Engendering Leadership Through Research and Practice

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Citing the Conference Proceedings

Please cite the proceedings using the following as an example:

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We would also like to acknowledge Deborah Kerfoot (Keele University) and GWO for the opportunity to host this unique international conference.

Thankyou to stream leaders, delegates, Veronica Cavlovic and Brianna Akesson.

Conference Partners

Alcoa
Business School (University of Western Australia)
Department of Consumer and Employment Protection (WA)
Department of Premier and Cabinet (WA)
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Leadership Development for Women Program (University of Western Australia)
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Small and Medium Enterprise Research Centre (Edith Cowan University)
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About the Conference

The overall aim of this international conference was to generate new thinking about gender and leadership by providing a creative forum for interaction between leadership scholars, researchers, practitioners and policy makers from Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, China, Finland, Germany, Ireland, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Italy, Malaysia, New Zealand, The Netherlands, Nigeria, Papua New Guinea, Singapore, South Africa, Sweden, United Kingdom and the United States. Contributions were drawn from a wide theoretical spectrum, including (but not limited to) feminism, sociology, management & organizational studies, economics, philosophy, history and cultural studies.

Conference Streams

Creative Contexts, Criminal Justice, Cultural Perspectives, Developing Leaders, Education, Entrepreneurship, Intergenerational Perspectives, Leadership Alternatives Masculinities, Organisational Culture, Public Policy, Theory into Practice.

Keynote Speakers

- Jill Blackmore, Professor, School of Education, Deakin University, Australia.
- Pat Dudgeon, Adjunct Associate Professor, School of Indigenous Studies (University of W. Australia)
- Joyce Fletcher, Distinguished Research Scholar, Center for Gender in Organizations, Simmons Graduate School, USA.
- Jeff Hearn, Professor, Swedish School of Economics, Helsinki, Finland; Linköping University, Sweden; and University of Huddersfield, UK
- Judi Marshall, Professor, Professor of Leadership and Learning, Lancaster University Management School, UK.
- Joanne Martin, Fred H. Merrill Professor of Organizational Behavior Emerita, Graduate School of Business, Stanford University, USA.
- Debra Meyerson, Associate Professor of Organizational Behavior and Associate Professor of Education, School of Education, Stanford University, USA.
- Amanda Sinclair, Foundation Professor Management Diversity and Change, Melbourne Business School, Australia.
About the Consortium for Diversity at Work (CDW)

The nature and organisation of work is undergoing rapid and far-reaching change in response to the pressures of an increasingly competitive global economy and the ever-growing demands for skills. The most striking aspect of these changes is the diversity of the workforce – women and men, different cultural and ethnic backgrounds, life experiences, age, aspirations and family circumstances. How governments, industry and communities choose to deal with this diversity has significant implications for the well-being of individuals, organisations and society.

CDW sponsors and provides high quality, responsive and timely research and consultancy on all aspects of diversity and work centred around four core themes:

- Labour market and workforce diversity
- Work/life quality and diversity
- Leadership and diversity
- Governance and diversity

Based in the UWA Business School, CDW brings together multi-disciplined research and teaching excellence across UWA and other Australian and international universities, to work in partnership with industry, government, non-government and community based organisations. CDW is focussed primarily on undertaking new research and analysis that will, in turn, support a full range of consultancy services for practical diversity management.

About Gender Work and Organisation

Launched by Blackwell Publishing in 1994, Gender, Work and Organization was the first journal to provide an arena dedicated to debate and analysis of gender relations, the organisation of gender and the gendering of organisations.

The journal has full ISI listing and is edited jointly by Deborah Kerfoot and David Knights. It is anticipated that a special edition of the GWO journal will be published from papers presented at the 2008 event.

Visit: www.blackwellpublishing.com/journal.asp?ref=0968-6673
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Leadership Development Through Creative Cross-Disciplinary Sabbaticals
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The Female Gender In Traditional Leadership In Nigeria: A Socio-Cultural Perspective

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ABSTRACT
Most societies in Africa are patriarchal, that is they are societies with a social system in which the male gender rules the family or clan, and in which descent is traced through the male line. The implication of this is that leadership positions in the societies are mainly reserved for the men. This is because men are generally regarded as being more dynamic, more charismatic and stronger in character than women. These attributes are seen as some of the major leadership qualities with which persons in positions of authority and power rule those who are under their authority. Women are generally seen as weaker vessels that must be handled delicately, that must not be involved with the rigors of administration at high level. This attitude permeates all ages in virtually all-human societies from the primordial to the modern times.

Deep research has however revealed the fact that in some traditional societies in Nigeria, women were given and are still given leadership roles in societies, above their male counterparts. They were made the rulers in human societies. In this scheme, four identifiable approaches of leadership are manifest. These include direct leadership of societies, the regency method, the dual-sex political system and the queen mother system.

This paper examines the phenomenon of women leadership in some traditional societies in ancient Nigeria and the four leadership approaches involved. It identifies such societies where women were traditional rulers of communities and what they were able to achieve during their tenures in office. The paper contrasts such achievements with the achievements of some women rulers in modern Nigerian societies and in other societies of the modern world. Such modern women rulers include Mrs. Margaret Thatcher of Great Britain, Queen Elizabeth the second of Great Britain, Maria Estella of Argentina, Mrs. Indra Ghandi of India, Mrs. Sirimawo Bandara Naike of Sri Lanka and Mrs. Johnson Sirleaf of Liberia. The paper concludes like Aristophanes did in the Ecclesiazusae (The women of parliament) that the human society may be in better hands if it were entrusted to women.

INTRODUCTION

Women leaders in traditional societies in Nigeria
Leadership positions in most African societies are male gender dominated. Women are seen as fragile/ delicate beings that needs to be cared for and not stressed. This so- called caring restrict women from being heard in the society, which results in loss of rights. But history revealed that even till date women partake in decisions that concern the community by holding one post or the other in terms of chieftaincy.

Chieftaincy institutions through which women in Nigeria exercise rulership as a check against male monopolization of traditional rulership are of four categories: Female ruler ship, Regency, Dual-sex
rulership or political system and Queens mother institution. Female rulership refers to places where only females can rule, not just over women but on men as well. It serves as counterweight to patriarchal monarchs as men dare not contest with women in this area at all. In short, in such communities, male rulership is abhorred. Examples of these in Nigeria can be found in Kumbada in Munya local government of Niger State, Arnado Debo in Ganye local government of Adamawa State and Nokowo in Numan local government of, Adamawa State (Olasupo, 2007:183).... Below is the table of some substantive female traditional rulers in the country.

SOME PRESENT DAY SUBSTANTIVE WOMEN TRADITIONAL RULERS.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/N</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Town or village</th>
<th>LGA</th>
<th>STATE</th>
<th>TYPE OF RULERSHIP</th>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>TIME SPENT IN OFFICE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Hajia Hadza Muhammed</td>
<td>Kumbada</td>
<td>Munyan L.G</td>
<td>Niger</td>
<td>Substantive woman Traditional ruler</td>
<td>2001-2006</td>
<td>7 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Nya’a Gangwu’u</td>
<td>Arnado Debo</td>
<td>Ganye L.G</td>
<td>Adamawa</td>
<td>Substantive woman Traditional ruler</td>
<td>2004-2008</td>
<td>4 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Bwaratu Nzumosu</td>
<td>Nokowo</td>
<td>Numan L.G</td>
<td>Adamawa</td>
<td>Substantive woman Traditional ruler</td>
<td>2005-2008</td>
<td>3 years</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Regency is a temporary arrangement for women to experience traditional rulership in certain parts of Nigeria such as Ekiti, Ondo, Osun and Ebonyi States. Dual rulership or political system is found mostly in certain communities in Ondo, Akure Ekiti and Delta states. Last but not the least is the Queen mother institutions that are found in certain parts of Ondo State, specifically Akoko areas, Bornu and Aocha area of Delta State.

While a lot has been written on female rulers as monarchs and regents, less attention has been given to dual rulership and Queen mothers institutions as ways through which women exercise traditional rule. This informed our recent extensive tour of communities where dual ruler ship exist in Yoruba land. In communities where this tradition exists there are paramount women traditional rulers under which lesser women traditional rulers exist. In Ondo kingdom, the paramount woman traditional ruler is Lobun of Ondo; the lesser women traditional rulers under her are Ajue, Igburowo and Oro. In Ille-Oluji kingdom, the paramount woman ruler is Lobun of Ille-Oluji. In Idanre kingdom, the paramount woman traditional ruler is Lobun Adeyemi Cole. Though she is deceased now her daughter is acting as regent. Lesser Lobun could as well be found in Alade Idanre and Atoshin Idanre. In Akure area, the paramount woman traditional ruler is Eyeule of Ilara Mokin, the lesser women rulers under her include, Eyeule of Ero, Eyeule of Ipogun, Eyeule of Ibule, Eyeule of Ilarun, Osemawe of Ilara and Osemawe of Ikota. In Ijero Ekiti kingdom, the paramount woman traditional ruler of the kingdom is Eyegun of Ijero with lesser women kings in not less than fifteen towns and villages in this area. In Delta state, specifically within the Anioma area, the paramount woman traditional ruler is Omu of Okpanam. Lesser Omus under her include Agwashi Uku, Ibusa and others (Alphonsus, 2007:13).
Of these chieftaincy institutions the ones that would engage our attention most in this paper are those of dual rulership and queen mother institutions. But an bird-eye view would be kept on absolute female rulership as well as regency in the areas of how modernity and change are impacting on them towards recognizing women traditional rulers. In a nutshell, this paper examines the extent to which modernity and change, are creating openings for women, who gain recognition as traditional rulers.

**DUAL-SEX RULER SHIP OR KINGSHIP**

Dual-sex rulership or kingship, in most places where this practice exist, varies in structure and content but are similar mostly in duties performed (Olasupo, 2007:183). While the females kings, variously called Lobun (by Ondo and Ile-Oluji; Eyegun Ijero-Ekiti; and Eye-Ule, Ilara Mokins and Omu by Aniomas of Delta state) are "in charge of female affairs and the markets" and also the "priestess of "Aje", (the god of wealth and trade)" male kings within the kingdoms are "political and religious heads of their kingdoms and, more importantly, the symbols of gender and ethnic unity (Akinfemiwa, 1994:24-25). Like the male kings, female kings also have their palaces e.g. 'Lobun palace' (this has been in existence more than 500 years ago in the case of Ondo kingdom).

Another symbol of authority which attests to their being kings or queens in their own rights are the ability to wear 'crown' and use horsetail. Traditionally, they are entitled to wear crown.

**COMMUNITIES WITH DUAL KINGSHIP OR DUAL RULERSHIP**

However, attempt to modernize the crown, by some women traditional rulers, in line with modernity and change, is not going down well with some monarchs, particularly those of Ile-Oluji and Ijero Ekiti. They warned that their female counterpart "kings" could go to anywhere provided they would not wear crown, use horsetail and carry the appellation "Oba binrin" (Female kings). According to them, Oba kii pe meji laafin (two kings could not occupy a palace at the same time. This is faulted by the fact that there are some communities, cities or towns with dual kingship such as Ogbomosho (Soun of Ogbomosho in Ogbomosho north local government and the Onpetu of Ijeru in Ogbomosho south local government. Both are beaded Obas); Ikere Ekiti (Ogoga of Ikere and Olukere of Ikere. Again both are beaded Obas) and Akure where there is the Deji of Akure, Osolo of Akure and Iralepo of Akure. The last two got installed in 2007.

In Ondo, Her Royal Highness position in the political organization of Ondo town is such that she is substitute to the male king and without her no king can be enthroned (Makinde and Aladekome, 1997:79, Olasupo, 2007 Forthcoming). Other Ondo suburbs such as Ore, Odigbo, Ajue, Igburowo and Oro share this tradition with Ondo town. In Idanre, there is a slight difference as the male king appoint the female king but once appointed becomes co-eval with the male king. The Eyeules in Akure area share this tradition substantially with Ile-Oluji, Ondo and Idanre but in variety of ways.

The death of female king in Ondo provided a good opportunity to compare her rites of passage with that of her male counterpart. When the male king in Ondo died early in 2006, markets were closed for seven days. When the female king also died in May 27, 2007, the entire market in Ondo was also closed for seven days to allow for rituals and sacrifices to be made.

In the appointment of their kingmakers and other cabinet members, both kings (female and male) have exclusive and sole rights to appoint their High Chiefs and lesser ones as well. Both the female kings and the male kings have six kingmakers, below is the example: from Ondo Kingdom

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Female King Cabinet Members</th>
<th>Male King Cabinet Members</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lobun (female king)</td>
<td>Jagun (male king)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. The High Chief Lisa Lobun</td>
<td>1. The High Chief Lisa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. The High Chief Jomu Lobun</td>
<td>2. The High Chief Jomu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. The High Chief Odofin Lobun</td>
<td>3. The High Chief Odofin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. The High Chief Orangun Lobun</td>
<td>4. The High Chief Sama</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. The High Chief Supou Lobun</td>
<td>5. The High Chief Odunwo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. The High Chief Sasere Lobun</td>
<td>6. The High Chief Sasere</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


In anioama area of Delta State, the Omu, though not addressed as female king, she enjoys recognition and performs roles such as ones found in some kingdoms in Yorubaland. She has her own cabinet with executive capacity like her male counterpart. In Ibusa for instance, “History has it that the institution in this community was a grant by the authority of the Obi (Chief) to his very powerful loyal and effective prime minister who was asked to appoint a woman to superintend over the affairs of the whole communities. However, in other communities such as Okpanam and Ogwashi Uku, appointment of Omu is by god. In Ogwashi Uku, two lineages, Idumu Agulu and Umunagbai/Umu Nwaele in Agidiase produce the Omu, while yet in some other places it is based on rotational basis. In the cabinet of an Omu are few men whom she conferred with traditional titles”(Alphonsus, 2007:13).

REGENCY
This chieftaincy institution is another vital area through which women exercise traditional ruler ship both as dual rulers or single rulers. More that any other institutions Regency institution been one that has put women into test as to whether they could assume full traditional ruler ship. The outcome over the years is such that women have proved more than able. This is attested to by the
The fact that contrary to three or six months of regency during which male kings ought to be in place, female regents now occupy the office for more than five, ten, fourteen or even seventeen years (Olasupo, 2007:178, Abiodun, 2006:3).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/N</th>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>TOWN OR VILLAGE</th>
<th>L.G.A</th>
<th>STATE</th>
<th>TYPE OF RULERSHIP</th>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>TIME SPENT IN OFFICE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Princess Adeyinka Adesida</td>
<td>Akure</td>
<td>Akure L.G</td>
<td>Ondo</td>
<td>Regent</td>
<td>2000-2004</td>
<td>5 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Princess Adejoke Adekanye</td>
<td>Akungba Akoko</td>
<td>Akoko South West LG</td>
<td>Ondo</td>
<td>Regent</td>
<td>2002-date</td>
<td>4 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Princess Joke Adesunloye</td>
<td>Ifira Akoko</td>
<td>Akoko South East LG</td>
<td>Ondo</td>
<td>Regent</td>
<td>2001-date</td>
<td>5 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Princess Janet Adigun</td>
<td>Iye Akoko</td>
<td>Akoko North LG</td>
<td>Ondo</td>
<td>Regent</td>
<td>2003-date</td>
<td>3 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Princess Ade Gbolarin</td>
<td>Ire-Ekiti</td>
<td>Oye L.G</td>
<td>Ekiti</td>
<td>Regent</td>
<td>1999-2004</td>
<td>5 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Princess Fehintola Omolewo</td>
<td>Ayegabju – Ekiti</td>
<td>Oye L.G</td>
<td>Ekiti</td>
<td>Regent</td>
<td>1997-2004</td>
<td>7 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Princess Bosede Elizabeth Fadiya</td>
<td>Oloje-Ekiti</td>
<td>Oye L.G</td>
<td>Ekiti</td>
<td>Regent</td>
<td>2002-2004</td>
<td>11½ years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Princess Aliu Ibiam</td>
<td>Uwanna</td>
<td>Afigbo North</td>
<td>Ebonyi</td>
<td>Regent</td>
<td>1996-2006</td>
<td>11 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Princess Adebohoye Aladeyeju</td>
<td>Igbara Odo Town</td>
<td>Ekiti South West</td>
<td>Ekiti</td>
<td>Regent</td>
<td>1996-2006</td>
<td>11 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Princess C.A Falade</td>
<td>Ido Ani</td>
<td>Ose L.G</td>
<td>Ondo</td>
<td>Regent</td>
<td>1978-1993</td>
<td>15 years</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Statistics of some women traditional rulers in the pre-colonial days

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/N</th>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>TOWN OR VILLAGE</th>
<th>L.G.A</th>
<th>STATE</th>
<th>TYPE OF RULERSHIP</th>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>TIME SPENT IN OFFICE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Oduduwa</td>
<td>Ife</td>
<td>Ife</td>
<td>Osun</td>
<td>Progenitor</td>
<td>Pre-colonial</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Terracotta evidence</td>
<td>Ife</td>
<td>Ife</td>
<td>Osun</td>
<td>Queen or Ooni of Ife</td>
<td>Between 12th and 13th centuries</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Luwo Gbadiga</td>
<td>Ife</td>
<td>Ife Cent. L.G</td>
<td>Osun</td>
<td>Ooni of Ife</td>
<td>Pre-colonial</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Debooye</td>
<td>Ife</td>
<td>Ife Cent. L.G</td>
<td>Osun</td>
<td>Ooni of Ife</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Iyayun</td>
<td>Oyo</td>
<td>Oyo L.G</td>
<td>Oyo</td>
<td>Alaafin</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Orompoto</td>
<td>Oyo</td>
<td>Oyo L.G</td>
<td>Oyo</td>
<td>Alaafin</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Jomijomi</td>
<td>Oyo</td>
<td>Oyo L.G</td>
<td>Oyo</td>
<td>Alaafin</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>Jepojepo</td>
<td>Oyo</td>
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<td>Oyo</td>
<td>Alaafin</td>
<td>-</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Ajiwon Arubosete</td>
<td>Oyo</td>
<td>Oyo L.G</td>
<td>Oyo</td>
<td>Alaafin</td>
<td>-</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Queen Amina</td>
<td>Zazzau</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>16th century Emir of Zaria</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>16th century</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Yakwano</td>
<td>Daura</td>
<td>Daura Emirate</td>
<td>Katsina</td>
<td>Queen</td>
<td>-</td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Yakania</td>
<td>Daura</td>
<td>Daura Emirate</td>
<td>Katsina</td>
<td>Queen</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Walsam</td>
<td>Daura</td>
<td>Daura Emirate</td>
<td>Katsina</td>
<td>Queen</td>
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<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Cadar</td>
<td>Daura</td>
<td>Daura Emirate</td>
<td>Katsina</td>
<td>Queen</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Agagri</td>
<td>Daura</td>
<td>Daura Emirate</td>
<td>Katsina</td>
<td>Queen</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Omu</td>
<td>Onitsha</td>
<td>Onitsha L.G</td>
<td>Anambra</td>
<td>Female Monarch</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Queen kanbasa</td>
<td>Bonny</td>
<td>Bonny L.G</td>
<td>Rivers</td>
<td>Queen</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Regency institution in certain parts of Yoruba land also lends credence to a female regent if not married before getting to the throne must remain celibate until expiration of her tenure as regent. Where she is married, on ascension to the throne, she should not bear child and the husband could not live with her in the palace. But all these are breaking down now due to modernization and civilization. Women regents now bear children while on the throne and some of them even keep their husband in the palace (Fashomi, 2005:13).

QUEENS’ MOTHERS
Queen mothers are ‘underground governments’ in some traditional states in Nigeria. In Bornu and Oyo Empires for instance, Queen mothers known as Magira in Kanuri and Iya-Oba in Yoruba hold in check, the excesses of their monarch sons. They exerted great influence on their sons in the conduct of the affairs of the kingdoms. While in Bornu Empire the Magira (Queens mother) could facilitate imprisonment of a particular Mai Biri, (citizen) in Oyo Empire the kings official mother influence society in matters relating to the economy and politics in Oyo (Awe, 1992:27).

At critical points the queen mothers did abandon their behind the scene role and come out openly as was the case in the days of Oyo Empire. In the days of Oyo Empire when the security of the empire was breaking down as a result of the disagreement between the ruler of the Empire, Alaafin Aole, and his prime-minister Basorun Gaa, it was the Palace women that intervened not only to support the king but more importantly they took over his personal security. They said:

A wa lehin re.
Gbogbo irumole aafin yi wa lehin re
Awon iyami wa lehin re....
Oسورonga –ا-pa-ni-ma-wa-gun
Olokiki oru at’ori jeran
Ati’idi j’edo enia.......
Awon l’Iolobe ide
Awon l’ogalanta ti mu ‘mi talotalo
Awon ni ifa, awon l’Odu-aiye –iya ooo!
( Faleti 1972: P29).

