studies familiar to organisational behaviour texts, and supplements this material
with analysis of contemporary research findings. The author concludes that the
metaphors of masculine and feminine in organisational studies now need to be challenged, and women need to claim their own authentic voice and view, seeing the world through women's eyes rather than holding up a mirror to men.

The chapter on sexuality in organisations is particularly novel, since it questions the pervasive assumptions of heterosexuality in organisation studies and addresses issues of sexuality and sexual harassment which have largely been ignored by traditional texts on organisational behaviour. This chapter also refers to disturbing evidence of perceptions of women by fourth-year boys (p220), which have important implications for organisation studies in the future. The section covering legal liability for sexual harassment in Britain is the only focus within the book on employer liability, and comparable sections have not been included on case law liability in discriminatory selection and promotion decisions, for example. A sexual harassment case study is included as an appendix, but this also sits a little uneasily, as similarly-detailed case studies have not been included to illustrate other topics covered by the book.

Despite its predominantly British focus, the book is suitable for use in other countries. For this reason, it would have been helpful, as clarification for readers unfamiliar with the European context, if the author had included a brief explanation of local initiatives such as Opportunity 2000, and cited the full names for bodies such as the TUC and EC.

As the author herself acknowledges, there is a danger that, through its focus on gender, this book will be perceived as an addendum to existing organisational behaviour texts, instead of a reformulation of the subject from a different, but equally valid, perspective. Yet this book deserves adoption as a mainstream organisational behaviour text, which should be compulsory reading for second-year undergraduates to postgraduate students in organisational studies, as well as their lecturers.

The book is also recommended for academics more generally, since its chapter on perception calls for reflection on the gendered nature of lecturers' assessment of students' class contributions and marks. It further illustrates the way in which students' evaluation of male and female lecturers' presentation and approach may be equally gendered in nature as a result of socialisation.

The author acknowledges (p18) that affirmative action is required if women are to make progress towards equality. However, the Australian experience suggests that affirmative action legislation alone is not sufficient for meaningful change to eventuate. Therefore, we all need to be aware of the issues addressed in Wilson's book, which constitutes a timely and valuable addition to the literature on organisational behaviour.

Catherine Smith
Edith Cowan University, Western Australia

"Women and Work in Developing Countries: An Annotated Bibliography", by Parvin Ghorayshi.

The main aim of this book is to facilitate an understanding of 'the nature of women's work' and to analyse the importance of this work in the context of society. To
achieve this aim, Parvin Gharoyshi has collected literature from different academic disciplines of social sciences, health and humanities which have been produced in a variety of modes, articles, books, dissertations, reports, videos and film. The common thread in all of these sources is the focus on ‘women and work in developing countries’ with a chapter representing the countries of four world regions of Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Carribean, and the Middle East. There are four chapters devoted to these regional perspectives, with one geographic quirk. A book concerning gender development in Tahiti is included in the African chapter. Unless there has been a global continental shift which I and cartographers have missed, Tahiti remains an island country of the Pacific ocean, not an African nation. The author has structured the content of each regional chapter under seven thematic sections which allow for comparative analysis to be made between research conducted in several countries. Each entry is also cross indexed with other relevant entries in the book.

The author explicitly states that this book represents the current available resources since the 1980s. However, in the section on Africa, out of a total of 85 entries, only five are published in the 1990s, with one being the Tahiti book. Can we deduce from this that there has been little published work done in the past five years or is the lack of entries due to the difficulty of finding current sources? For example, two African women’s organisations mentioned in the Appendix have Salisbury, Zimbabwe as their contact address. Harare has been the official name for this city for many years, denoting the country’s political change from British colonial to independent status.

This book is an important addition to the growing literature concerning gender and development (Momsen & Kinnaird, 1993). It is an excellent source for researchers, students, activists, academics, and people from governmental and non-governmental aid originations. While the explicit focus is women and work in developing countries, the much broader issues of economic development, environmental aspects of development approaches, globalisation of trade and markets, inequality of populations within and between countries, both developed and developing, are touched upon in the introduction making this book valuable for a wide audience.

References:

Nancy Hudson-Rod,
Edith Cowan University, Western Australia

“Gender: A Strategic Management Issue”, by Catherine R. Smith and Jacquie Hutchinson.