They are the Ifa, they are the hidden truth-of
The World –Oh Mother! (translation)

Qualification for Chieftaincy of women:
In the traditional setting, before a woman could be honoured she must either be from a royal house, one of the high chief daughter or wealthy. To have wealthy woman is always not easy because they mostly work in their husbands’ farm or business. Arrival of modernization changes the role of women from being working in their husbands’ businesses.

WOMEN RULERS IN MODERN NIGERIAN SOCIETIES
The call of United Nations on upliftment of women status politically, economically and socially has promoted women’s right all over the world. The outcome of the 1975 Mexico United Nations conference that aimed on improvement of the status of women, that of Copenhagen in 1980, and that of Nairobi 1985 (Forward Looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women to the year 2000 – FLSAW) a wake up call for African continent that aimed to protect women’s interests in health, employment, family life, political life, and also promote women’s human rights, Beijing conference of 1995, formed the basis for the upsurge of women’s rights groups in Africa in general and Nigeria in particular. Apart from Liberia, Gambia and Uganda that have produced President and Vice-Presidents respectively Nigeria appears to be the next in terms of women participation in party politics.
The Second Republic saw the upward movement of women from Regional level to the Federal level both in elective and nominative posts—while Chief Franca Afegba was the only elected woman Senator, Mrs. Biola Babatope, Mrs. Kande Balarabe and one other woman got elected into the House of Representatives. While the third republic recorded women advancement not only in state and local politics but more importantly in national politics as well. The first woman presidential aspirant in the country is Mrs. Sarah Jubril who effectively competed with her male counterparts in the Social Democratic Party (SDP) to vie for the presidential ticket.

Fourth Republic is not only the most impressive but colorful as well, in women ascendancy and political turnover in national politics. The beauty of this republic was not just election of women into elective posts but more importantly the emergence of four of them, Mrs. Margaret Ichen and Mrs Titilayo Shodunike Oseni, for Benue, Ogun respectively and two other ones for Anambra and Lagos States’ Houses of Assembly. As well, three women got elected as deputy governors in this fourth republic.

Offices of the First Ladies to the Presidents, Prime Ministers or any Head of government throughout the world are increasingly becoming institutionalized not by elective or appointive means but partly by marriage and partly by the forces of globalization (Olojede, 2000:265), [Issues, (2003:15)]. African First Ladies now have forum that meet periodically. The most recent one was their gathering at Abuja recently where the Vice-President enjoined them to use their population to produce the next president of the country [Editorial, (2004:14)].

Of course, gender quota system is becoming a global fad as women in countries such as Sweden, Denmark, Finland, Norway, Netherlands and Iceland occupy at least a third of their Houses of legislature. In India especially, the 1993 constitutional amendment reserved 33 percent of seats for women in local councils through which about one million women of the country enter into its politics.

WOMEN MODERN LOCAL RULERS

However contrary is the case in the modern rule (local government). For instance, for a very long time, right from the colonial days, the male traditional rulers have monopolized presidents of local government councils. Not even when local government system in Nigeria was reformed in 1976 did anybody think of voting or appointing women as local government chairpersons. This Rubicon was crossed in 1987 during General Babangida’s administration when for the first time two women won local government elections in Abeokuta in Ogun State and Katsina in Katsina state respectively. Three years later in 1990 additional three women were similarly elected and finally, in 1998 nine women were elected as local government chairwomen. Since then, women participation in local government councils has been increasing by leap and bounds (Afonja S. and Olasupo F, Forthcoming). See the details below.

WOMEN ELECTED CHAIRPERSONS IN FEDERALLY CONDUCTED LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS 1987 –1999

Table 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/N</th>
<th>STATES</th>
<th>LOCAL GOVTS</th>
<th>NAMES</th>
<th>POLITICAL PARTIES</th>
<th>DATE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Ogun</td>
<td>Abeokuta-</td>
<td>-Mrs Titi Ajanaku</td>
<td>Zero Party</td>
<td>1987</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Katsina</td>
<td>Malumfashi</td>
<td>Hajiya Magajiyi Garba Adamu</td>
<td>Zero Party</td>
<td>1987</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Benue</td>
<td>Ushogo</td>
<td>Chief Mrs Kazieh</td>
<td>SDP</td>
<td>1990</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Benue</td>
<td>Oju</td>
<td>Mrs. Eba Ogah</td>
<td>SDP</td>
<td>1990</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Ogun</td>
<td>Abeokuta</td>
<td>Mrs. Titi Ajanaku</td>
<td>SDP</td>
<td>1990</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Katsina</td>
<td>Bokkos</td>
<td>Mrs. Mariya Abdulahi</td>
<td>SDP</td>
<td>1990</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Plateau</td>
<td>Bakori</td>
<td>Mrs. Mariya Abdulahi</td>
<td>SDP</td>
<td>1990</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Anambra</td>
<td>Ogbaru</td>
<td>Calista Nwachukwu</td>
<td>AD</td>
<td>1998</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Imo</td>
<td>Ehime</td>
<td>Abigbogwu Amaka May</td>
<td>PDP</td>
<td>1998</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
However, in the Emirate or traditional councils, the impact of modernization and change, as regards recognition of women traditional rulers, particularly by the male kings and government officials at all levels of government, has been abysmally low. Traditional rulers were separated from local government administration in 1976 and constituted in to a separate council known as Emirate or Traditional council (Olasupo, 2007:169). Thus, just as we have 774 local government councils, do we have 774 traditional councils? Similarly as we have 36 State governments so do we have 36 State Council of Traditional rulers? At the national level, there is one National Traditional Rulers Forum in line with one National or Federal government. It is curious therefore that no woman traditional ruler is found in any of these tiers. More repugnant and disgusting is the fact that, in all of the 774 traditional councils none has female monarch.

CONCLUSION
No befitting conclusion for this paper sharper and pungent as the one provided by Professor S.O Arifalo and Dr. S. T. Okajare, who in a paper presented at the annual conference of Ondo State Council of Obas, states that “a review of the current convention on regency may also help in integrating the monarchs into modern government. The trend across the world today is gender sensitivity, which guarantees equal opportunity for the females with their male counterpart. Since they are traditionally qualified to be regent upon the death of a king, any effort at integrating the monarchs within modern governance apparatus demands some measures of flexibility to make them prospective candidates for the throne. Such flexibility is not unprecedented. History has shown that women rulers are usually very humane and effective administrators. In fact many believe that the political terrain in many countries would be much better if women are allowed to control the bulk of a nation’s political administration.

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Olowu Chieftaincy (1964) Amendment Declaration Made Under Section 9A of the Chiefs Law, Cap. 19, Setting out the Customary Law Regulating the Selection to the Olowu of Owu Chieftaincy as set out in section 10 of the chiefs Law, 1957)


The Westerner of February 5-11, 2005.

Abstract
This paper uses the lens of Social Identity Theory (Ashforth & Mael 1989; Tajfel 1982), from psychology and organisational psychology literature, and the concept of employer branding (Ambler & Barrow 1996; Ewing et al. 2002) from the marketing discipline, to investigate differing perceptions of employer attractiveness across different generations of potential and current employees. This paper presents a case study of a major private hospital in Western Australia which aims to contribute towards a better understanding of how managers can attract workers with increasingly disparate expectations of their working life in a highly “gendered” profession. To date no study has looked at whether a strong employer brand has the same resonance for different individuals within and outside an organisation and across different age groups and levels of experience. The current study is important from an industry perspective for two main reasons. Firstly, the shortage of skilled workers has become a prominent aspect of the Australian economy with calls in the business press for better marketing to prospective employees (Moses 2006). The healthcare industry, not only in Australia but also in many other developed nations, has been particularly badly affected. Secondly, the aging population means that no generation of workers can be ignored in the fight for talent. The demand for trained nurses is increasing at the same time as the supply is declining (Creswell 2005).

Key words: social identity theory, employer brand, healthcare, generations, gender.

1.0 Introduction
In this paper, different perceptions of employer attractiveness across generations of potential and current employees are investigated, using the concept of employer branding (Ambler & Barrow 1996; Ewing et al. 2002) from the marketing literature and Social Identity Theory (Ashforth & Mael 1989; Tajfel 1982) from organisational psychology. From an academic perspective, the interest in the troika of “identity” concepts – firstly at a personal, individual level, as well as at an internal organizational level and outwardly expressed as a corporate identity – has been growing in recent years (Cornelissen, Haslam & Balmer 2007). In fact, the convergence of the issues of identity, reputation and the corporate brand is seen as a crisis in strategy (Schultz, Hatch & Holten Larsen 2002) but also an opportunity. Hatch and Schultz (2002) used the metaphor of the “Tower of Babel” to describe the “conceptual confusion” and acknowledge the frustration felt by researchers trying to define key terms. They also suggested that while there is confusion there is also a richness to be found in the research. Another reason for this convergence is the breakdown of boundaries between the internal and external aspects of the firm. Balmer (2001) used the metaphor of a “fog” enveloping business identity studies and made reference to corporate reputation, total corporate communications and corporate branding and the interplay between these concepts. The paper proceeds as follows. Firstly a short introduction to the closely related concepts of employer branding and employer attractiveness are provided. Then, social identity theory is explained. Next, the case study of a major private hospital is introduced and the major findings are presented. The paper concludes with a discussion of the implications - notably the flexibility required to meet the demands of different generations across a highly gendered workforce.
2.0 Literature Review

2.1 The Employer Branding Concept
The term employer branding appears to have been coined by Ambler and Barrow (1996) whose definition is the “package of functional, economic and psychological benefits provided by employment and identified with the employing company” (Ambler and Barrow, 1996, p. 187). Ambler and Barrow (1996) posited that employer branding relates to three main groups of concepts: corporate culture and identity; internal relationship marketing; and corporate reputation. Thus employer branding represents a unique synthesis. It is clearly a cross-functional process ranging across public relations/communication management; marketing (Adamson, 2004; Simms, 2003), advertising (Berthon, Ewing and Li, 2005), human resources management (Brandon, 2005; Martin et al., 2004), general management and quality management. They also suggested that an employer brand has a personality and traditional marketing techniques should be, mutatis mutandis, applicable.

The notion of “employer attractiveness” is closely related to “employer branding” (Berthon, Ewing & Li 2005). Berthon, Ewing and Li (2005, p. 156) defined employer attractiveness as “the envisioned benefits that a potential employee sees in working for a specific organisation”. An important distinction should be made, however, in that Ambler and Barrow’s concept of EB encompasses both existing employees and potential employees while Berthon, Ewing and Li concentrate on potential employees. Berthon, Ewing and Li (2005) developed an employer attractiveness scale – and they stated that the scale’s five factor structure is essentially a refinement and extension of the three factors proposed by Ambler and Barrow (1996) for employer branding.

2.2 Social identity theory
Several scholars have noted the importance of social identity theory (SIT) applied to recruitment and the employer branding process (Backhaus 2004; Backhaus, Stone & Heiner 2002; Backhaus & Tikoo 2004; Cable & Graham 2000; Goldberg 2003; Turban & Greening 1997). The theory suggests that people derive their self worth at least in part from membership of certain groups (Tajfel 1982). Membership of an organisation will influence an individual’s self concept. So “belonging” to an attractive employer would be seen as advantageous for a potential employee. Ashforth and Mael (1989) were the first to use SIT in terms of a person’s identification with an organisation. People may be classified in various categories and people classify themselves according to what social groups they belong to, known as social classification. Social classification serves two functions. First it cognitively segments and orders the social environment. Second, social classification enables the individual to define him or herself in the social environment (Ashforth & Mael 1989). The individual’s organisation may provide one answer to the question; Who am I (Ashforth & Mael 1989)? Individuals identify with social categories partly to enhance self esteem and through social identification and comparison, individuals are argued to partake in the successes and status of the group. Hence organisations with a positive reputation would be perceived as a more attractive proposition for potential employees.

Ashforth and Mael apply SIT to organisations across three areas: organisational socialisation, role conflict and intergroup relations. Under the area of organisational socialisation, Ashforth and Mael contended that because identification is group specific, organisations make claims to be unique. They also suggest that this is why a search for a distinctive identity by managers induces organisations to focus intensely on symbols including: advertising, names and logos, jargon, leaders and mascots. Ashforth and Mael’s (1989) emphasis on the organisational search for a point of difference, and its representation/manipulation through symbols including traditions, myths, metaphors, heroes and physical setting, is echoed in the literature on branding. Their link between symbolism and identification (Ashforth & Mael 1989) is also mirrored in the literature on corporate identity.
Role conflict explores the notion that, as most individuals belong to different groups, the different "social identities" that result from belonging to these groups could make inconsistent demands on a person. While most people slide easily from one role to another; when the disparities between roles are made obvious and a person is forced to "don two hats" the ease of cognitively managing two roles is broken down (Ashforth & Mael 1989). Ashforth and Mael use the example of the Challenger disaster where a senior engineer sent the shuttle into space, despite a faulty solid rocket booster, when he was asked to stop thinking like an engineer and think like a manager. Looking at hospital groups, nurses may find a potential role conflict in their dedication to patient care, as a member of the nursing profession, on the one hand, and as a nurse within a private hospital setting the opposing need for efficiency in nursing hours devoted to patents (known in the health industry as "hours per patient day") to increase revenue. Nurse managers, in particular, who are responsible for staffing, may face this difficulty in cognitively managing different group expectations. This concept of role conflict can also be explored when a large proportion of nurses are part-time workers with family obligations.

A distinction is made between holographic organisations and ideographic organisations (Ashforth & Mael 1989). Holographic organisations have a purpose and identity that is common across departments whereas ideographic organisations have multiple identities across sub-units which may vie for power and status. It is suggested that in the ideographic organisation sub-units can be the primary focus of inter-group conflict. Ashforth and Mael (1989) quote a study of hospitals by Bates and White (1961) that sampled board members, administrators, doctors and nurses from 13 hospitals and found that each group believed it should have more authority than allowed.

Cable and Graham (2000) used SIT to as a basis to suggest that employees and applicants, because of their close affiliation or potential affiliation with an organisation, may have very different perceptions of reputation and reputational attributes than other stakeholders such as consumers or investors. Indeed, their empirical research supported this view. In summary, SIT is of particularly use when looking at the area of employer branding as it explores the important role of identification with the employer by the job applicant or employee. It also has resonance with key ideas in the branding, reputation and identity literature.

3.0 Methodology

This paper presents a case study of a major private hospital in Western Australia which aims to contribute towards a better understanding of how managers can attract workers with increasingly disparate expectations of their working life in a highly "gendered" profession. To date no study has looked at whether a strong employer brand has the same resonance for different individuals within and outside an organisation and across different age groups and levels of experience. However, as the case study is looking at employer branding, the research does go "beyond" the case, looking at the views of potential graduate applicants for the hospital. Through depth interviews and focus groups involving hospital management and highly skilled nursing professionals, this study investigates what drives perceptions of employer attractiveness. This study investigates two questions in relation to social identity of individuals, organisational identity and corporate identity.

- How do perceptions of employer attractiveness in the private hospital sector differ between nurses of different generations and at different levels of their career – undergraduate, early career, mid-career and at senior levels?

- How do perceptions of employer attractiveness vary between upper managers, line managers and nursing staff and across the management team?

The case study incorporates mainly qualitative data from in-depth interviews and focus groups with nursing employees, managers and directors at different hierarchical and experiential levels within the organisation and prospective nursing employees outside the organisation as well as doctors,
who are not directly employed by the organisation but do work within it and other hospitals. As well as in-depth interviews and focus groups, documentary evidence – including advertising by the organisation and the organisation’s website - have been used in order to triangulate the data (Yin 2003). The nursing profession provides one of the best examples of the challenges resulting from changed generational and gender expectations, as nursing is both a highly gendered profession and one which is dominated by an aging workforce (Preston 2005).

Table 3.1 Coding for interviews

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interviewees/focus groups</th>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Executive Director</td>
<td>E Director</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Director of Clinical Services</td>
<td>Director CS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Director of Medical Services</td>
<td>Director MS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Director of Corporate Services</td>
<td>Director CorS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human Resources Manager</td>
<td>HR Manager</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marketing and Public Relations Manager</td>
<td>MPR Manager</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training and Development Manager</td>
<td>TD Manager</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nurse Manager, Clinical Services</td>
<td>N Manager, CS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three medical specialists</td>
<td>MS1, MS2, MS3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undergraduate registered nurses: focus group</td>
<td>FG – undergrad RNs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undergraduate enrolled nurses: focus group</td>
<td>FG – undergrad ENs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate enrolled nurses: focus group</td>
<td>FG – grad ENs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate registered nurses with six months’ experience: focus group</td>
<td>FG – RNs, 6 mos experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate registered nurses with nine months’ experience: focus group</td>
<td>FG – RNs, 9mos experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nurses with five years’ experience: focus group</td>
<td>FG –RNs, 5 yrs experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clinical nurses with 10 years experience: focus group</td>
<td>FG – CNs, 10 yrs experience</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.0 Findings and discussion

4.1 Research question one

- How do perceptions of employer attractiveness in the private hospital sector differ between nurses of different generations and at different levels of their career – undergraduate, early career, mid-career and at senior levels?

4.1.2 Support required

For nurses about to graduate and those who had only recently graduated the concept of “support” emerged as one of the key themes. A supportive work environment was seen as synonymous with an attractive employer. The way the undergraduates and early graduates assessed this was often through experience during their undergraduate practical experience, through their interaction with recruiting staff at a hospital as well as through word of mouth.

In the focus group interview conducted with graduate nurses with six months’ experience, the response to the question on what makes an employer attractive was:

Just starting out – knowing you can go to people, knowing people will be approachable and not...
That people actually know you – not just as a number. Feeling valued as a person – not just as an academic number. (FG – RNs, 6 mos experience)

4.1.3 Flexibility – there’s more to life than work
“Support” was commonly the first word mentioned when asked about what makes an attractive employer at undergraduate and recent graduate level for both enrolled and registered nurses. However, for older, more experienced nurses, support was not mentioned. For those with more experience, the concept of “flexibility” (of hours and rosters) was a common theme. The importance of flexibility was not confined to the older, more experienced nurses (who were all women, some with family responsibilities) but across all age groups. The following comment is illustrative of this theme.

I think flexibility of working hours [makes an employer attractive]. Not everybody has got family but people still like to have a life. To have rosters based on requests as well as on operational needs. (FG – CNs, 10 years experience)

At more senior levels, nurses also mentioned the opportunities for career development, but this did not always equate with promotion but rather for knowledge enhancement opportunities and study days.

4.1.4 The importance of relationships
For many of the recently graduated nurses, employer attractiveness was often judged by the relationship they had with the organisation prior to joining. For younger nurses, the relationships are mostly through practical work experience (or “pracs”) while they are still at university and later through agency nursing and that these relationships are an important way to judge employer attractiveness, prior to applying for a position. The relationship of the hospital with its current staff was also seen as important in generating positive word of mouth, which, or course, would then influence its reputation.

In response to a question to a focus group of recently graduated registered nurses on why they joined the case hospital when they knew the pay was better at public hospitals the following comment illustrated the importance of familiarity – or an existing relationship.

Most of us - I had a prac here – I knew the paperwork, I knew the wards, I knew some of the staff – you talked to other grads on the programme.

The more senior nurses recognised that in nursing it was possible to “try before you buy” by doing agency work. Interestingly, management who were responsible for managing the employer branding process were in no doubt as to the importance of relationships. The Training and Development Manager, who is largely responsible for recruiting the graduates into the hospital’s specialised graduate programme as well as co-ordinating the practicums during the nurses’ undergraduate degree, recognised the need to give the students a positive experience to help in recruiting them when they graduated. Her view shows clearly that relationships must come first and the reputation is second.

So it’s really down to interaction - so while we have got a captive audience with students coming through we make an effort to make it is as good a learning environment as possible. But there’s also that human touch of making sure they feel important and that’s how they are welcomed in the organisation. And we are looking at future strategies for capturing that audience. We know from all the jingles and jangles and posters and things might attract a small proportion [but] it’s the word of mouth. (TD Manager)
4.1.5 The importance of first impressions

For most potential employees, unless they have done a practicum or internship prior to employment, their first relationship-based encounter with an employer is through the application for the position and interview process. To use Carlzon’s (1987) moment of truth concept, from the services marketing literature, the interview is a key “moment of truth” in the delivery of the employer brand to potential employees. For the undergraduate and graduate nurses, the interview certainly was a key decider in their search for an attractive employer. In fact, several commented on the friendly nature of the interviews at the case hospital (and certain other hospitals) and contrasted this with some rather daunting interviews at other, particularly, Government hospitals.

I actually applied at the public ones first and I didn’t like the interview process there. (FG – undergrad RNs, respondent 2)
Oh yeah – terrible. (FG – undergrad RNs, respondent 3)
Yeah – it was very cold and they didn’t want to look at any academic results. (FG – undergrad RNs, respondent 1)

The HR Manager at the case hospital recognised the importance of making the recruitment process as simple as possible and emphasised the development of a positive relationship early on. In fact, her view was of a “passive” job seeker and felt recruitment was actually like “selling a car”.

It was very much how can we make life easier for you as a grad applying for the job so then [in the past] we would send out a whole lot of paperwork so we felt no, no we want to kept talking to them – because it’s very easy for them not to accept it whereas if we ring them up and say: “Why what is it? Well did you know we can do this for you or let me know how we can overcome that for you”…so it was very much that approach. (HR Manager)

4.1.6 Relationships damaged on the inside

If the recruitment process leading up to employment could be viewed as courtship, then the “marriage” part of the relationship, when the nurse becomes an employee, is critical in the final judgement on a company’s employer attractiveness. Comments from employees showed that the employer brand equity could be badly damaged once they are hired, by failure to live up to the brand promise. As Keller points out, one of the “seven deadly sins of brand management” (2003, p. 736) is a broken brand promise which can see a firm worse off than if it had set no expectations at all. Setting brand expectations too high and then not delivering is a common – but deadly – mistake (Keller 2003). The relationship side of the employer branding equation, can certainly be damaged by not delivering on advertised functional benefits. At the case hospital, these functional benefits, taken from the company website, are promoted as:

• Competitive pay and conditions
• Flexible salary packaging
• Flexible banking payments
• Employee assistance programmes
• Free parking
• On-site childcare coordinator
• School holiday programs for children
• Paid parental leave
• Close to public transport
• Library on site
• Gymnasium with subsidised membership
• Subsidised massage & beauty therapies
• Enjoyable social events
• Employee wellness programs
• Corporate private healthcare rates.
The overall response from most of the focus groups was a concern that organisations do over-promise when it comes to recruitment.

Yeah, yep (Lots of nods of agreement). They have to – otherwise they wouldn’t get anyone. They can’t say: Tiny gym; crap rosters. (Lots of laughter) (FG – RNs, 9mos experience)

Another comment from the graduates related to lifestyle (functional) benefits offered sums up a similar disappointment in the reality.

They offer that they have got all these lifestyle benefits which didn’t really live up to it. Like they offer that they have a gym. When they advertise jobs for [the case hospital] they say they have five star benefits and the gym is this little thing, this tiny little thing that the patients use. Like if that lived up to it it would be better as well because that did draw a few people thought that’s going to make the lifestyle easier. (FG – RNs, 9mos experience)

The clinical nurses were in agreement on the issue of over-promising. However, while there was a disconnect between the advertising promise and the reality, the more senior nurses had been with the company for some time and did not express a real desire to leave, perhaps because this advertising had taken place after they had been recruited.

Yes (General agreement). They promise the world. In all the ads I mean it says “Flexible rostering.” And all that sort of stuff “Join the stars (said in a sarcastic tone).” (Lots of laughter) Once you get in….It’s pathetic! (FG - CNs, 10 yrs experience)

With the focus group with graduate registered nurses with six months’ experience, one of the respondents did not feel that the case hospital had over-promised. The nurse’s response was “Some do. Not here.” However, other respondents in the same group felt differently.

Leading up to the interview they promise everything and then you rock up to the interview and they’re not actually flexible and they don’t actually want to keep you. (FG – RNs, 6 mos experience)

It’s been a huge adjustment. The hours. And you don’t just get enough of the prac as a student. You do Monday to Friday and it’s just not the reality (FG – RNSs, 6 mos experience)

This quote shows that it perhaps is not just the over-promising of advertising campaigns but the change in expectations placed upon graduates compared to their student experience. As students, they only had to work Monday to Friday for their practical work experience but once in the “real” workforce, the graduates had to work longer and more “unsocial” hours on shifts across weekends and at night.

4.1.7 The promise of flexibility, the reality of rosters

The organisation’s promotional slogan aimed at jobseekers, which features across the hospital website, is: “We know there’s more to life than work”. It could be argued that inherent in this slogan is a recognition that staff want to have flexibility (or at least some control) in their work hours. However, a major failure in the delivery of the brand promise at the case hospital appears to be a perception that rostering and lack of choice are key concerns for nursing employees once they join.

In the interviews, it was also interesting to note resentment from younger nurses without children who felt that there was some favouritism to more flexible rosters for those with children.
You have to have kids – that’s ridiculous. It [rostering] varies – some wards are really good I think but other wards are a bit...they are understaffed. I understand that there’s not much they can do cos they’re understaffed but then that’s not our fault. They will just lose more staff. You get overworked...It just affects everything because if you never know when you’re working you can’t plan anything. Like I have got a 21st in two months – I, well, I will request it off and hopefully I will get it off. Sometimes you work right up to the Friday and you don’t know the following Tuesday what you are working. (FG – RNs, 9 mos experience)

4.1.8 The need for respect
Continuing the theme of the importance of relationship development and maintenance for a strong employer brand, the issue of “respect” emerged as a key factor. “Respect” was desired by potential and existing nursing staff, but it was acknowledged there may be a lack of respect for nurses. There was a sense that recruitment of doctors had always taken priority for management, at least up until recently. It became evident that a major challenge – or perhaps an opportunity – for being an attractive employer for nurses in the health industry was the culture and history of the professions of nursing and medicine, in particular the questions of power and respect.

The following comments were elicited from the focus group with senior clinical nurses.

If you want a lot of money don’t be a nurse – do something else....Generally actually we are underpaid. We are undervalued and overworked. There are not enough avenues for promotion. Within this organisation, or...?
Across the board. In any other industry if you had a situation with so many demands – it is so ordinary. The salary is poor – A lollypop man can turn a sign around, wear short shorts and get $100,000. Who’s the mug? It’s not him!
When you consider it’s a documented fact that nursing is one of the most dangerous professions – we should get paid danger money. (FG – CNs, 10 yrs experience)

This comment shows that while salary could be seen purely as an economic benefit, it also has a symbolic quality as it shows that the concepts of “respect” and salary are interlinked.

A graduate summed up her frustrations as the reality of nursing hit her: “I didn’t do three and a half years to wipe people’s bottoms.” (FG – RNs, 9 mos experience). However, those nurses who commented positively said it was definitely the support for their professional skills that made a difference. The Nurse Recruitment Manager (herself from a nursing background), who has recently changed her title to Nurse Manager – Clinical Services, felt that the most important thing in attracting nurses was respect. “That’s the reason I’ve been here so long – you are not just treated as a number here – we don’t do salary packaging, but I would rather have the respect and not be treated as a number.” (NManager, CS) [Note: the case hospital does offer limited salary packing, within the regulations of Australian taxation laws. However, Australian State Government-run hospitals and those which are run by Church-related organisations are able to offer more generous salary packaging benefits because of taxation rulings.]

The notion of respect is important, ignored and poorly defined in marketing circles (Costley, Friend & Babis 2005). However, it appears to be a major factor that certainly warrants more attention in relation to the concept of employer branding.

4.1.9 Reputation and social identity theory
Across undergraduates, graduates, more experienced nurses and management, a common theme was of those hospitals with negative reputations being unattractive rather than talking of hospitals with exceptional reputations being magnets. The focus group with the senior, experienced clinical nurses provoked a reaction that could be linked to the concept of social identity theory. As
discussed previously, social identity theory states that people’s identity and self esteem are partly determined by their membership of social organisations, such as the organisation they work for or their specific workgroup (Lievens, Van Hoye & Ansee 2007). Lievens, Van Hoye and Ansee discuss the “cocktail party test” where people’s reaction in a social situation (such as a cocktail party) to where you work will have an impact on your own feelings about the organisation. The nurses’ views seem to tie into this theory as they suggest that they don’t want to work for a hospital that others disapprove of.

I guess you need to be able to tell people that you work at a good place – I guess if it’s got a bad reputation then you think the nurses are bad...It gives you a sense of security.

I guess there are certain hospitals you wouldn’t work at because they have got negative publicity. Some hospitals have a lot of adverse publicity. The negative can be a driver away. (FG – CNs, 10 yrs experience)

The enrolled nurse graduates also spoke of deciding not to work at a hospital because of its negative reputation.

4.2 Research question two
• How do perceptions of employer attractiveness and organisational identity vary between upper managers, line managers and nursing staff and across the management team?

While support was seen as key by the less experienced nurses and flexibility of hours as well as respect were seen as relevant across all levels of experience, these key elements espoused by the nurses themselves did not always match the views of senior management on what made an attractive employer. For the Director of Clinical Services, the importance of a match of specialties was seen as vital. Both the Executive Director and the Director of Medical Services felt that a “fun” environment was important. However, the Executive Director did acknowledge that, for nurses, respect was key.

Doctors would want to have good patient care – doctors would want their instructions are to be followed, want to be able to get their patients in – staff to know them – ‘the way I like to do things’; pre-empt what it is this they want...Nurses would want other people to treat them with respect – not to be treated like dirt. (E Director)

Interestingly, the marketing public relations manager, who had only recently commenced working in the health public relations/marketing field (but with senior experience in other areas), was extremely insightful and honest about this challenge.

5.0 Conclusion
In summary, empirical findings from this case study reveal that perceptions of what make an attractive employer vary across the generations and levels of experience. For recent graduates, the notion of support is crucial. Perhaps for different reasons, the concept of flexibility of the employer and some control over hours and rosters is vital for all ages. Relationships prior to recruitment and the importance of managing the “moments of truth” during the recruitment process have been identified. Avoiding over-promising is also vital. “Respect” is a key theme for nurses at all levels. The empirical findings also identified different views across senior managers and at different levels of the organisation of what makes an attractive employer. In trying to manage a consistent corporate identity for the organisation these differences could prove a challenge. As a single case study this research clearly has limitations. However, if employers are to survive the skills shortage, it is imperative that organisation have flexible and ever-changing strategies to deal with intergenerational and gender expectations across organisations in the highly female workforce of the health profession.
References
Women leading women – a masculine or feminine business? Management in Swedish elderly care

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WORK IN PROGRESS – NOT FOR CITATION

Abstract
The main purpose of the paper is to describe and analyze how leadership and gender is constructed in organizations dominated by women. The paper presents findings in a research project concerning management within care of elderly people in Sweden. The main theoretical framework in the paper relates to a doing gender perspective (Acker, 1992). The research topic is also discussed from theoretical viewpoints on the public sector and its change, first line managers as well as gender and leadership. The empirical data consists of qualitative interviews with managers within public and private elderly care organizations. Observations of management meetings as well as shadowings of a number of managers provide background information. The findings in the paper indicate traces of a “masculinisation” and “managementification” of the public elderly care sector on a general level. The individual managers’ accounts on being a manager and a woman within this sector display intersections of several social categorizations.

Keywords: doing gender in organizations, leadership, managers, management, public sector

Introduction
The main purpose of the paper is to describe and analyze how leadership and gender is constructed in organizations dominated by women. The research on leadership and gender has developed from the 1970’s focus on women as managers to be from the 1990’s onwards concerned with the question of how leadership and gender is constructed in the context of organizations. We now know a great deal about women’s possibilities and limitations when it comes to reaching and retaining management positions in organizations dominated by men (e.g. Frankenhaeuser, 1993; Marshall, 1984). Within the field of critical studies on men and masculinity, there is a growing body of research on the relationship of men, masculinity, organization and management. A strong connection between leadership and masculinity has been reported (Collinson and Hearn, 1994; 1996; Powell et al, 2002) - both in terms of men’s over representation on management positions and the masculine image of management. But what more can we learn about women leading women and the processes of doing leadership and gender in organizations dominated by women?

In order to discuss these questions, we turn to the Swedish public sector that has been dominated by women ever since the 1960’s extension of this particular sector. More precisely, the paper presents empirical findings in a research project concerning first line managers and leadership within care of elderly people\(^1\) in Sweden.

The next two sections of the paper shortly introduce our theoretical starting points and the methodology being used. Then two lengthier sections of empirical material are presented where the processes of doing leadership and gender are described and analysed in two steps. Firstly we describe and analyse the context of Swedish elderly care and it changes, secondly four first line managers’ stories on being a manager in this context. The paper ends with conclusions.

\(^1\) This is non-medical care for elderly people provided by the municipality, here after referred to as elderly care.
Theoretical starting points

The aim of the article touches on a number of central concepts. One distinction that is often made is that between manager and leader, where manager denotes the person who has formally, by some higher level, been appointed the authority to act on behalf of the employer, while leader denotes one who has gained the employees’ confidence and acceptance (Yukl, 2006). With this type of definition of leadership the focus is placed on relations and processes. In a similar way to the majority of leadership literature, the focus in this paper is directed towards the managers in that process. Despite the distinction between leader and manager, these designations are often used as synonyms in studies of leadership, due to the fact, which is the case even here, that studies of leadership often use actual managers as a starting point.

The other central concept is gender, which in this article is understood as something that is created socially and reproduced through what is said and done in different contexts, for example in the workplace. Gender research today implies that the focus is placed equally on women and men, likewise femininity and not least masculinity (Collinson and Hearn, 1996; Mills, 2002). We place the article within the framework of a doing gender approach. The terms leadership and gender are used and understood as processes; herein meaning that gender and leadership is done in an organizational context. Using a processual perspective it is possible to link different levels in the analysis of the construction of gender and leadership; how society, organizational and individual levels interact. More precisely we use Joan Acker’s (1992; 1999) theoretical framework, where construction of gender may be understood through four interacting processes: 1) Production of gender divisions. Professions, wages, hierarchies and power are distributed in a way that produces divisions between men and women, masculinity and femininity. 2) Creation of symbols and images. Corporate values and metaphors for describing for example leadership may be used to explain, confirm – and sometimes contest – gender divisions. 3) Interactions between individuals and groups. Interactions display inclusion and exclusion as well as horizontal and vertical gender divisions. 4) Internal mental work, which relates to the individual sense making concerning gender divisions.

Theory on gender order, for example the gender system (Hirdman 1988; 2001), has been widely used in feminist research concerning working life. The main components of the gender system are the two logics of vertical and horizontal segregation of women and men as well as masculinity and femininity. Structuralist theory on gender order or gendered power has however been criticized for neglecting variations, change and agents. Research in recent years also deals with the fact that male dominance cannot be understood in only one, static, way. Variation, dynamics, alteration are important keywords (Connell and Messerschmidt, 2005; Kvande, 2003). The theoretical concept of intersectionality, different power structure interactions, has lately been discussed and used in order to generate knowledge about people’s living terms and conditions (Crenshaw, 1995; Lykke, 2005), and is also touched upon in studies on leadership and gender. The results from studies over recent years, which have focused on management development, management recruitment and organizational restructuring show however that the traditional, stable and inert gender-power patterns apparently prevail (e.g. Holgersson, 2003; Kvande, 2003).

Methodology

The empirical study has been designed as a case study of the elderly care and its management within Linköping, a Swedish municipality. Linköping is the fifth largest region in Sweden with 140 000 inhabitants. In Linköping elderly care is provided both by private and public organisations. The elderly care consists of home help service and nursing homes. Every unit has a manager who has the responsibility for one or more unit. The responsibility as a manager comprises responsibility for economy/finance, personnel, the elderly and development.
During the last years, about 50 per cent of the elderly care has been provided by private companies in Linköping but the share of elderly care provided by private companies increases. In 2008 the ratio is 60 per cent private units and 40 per cent public units.

Focus on first line managers
We have chosen to focus on first line managers in the study as they are an interesting and important group within the elderly care organizations: “The middle is the organization, the holder of its traditions, the keeper of its faith” (Kanter et al, 1979, p 90). First line managers in elderly care are unit managers or line managers with responsibility for the daily activities. These managers have the total responsibility for budgets, personnel and the development for the unit. The first line managers can be described as being in the middle between employees and senior managers. They are managers on the lowest hierarchical level in the organisation and therefore closest to the employees and the customers. The first line managers in this paper are formal managers. There may be other leaders within the unit as well but we have chosen to focus on the formal managers since they have the overall responsibility for their unit.

Methods of inquiry
In the study we have used methods of inquiry such as interviews, shadowings (Czarniawska, 2007) of managers and management meetings and analysis of official documents. The shadowings and the official documents provide background information presented in the subsequent section on the context of elderly care. The main empirical material presented consists of interview data. A total of 29 interviews have been conducted with first line managers (24 within public units and five within private units). 28 were women. A number of interviews have also been conducted with persons surrounding the first line manager; seven interviews with senior managers (four public and three private, all women), two interviews with politicians (one woman, one man), four with municipality officials, and finally two with union representatives. Totally 44 interviews were conducted during a period of four months in 2006.

The interviews were semi structured and the length of the interviews varied from 42 to 70 minutes. All of the interviews have been transcribed as a whole.

The contents have gone through a qualitative analysis. When analysing the interviews with the first line managers we divided them into seven comprehensive areas such as background, what it means to be a first line manager in elderly care, what a manager must know, how they describe their leadership, working conditions, gender equality and finally perceptions about managers working in the “other” sector (private/public).

For this article we have chosen to focus on four of the interviews with first line managers and describing them more thoroughly. The strategy behind this choice was to focus on managers who represent both unity and variation in the empirical material. When reading the whole material we chose two older and experienced managers, one from a public unit and one from a private unit. The other two managers are younger and relatively new on their positions. They are both from public units.

The context of elderly care and its changes
After the Second World War, health care and service has been a public sector responsibility in Sweden where co-workers as well as managers have been public employees. Elderly care in Sweden is financed through taxes and the municipalities (local governments) are responsible in this field. Professional elderly care is mainly provided by municipality (local government) organizations, but there is a trend of an increased ratio of private companies providing elderly care, right now 14 per cent.
As in most countries, the number of persons in need of care in Sweden increases due to an ageing population and a growing share of elderly people. The financial foundation for the public sector is decreasing as younger people do not outnumber the older in the demographic pyramid. The total costs for nursing and caring for elderly provided by the state and the municipalities was 6.5 per cent of the GNP, a total of 159 billion SEK in 2004. The costs for elderly care provided by the municipality constituted 80 billion SEK of the total cost. For a municipality the average costs for elderly care constitute a large share of the budget, close to one fifth of the total costs. (Socialstyrelsen, 2007).

The public sector is a female sector: women dominate amongst employees and first line managers. This is also the case within elderly care. Approximately 90 per cent of the employees (300 000 persons) within public elderly care are women. This contributes to the notion of elderly care as having a female image.

The public sector has been described as “the ugly sister” compared to the private sector due to the self-image, the leadership and the HR-policy within the public sector (Czarniawska, 1985). The public sector is a sector that is not always visible when it comes to leadership research for example. In Sweden this sector is often seen as bureaucratic and ineffective, and there seem to exist a negative self-image within this sector. Even though these descriptions the public sector is an important sector on a societal and organisational level. It constitutes a great share of the economy and employs a lot of people.

Organizational changes and changing demands
During the last decades a number of changes have been directed towards the public sector. The trend often referred to as New Public Management is applied also in Sweden. This trend comprises market orientation and competition, independent units, measurability and financial accountability as well as greater orientation towards customers and service (Christensen et al, 2005). These trends also contain new organizational forms and models and new owners. The local government/municipality as an organisation is often described as being under enormous pressure for change. Managing ideas from the private sector are often seen as positive models for the public sector (Sundin, 2006).

The NPM-trend has certainly influenced elderly care in Sweden. Different legislations and great reforms of organisational principles have changed the elderly care and its activity. There is a financial pressure in terms of cost reduction at the same time as increased accountability and quality assessment (cf. Goldmann, 2007). The contract times\(^2\) are becoming shorter and shorter and the competition between private and public units increases. During the last ten years there have been large organisational changes also within elderly care in Linköping. There are new ways of organising work and the responsibilities have changed.

Managers in Swedish elderly care and particular in Linköping
The management role of the unit manager within elderly care has a long history and the role has changed from being a “matron” of a poorhouse to a unit manager with responsibility for budget and personnel in professional care organizations (Trydegård, 2000). The reforms that have taken place within the public sector and elderly care have also led to a demand for a new role of the manager (Sundin, 1997). New competencies and a distinct leadership are requested – not least due to the common notion of leadership as both a problem and a solution within the public sector (Holmberg, 2003; Tullberg, 2003).

\(^2\) Here we refer to the system with tenders through bidding that is used in many municipalities in Sweden. When an organisation win a purchase with their tender they get to run a unit for a stated amount of years.
The role as a unit manager in elderly care is often described as a role of variation, complexity and diversity. The manager has a difficult middle position and is exposed for “cross pressure”, meaning pressure from both below and over. Within elderly care several discourses meet. The medical discourse, the caring discourse, the financial discourse and the service discourse all exist within elderly care (Selander, 2001). The managers face conflicting demands in relation to the various discourses of “customers”, employees and superiors (Szébehely, 2005; Wolmesjö, 2005).