The authors are experienced and knowledgable in the area, and have created an accessible and clearly written book which is firmly based in women and management research. It is an attractive book, clearly written and the larger than average print all adds to the impression of accessibility.

The “book is designed to form an additional support for those organisations and individuals wishing to tackle the complexity of gender issues in the workplace
and on the campus" (p12). It is well positioned and appropriate for the identified target audience of MBA students, practitioners and as an educational text (p13).

The book is in three parts. The first part: “Challenges Managers Face” includes chapters on global business forces; changing demographics in the workforce and in management; and prevailing Equal Employment Opportunity legislation. The section provides the context and current status of women in the workplace. It is a little uneven, especially the chapter on workplace statistics, but the following chapter on women in management statistics is very good.

The second part: “Gender Issues in Organisations” includes a chapter on the culture of management and another on the benefits of gender diversity. The masculinist organisational culture is identified as a major cause of women’s lack of progress within management, and personal or individual barriers are subsumed within this chapter. This whole section provides valuable arguments for those readers working to create changes in management.

The third and largest part of the book is on “Mechanisms for Change”. It is refreshing that, even in the structure of the book, there is a clear emphasis on change and positive examples (42%) rather than the common emphasis in books for women managers which tend to analyse the barriers. The authors have focused on three strategies for women managers out of the possible array: career development, mentors and networks. They provide a good overview of information and developments around these strategies presented in two chapters. A particularly helpful distinction is made between the different promotional requirements of middle and senior management. The point is made that mentors and networks are a way through the transition from middle to senior management. This discussion is followed by seven excellent case studies of ‘best practice’ from the public and private sectors. They are brief, but cogent, and most usefully outline what can be done. The next chapter is a lucid and valid criticism of how management education is perpetuating the masculine nature of management. The final chapter is perhaps tied too tightly back to the Karpin Report of the 1992-95 Industry Task Force on Leadership and Management Skills, and the ‘national strategy for change’ which could act to date the book somewhat.

It is refreshing that the authors’ views are not veiled in uncertainties or political correctness. Smith and Hutchinson clearly identify gender issues as an area of weakness in organisations and in management education, and clearly make the argument throughout the book that gender issues are a strategic management imperative. “The lack of women in management is an indicator of an organisation’s capacity to effectively manage the changes needed to meet the challenges of a dynamic economy” and further, if “an organisation is unable to capitalise on gender diversity, then it is ill-equipped to deal with the more complex issues associated with the need for greater international competitiveness” (p13-14). They clearly see the reasons for women’s low representation in senior management as the responsibility of the organisation and do not support the all too common ‘women as deficit’ model.

The authors do state the core of the problem directly with “if there are more women in management, then there will be fewer men in management” (p133). Such directness is unfortunately rare in books written for management which are often written from a management ethos. Such directness is necessary if a realistic discussion of power and control in organisations is going to be achieved. The authors could have been more daring in presenting counter-arguments for dealing with those who may not agree with the obvious benefits of more women in senior management.
In terms of layout of the book, the introduction provides an accurate overview and the chapter summaries are very good. The quotes at the beginning of each section bring the material to life and also prevent the text getting weighed down in quotes and references. The questions at the end of every chapter were a good idea. However, the questions are not always meshed in with the chapter content. For example, the questions at the end of the chapter on the “Benefits of Gender Diversity” focused on maternity leave. Each chapter can be read independently of the others, which is good, although there is some repetition of material across chapters when the book is read as a whole.

These minor criticisms should not detract from the importance of this timely book which will further help place women on the agenda at a time of Equal Employment Opportunity disillusionment and the rise of diversity rhetoric. The arguments and information in Gender clearly present the imperative of women’s place in management as a strategic management issue and make it a book that should be read by every management student and every manager, male and female.

Judith Pringle,
University of Auckland, New Zealand
Forthcoming Events

CENTER FOR CREATIVE LEADERSHIP
CALL FOR PAPERS
THE KENNETH E. CLARK RESEARCH AWARD

The Center for Creative Leadership is sponsoring the Kenneth E. Clark Research Award, an annual competition to recognise outstanding unpublished papers on leadership by undergraduate and graduate students. The award is named in honour of the distinguished scholar and former Chief Executive Officer of the Center.