In 2004, a new job description concerning the assignment as unit manager in elderly care in Linköping was created. There the unit manager’s assignment is described in terms of three areas of responsibility; core activity, finance and personnel. In 2006, the municipality invested in a stronger and more visible strategic human resource management work. For example the creation of a “leadership profile” for all their managers to be applied within all areas, including elderly care, programs for leadership development, recruitment etc. The director of HR stated that it is important that the municipality gives the first line managers clearer goals to work towards.

During the period of data collection there was a great economical pressure on each elderly care manager to hold their budget and it was a prioritized responsibility for the managers.

Summary and analysis of the elderly care context
As described in the above section, the elderly care is dominated by women. The gender distribution among employees and managers within elderly care contribute to the female image of care work also in a symbolic sense. The care work carried out by women within elderly care is also and arena for doing femininity, i.e. a femininity connected to the care work traditionally carried out by women (Acker, 1992; Hirdman, 2001). The changes of public welfare services, in practice as well as in rhetoric, however imply a change of traditional assumptions. The new public management and new owners imply that some of the characteristics of the public sector do not apply any more, but are rather replaced by the logics of the private sector. What does that mean for the female image of elderly care and its management?

The need for a “new” and “distinct” leadership and the idealization of the management principles of private companies can be understood in terms of masculinisation of the elderly care sector and its leadership (Acker, 1992; Collinson & Hearn, 1994). By investing in leadership policies and development programs, leadership is pointed out as a strategic resource within elderly care. The leadership called for is however not a “soft” one, rather directed towards economical management. The ideals concerning a traditionally feminine rationality of care become inferior in relation to a traditionally masculine logic of financial control, normative business economics and performance management as the managers’ responsibility for economical matters is focused. The presence of women on management positions does not guarantee that the interests of women or women’s experiences are highlighted (Phillips, 1995). Thus, the managementification of elderly care can be interpreted as a masculinisation that brings with it a situation where managers, women as well as men, that do not fulfill the new norms become marginalized (cf. Hedlund, 2006; Johansson, 1997; Linstead & Thomas, 2002).

Being a manager: four accounts on work, legitimacy and responsibility
In this section of the paper, we present the notions and opinions of four first line managers: Annie, Beth, Carol and Diane (their first names have been changed). These four managers represent somewhat of the varying experiences and differences among the interviewed first line managers. They were all asked to describe their personal backgrounds in terms of education and previous jobs. Other questions concerned how they would describe an average working day, what they think a manager within elderly care should do and what aspects of leadership they find crucial. Some questions also addressed the working conditions of first line managers within elderly care. The managers were also asked about their views on gender equality within elderly care. In the below
sections, their personal backgrounds are described, followed by summaries and quotes from the interviews.

**Annie – the nurse**
Annie works as a first line manager in a private health care company. She is the manager of two nursing homes. Annie is in her 50s. She has been working within health care since 1971, at first as an auxiliary nurse. By the age of 40, she received her degree as a nurse and worked as such at two different nursing homes. She was asked several times to become a manager, and she finally accepted in 2000.

My role as a manager here is to make sure that all laws are being followed, that I have a clear picture of what is going on here, that I check how things are coming along, that the place works. I have contacts with relatives, the old people living here, representatives of the municipality, politicians, the staff.

Annie describes that it is important that the manager knows what it is like to work as an auxiliary nurse, to have the understanding of what the fun parts and the boring parts of this work are. That makes it possible to take the employees’ perspectives on what is expected of her as a manager.

In a nursing home, it is essential that the first line manager is an educated nurse, Annie says. Her opinion is that it is different from being a manager within home care services. The old people in a nursing home tend to have multiple diseases and it is important that the manager has the competencies in order to make adequate plans for the nursing home and to educate the staff.

Annie has two so called group leaders to help her with staff planning, holiday substitutes and budgeting. She says:

I don’t need to do the short time stuff like “fire-fighting activities”. I don’t have to do the running, the team leaders do the running for me. To me, it is important to be visible. A lot of my time is to come here in the morning so that we can have coffee together, it is better than coming in here in the middle of a care situation, I don’t want to disturb them then. You hear a lot during the coffee break.

Annie finds her working conditions quite good, and that she can influence her working days by herself. She prefers to have a time agenda for certain activities so that she can be visible at the two nursing homes. The difficulties as a manager is not related to her staff:

I think the working situation is satisfactory. The hard part is when relatives of the old people aren’t content and you feel questioned, that is tough, or when the politicians come here and have opinions that you don’t feel are adequate.

However, there are some staff situations that Annie finds difficult: when the team is not working due to a specific person that may have to quit her job. The fun part of being a manager is when the staff takes initiatives and when the old people and their relatives are satisfied.

This is a fun job. You are very free, you have an immense amount of responsibility, but the job is very free. The most important trait is to be humble to the people around you, especially those you work with so that you can tune in how they are doing. And to let them grow with their tasks.

Annie finishes the interview by commenting upon the fact that she has been studying university courses on management within the health care sector and that has been valuable for her as a manager. But what gives her respect among her co-workers is her working experience within health care, alongside her age:
I can sometimes feel that I get respect due to my many years within care work, I’m not distanced from this. At the same time I’m older. It is really a very good combination. I think it is more difficult to be young, and not be educated within health care. When these old ladies in my staff come to me with their many opinions on various things, it is good to be able to answer them. You often hear ‘it’s so tough’ and I ask them ‘what is tough, tell me’ and also ask them if it is really tough work every day - it boils down to their work not being so tough after all.

**Beth – the experienced entrepreneur**

Beth is in her 60s. She describes that she has been working with various things; as an operative in a chocolate factory and later on as an auxiliary nurse. Beth has been working within elderly care for 20 years, as a manager for home care services and old-people’s homes for six years. When the municipality restructured the elderly care in 2004, she was asked if she wanted to become middle manager, but turned the offer down since she will soon retire. She says that the work as manager has changed over the last few years:

There is more explicit management and control today...especially when it comes to the economical matters, by key ratios that are specified within the model of balanced scorecard. The results and economical prognosis is specified./..../ I actually like it. Sometimes it is a bit finical and trifle, but the manager role is more transparent, and I like that.

Beth describes that her working days are very different:

If it is a bad week, there are meetings all the week. These meetings may include development work, marketing, meetings with my staff in their work groups. Sometimes you have the feeling that you aren’t at your work place and that you can’t perform the administrative assignments or to be present. It is a combination of these meetings and development work.

Beth is an entrepreneurial person. She has been involved in developing organizational models in order to offer better solutions for home care services and old people’s homes. She says:

This is an inspirational job, really. It is exciting to be able to be active and influence. As with many other jobs a heavy work load sometimes, but it is...well there is lot of room for creativity and imagination, I think it is great.

Later on in the interview she continues to talk about the interesting parts of her work as a manager:

The daily work can be very stimulating. The work becomes what you make of it, and that is probably something that you learn. You have to utilize the opportunities and the contacts, to develop those parts of your self. Nowadays they talk about work life balance, but also working life balance. This job can actually consume you if you are ambitious and want to show that you are good.

An important part of her work as a manager is to keep the staff informed of what is going on within the elderly care in the municipality and how their specific unit is going. In addition, Beth points to the importance of giving the staff feedback on their work activities.

When asked about what competencies are suitable for the management position she holds, Beth first mentions “experience of life”, and also work life experience and personal maturity. The educational may vary, she has met managers with bachelor degrees in behavioral sciences as well as business administration and they are all suitable. The “big parts” that are essential include budgeting, human resources management and group and organizational processes.

Gender equality is not an issue they work with or talk about, unless perhaps on a personal level that has to do with the difficulties when the personnel has to stay at home with sick children, Beth says.
Carol – being responsible

Carol is 34 years old and has one child, and is right now pregnant with child number two. After finishing high school in 1990, she worked within elderly care as an auxiliary nurse. She found her own boss’ work so interesting that she decided to take a university degree in social care, which she completed in 2002. After that Carol has been working as a manager; first as an assistant manager but now as the manager of a block of service flats with 22 employees and a large number of persons that are employed to take care of their relatives in their private homes. She does not wish to work full time. She started out working 90% of full time, but she worked so much that she increased her hours of service to 95%.

I want to stay at home with my son, I want to be able to be a parent and it makes you think. Not least since I’m pregnant again, it makes you wonder if you really should work as a manager during the baby years, and then I get really annoyed as I think that of course you must have the adequate working conditions, because young managers are important.

Carol thinks that the work takes too much time:

Maybe I am too dutiful, or maybe too naïve, as I want to make all the changes right away, it must probably take longer time than you wish in order to cope yourself. Because there is no one that will guide about boundaries or limits of work, you have to do it yourself. But it is too bad because this job…without kids it is a wonderful job.

When it comes to the contents of her work, she states that she devotes most of her time to her staff. She also stresses that administrative issues, above all economical matters such as budgeting and financial planning, is a substantial part of her work. This is something she is not comfortable with:

Right now, economical matters are really focused and that is something I feel uncertain about. It is about following up the hours we do. /…/ But I do not want to deal with the economical issues, I am not interested in it, I want to devote my time to the old people and the staff, that is what you want to do. /…/It is hard not to have control over your own time, there are so many people that own my time, that is how I feel.

Carol mentions that she is really happy that she has a background as an auxiliary nurse, she has been working with the same matters as her staff. That gives her legitimacy. Concerning what education is suitable for the type of management position she holds, she says that several degrees are suitable, e.g. within social work or human resources management. When Carol comments upon the working conditions for managers she says:

All the time, I have the final responsibility as manager. No one else has that responsibility and everything finally ends up in my laps. If I would walk around and constantly think about the economical responsibility, I wouldn’t dare to go to work…it is fortunate that you actually forget about all the responsibilities.

Carol mentions a personal network as important to her work. It is a network of young managers that they have started themselves. They use the network as a source of support and to exchange ideas.

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2 This may require some explanation of the Swedish system of parental leave. All parents have the right to be on parental leave (not work at all) until the child is 18 months. Parental benefit is payable for 480 days. In addition, all parents have the right to work part time (min 75 per cent of their normal working time) until their child is 8 years old. Employers cannot refuse this. There is however no monetary compensation for working part time.
Carol points out that there is only one man among the permanently appointed persons. She says that there is an urgent need for more men on management positions but also among co-workers:

I will supervise a male manager trainee soon. When I went to the university to get my degree, there were no men at all in my class, but now there seem to be at least a few. That is necessary. And I believe there is a need for more men in the staff groups because it is easier – oh I’m prejudiced – but I think it is easier for the staff to come to me with unimportant issues than to a man, so...

Diane – managing self
Diane is 29 years old and is the manager of a nursing home with four wards. She has a staff of 30 persons and some 20 deputies. Diane started working within childcare during holidays when she was a high school student, there after she worked at a nursing home while she was pregnant with her first child. After eight months on parental leave she worked within social care for three years. She then decided to take a university degree in social care and graduated in 2005. After that she was filling in as a manager for a nursing home until she had another child and was on parental leave for eight months. When the interview is taking place, she has been the permanent manager for the nursing home for two months. She works 75 per cent of full time, as she does not want to work full time with small children.

A manager within elderly care has several responsibilities; towards the old people; rules, regulations and routines; staff; and finally the economical responsibility. Diane describes that her working days can be either calm, normal or chaotic. A calm day is when she has time to sit down with administrative issues, while a chaotic day is when there is a constant flow of issues and meetings. She says that this variation calls for planning:

I write down lists of what I need to do. It is impossible and really bad when you forget a lot of things. Since I became a manager I have started to forget things, I can’t possibly keep all things in my head, there is too much input. Sometimes so much input that I don’t remember all the things I should have done until I get home. So I write lists in order to eliminate mistakes, not to forget.

She finds her educational background very suitable for the work she has right now. But what gives her legitimacy in relation to her staff is her working experience:

I have experience within care work, it is probably the most important thing that I have been working as an auxiliary nurse. /.../ Many persons think I’m very young, so it is good that I have the experience and they hear that I know what I am talking about.

Diane says it is important to be visible – the staff wants to know where she is:

It is important to them that I am present, that they see me here a lot. If they don’t see me every day at the wards, they wonder where I have gone. I put a note on my door everyday so they know where I am.

The difficult aspects of her work is the leadership, to limit her work and to handle the stress. The fun parts of work are to influence in order to make the situation as good as possible for the old people and to develop the staff.

Three male substitutes work in her teams. When asked if they work with issues regarding gender equality, Diane answers:

It is foremost a political issue, I think we need to raise the question of how to attract men to the care sector. This has to do with ideals and norms way, way back in time, that women were more nurturing. This is loosening up in our generation, men and women are more equal. /.../ Maybe the
pay needs to be higher, the loss of money and low wages often come up as a reason for men not working here. I don’t know. What I can do is to adopt to the current situation and, that is to try to look after the men who apply here, and to think about the gender aspect when recruiting. And I try to do that, to have a mix at a work place is the best, a mix of ages but also gender. The cultures of female dominated work places are a bit special, probably also at male dominated work places. I don’t know, I have never worked at a male dominated work place, so I don’t know.

Summary and analysis of the managers’ stories
There are similarities as well as differences in the stories of the four managers. From an analytical point of view, we are here interested in how the managers construct themselves as managers, management (including leadership) and gender in their stories. Which are the themes that seem central to these managers in their accounts?

All four managers talk about how to gain legitimacy among their co-workers. Their own experiences of care work is regarded as crucial. The educational background is not regarded as crucial as their personal experiences of care work in relation to their staff. Here age is brought to the fore by Diane – as a young manager it is important to her that she can rely on her previous work within the care sector. Age, being a young or old manager, appears to influence the conditions for each manager. Being young stands out as something that may put extra pressure on the situation, for example Annie says it is an advantage to be of some age as a manager.

Being visible, present and accessible is also presented as a central aspect of legitimacy as a manager – and also a work content. Visibility is not only about gaining legitimacy among the co-workers. Being visible is also a tool for the manager to gain information of what is going on.

The four managers all talk about their responsibilities as managers, the responsibilities that follow the formal position as manager. The managers however have different ways of relating to the formal responsibilities. Annie and Beth briefly mention the responsibilities that follow the managerial task. Their age and previous work life experience give them a relaxed view on the responsibility of a management position. Carol and Diane describe the responsibilities in a somewhat different way. In their accounts, the responsibility is severe. Carol above all talks about the economical responsibility and her insecurity and unwillingness in relation to that. Diane has not been working as a manager for a very long time, and she is still trying to find a way to deal with the responsibility. Being a manager is in her sense not only an issue of management of others, rather of self-management.

Carol and Diane are both in the situation of having small children. Therefore, the issue of working hours and family life is present in their accounts. They both express the feeling that it is hardly possible to be a manager and to have small children at the same time. It seems that the demands of the “greedy organization” (Rasmussen, 1999) concerning the presence, performance and commitment of managers strike hard against women managers while women still have a greater responsibility for the unpaid house work. These two, relatively young, managers both mention the importance of having a personal network in order to cope with the situation as manager. The networks seem to be single-gendered, i.e. female.

The explicit questions about gender within elderly care are addressed differently in the managers’ accounts. To Beth, it is not a central question to work with. Carol and Diane express that gender equality is an important issue as more men working within elderly care and on management positions would bring a welcome diversity. Carol has the feeling that a male manager would not have to deal with all the detailed questions that her co-workers expect her to engage in, that it somehow would be easier for a man to be a manager. There seem to be a notion of all female work places as particular, but not necessarily in a good sense. Diane relates the low wages and status of
the elderly care sector to the majority of women working there. The interview with Annie did not contain questions about gender due to lack of time.

To sum up, the construction of being a manager comprises several aspects such as the management responsibilities concerning control of the activities and budgeting but also the relational aspects of leadership. The explicit construction of gender relates to the peculiarities of working in a context staffed by women only and the low wages and status of elderly care. For the individual manager, the management position is dynamically interrelated to the female context, being a woman and a manager, the own experience, the age and the responsibilities of being a mother.

Conclusions

In this paper we have presented a case study of management in Swedish elderly care. As we described in the earlier sections of the paper, the elderly care sector historically has a strong female image, not least due to the number of women working there. However, the changes directed towards the public sector and particularly the elderly care may be described in terms of managementification and masculinisation. With stronger emphasis on management systems and financial control, there is more focus on rational planning models, and less focus on the care service performed. The traditionally masculine logic of financial control, normative business economics and performance management is focused rather than the ideals concerning a traditionally feminine rationality of care. The different analytical entries of gender distribution and the symbols and images of doing gender (Acker, 1992) thus provide different answers to the question of how gender and leadership is constructed on a general level in the elderly care context.

The themes we highlighted in the section describing the four first line managers were legitimacy, visibility, experience, age, the contents of managerial work, responsibility, economical issues, networking, family, working hours and gender. These themes are in intricate and dynamic ways interconnected. The themes also display intersections of several social categorizations as the construction of leadership and gender intersect with for example age and professional identity.

So, women leading women – is it a feminine or masculine business? Drawing on the discussion we have outlined in this paper, the construction of leadership and gender is both expected in relation to a traditional gender order and dynamic and paradoxical. There is not an immediate relation between a “feminine” construction of leadership and a situation where women dominate numerically. The continuous changes directed towards the elderly care sector indeed calls for further studies of the implications for the women (and few men) working there.

References


The Influence of Gender Role Identity on the Advancement of Managerial Women in Pakistan

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to investigate the gender role orientation of managerial women in Pakistan and to see if the assumptions that hold true in the west apply to Pakistan. The BEM sex role inventory (BSRI) was applied to 207 managerial women employed in private sector organizations in Pakistan. The study demonstrates that masculine or androgynous gender role identities do not dominate managerial women’s gender role orientation. The most significant finding of this study is that a large number of Pakistani managerial women are undifferentiated in their role orientations and are fairly successful. The paper critically reflects on the reasons why a large number of the managerial women remain hostage to the unique social and cultural environment of Pakistan and concludes that it is difficult for the managerial women of Pakistan to break away from their traditional role expectations.

Keywords: Gender role identity, Pakistan, success, women managers.

1. INTRODUCTION

There are few women in management positions worldwide, the rate of progress is slow and uneven (ILO, 2004) with even fewer women in senior positions. Global research has demonstrated that gender role identity or sex role orientation is associated with leader emergence (Dorbrzynski, 1996; Fagenson, 1990; Goktepe and Schneier, 1989; Guy, 1992; Kent and Moss, 1994; Rosener, 1995). Successful managers must exhibit leadership qualities. A successful manager is one who meets his/her organizational goals by asserting influence on subordinates to accomplish tasks. Most research points to both male and female successful managers being perceived as possessing masculine traits.

The purpose of this study therefore, was foremost to investigate the gender role identity of managerial women in Pakistan in the private sector. Gender role identity of managerial women in Pakistan had never been explored and it was essential to find out if the rules of the game were the same. The second objective was to investigate if there was an association between any gender role identity and rapid managerial advancement. This research is of significance because it looks at a relatively unexplored area; Pakistani managerial women and gender role orientations. Secondly, the results will add to the body of literature on gender role orientations as it provides empirical testing of female managers’. Thirdly, the study demonstrates that because gender role identity occurs as a consequence of rearing patterns and social practice, gender role orientations for women in management can be overshadowed by their unique socio-cultural environments. The practical implications of the study are that in order to survive and be successful in male dominated organizations, Pakistani managerial women will have to strengthen their masculine side.

A limitation of this study, some may argue, is that the BSRI is an outdated measure (Ballard-Reisch and Elton, 1992; Wong et al, 1990) or cannot be applied to all cultures. BSRI was chosen as it has been used for a number of empirical studies in the recent past (Campbell et al, 1997; Holt and Ellis, 1998; Konrad and Harris, 2002). It has also been used in other cultures: Japan (Katsurada & Sugiara, 1999) Malaysia (Maznah and Choo, 1986; Ward and Sethi, 1986), Zimbabwe (Wilson et al, 1990), China (Wang and Creedon, 1989) and Turkey (Ozkan and Lajunen, 2005).
2. LITERATURE REVIEW and HYPOTHESES

2.1 Gender, Gender Roles and Culture

Gender refers to social categories of male and female, differentiated on the bases of psychological characteristics and role expectations. They may vary across culture and situations. Gender is considered as representing a cultural category (Cox, 1993). Men and women learn different communication styles and develop different communication strategies because they belong to different subcultures (Maltz and Borker, 1982; Tannen, 1990, 1994.)

Gender role is a set of expected behaviors (masculine/feminine) that society associates with being physically male or female. “It is a form of ‘culture trap’........a form of social determinism whereby individuals are trapped into stereotypes, which people then choose to maintain as customs” (Claes, 1999). In most of the world the male role is described as agentic, getting things done and the female role as communal-keeping the group together and contented. (Eagly, 1987) With agentic qualities behavior is primarily assertive, goal directed, controlling, aggressive, ambitious, dominant, independent, self-reliant, self-sufficient, direct and decisive. Studies which have shown that males have more agentic qualities (Bem, 1974; Rosner, 1990; Spence & Helmreich, 1978; Werner & LaRussa, 1985). The communal dimensions represent a concern with the welfare of other people. They include nurturance, affection, ability to devote self to the other, eagerness to soothe hurt feelings, helpfulness, sympathy, awareness of the feelings of other, and emotional expressiveness. Studies which have shown that females have communal qualities (Bem, 1974; Broverman et al, 1972; Deaux & Lewis, 1983; Ruble, 1983; Spence & Helmreich, 1978; Werner & LaRussa, 1985).

There are different reasons why female and males are characterized by communal versus agentic qualities. Williams and Best (1982), suggest that it is based on a division of labor. Since a disproportionate share of domestic activities is carried out by females requiring communal activities, these are valued and encouraged in females. Males are encouraged to develop agentic qualities as they tend to work outside of home. Traditional gender roles emphasize separate focus for men and women, with women in the house and men outside (Duncan et al, 1997). Modern or liberal view is that both genders may carry out tasks or behaviors traditionally assigned to the other sex (Blee and Tickamyer, 1997).

A review of literature has revealed the use of gender roles in various situations. Differences in the value structure of men and women generally and within cultural groups is documented (Bartol et al, 1981; Bassof & Ortiz, 1984; Beutell & Brenner, 1986; DeVaus & McCallister, 1991; Stimpson, Jenson and Neff, 1992; Vacha-Haasa et al, 1994; Wagoner & Bridwell, 1989). Culture plays a major part in role expectations as they shape cognitive schemas or sets of shared meanings within a group of people (Erez and Earley, 1993; Shweder and LeVine, 1984; Wyer and Srull, 1989). During cross cultural/cross national studies of gender role ideology, (William and Best, 1990) a common finding was that males were biased towards a more traditional gender role ideology (Nigeria, Pakistan, India, Japan, and Malaysia) and women exhibited more liberal attitudes towards women’s roles except for Pakistan and Malaysia. They found no evidence of gender differences in gender ideology in Malaysia and Pakistan. Relative to other countries studied stereotype scores were unusually high in Pakistan.

2.2 Gender Role Identity

Gender role identity is the perception of an individual about themselves as a specific gender. In most cases gender role identity matches with biological sex. Gender role identity is a subset of gender roles that an individual actually displays. Gender role identity occurs as a result of rearing patterns and not by hormones. It is social practice that determines gender role identity. Bem (1974, 1975) has classified gender role identity as Masculine, Feminine, Androgynous and Undifferentiated. Bem argued that (1) masculinity and femininity are complementary, not opposite positive domains of traits and behaviors, (2) an individual of either sex may be both masculine and feminine, or instrumental and expressive, depending on the given situation, and (3) it is each
individual’s sex-role identity, not sex, that magnifies the degree to which certain traits and behaviors are manifested. Individuals are classified as (1) Masculine, if they are male sex with masculine gender role identity (Sex-typed) or female sex with masculine gender role identity. (Cross-sex-typed) and possess very few, if any feminine traits. (2) Feminine, if they are female sex with feminine gender role identity (Sex-typed) or male sex with feminine gender role identity (Cross-sex-typed) and possess very few, if any masculine traits. (3) Androgynous, if they are female sex with high feminine and high masculine gender role identity or male sex with high masculine and high feminine gender role identity. They must display both types of traits and approximately equal number of both male and female traits. (4) Undifferentiated, if they are female sex with few, if any, feminine and few, if any, masculine gender role identity or male sex with few, if any, masculine and few, if any, feminine gender role identity. (Not sex-typed). In 1981, Bem focused more on gender schema then on gender role. She suggested that there are individual differences in the use of gender for interpretation of a social situation. She reported that masculine and feminine individuals were more likely to use gender as an organizing principle in information processing then were androgynous individuals. Later Bem (1993) looked at masculinity and femininity in depth. The purpose of her book was to “look at the culture’s gender lenses rather than through them”. She suggested that many of the choices we make about our own behavior are to varying degree guided by cultural expectations of our gender. This cultural gender role information is used to form our self concept.

2.3 Gender Role Identity and the Work Place.

Women usually acquire a great deal of sex role learning early in their lives, leading to an attitude that creates difficulties later in working lives (Lipsey et al 1990). Gender role identity has been used to explore various areas of work related behaviors. Feminine women tend to select feminine dominant careers with low status and limited opportunities (Gianakos and Subich, 1988). Their behavior receives approval from others and they experience less interpersonal strain (Long, 1989). However, femininity at times weakens future career progress (Bhatnagar, 1988). Masculine working females are associated with strong feelings of personal accomplishments and higher attainments in occupational status (Eichinger et al., 1991). An association between androgyny and more effective behavior was observed in a variety of non organizational situations (Bem, 1975; Bem & Lenny, 1976; Heilbrum, 1976; Spence, Helmreich, & Stapp, 1975). It is also allied to strong decision making, self-efficacy and involvement in career exploration (Gianakos, 1995). Undifferentiated individuals demonstrated low self-esteem (Chow, 1987).

Eagly and Johnson (1990) showed that women managers in male dominated industries tended to emulate more stereo typically masculine leadership style. It seems that women in managerial positions adapt themselves to conform to masculine standards thereby reinforcing the stereotype that men or masculine characteristics are more desirable in management. Chambers (1999) established that “the stereotypical view of a manager as exhibiting mostly masculine behavior still holds true”. Claes (1999) discovered that from a cross cultural perspective, the right managerial skills are masculine skills. However with the women’s movement of recent decades, the mass entrance of women into the work force, the increasing number of female manager (Powell, Posner & Schmidt, 1984) and societal shifts in gender-role perceptions (Helmreich, Spence & Gibson, 1982) the formerly clear, unambiguous roles of the sexes have been blurred. Women who have chosen traditionally masculine or managerial careers have very likely rejected customary gender stereotypes. Twenge (1997) reported that women’s self reported masculinity scores were rising over time. Duehr and Bono (2006) reported increase in perceived masculinity and agency of women.

2.4 Gender Role Identity and Managerial Advancement

Successful managers are those that accomplish organizational objectives. Consequently, they are generally rewarded by the organization in combination or isolation with promotion, increase in
salary and increase in responsibility. In our study a successful manager is one who has advanced rapidly. Research by O'Leary(1974), stated that “the model of the successful manager is masculine...........the very expression of emotion is viewed as a feminine weakness that would interfere with effective business processes.” Schein (1973, 1975) Miner(1974) and Tyler( 1965) found agreement by male and female managers on a decidedly masculine profile of the successful manager. Both sexes saw managers as appropriately masculine. Powell and Butterfield( 1979) wanted to see, that if the more effective person is androgynous, then the more effective manager may be androgynous as well. The results of the study demonstrated overwhelming preference for a masculine manager. Heilman et al (1989) replicated Schein’s (1973) work and found little change in the stereotypes of male mangers over time.

In a study by Goktepe and Schneier (1989), results indicated that sex had no effect on leader emergence, but gender role did. Specifically, masculine subjects were more likely to emerge as leaders than feminine, androgynous, and undifferentiated individuals. Brenner et al( 1989) simulated the original Schein study on both male and female management. They found that female managers described the “successful middle manager” as possessing both stereotypically masculine and feminine characteristics (androgynous). A field study by Fagenson (1990) produced results similar to the Goktepe study. Men and women who were high in an organizational hierarchy were significantly higher on measures of masculinity than were lower-level workers. It appears that the possession of feminine characteristics is detrimental to leader emergence, and the possession of masculine characteristics is beneficial. Kent and Moss (1994) concluded.“ If women are more likely to be androgynous, they may have better chances of rising to leadership status.” Studies proved androgyny and higher self expectations and better performance in competitive situations( Algana,1982)and higher levels of self esteem and job satisfaction( Chow,1987; Eichinger et al 1991,Krausz et al 1992; Ushasree et al, 1995). Consequently there is a shift away from sex-role stereotypes for both women ( Kravetz, 1976) and men (Tavris, 1977). Schein(2001),concluded that managerial stereotyping had reduced amongst women but not men. McCormick et al(2003) found that the masculine scores of an individuals sex role identity was positively associated and feminine dimension minimally related to leadership related developmental experiences on undergraduate students in a USA university.

In view of the international research overwhelmingly concluding that androgyny and masculinity is related to women emerging as managers and assuming that Pakistan’s unique culture and socio-economic environment would have a minimal impact on the managerial women’s gender role identity, we would expect,

Hypotheses 1: Pakistani Managerial women would be more likely to be androgynous or masculine.

Hypotheses 2: Managerial women classified as androgynous or masculine would be more likely to advance rapidly than feminine or undifferentiated.

3. METHOD

3.1 Procedure and Respondents

Over 152 companies in Pakistan’s three major cities of Karachi, Lahore and Islamabad/Rawalpindi were contacted to find out if they were employing females at managerial levels. Out of these, 87 organizations informed us that women were working at managerial levels. Packets of questionnaires were sent to Head of Human Resources according to the numbers intimated. The Human Resource Department circulated these questionnaires which were all in self addressed envelopes to all women working at managerial levels in their organization. A total of 805 questionnaires were sent out. Response rate was 29.19%.

The respondents were a cross section of ages. 50% of the total managerial women surveyed were young women in the 21- 30 year category with the majority falling in the 25-30 year bracket signifying a growing trend among younger women in Pakistan to join the managerial ranks. 56% of the women were employed by private multinational and 24% by local companies. Almost all worked in a large city. 48% were single and 45% married. 16% had no children. They had mostly been to
English medium schools and were highly educated. Their education level ranged from Bachelors to Doctorate with 83% having a Masters or professional degree.

3.2 Measures.

The questionnaire was in English as English language is taught as primary medium of instruction in all universities. The predominantly close ended questionnaire contained multiple measures including two specifically designed to measure gender role identity and managerial advancement.

3.2.a Gender role (i.e. sex role identity) was assessed using The Bem Sex Role Inventory (BSRI) (Bem, 1974). It was developed to measure gender roles as indicated by internalized socially desirable characteristics. It contains 60 items, 20 characteristic of femininity, 20 characteristic of masculinity and 20 characteristics of social desirability bias. Items are rated from 1 (never or almost never true) to 7 (always or almost always true). It has high internal consistency (masculine $\alpha = .86$, and feminine $\alpha = .80$) and test-retest reliabilities were also high. (masculine $\alpha = .90$, and feminine $\alpha = .90$). Masculinity and Femininity scores were calculated for each individual as the average of scores on the masculine and feminine items in each self description. Each individual was assigned to each of the four gender role categories, masculine, feminine, androgynous and undifferentiated.

3.2.b Managerial Advancement: Managerial advancement was measured using a scale used by P. Tharenou (1999). It was the average of 3 items: (a) Managerial level was measured from 1, Officer/Management Trainee to 6, CEO; (b) Monthly salary, from 1, Rs 7,000- Rs 25,000 to 6, Rs 160,000 and above (c) total managerial promotions from no promotions to 4 promotions. Questions were asked on work history, specifically current designation, current salary and previous designations and previous salary. Number of promotions was derived based on work history of each individual. The three item measure of managerial career advancement was reported reliable by Tharenou (1999). The average of the three items was then split into rapid and slow advancement based on mean value.

4. RESULTS

The first objective of this study was to investigate the gender role identity. Table 1 (see appendix) shows the descriptive results. As can be seen the managerial women fall into the four groups: 29%, Androgynous; 21.7%, Masculine; 22.7%, Feminine and 26.6%, Undifferentiated. Unlike studies in the developed world, our managerial women do not conform to the “think manager, think male” model (Schein, 1996). As can be seen, although the percentage of androgynous women is higher than the other orientations, it is only by a small percentage. Non-parametric chi square test was used to test if all four categories contained the same proportion of values. This test was found to be not significant (Table 2). Chi-square = 2.83, df 3, $p = .418$. Therefore, it was concluded that there was no dominant gender role orientation of managerial women in Pakistan. All were equally distributed. Our hypothesis was rejected that managerial women were more likely to be masculine or androgynous.

Medians were used for classification purposes into gender role orientations. The median cutoffs in our study, for the masculinity scores were 5.25 and the median cut off for the femininity score was 5.20. The median cutoffs for the masculinity scores were 5.3 and the median cut off for the femininity score was 4.7, of a study in USA of 122 undergraduate business students (Kent and Moss, 1994). Table 3 (see appendix) illustrates a comparison of mean scores of masculinity and femininity of USA and Pakistan. An examination of the scores of masculinity and femininity of Pakistani Managerial women reveals that the femininity scores are higher for all Pakistani Managerial women. This may be reflective of our culture. In a study (Zhang et al, 2001), the BSRI scores across a 302 American and 273 Chinese students revealed that Chinese scores were generally lower for masculinity and femininity as compared to the American sample. Culture was used as an explanation for the low scores on both items, specifically the Confucius philosophy in which moderation is always valued.

In order to explore the reasons why so many women were undifferentiated, cross tabulations were carried out. No association was found between ethnic background, education, marital status,
organization of employment, city of formative years and city of employment. Table 4A displays frequency tables and Table 4B (see appendix) demonstrates that of the 30 and below age group 29% were Feminine; 28% Undifferentiated; 24% Androgynous and 19.0%, Masculine as compared to the age group 31 years and above, 15%, Feminine; 25 % Undifferentiated; 35% Androgynous; and 25% Masculine. (Chi square= 7.234, df=3, p= .065). It seemed possible that age might play some role. A cross tabulation between age less than or equal to 30 years and 31 years and above, and sex-role orientation (combined) resulted in a Chi-square = 5.635, df 1, p< .05 (Table 5). It demonstrated that women of age 31 years and above were more likely to be masculine or androgynous. (Z = 2.37, p= .009, one tailed test)

The second objective was to explore whether masculine or androgynous gender role orientation would expedite managerial advancement. The managerial advancement variable was split into rapid and slow advancement. Table 6A and Table 6B (see appendix) exhibit cross tabulations between gender roles and managerial advancement. Chi-square test of sex-role orientation and managerial advancement (slow and rapid) reported association between managerial advancement and sex role orientations, Chi-square= 8.906 with 3 degrees of freedom (p< .05). As our hypothesis was to prove that Pakistani Managerial women would be more likely to be androgynous or masculine, the above genders were then collapsed into androgynous/masculine and feminine/undifferentiated. Table 7 exhibits the cross tabulations between combined gender group masculine/androgynous and feminine/undifferentiated. Chi-square= 4.228, p< 0.05, revealed that there was some difference in the managerial advancement of androgynous/masculine and feminine/undifferentiated managerial women. The significance test between two proportions (Androgynous and masculine, Rapid advancement: N= 62) was significant. (Z = 2.06, p=0.04.)

In order to further explore the relationships between specific gender roles and managerial advancement, additional tests were carried out. Table 8 (see appendix) exhibits the mean advancement scores of the different gender orientations. It revealed that feminine women were least likely to advance rapidly. Pair wise t- test was conducted between the mean advancement scores of the different gender orientations. Specifically, the masculine women advanced faster than feminine (t= 2.851, p=.005), undifferentiated women advanced faster than feminine (t= 1.979, p=.051). There was no significant difference between androgynous and feminine women’s advancement. (t= 1.443, p= .151). It was concluded that masculine and undifferentiated individuals scored higher on managerial advancement as compared to feminine.

Further cross tabulations were carried out to explore the relationships between specific gender roles, age and managerial advancement. (Table 9). It was interesting to note, in the frequency distribution of the cross tabulation of the age groups, sex role orientation and managerial advancement, that sixteen of the twenty six, undifferentiated, rapid advancement women fell in the 31 year old and above category.

5. DISCUSSION

The most significant finding of the Pakistani study is that a large number of Pakistani managerial women are undifferentiated in their sex role orientation. The sex role orientation of Pakistani managerial women shows that 29% are Androgynous; 21.7%, Masculine; 22.7%, Feminine and 26.6%, Undifferentiated. Unlike the Pakistani data, the data of an Indian study (Buddhapriya, 1999) of 166 public sector female managers demonstrates that 44.38% of the women were androgynous, 21.88% were Masculine; 25.63% were Feminine and 8.13% were Undifferentiated. The second significant finding of the study is that undifferentiated gender role identity does not have an adverse affect on managerial advancement.

The question that emerges as a result of the findings is why so many women in Pakistan are undifferentiated in their gender orientation. Undifferentiated individuals are suggestive of poorer socialization and limited behavioral flexibility. (Bem, 1974) A possible explanation why so many of the Pakistani managerial women fell in the undifferentiated category may have to do with the unique socio-cultural environment of Pakistan. The purpose for which BSRI was constructed was to
“assess the extent to which the cultures definitions of desirable female and male attributes are reflected in an individuals self-description” (Bem, 1979, p 1048). Whereas, in the developed countries, girls and boys receive fairly similar training, in Pakistan, the girl child faces a different environment. In Pakistan, women are conditioned from childhood to give importance to the “communal” dimension discussed earlier. Being feminine is expected of women and women are incomplete as “women” if they do not demonstrate qualities of devotion, nurturance etc. In Pakistan this conditioning is defined by culture and some would claim by religion. However as Shah (1986) points out in her book (page 29), the religion of Islam awards more rights to women than are available in Pakistan. Therefore Shah (1986) states that “In Pakistani women, the parental and conjugal roles have a high degree of primacy while the occupational and community roles are secondary.”. She further argues that the roles of women are defined by people who have been raised in a tradition of compromise and confusion.

Thus, these cultural myths shape the gender schemas of children of both genders and influence their perceptions without their being consciously aware of it. These myths are reinforced by parents, mass media, socialization and schools. It is further compounded by the fact that in Pakistan, females are generally kept segregated with a minimum interaction with men, who are not part of the immediate or extended family. This means that observational learning is also restricted. Females almost always attend single sex schools and colleges. Teachers usually are also of the same sex. Sports, an area where women might bring out their assertive or aggressive side is not encouraged. As a norm, most sports played in schools is mostly “feminine” such as netball, badminton, table tennis. The university is the first level where they deal with men, who are not part of their extended family. The next level of interaction occurs when they join the workforce. As a result, most women only know the feminine side of themselves.

On the other hand in order to survive in a predominantly male organizational setting, most women world over acquire “male traits” (Briles, 1987; Madden, 1987; Coppolino & Seath, 1987; Gutek, 1985; Kanter, 1977; Miller, 1976, Bell, 1990). The social identity theory argues that when status differences are clear and the value systems are wide spread, individuals disassociate themselves from the low status group (women in male dominated organizations) and assimilate culturally and psychologically into the higher status group; men in male dominated organizations (Williams & Giles, 1978). They have to be assertive, tough, dominant, task oriented etc. These Pakistani young women, straight out of university learn quickly that they have to act like men in order to survive. Therefore the masculine side starts emerging at this stage. They also learn that they have to suppress their femininity in order to survive in a male dominated organization and in a male dominated society where being young and female brings attention to the gender. It is interesting to note that the mean feminine scores of both masculine women and undifferentiated women are the same. Consequently, the suppression of the feminine side and the emergence of the masculine side results in the undifferentiated gender identity.

Age also has a role to play. The below 30 year old women are still in the process of forming their identity. They do not have the confidence to take a stance. This dilemma of young women’s inability to differentiate themselves based on gender identity seems plausible given the environment they have grown up, in Pakistan. As these women grow older and more experienced, it is conceivable that they become confident and take a stance. They learn how to handle themselves. The more they learn through successful experience, the more confident they become and the self begins to take shape. In such a scenario women, who are confident, will break the norm and decide that “maleness” is an acceptable part of their identity. However as already stated, this “maleness” goes against the conditioning of women of Pakistan. Therefore four groups of women emerge: The masculine gender identity, who realizes the importance of the male centeredness of organizations and suppresses her femininity; the androgynous individual who recognizes the importance of the male centeredness of organizations but is not willing to suppresses her femininity; and the feminine individual who accepts her cultural conditioning and decides not to break the norms. These women have not accepted being “male” as part of their self identity. For the undifferentiated group, paradoxically there is not much change in the percentage
based on age. Even though the percentage of women increases with age for masculine and androgynous and decreases for feminine in the above 30 years old group, the undifferentiated women remain, as a percentage almost similar (Table 4B). This means that the fourth group is still struggling with its gender identity. It seems that they are suppressing both their feminine as well as their masculine orientation. However that struggle has not come at the cost of managerial advancement. Most of these undifferentiated women, particularly over the age of 30 years, have had rapid managerial advancement.