The first place award will include a prize of US$1,500 and a trip to the Center to present the paper in a colloquium. The Center will also assist the author in publishing the work in The Leadership Quarterly Journal. Additionally, a prize of US$750 will be awarded for a paper judged as deserving honourable mention status.

Submissions may be either empirically or conceptually based. Non-traditional and multidisciplinary approaches to leadership research are welcomed. The theme for the 1996 award is “The Dynamics and Context of Leadership”, which includes issues such as: (a) leadership during times of rapid change, (b) leadership for quality organisations, (c) leadership in team settings, (d) cross-cultural issues in leadership, (e) meta-studies or comparative studies of leadership models, (f) other innovative or unexplored perspectives of leadership.

Submissions will be judged by the following criteria: (1) the degree to which the paper addresses issues and trends that are significant to the study of leadership; (2) the extent to which the paper shows consideration of the relevant theoretical and empirical literature; (3) the degree to which the paper develops implications for research into the dynamics and context of leadership; (4) the extent to which the paper makes a conceptual or empirical contribution; (5) the implications of the research for application to leadership identification and development. Papers will be reviewed anonymously by a panel of researchers from the Center.

Papers may be authored and submitted only by graduate or undergraduate students. Center staff and submissions to other Center awards are ineligible. Entrants must provide a letter from a faculty member certifying that the paper was written by a student or students, and is an unpublished work. Entrants should submit four copies of an article-length paper. Electronic submissions will not be accepted. The name of the author(s) should appear only on the title page of the paper. The title page should also show the authors’ affiliations, mailing addresses and telephone numbers.

Papers are limited to 30 double-spaced pages, including title page, abstract, tables, figures, notes, and references. Papers should be prepared according to current edition of the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association.

In the absence of a paper deemed deserving of the award, the award may be withheld. Entries (accompanied by faculty letters) must be received by 30th August, 1996. Winning papers will be announced by 31st October, 1996. Entries should be submitted to:

Dr. Walter Tornow,
Vice-President, Research and Publication,
Center for Creative Leadership,
One Leadership Place,
THE WOMEN OF EUROPE AWARD
IRELAND, AUTUMN 1996

The Women of Europe Award was created in 1987 with the support of the European Commission, the European Parliament and the European Movement to honour a woman from each Member State who, in the previous two years, has helped to increase European integration amongst the citizens of the European Union.

The nomination has to be made by a journalist, or recognised body or organisation and must include a page written by the nominee showing the European aspect of her work to date and how she sees it developing. The nomination must be for her own voluntary work over and beyond her paid work.

UK Women of Europe include:

1996
Lesley Abdela
Founder, 300 Group and "Project Parity", Journalist.

1995
Helena Kennedy, QC
Chair of Charter 88, Barrister and Broadcaster.

1994
Josie Farrington
House of Lords, Council of Europe, Cttee of Regions.

1993
Valerie Strachan
Chair of HM Customs & Excise.

1992
Juliet Lodge
Professor, University of Hull, 1992 European Woman of the Year.

1991
Sally Geengross
Director of Age Concern.

1990
Kay Young
NCVO

Every year each Member State sends out a Call for Nominations with an Autumn deadline. Nominations are then checked by the National Committee to see that they meet the criteria laid down at an international level. The National Committee is made up of representatives of the three supporting bodies as well as representatives of women's organisations, academia and business. A shortlist of nominations then goes forward to a vote. The national Jury is made up of this Committee and journalists who represent all aspects of the media.

At an international meeting, normally held in the country which holds the Presidency of the Council of Ministers, one woman is chosen by an international Jury to represent the other Women of Europe. She holds the title European Woman of the Year. This year the international meeting will be held in Dublin. The international association organises pan-European conferences, the next will be held in Ireland in the autumn of 1996.

The Award itself is a symbolic pendant of clasped hands (silver for the national winner and gold for the international winner). The Award was designed and is executed for the women of Europe by the Spanish jeweller ERLANZ.

For Further Information Please Contact:
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*International Review of Women and Leadership*  
Edith Cowan University  
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