Why are these older women still undifferentiated? Since no strong pattern could be seen for these older women, it is concluded that these women were hostage to the social/cultural role expectations of Pakistan. The detail that some of the undifferentiated women had rapid advancement means that organizations in Pakistan also accept the predicament that women face. A possible explanation for this acceptance maybe that organizations in Pakistan are an extension of the general social culture. These women have adjusted to the “double bind situation in which they are required both to assume male patters of behavior and to preserve their distinctively female characteristics” (Gherardi and Poggio, 2001)

What implications do the findings of this study carry? Will this picture change in the future? Will the numbers of undifferentiated women change? As stated before, gender role identity occurs as a result of rearing patterns and not by hormones. It is social practice that determines gender role identity. Women usually acquire a great deal of sex role learning early in their lives. Undoing that learning process takes time. As our study has demonstrated, it has been difficult for the managerial women of Pakistan to break away from the traditional role expectations. It is expected that as younger women grow more experienced and older, most of them will move into the androgynous or masculine group and some into the feminine and undifferentiated group. The undifferentiated gender identity is not a barrier to women’s managerial advancement. However, the importance of the masculine orientation needs to be highlighted. Our study does demonstrate that managerial women who were feminine were least likely to advance rapidly in managerial advancement. To put it another way, in order to survive and be successful in male dominated organizations women in Pakistan will have to strengthen their masculine side. As younger women join the managerial ranks, the cycle of gender orientation will remain the same unless, these young Pakistani managerial women understand how important it is for them to develop and accept the masculine side of their gender identity at an early age. It is incumbent, at the very least on the educational institutions from which they are acquiring professional degrees to train these women in assertiveness and decisiveness so that they do not have to learn on their “way up” the masculine side of managers.

References
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Twenge, J.M.(1997)“Changes in masculine and feminine traits over time: A meta- analysis.” *Sex Roles*, 36, pp305-325.


Appendix

### TABLE 1
Sex Role orientation of Managerial Women of Pakistan.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sex Role Orientation</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Undifferentiated</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>26.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feminine</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>22.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masculine</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>21.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Androgynous</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### TABLE 2
Non-Parametric Chi Square Test Frequencies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender Identity</th>
<th>Observed N</th>
<th>Expected N</th>
<th>Residue</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Undifferentiated</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>51.8</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feminine</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>51.8</td>
<td>-4.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masculine</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>51.8</td>
<td>-6.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Androgynous</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>51.8</td>
<td>8.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>207</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Test Statistics**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender Identity</th>
<th>Chi Square</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Asymp.Sig</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.836</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>.418</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### TABLE 3
A comparison of Mean scores of Masculinity and Femininity of USA and Pakistan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender Role Orientation</th>
<th>Mean Masculine Scores(USA)</th>
<th>Mean Masculine Scores(Pakistan)</th>
<th>Mean Feminine Scores(USA)</th>
<th>Mean Feminine Scores(Pakistan)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Masculinity</td>
<td>5.73</td>
<td>5.60</td>
<td>4.03</td>
<td>4.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Androgynous</td>
<td>5.84</td>
<td>5.77</td>
<td>5.18</td>
<td>5.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feminine</td>
<td>4.57</td>
<td>4.74</td>
<td>5.38</td>
<td>5.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undifferentiated</td>
<td>4.59</td>
<td>4.65</td>
<td>4.09</td>
<td>4.60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### TABLE 4A

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Undifferentiated</th>
<th>Feminine</th>
<th>Masculine</th>
<th>Androgynous</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>30 and Below</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31 and Above</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>54</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>204</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### TABLE 4B

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Undifferentiated</th>
<th>Feminine</th>
<th>Masculine</th>
<th>Androgynous</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>30 and Below</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31 and Above</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### TABLE 5

**Cross Tabulation of Age and Sex Role Orientation.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Undifferentiated/ Feminine</th>
<th>Masculine/ Androgynous</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>30 and Below</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31 and Above</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>62 **</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>99</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>204</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(** )Proportion larger than random, \( p = .009 \)

### TABLE 6A

**Cross Tabulation of Managerial Advancement and Sex Role Orientation**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sex Role Orientation</th>
<th>Slow</th>
<th></th>
<th>Rapid</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Androgynous</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>29.5</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masculine</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>15.6</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feminine</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>27.9</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undifferentiated</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>27.0</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>122</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### TABLE 6B
Cross Tabulation of Managerial Advancement and Sex Role Orientation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sex Role Orientation</th>
<th>Slow N</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Rapid N</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Total N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Androgynous</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>60.0</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>40.0</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masculine</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>43.2</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>56.8</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feminine</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>74.0</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>26.0</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undifferentiated</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>61.1</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>38.9</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### TABLE 7
Combined Group Sex Role Orientation and Managerial Advancement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sex Role Orientation</th>
<th>Managerial Advancement Slow (Obs)</th>
<th>Managerial Advancement Rapid (Obs)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Andro/Masc</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>49(**)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Femin/Undiff</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>122</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(**) Proportion larger than random, p = .04

### TABLE 8
Mean Advancement Scores of each Gender Role identity of Managerial Women Of Pakistan.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sex Role Orientation</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>S.D</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Undifferentiated</td>
<td>2.1604</td>
<td>.9173</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feminine</td>
<td>1.8043</td>
<td>.8789</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masculine</td>
<td>2.3177</td>
<td>.8291</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Androgynous</td>
<td>2.0668</td>
<td>.9837</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### TABLE 9
Cross Tabulation of Managerial Advancement, Sex Role Orientation and age.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Managerial Advancement</th>
<th>Undifferentiated</th>
<th>Feminine</th>
<th>Masculine</th>
<th>Androgynous</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>30 and Below</td>
<td>Slow Advancement</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rapid Advancement</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>27</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31 and above</td>
<td>Slow Advancement</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rapid Advancement</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>26</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>103</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Entitlement, choice and leadership ambivalence: The occupational aspirations and experiences of young women in a post-feminist era.

Joanne Baker
School of Social Sciences, James Cook University

Abstract

Popular culture and much academic work increasingly endorse the idea that social and economic changes have ushered in a time of unparalleled choice and entitlement for young women. Indeed, in this ‘post-feminist’ era (McRobbie 2004) it is unfashionable to suggest that the lives of young women are determined to any significant degree by gender rather than by self-design and individual performance. In light of triumphant assumptions of a ‘genderquake’, it is reasonable to expect that the widening of opportunities and dismantling of formal exclusions for young women has led to expanded occupational goals and their increased engagement with ideas about and ambitions of leadership. This paper discusses the findings of qualitative Australian research with young women which challenges contemporary optimism about the nature and extent of female empowerment in relation to employment aspirations and leadership.

Consistent with the discourse of a newly empowered and modernised femininity, the majority of the young women in this research articulated a sense of increased entitlement to a range of occupational ambitions. Despite this, the employment goals that were actually identified revealed some seemingly intransigent features of women’s relationship to employment and leadership. These included a persistent and widespread orientation to people-focused, caring work; a positioning as a family’s primary carer and secondary earner; discomfort with competitive and masculinised occupational behaviour and fears about transgressing traditional forms of femininity in the realm of employment. Crucially, however, these features are now articulated and accounted for within a discourse of individualised choice and personal responsibility which works to obscure the continuation – albeit in less explicit forms – of historically and culturally imposed limits for women.

Keywords: Young women, post-feminist, empowerment, leadership, occupational aspirations

Introduction: Young women as emblematic of social progress

Influential theorising about social progress in late modern, post-industrial Western democracies has described a widespread disembedding from prescribed social norms (Beck, 1992, 1994, Giddens 1990, 1991). The de-traditionalised arena that is conceptualised has lost much of its pre-ordained and institutionalised nature so that new forms of autonomy and an increased call for decision-making emerge. Such changes are imagined to particularly benefit girls and women who are increasingly liberated from gendered constraints. Indeed, Beck and Beck-Gernsheim assert that amidst such new freedoms, gender at work is now self-fashioned to the degree that it is “decidable down to the small print” (1995, 29). These theories of reflexive modernisation or individualisation converge with neo-liberal ideology which is so prevalent in the post-industrial era, and which in turn has fused with palatable elements of liberal variants of feminism to create a heightened contemporary emphasis on individuated personhood (Baker, 2008).

Assumptions about the extent of social change and its impact on gender relations are evident in social research and analysis which makes claims for a ‘genderquake’ (Wilkinson, 1994) and a ‘female future’ (Wilkinson and Mulgan, 1995, Howard and Wilkinson, 1997). Beliefs that equality has been achieved and gender norms transgressed are certainly tempting; particularly amidst the proliferation of confident, savvy women in advertising and other forms of popular culture where their (still highly sexualised) representations emphasise participation and knowingness (Gill, 2007). It’s dangerously easy to presume that gender is no longer an issue for young women, that they can
match boys and men in achievement and power - and even overtake them as panicked elements of the debate over boys’ schooling would suggest (Hayes and Lingard, 2003).

Surveying this changing face of femininity, British cultural theorist Angela McRobbie (2004) has argued that young women have actually come to represent social progress (which implicitly suggests that feminist politics have been attended to and are now passé and therefore redundant, hence her use of the term ‘postfeminist’). Thus, they are regarded as exemplars of the new neoliberal subject; self-driven, independent, ambitious and enterprising. The view that young women have come to the fore as the superlative subjects of the new neoliberal, postfeminist ethos of individual freedom and personal responsibility is endorsed in Australia by youth scholar Anita Harris in *Future Girl* (2004). Gayatri Spivak (1999) also reports that in developing nations, young women are increasingly the focus for social change and leadership investment by governments and NGOs, although this comes at the price of uncensored feminist activism.

Current times have certainly seen tangible improvements for many young women, who are now better able to take a place in the public world, facilitated by better access to education and professional sectors of the labour market for some. In a welcome change from previous exclusions, young women are now encouraged to take their place in the public sphere, with women no longer explicitly positioned at a remove from civic participation and positions of influence and leadership. Indeed, as Anita Harris (2004) points out, there has been a proliferation of leadership programs specifically for girls and young women which underscore their new importance as symbols of and standard bearers for self-reliant citizenship, particularly contemporary manifestations of citizenship which emphasise responsibilities rather than rights.

In this paper, findings from Australian research with young women are reported which destabilise congratulatory discourses about contemporary femininity. The themes which emerged from descriptions of their occupational aspirations and wider ambitions suggest that these do not easily extend to hopes or expectations of themselves in expanded positions of leadership and influence. Most importantly, their preferences are not interpreted as any manifestation of historical exclusion or structural barriers, but as reflections of personal choice.

The research study
This paper draws on data from qualitative doctoral research with 55 young women aged between 18 and 25 who represented diversity in terms of educational achievement, race, ethnicity, motherhood and sexuality. The young women were all living in a regional city in North Queensland when the semi-structured interviews took place in 2003-4. In terms of ethnic background, 40 of the 55 of the participants were White Australians with European or Anglo-Celtic family origins; 9 identified as Aboriginal Australian, Torres Strait Islander or Australian South Sea Islander and 5 were non-European migrants to Australia. A significant proportion of the participants (42 per cent, n = 23) were engaged in higher education. Over a third, 20, of the young women had children and just under a quarter of the sample named home duties as their primary occupation. Two young women who did not have children were unemployed and 25 per cent (n = 14) of the participants who were not students were employed in full-time, part-time or casual jobs. Respondents were recruited through widely distributed flyers at educational and social organisations, snowball recruitment and purposive sampling at programs for young mothers and Indigenous organisations.

The broad purpose of the research was to conduct a feminist analysis of the influence of the conditions associated with late modernity and neo-liberalism on young women’s lives. Therefore, I spoke to the respondents of this research about a range of aspects of their lives. This paper is concerned with the responses to questions about their educational and occupational experiences and aspirations. I asked each young woman about her current occupation (whether it was mothering, studying, paid employment or looking for work or a combination of these), how she
came to be doing it and what her occupational aspirations were. These lines of discussion elicited experiential information about young women’s experiences of education and the labour market; how they form aspirations and their relationship to notions of leadership.

The concepts and processes of leadership have been notably difficult to define (Chin, 2004), with feminist theorising making important contributions to this debate to widen its understanding from a hierarchical model premised on abstract individualism and rationality (for example Blackmore, 1999). Masculinised notions of leadership have certainly been destabilised by such challenges and female embodiment of positions of leadership is occasionally the subject of public discussion. This occurs most commonly when a woman is appointed to a prominent public position, with Julia Gillard, Kay Goldsworthy and Quentin Bryce\(^1\) providing recent and notable Australian examples (Xuereb, 2008). This paper is informed by a broad understanding of leadership which centres on occupational roles and behaviour which are influential in relation to others and is often connected to the pursuit of a common goal (for example Northouse, 2004) and it is not within its scope to contribute to the debate about the contemporary nature of leadership. Rather, it considers young women’s relationship to leadership in terms of the roles and occupations that they aspire to and what this means for their desire and ability to occupy positions of influence and authority and what this tell us about contemporary femininity and social change.

**Education, disadvantage and early parenthood**

It is important to preface reporting of these research findings with discussion about the heterogenous social and economic positioning of young women – often neglected by triumphant girl power rhetoric which presumes a high degree of privilege. Critics of contemporary theories of individualisation have pointed out that the changes and benefits associated with de-traditionalisation are unevenly distributed and do not automatically and universally advantage all girls and women. Australian research demonstrates that the nature and extent of women’s employment continues to be overwhelmingly mediated by the presence of dependent children (McClelland and Macdonald, 1999, Wooden and VandenHeuvel, 1999, Pocock, 2003). Indeed, there existed in this research sample a strong correlation between disadvantaged home lives, limited educational qualifications and early parenthood. Only a quarter of the young mothers who took part in this research had education that exceeded a Year 12 level, a statistic which was reversed for the participants without children, 75 per cent of whom were either currently enrolled in or had successfully completed higher education qualifications.

Higher education was very commonly represented as a natural progression for those young women not already parenting. It was an expectation that was often held by their parents and thus was described as an inevitable path by many. These young women were most often well-positioned in terms of their race, ethnicity and family’s socio-economic status. Although there has been a decline in gender inequality in terms of university student populations, there has been no reduction in social class inequality, an issue often obscured by the increased scale and scope of higher education and the rhetoric of widening access and meritocracy (see for example Reay et al., 2001).

Celebratory discourses underpinned participants’ assessment of the lives of contemporary young women – almost irrespective of background and current circumstances. Over 90 per cent of the young women believed that gender equality had been achieved, or at least that any unfairness was residual and would, in time, dissipate. Opportunity, success and failure were articulated within a highly individualised framework where it was the responsibility of women to now avail themselves of improved prospects in the new meritocracy. Shelley’s comments are representative of such optimistic beliefs, as was their punctuation by some anxiety about managing the apparent

\(^1\) The Hon Julia Gillard is Australia’s first Deputy Prime Minister (and first Acting Prime Minister), Kay Goldsworthy is the first female bishop and Quentin Bryce will be the first woman to hold the position of Governor General.
proliferation of choice (see Baker, 2008 for a fuller exploration). The removal of obstacles to women’s progress is assumed and personal drive and autonomy are foregrounded:

I see that I have a lot of opportunities and I’m there to take them. I can just see the world, there’s that many opportunities nowadays, that there’s nothing you can’t do, even if you are a woman. I don’t know, it’s scary, I think. That you’ve got so many opportunities you just don’t know which of them to take. Which one’s right for you...When you’re reading through history, that women have so much and then they stop because that’s their limit. And then now you can do whatever you want and no one can say anything (Shelly, 21, South Sea Islander, University Student, Arts).

The persistent appeal of caring occupations
When asked about their employment aspirations, the majority of respondents reported that they expect to derive personal satisfaction from their occupation, suggesting that the validation of personal fulfilment and self-expression for women through employment has become more widely accepted (Orenstein, 2000). The pursuit of a career was frequently described as a vehicle for personal satisfaction, a way of fulfilling their individual potential and establishing a crucial part of their identity. The young women with higher levels of education also expressed value for employment that offered flexibility, variety and opportunities to relocate or travel. When they were mentioned, salary and economic advancement were most often identified as secondary issues.

Given the consistently endorsed view that employment should be congruent with individual preferences, it is fascinating that the vast majority of young women (regardless of their background and educational attainment) stated that what would be most occupationally satisfying to them was people-focused work which involved helping others; most commonly child care, teaching, nursing and other allied health professions, social welfare and personnel or human resources work. This point should not be taken to constitute an argument against the value of caring work (a view that is not compatible with my own occupation as an academic in a Department of Social Work and Community Welfare!) Furthermore, I am not arguing that caring work and helping professions are not sites of leadership. However, an extensive body of feminist employment literature has documented the socio-political structures and attitudes underpinning the orientation of women’s occupational preferences (see for example England and Kilbourne, 1990, Poole and Langan-Fox, 1997, Rubery, 1988). Feminists have argued that such occupations are often treated as extensions of the domestic role and consequently devalued and poorly paid. What is significant, therefore, is that these enduring preferences emerge when the catch-cry is ‘girls can do anything’. Furthermore, these preferences are now detached from the structural analysis of the feminist critique and conceptualised firmly as reflections of personality and demonstrations of individual choice. Note that these features are coupled with a stated antipathy to authority and status:

I really want to do a job where I can be with people and help people – that’s who I am, always has been. It all depends on who you are, everyone’s different. I think it would suit me and I’ve never been so interested in being high up with loads of money, ordering people around! My personality is more one where I like helping, you know so I’ll choose something like that (Liz, 22, White Australian, TAFE student).

Interestingly, the orientation to people-focused caring work was not only voiced by those studying in the areas of humanities or social sciences. Several young women engaged in the areas of science or business, described uncertainty about their current path (where it wasn’t conventionally people-focused of helping oriented) and the sense that they should be engaged in a more altruistic role:

Don’t get me wrong, like my PhD is so important to me. It’s the most important thing to me at the moment, to finish it and to be doing this. But I really, I think that when I get older I will quit blocking a lot of my inside urges to help people (Beth, 23, White Australian, Postgraduate Science Student).
Although this paper argues that the young women’s connection to conventional notions of leadership was limited (in terms of aspirations to a wide range of occupational positions including those that carry authority, social status and are highly remunerated), the concept of social contribution - which could be argued to represent a form of leadership - was not absent. However, what was often termed ‘making a difference’ by respondents was most frequently accessed through the relatively narrow and highly gendered prism of caring work. Also set within this altruistic preference was the desire of Indigenous young women to act in a leadership role which set a positive example for their communities and particularly younger female family members. The four Indigenous young women in this research sample who were university students all mentioned the privilege of being at university. They specifically wanted their educational achievements to provide hope and ambition for other Indigenous girls and three described their desire to encourage younger female family members to believe that they could invoke similar personal determination and do the same:

I was the first one [in her family to go to university]. It’s good in a way because I think I wanted to do it because I wanted to set an example for all my cousins and that. You don’t have to be rich and have money to go to uni. If you work hard enough you’ll get it (Shelly, 21, South Sea Islander, University Student, Arts).

While Shelley articulates an understanding of the need for role Indigenous role models her understanding of access to higher education is very firmly situated in a context of assumed meritocracy and personal responsibility (economic status is no longer a barrier, individual effort is what will “get it”).

Aspirations in the context of early motherhood
Alongside the almost unanimous belief that girls and young women were newly advantaged by the successful – and almost completed - challenge to gender inequality, other features of their stories suggested much more struggle and complexity. This was particularly evident in the accounts of the young women with children (strikingly absent in the ‘successful girls’ discourse), the majority of whom (16 out of 20) were shouldering sole or primary responsibility for domestic and child care labour, with very little support from partners. Many of their narratives echoed Barbara Pocock’s identification of the “cross criticism” that mothers of young children face where they feel guilty if they have a job and guilty or inadequate if they don’t (2003, 76). On the one hand, there were consistent statements from young mothers about how important it was to be “more than a housewife”. On the other, there were regular descriptions of their ambivalence about accessing formal childcare. There were tales of thwarted attempts to combine employment with parenting. Single mothers described job interviews which interrogated their parental status and childcare arrangements. Others were on waiting lists for funded childcare places and described employment and training opportunities that they had missed through a lack of childcare support. Despite the voicing of such frustrations, such problems were largely conceptualised as the responsibility of the individual woman to resolve; “The important thing is that you don’t let that stuff put you off. If you really want to do something you can, even if you have got kids and that, just have to stay strong, don’t let them put you off” (Charmaine, 25, White Australian, 3 children, Part time care worker).

Aspirations in the context of anticipated motherhood
The increased commitment to (personally fulfilling) employment indicated no reduction in the commitment to motherhood – with 88 per cent of those young women without children stating that they wished to have children in the future (commonly describing a desire for large rather than small families in order to replicate their own experience of siblings). While the pursuit of a career or occupation has become normalised amongst young women, whether or not they are already parenting, this research found evidence to suggest that young women who place a high value on paid employment still consistently expect to disrupt their career involvement because of competing family responsibilities. This supports the feminist argument that women in the labour market still
shoulder the domestic and childcare responsibility in their families (Craig, 2007, Pocock, 2003, Probert, 2002).

Suzanne, who described her satisfaction at being an efficient and valued administrator in the organisation that employed her, described how she intends to interrupt this career in order to care for her children in their first years before school. Her expected return to the labour market is noted as occurring in the contemporary context where it is no longer acceptable to be ‘just’ a housewife. However, it is significant that she positions her salary as a secondary income to that of an imagined future husband. Her salary is imagined as providing additional opportunities for her children and some financial freedom (although not independence) for herself:

Yeah. I definitely wouldn’t work in the first years of having children. But when they’re at school I’d want to get my life back – you can’t just be a housewife these days can you? I could see myself wanting to make sure they had money for extra activities like sports and dancing lessons, stuff like that. And my own money to spend on stuff I wanted. I wouldn’t have to just rely on my husband for his money (Suzanne, 18, White Australian, Administrator).

There were some indications that the partiality for helping occupations was linked to perceptions that this kind of work was more amenable to flexible work patterns; nursing, social welfare and teaching were specifically identified as professions that were known to offer part-time and casual positions. Little awareness was demonstrated about the availability or limits to parental leave in Australia and young women were optimistic about the opportunity to enter and exit their chosen profession when it suited their child-rearing responsibilities, although Australian and international evidence questions this (Hochschild, 1990, Pocock, 2003, Wajcman, 1999, Drago et al., 2004).

The persistent deterrence of masculinised terrains

Despite the emphasis on individual choice and widening opportunities, there were clearly areas of education and work that deter young women or are not initially perceived to be natural destinations. For example, a young woman who was currently enrolled in a medical degree described how she had almost routinely applied for entry to a nursing programme until a friend pointed out that her high level of educational attainment qualified her to attempt a degree in medicine. The tendency to downplay ability was also evident when a respondent described her occupation as that of a waitress. It was only later in our conversation that it became apparent that she was actually one of two owners of a successful restaurant and catering business.

In addition to the striking orientation to people-focused, caring work that prioritises the needs of others, there were notable examples of the doubts and unease that can be experienced when this focus is transgressed. For instance, Holly, an undergraduate student studying business dwelt in her interview on her fears about the impact of the aggressive and unfeeling commercial world. She was troubled by her strong desire to teach in developing countries but had remained in a business degree because psychometric testing from a careers advisor had found her to be suited to marketing:

If you’re surrounded by people who are arrogant, you tend to lean that way. That’s what I’m scared of, I don’t want to become arrogant or anything like that (Holly, 19, White Australian, University Student, Business).

Hilary Lips (2000) found that, despite having comparable academic talents, female university students envisaged a future in which they were less in charge than men and then actualised that vision by the ‘choices’ they make in regard to their academic programs and employment. In this research, interviews with young women also contained narratives of how some had moderated their ambitions and revised their occupational aspirations from masculinised or professional occupations to goals that fitted with a more traditionally feminised role or required strong
educational qualifications that they probably couldn’t realise. Leanne describes the successive
discounting of occupational goals that led her to be enrolled in an education degree. She was one of
the few participants who had overcome the disadvantages of an extremely impoverished and
violent background and early parenthood to attend university and eventually felt most comfortable
studying to be a teacher:

I always knew that I was going to uni, I always had that, I was going to do something like that with
my life. And because I have [a medical condition], a neurosurgeon saved my life as a baby so until
about the sixth grade I wanted to be a neurosurgeon. And then I found out what is actually involved
in being a neurosurgeon so that sort of went out of the window. And then I wanted to be a lawyer,
right or wrong, I was going to be a lawyer. I went down to Canberra and went to Parliament House. I
was just enthralled, that was my dream. So I got accepted to law, came up here and did a semester
of it. I was just, like no. So then I came to education and I love it (Leanne, 21, White Australian,
University Student, Education and Home Duties, 1 child).

Concluding comments
In this paper I have questioned whether the wider opportunities, increased qualifications and sense
of entitlement associated with contemporary young womanhood have led to aspirations which
indicate a significantly changed orientation to employment and leadership. In this research, a
widespread orientation to caring work persists, as does ambivalence about traditionally
masculinised occupations and behaviours. The vast majority of young women with strong
educational credentials are forming their aspirations and mediating their expectations in order to
enable them to fulfil the dual desires of childrearing and employment. This reflects their current
reality or future expectation that they will take primary responsibility for childcare and domestic
work - again understood through the prism of choice - and clearly has implications for young
women’s career progression and access to positions of leadership.

What these findings seem to illustrate is that young women today make occupational decisions
which are still bounded by rather intransigent historically and culturally imposed limits and
assumptions. What does seem to have changed is that these are now influenced by notions of a
liberated modern femininity which allows for the unproblematic expression of personal preferences
based on choice. This works to obscure the continuing importance of social structures in shaping
young women’s life chances. An understanding of the regulative dimension of neo-liberal choice
and the seductive incitements of postfeminist discourses are crucial if we are to engage fruitfully in
discussions about women as leaders and not be sidelined by explanations of ‘choice’.

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Gender, globalisation and teachers’ employment; marginality, choice and resistance in casual teachers’ work

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Abstract
This paper draws on a broader study that examined the impact of globalisation, public sector and educational reform on gender relations in NSW public secondary education (Bamberry, 2005). The paper finds that employment patterns in NSW secondary schools continue to be highly gendered, with men dominating promotional positions and women prevalent in the most marginal roles as casual teachers. Despite the gendered patterns of employment and their own perceptions of marginality, the casual teachers in this study did not recognise these as forms of gender discrimination. Rather they utilised a neoliberal discourse of choice to position themselves as having chosen to prioritise family or ‘lifestyle’ ahead of career. Two alternative discourses are apparent in the teachers’ narratives. Firstly, many of the teachers recognised that their employment and lifestyle choices were constrained by a range of structural factors. Secondly, utilising a model proposed by Dick and Hyde (2006) the narratives can be re-read as a form of resistance to a dominant understanding of teachers employment. The teachers adopt a range of strategies to mediate their marginality. One such strategy is the use of social networks. However, social networks are a double edged sword and can operate as barriers to further marginalise casual workers.

Key Words: gender, casual work, teachers, choice, marginality

This paper examines how public sector and educational reform have impacted on gender relations in the education industry in NSW. In particular it examines the impact of education reform on the gender relations experienced by casual teachers. Public sector and educational reforms such as devolution, decentralisation, commercialisation and competition policies have opened up greater distances between casual teachers and permanent teachers, particularly principals and deputy principals. Employment patterns in schools in NSW continue to be gendered with men most prevalent in promotional positions and women dominating the most marginal category, the casual teacher. Employment conditions in education continue to assume a standard or “male breadwinner” model of employment. Teachers with caring responsibilities are penalised for moving outside this standard model.

Casual teachers are marginalised in schools both in social and material terms. In social terms, casual teachers express this marginality as an increasing tenuousness in their employment and a growing sense of risk. In material terms they are marginalised by limits on their progression through incremental pay steps, priority status for transfer and promotion, as well as limited access to training and professional development opportunities. Despite the gendered employment patterns and their perceptions of increasing marginality, the casual teachers in this study did not recognise these as “gender issues”. Rather they utilised a neoliberal discourse of choice to position casual teachers as those who have chosen to prioritise family responsibilities and lifestyle over career. While many of the teachers who participated in this study utilised the discourse of choice a number recognised that their choices could be constrained by structures of gender, class, geography, economy and the labour market. Casual work can also be seen as a form of resistance to the standard employment model in NSW education.

A number of the participants resisted the marginality of casual work through the use of social networks. Social networks can provide casual teachers with access to the workplace, and once in a workplace, participants formed social relationships with other teachers and students in order to alleviate the marginalised nature of casual teaching. However, social relationships can be tenuous
and can also create a barrier to those outside the network and can reinforce casual teachers’ marginality.

**The Context: globalisation, public sector reform and educational reform**

Globalisation is a much debated and somewhat contested concept (Edwards & Magery, 1995; Probert, 1995). There are many myths surrounding its processes and its effects. Globalisation is also a highly gendered process (R. W. Connell, 2000). The institutions and structures of globalisation, such as international relations, international trade and global markets and the supranational political and economic organisations have had differential impacts on men and women at the local level in terms of access to stable employment, welfare services and other resources (Bakker, 1994; McDowell, 1999; Nagar, Lawson, McDowell, & Hanson, 2002).

In terms of the education industry, particularly at the secondary school level, the direct impact of the global labour market is less obvious than in other economic sectors. School education cannot be shifted off-shore, nor can it be shifted to a more capital-intensive basis. School teachers are relatively highly skilled, yet teacher shortages do not tend to result in increased occupational rates of pay. These factors seem to suggest that less direct processes of globalisation are at play within the industry.

Indirect processes of globalisation include economic restructuring and the ideological constructions associated with restructuring, such as neoliberalism or economic rationalism. Particular aspects of restructuring in Australia have been labour market restructuring and public sector reform. Public sector reform has resulted in widespread introduction of new managerialism to all aspects of public service provision (Considine & Painter, 1997).

Many aspects of new managerialism have been introduced to the management of public schools and the education system. In particular, privatisation, commercialisation and the introduction of competition policy, devolution and decentralisation have had an impact, not only on the employment patterns of teachers but also on the type of work they are expected to do, and the nature of workplace relations.

At the local level of the school, public sector and educational reform appears to have changed the roles of Principals within schools, opening up greater differentials in power. The market view of school-based management constructs Principals as managers and marketers, as entrepreneurs and as surrogate employers rather than as pedagogical leaders (Lingard, Hayes, & Mills, 2002). Reid (1998, 63) argues that these roles create a strain between Principals and their teaching staff, undermining the collegiality between staff within a school and the professional partnerships amongst Principals between schools. As line managers and surrogate employers, Principals have significant power over employment and promotion. This creates further tensions within schools, especially as the number of teachers on contract, temporary or casual employment increases.

Teaching and management in the education sector have traditionally been organised on gender lines in Australia, with senior teachers and Principals predominantly men and lower level teachers predominantly women (Reid, 1998). The increasing personnel power of Principals and the increasingly casualised workforce have accentuated these power differentials. Reid (1998) suggests that this increased power differential adds a class dimension to the relationship between teachers and Principals.

In NSW, teaching continues to be organised along gender lines. In 2006, across all schools, primary and secondary, in NSW, women represented 66% of all staff. Within secondary schools women represented 56% of all classroom staff, 42% of promotional positions and only 32% of Principals. A gender breakdown of casual staff is difficult to obtain. Neither the Department of Education and Training nor the Public Sector Workforce Office within the Department of Premier and Cabinet,
provide details on casual teachers in their gender equity and equal employment opportunity reporting. It seems that casual teachers are too marginal to be included in official analysis of public sector employment. The most recent data on casual teachers is drawn from an unpublished report prepared by Goodwin and Schofield (c.2001) for the Gender Equity in Public Institutions project. Goodwin and Schofield found that 83% of casual school teachers are women, compared to 17% men.

Casual school teachers have long been recognised to be the most marginalised teachers in the workplace (Galloway & Morrison, 1994). Casual teachers are excluded from many workplace benefits such as training and professional development. In moving to casual employment teachers may lose access to higher rates of pay (Junor, 2000; Junor, O'Brien, & O'Brien, 2004), superannuation schemes and status priority for transfer and promotion processes (Bamberry, 2005). A casual teacher’s sense of identity and career options are constrained by their lower positions in school hierarchies (Worsnop, 1995). Casual teachers are the least likely to take on leadership roles within schools, and as noted above, statistically speaking they are more likely to be women.

The field study

Twenty interviews were conducted with men and women casual teachers currently working in urban and rural areas of NSW in public sector schools (Bamberry, 2005).

Although the aim was to capture the experiences of those working casually in public sector secondary schools, it became apparent that the familiar distinctions of public/private, primary/secondary and rural/urban had little to do with the way that participants viewed their career and life history. The participants had generally worked across a range of educational institutions, from primary school through to university, and in public, Catholic systemic and private schools. They had also worked in urban, regional and rural schools.

The final list of participants included ten from a regional location in NSW which will be referred to as Regional Centre, and ten from various suburbs across the Sydney metropolitan region. Eleven women and nine men ranging in age from 26 to 61 (mean 43.8 years) participated.

Impact of reform on gender relations at work

Eleven of the interviewees described changes in the management of schools that reflected new managerialist techniques and funding cuts to public education. These teachers saw the impact of the devolution of budgeting on school expenditure, facilities, resources and personnel. The participants described how the focus of Principals had moved from ensuring the educational outcomes of the young people in their care to a cost minimisation focus.

When I started at B the principal was more concerned with pastoral care and those sorts of issues... but then he became like a manager, like a business manager you know, I think that was the year they introduced global budgeting and a principal had to be sort of everything you know which I didn’t like (Guy).

The devolution of responsibility for budgeting, and the emphasis on market competition and on efficiency and effectiveness, has eroded equity in employment outcomes in schools. Devolution and cost-cutting have resulted in the reduction in the use of mobile, generalist or supply casual teachers, which were forms of casual teaching that gave teachers some stability in their work. There is evidence from the interviews that Principals and Deputy Principals have attempted to cut costs by reducing the use of day relief casuals and using permanent teachers more intensively.

...we got a new boss last year, he is just great now but he was into saving a bit of money because he had been given that directive to save a bit of money so he was using the permanents to take up all the extras at the beginning of the year and I am thinking... this new boss is not going to get
us to do the casual, and I went for about a month only doing a couple of days initially and [then] he realised that he had to use casuals and that was fine he called me every day... (Bridget)

The participants in the study identified that employment patterns in school education continue to be highly gendered. Although the education industry at the school level is dominated by women, all the interviewees described promotion positions as dominated by men and almost all noted that there were more women teaching casually than men.

Five of the women and three of the men teachers interviewed were able to identify systemic factors that materially marginalised them in the workplace (Dagma, Penny, Marika, Rachel, Susan, Guy, Michael and Scott). In NSW the conditions of employment for teachers continue to assume that a “normal” worker will be employed under the model of “standard employment”. Employment practices in NSW public education continue to assume that workers will work full-time, 35 hours per week for 45 weeks of the year, for 30-40 years of their lives. Teachers who choose not to follow this model lose security of employment, entitlements to paid leave, superannuation entitlements, access to training and other developmental opportunities. There are few concessions made to people who do not work within the standard model of employment. This situation persists despite the fact that in NSW approximately a quarter to a third of all public school teachers are employed casually.

There is still little recognition in NSW that teachers may wish to take time out of their careers for raising a family. Despite career break schemes operating in public education in many states for a number of years, the NSW Department of Education and Training has only recently introduced this entitlement (the website that provides details of this entitlement is currently under review). All of the participants in this study who wished to take more than twelve months of unpaid leave for parental purposes were expected to resign. Women taking a career break in public education have also faced discrimination on their return to the work force. As one participant, Rachel, found, parenting skills are not considered relevant skills for work in the education industry.

I went around the public schools. I didn’t get any response from a number of the schools around here... The big gap of eight years has... Because I had only got three years experience and then I have been out of it [being a mum] for eight years. So I changed my covering letter, and told them all the things that I had done and [emphasised] the teaching side of it... So now I am getting some interviews.

The casual teachers interviewed were highly aware of their marginality within schools and the tenuous nature of their employment relationship. Val summed this up most comprehensively:

As a casual you feel very insecure I suppose. The principal at M, probably eight months after I was there, he said “well what do you think do you like the school? Do you feel at home?” And I said: “well I feel as comfortable as I think a casual can feel ... knowing that I am as disposable as the next tissue that comes out of the box”. So, you know, say the wrong thing to a student and you may not be in tomorrow, whereas a permanent would say: “get real this is ridiculous” and turn around and walk away and still be employed tomorrow, so you have that living on the edge...

In many of the narratives there was a sense that risk was a significant feature of the nature of their work as casual teachers. There was risk of losing their jobs through the actions of other staff, students or parents, or through other factors outside their control.

Many of the participants also spoke of the marginal nature of casual employment, describing how there was very little encouragement, support or inclusive behaviour towards new casual teachers when they arrived at a school. Susan described the isolation and alienation as:

I suppose there are times, I don’t know if it is discrimination but there are times when you feel as though you don’t really fit you know you are not part of this place, you don’t sort of belong...
A major finding from the broader study was that although gender relations had an impact on patterns of casual employment and workplace relations in schools, these relationships were not identified by the teachers themselves as gendered (Bambery, 2005: 295). That is, although the respondents described gendered occupational and employment structures or gendered relationships in the workplace that impacted on their access to casual employment, the gendered nature of these experiences was not identified, or was dismissed as “not really a gender issue”, more an “issue of personal preference”. There was even reluctance by some of the teachers to name gendered behaviour as discrimination although they were aware of its gendered nature. As Dagma noted:

I don’t know that it is discrimination, I think it is just favouritism for the ones he knew and... yeah actually I wonder... he had a male... I mean I don’t know it is probably not, but he had a male employed who went overseas and then he re-employed another male.

This is consistent with many other studies. For example, Hunter has identified similar experiences amongst women barristers (2005) and IT systems analysts (2006). Similarly, in a recent study of gender equity in NSW public institutions, Connell (2006, 845), found that across a number of public sector organisation the neoliberal discourse of choice has become common and that within this discourse systematic gender differences are seen as the outcomes of the choices individuals make. This is problematic because the logic follows that if individual choice is the reason for gender difference then there is no driving need for active policy intervention to instigate change.

Choosing marginality

All of the teachers in the study, at some point in their interviews, utilised the discourse of choice. They discussed choosing a career in teaching, choosing to work casually, choosing to prioritise family or lifestyle ahead of career. All of the participants expressed a sense of control over their decision-making processes. For example, Penny emphasised that she made a deliberate choice to prioritise family ahead of career:

Oh family definitely first, I mean that is basically why I chose to leave teaching why I chose to go back as a casual and why I chose to limit myself to not go on to be a head teacher, I mean I have done some acting head teacher’s work and I find it very easy but I would choose not to do it even now because... I would rather be involved [with] my granddaughter, before I was more interested in being involved with my children. That was a deliberate choice.

However, a re-reading of their narratives reveals that many of these choices were constrained by structural factors such as gender, class and geographical location. Decisions were not taken in a vacuum: the social, economic and cultural institutions of Australia provided the framework for decision-making. As Krüger (2001, 401) suggests, the institutions of a country “form the generative grammar” which explain the national differences in how biographies and changing individual opportunities in the life course interact with social structures inherited from the past.

Constrained choices

Gender played an important role in employment choices. Five of the older women described how structures of gender identity had constrained their career decisions. At the time when they were choosing a career the only options available to them were teaching and nursing. Dagma explained that she became a teacher

Because I was female, because it was the 1970s and because realistically the only jobs people talked about for women were teaching and nursing and I never wanted to be a nurse... That was the other option really, I mean realistically we weren’t encouraged to do anything else.

Bridget similarly described her options as teaching or nursing, and having been turned off nursing, she decided to follow a career in education because she liked children.
Three women (Rachel, Bridget, Val) talked of choosing teaching as a career because it would allow them to have a family and combine work with family responsibilities:

I am very much a family person, I have always said you know I am getting married and I am having children and I have always been a person who wanted to stay at home with their children, or be there after school and those sort of things, and teaching of course meets all those requirements I think, I guess that is why I decided to do it (Rachel).

None of the men in the study identified gender or family reasons as the basis for their choice of career although four men (Darren, Guy, Michael and Roger) suggested that lifestyle reasons, such as long holidays, were a factor.

When asked how and why they had come to casual work, nine of the respondents talked of having made a conscious decision to move to casual teaching. The other eleven described it as their only option or said they had simply fallen into the pattern, having been asked by someone to fill-in. Reasons given for working casually were strongly gendered. Eight of the eleven women described having chosen to have a family, which in turn drove their decisions about their working patterns. Two older women cited partial retirement while a younger woman had found casual employment her only option on completing her university studies.

Amongst the men, there was a focus on work life balance; however the reasons given were less strongly related to child rearing or child care issues. Two older men, who were close to retirement age and had teenage or adult children, had taken up casual work to focus on other interests such as photography, inventing and voluntary community work. One man had chosen to work casually in regional centre rather than accept a remote posting in order to be closer to ageing parents and to ensure his wife, who worked in graphic design, had better career opportunities. Two men identified high stress levels and work intensity as contributing to their decisions, while one had been made redundant from a permanent music teacher role and had subsequently only had access to casual work within the region. The remaining three men had accepted casual teaching as their first opportunity on completing their university studies.

Class also impacted on decision-making processes. Five respondents described class factors such as an expectation amongst middle class women that they would “make a contribution” to society (Ann, Penny Marika and Susan), or an expectation amongst working class families that women should finish school at the age of 15 and make a contribution to household income (Val). Class structures were less apparent as factors in the decision-making processes of the men in the study.

Geographical and economic structures were identified as factors within choices. The need to be close to ageing parents, or an unwillingness to uproot young families, contributed to many of the respondents’ patterns of casual employment. The need for more than one income, or the economic stability that teaching provided in periods of both personal and social economic instability, also impacted on decisions.

Choosing resistance
Dick and Hyde (2006) suggest that part-time professionals may not experience their subordinate position in workplace hierarchies as problematic, as the drawbacks to part-time work are seen as a “legitimate consequence” of their choices to work part-time. “Such ‘choices’ are frequently attributed to part-timers’ prioritisation of non-work activities” (Dick & Hyde, 2006, 543).

While some of the participants in the field study had accepted their marginal status within schools and viewed it as a trade-off for prioritising family responsibilities or other aspects of their lives, others resented the loss of status and pay. There was a range of responses amongst the study participants, from acceptance to resentment and resistance.
Bridget was one teacher who had prioritised family life over a career and had accepted the nature of casual employment. She stated "I have just always been grateful for the money that I have had and I haven't gone after, I haven't chased any additional [entitlements]".

However, Dick and Hyde also recognise that consent and resistance are linked, frequently in contradictory ways (Dick & Hyde, 2006: 555). Dagma most clearly expressed the contradictory ambivalence that many of the teachers felt about the trade-off between having children and a continuing career. At one point in the interview she described “the old clock ticking over” and a biological imperative to have a child “must have child, must have child, must do it now, do it now, do it now, do it now!!!” Later she said:

We actively chose to have children... because we actively were deciding whether to have children or not, we actively decided to have children... so it was probably a decision on my part I wanted them, and my partner as well, but at that stage I didn't realise the impact it would have on my career. Not that I would have opted to do it a different way in hindsight. I am not regretting my time with the children, I am not regretting having given up work for them. But I do regret not having superannuation and not having a permanent job...

Similarly, Penny who, as discussed above, felt that she had made a deliberate choice to prioritise family, still expressed some frustration and resentment that these choices had impacted on her pay and other entitlements.

Casual teachers can only go a certain way up the scale and I had been teaching for a lot of years so I technically should have been at the top of the scale, but as a casual I was only about halfway up... that is still the case now, it is very inequitable if people are doing big blocks of work, well it is inequitable full stop... why should we pay our casuals less than our permanent people when they do the same job?

Many of the teachers recognised that although they chose to work casually they did not choose to be marginalised. Dick and Hyde (2006: 557) suggest that marginalised professionals will engage in material acts of resistance when they have the support and positional power to instigate change and when they see their marginal status as a long-term issue. This is apparent amongst the teachers in this study. Older, more long-term casual teachers were more likely to express dissatisfaction at their material and social marginality than those who saw casual teaching as a short-term phase of their career.

Dick and Hyde argue that choices are situated in space and time, but are also constrained discursively and that “part-timers’ responses to their positions at work can also be understood as resistance to some of the dominant norms of the profession” (Dick & Hyde, 2006, 543). Although all the teachers’ utilised the discourse of choice, in many of their narratives there is an ambivalence to the nature of these choices and a recognition that the choices change given different time and spatial circumstances. For example, Dagma described how her choices changed at different stages of the lifecycle:

When I was teaching full-time, before I had children, I chose to teach till I retired. And no, I haven't chosen my career it has been dictated by the fact that I had children and I felt my dedication to my children was greater than my dedication to my career.

The narratives of the teachers can be re-read as a form of resistance to the standard employment model and to the intensification of teachers’ work under new managerialism. Three interviewees described how they had responded to the intensification of work practices in schools by moving to casual employment to reduce their workload and level of responsibility (Guy, Bill, Ann). Guy described how he was exhausted by full-time teaching in music and English and needed a break so had resigned from his full-time position and moved to a casual role.
Penny had initially attempted to combine work with family with exhausting results. Despite claiming to have made a deliberate choice to work casually and prioritise family, she had initially returned to full-time work after taking maternity leave for the birth of her twin daughters.

I actually only took [paid] maternity leave, I had twins and I went back after the amount of maternity leave... and I worked for about another oh seven or eight months and then I found that I was so tired that I was doing things like driving through red lights when I was picking up the kids, so I just marched in one day and resigned and decided whether we had any money or not it didn’t matter, if I was going to kill us there wasn’t much point because I was absolutely exhausted

Penny’s decision to resign rather than attempt to combine full-time work and caring for twins can be seen as a form of resistance to the dominant construction of teachers’ work as a full-time professional career.

Resisting marginality
Teachers choosing to work casually do not actively seek marginality. While they may seek to reduce workload and responsibilities or to combine work with family care, they do not seek the material and social marginality that accompanies casual work. The teachers in this study identified a number of strategies that they used to mediate their marginality. On a formal level more than half of the teachers in the study were union members and many saw union membership as a crucial strategy for addressing both the high level of risk they felt in the workplace and the material marginality of casual work. The union membership of the casual teachers in this study is discussed in more detail in a recent working paper (Bamberry, 2008). On an informal level, the teachers describe how they use social networks both to gain access to the workplace and to strengthen their connections once they have gained access.

Gaining access
Five women participants (Ann, Dagma, Rachel, Susan and Glynis) described how it had been difficult to gain access to casual work in schools, particularly if they had been out of the education system for a number of years (Rachel) or had moved to a new geographical location (Susan). Dagma described how one “ratbag deputy” had given work to his “favourites” rather than sharing the available casual work more equitably. Similarly, Glynis, who had worked in health and higher education for most of her career, and therefore did not have strong social networks in the school sector, found it quite difficult to break into the casual network amongst local schools. She said “oh I think most schools have their regulars and they just don’t want to try anyone new”.

In contrast two men described how their social networks had helped them gain access to ongoing casual work. Guy noted that many of his friends from university or from the schools where he had previously worked were teaching at schools in his local area and frequently called him in for work. Darren describes how he played cricket with the deputy principal of a central school 40 kilometres from Regional Centre, who said to him “Why don’t you come out and work for us when you finish up your course?” Social networks based around sport and social events have the potential to exclude women, particularly those with small children who have less opportunity to participate in organised sport or to ‘network’. However, two women in the study were able to access these types of networks vicariously. Marika started working casually when she was approached by a member of her husband’s squash team who happened to be the Principal at a local school. Similarly, Penny was approached by a neighbour who was a full-time teacher to fill in for a couple of days per week. Although favouritism and informal networks are not necessarily gender-based, they can create avenues through which casuals could experience gender bias.

Staying connected
Casual teachers continue to feel marginalised once they gain access to a workplace. They feel they are outsiders within the school. Val, Bridget, Carman, Penny and Susan all describe being treated as
a non-person, or as if their views did not count. There is also evidence of this in much of the literature about casual teaching (Acker, 1992; Chessum, 1989). Many of the teachers mobilise their social skills to gain acceptance. They attempt to work mainly in one or two schools in order to get to know the students, other teachers, and the systems in place in those schools. Darren described his ability to ‘get along’ to ‘help out’ and to participate in staff room social activities. He took an approach that appeased two competing factions in the staff room. He joined two lunchtime groups - the ‘gourmet club’ a group of women, who brought salads and other foods to share at a weekly event, and the ‘fish and chips club’, held by the men teachers as a response to the gourmet club. The casual teachers had to undertake the emotional labour required to maintain these social relationships. Some of the teachers achieved this more successfully than others, becoming part of the school (Bridget) and turning up for work almost every day of the year (Guy, Penny).

Lawrence and Corwin (2003: 930-31) suggest that participation in such ‘interaction rituals’ is essential for the acceptance of part-time professionals and that a lack of participation, due to the scheduling of events outside their regular hours may undermine the acceptance of these workers within a workplace.

Other teachers in the study noted the tenuousness of social relationships within a particular school. Val, who had been a regular casual at one school, and described herself as a favourite, told of an experience where she had asked the Deputy not to call on her for the first two weeks of term as she needed to help her daughter search for employment. As a result Val had not been offered much work that term, only five days for the whole term. She felt that she had moved from being a favourite to being on the outer because of a simple request for two weeks off. Bridget also described how positive relationships in one school had changed when a new deputy arrived. In response to the change she had sought work in another nearby school.

Conclusion

The teachers in this study were aware of the changes that had occurred in teaching due to the implementation of new managerialism. They were aware of an increasing sense of marginality or risk in their work. However, most did not see the patterns of their employment as gendered. Rather they relied on a neoliberal discourse of choice to explain the marginalised nature of their work. There were a range of responses to their marginalisation, from acceptance to resentment and resistance. Many of the teachers recognised that their choices were constrained by structural factors. For some the decision to work casually was a form of resistance to work intensification and the standard model of employment expected in the education sector. A further strategy for resistance of marginality was the mobilisation of social relationships to gain access to work and to strengthen their connection to the workplace. However, social networks could form barriers to workplace access. Social relationships could be tenuous and were susceptible to sudden changes.
References

‘My mum said to me’: The feminisation of career advice in young women’s career related decision making.

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Understanding the role performed by parents within young women’s career decision making is a critical but relatively under-explored issue in the career’s literature (Reay 1998; Standing 1999). Reflecting the context in which they have been produced and reproduced, mainstream models of career choice persist in using the category of parent both as a thin disguise for the father or an undifferentiated category of experiences.

Psychological theories of career choice have typically focused on the individual, with personality a key factor in occupational choice (Holland 1985). Whilst acknowledging the ‘family’ as a site of influence, details are limited to a narrow definition of socialization typically focusing on fathers’ educational and occupational achievements and experience. Within neo-classical economics, human capital theory presents career decision making as an act of individual choice relating to investment (Becker 1964). The role of family or parental influence is relatively undefined.

Sociological discourses of work, initially inspired by Marxist critiques in the 1960s, politicized the familial context in young people’s career choice. Theories of reproduction critiqued the previously unproblematised intergenerational transfer of occupations between fathers and sons (Roberts, 1968; Bowles & Gintis, 1976). Despite this critical understanding, mothers continued to be excluded as a source of career influence due to their perceived lack of experience in the world of paid work (Mann 1998, 212; Reay 1998, 196). Similarly, women’s increased entry into the labour market and gradual expansion into non-traditional occupations alongside their continuing marginalization in education and employment (Crompton and Harris 1998) led to the gradual re-gendering of career choice theories. Yet, this awareness did not extend to the inclusion of women as sources of influence in their daughter or son’s occupational decision making. Mothers’ roles as the primary agents in the reproduction of their daughters’ femininity continued to hold but their ‘reproductive’ role in career choice and decision making, a traditionally masculine domain, was largely constructed as negligible (Betz, 1994). Later sociological theories began to engage the category of ‘parent’ in discussion of ‘home’ and ‘family’ influence in young people’s career decision making. Despite the broader term the generic ‘parent’ remained conceptually male.

The development of contextual theories in the mid-1990s has facilitated an increasing awareness of the diverse and significant roles played by parents, both mothers and fathers, in the occupational choices and career decision making of their daughters and sons (Young, Valach and Collin 2002). The emphasis on context within contemporary career theories reflects a shift away from the ‘logical positivism’ of personality archetypes and rational choice theories to a focus on young people’s career decision making as contextually bound (Brott 2001). The focus on context also acknowledges the collaborative nature of decision making or, as related to parents, how a daughter or son’s decisions and choices are shaped by and through interactions with their parents (Brott 2001, 304). Within this framing, the generic category of parent is rendered unhelpful and irrelevant, providing little detail as to how a particular parent, whether, mother and father, shape and influence their daughter or son’s career decision making.

The importance of unpacking the generic parent was raised in a series of in-depth interviews I undertook with a group of young women in their final year of school. The discussions were part of a research project exploring how young women in their final year of school negotiate their career
decision making; how they chose courses and selected universities, how they saw their careers in action, and how they imagined their futures. Throughout the interviews, the significant and distinct role attributed to mothers as specific agents of influence, informing and shaping their daughter's career decision making, was overwhelming. For some of the young women, their mothers’ experiences provided a site of reflexive learning. The young women sought to understand their mothers’ engagements with work and career in the context of their own career decision making, providing commentary on particular practices and experiences, and negotiating its ‘fit’ with personal preferences and choices. Other stories told by the young women took place within interactions between mothers and their daughters, in which mothers provided direct advice, information and/or support regarding particular options and choices. The young women also told stories created through ‘observation’, a mix of past conversations, interpretations of their mother’s actions and meanings formed from what they perceived their mothers wanted or approved of for their daughters.

This paper engages in a critical discussion of mothers and daughters and career decision making. Beginning with an overview of mainstream career choice models the paper introduces the young women’s stories of their mothers highlighting the intersection between gender, power, discourse in the young women’s career decision making.

Mothers in the careers literature
The significance attributed to mothers in the young women’s experiences is not matched within mainstream careers literature, where the undifferentiated, category of ‘parent’ or ‘family influence’ maintains dominance. The relative invisibility of mothers is not surprising; despite women’s increased entry into the labour market and male work domains, women’s presence within mainstream career choice discourses continues to be scant (Vinnicombe & Singh 2003; Farmer, Wardrop, Anderson and Risinger 1995; Seymour 1995). The reasons for mothers’ invisibility are both historical and political. In early career choice models, such as Parson’s and Holland’s trait factor or person-environment theories, women’s lack of experience in the labour market meant that she had neither the knowledge or experience to be influential in matters of work and occupational choice.

Even as women populated occupations such as nursing and teaching, and entered non-traditional fields of work, their work experiences did not attract the title of ‘career’. While these roles were classified within educational and labour market settings as ‘occupations’ and ‘para-professions’, within the broader public domain these positions were regarded as ‘simply jobs’ (Dixon 1976; Ryan and Conlon 1989) — ones that women would be expected or, as was often the case, forced to abandon once they were married or became pregnant (Poole & Langan-Fox 1997, 20). As women have continued to negotiate their entry into a range of occupational groupings and labour market positions, discussions of career remain locked within the generic category of parent, with its overt patriarchal attributes. Mother’s knowledges of work and engagements with the labour market, unless the subject of specific focus, continue to be subsumed by the ‘fathers’ experiences.

Human capital
Within human capital theory, women’s supposed innate and predilection for childbearing and family responsibilities meant that investing in the education and experience necessary for a career is an irrational choice, the outlay costing more than the available return (Mincer and Polachek 1974, 83). A woman’s limited time in the labour market means that her role as a career advisor to a daughter or son is superficial; men’s vast work experience however positions him as ‘expert’. Whilst women, as wives and mothers contribute to the production and maintenance of human capital investment, this emotional labour, alongside the domestic work undertaken by women, is regarded as having no broader application or value (Budig and England 2001; Fobre 1994).
**Sociological theories**

Sociological theories of occupational choice developed in the late 1960s and 70s acknowledged the broader family context. Blau and Duncan's (1967) status attainment theory was one of the few models to focus on young people's decision-making processes and recognise the importance of familial context. Based on the premise that occupational and career choices are determined within a context of 'occupational inheritance' (Taylor 1968, 146), status attainment theory emphasises the intergenerational transference of occupational experience: 'career statuses, such as education, occupational, and income, are passed from generation to generation by a sequence of interpersonal processes' (Brown and Brooks 1984, 139).

In the context of the 1960s and early 1970s, this 'intergenerational transmission of status' (Maume 1999, 1434) was restricted to young men choosing occupations and work lives similar to those of their fathers (Taylor 1968, 146). Whilst criticised for its simplicity and reductionism, the 'newer' model (Sewell, Haller and Ohendorf 1970) did not broaden to include mothers as the transferrer of work or occupational status. Reflecting some of the aspects of these later models, reproduction theory emphasises the interplay between institutionalised social class and family in a young person's occupational choices (Ashton & Field 1976). This interplay is referred to by Lindh and Dahlin (2000, 198) as 'social heritage' and is traditionally referred to as 'occupational socialisation' (Banks, Bates, Breakwell, Bynner, Emler, Jamieson and Roberts 1992, 9). According to Brown and Brooks (1984, 5), parents "act as a critical filter to the kind of information, encouragement and opportunities available to the individual". By proposing that children internalise 'the values embodied in their home and school experience', reproduction theory portrayed young people as 'led' to occupational groupings aligned with their social class (Cregan 1999, 35–39; Ashton & Field 1976; Bowles & Gintis 1976).

**The gender of experience**

Within each of these models, the generic category of 'parent' or 'family' is used to signify the influence of familial context. Whilst this shift in language from 'father' to 'family' suggests a broader and more inclusive focus, the attributes used to measure family influence, remain masculine. Income and educational background are not neutral or benign attributes. Access to education and engagement with career has been and continues to be mediated by gender. Women's exclusion from higher earnings and their tenuous labour market position is constructed as lacking in engagement and experience (Tam 1997). As such, women's knowledge of work, both in the paid and unpaid domains, is positioned as less-than that of the man-as-father. Through such representations, mothers and fathers' interactions with their daughters and/or son's career decision making are collectivised, the mother's experiences subsumed within the 'knowing' of the 'father-as-male-as-breadwinner' (Standing, 1999, 58; Reay 1998, 196).

**Contextualist models**

Recognising the limitations of earlier models, contextualist theories of decision making highlight the interrelatedness between a young person's career choices and their social, political, economic and cultural contexts (Young et al, 2002, 207). Drawing on Bourdieu's (1990) concept of habitus, the 'contextualist explanation' shifts from traditional conceptualisations of context as place as a setting for action to an emphasis on 'human intention, processes and change in context" (Young et al. 2002, 207). Unpacking the relational aspects of 'knowing and doing' in career decision-making, previously negated or minimised experiences — such as issues of gender, cultural heritage, age and sexuality — are made overt. Within this understanding it is possible to identify, highlight and explore the interactions between mothers and/or fathers and their daughters' decision making. A contextualist understanding also allows for engagement with the complexities and interrelatedness of experiences such as the ways in which mothers' experiences of both domestic and public life contribute to their daughter or son's career choices. This close reading of career choice and development can expose the 'under-theorised' aspects of careers (Fletcher 1998, 164). This emphasis on context and the conceptualisation of career planning as an activity embedded in and
integrated within broader ‘life’ decision-making (Holbeche 1995, 26), allows for the young women’s stories of influence to be heard. Stories that within this project were those of their mothers, not their fathers.

Maternal knowing
As Standing (1999, 58) claims, “parental involvement is gendered — it is women, as mothers (or other female carers) who are involved in children’s schooling regardless of family structure or marital status”. This maternal engagement should not be surprising given the social and political context in which mothers are predominantly the primary caregivers and supports of their children, particularly their daughters. While adolescence is frequently described as a space in which parental influence is infiltrated by peers, mothers and to a much lesser degree, parents, remained critical sources of support and advice within many of the young women’s decision making (Ball, Maguire and McRae 1999, 211).

Whilst other women were identified by the young women as sources of information and influence, including Aly McBeal, Natasha Stott De Spofa, sisters, friends and aunts, the space given to mothers was both particular and significant. Mothers provided advice, information, opinions, and personal narratives in an effort to support and encourage their daughters. Within many of the young women’s maternal narratives their mothers were cast as vanguards of career possibilities, armed with the ‘knowing’ gained through lived experience. This ‘knowing’ was highly lucrative, taking many forms and serving many purposes, including, the provision of specific information and advice; a site of and for reflection; and a guide to ‘what to’ or ‘not to do’.

The young women, reflected, negotiated and mediated this input creating a reflexive process of knowing. Through this process the young women re-crafted their mothers’ personal narratives, producing ‘lived’ understandings of their mothers as young women who made decisions about work and career and imagined a future family life. This intersubjectivity facilitated a reflexive site for decision making; a site where the young women worked and reworked meanings which could shift and intersect across time and space (Severy 2002; Thorngren & Feit 2001). The stories told by the young women within the interview conversations were the re-interpretation of these meanings, made relevant and useful for their decision making in the ‘here and now’.

Mothers’ support
In reflecting on ‘how’ mothers were involved in their daughters’ decision making, the broad term of support provides a useful starting point. Constructed as a continuum, the support offered by mothers can be positioned at various points along the continuum to reflect the type of engagement and interaction between mothers and daughters. For example, in many of the young women’s stories, mothers were presented as providing unconditional support – support that was not limited to or constrained by specific occupational choices, universities or degrees. As Janice and Amy describe, these mothers were described as engaged and laid back, enthusiastic but not demanding; ‘She just says to me, “Do what you want to do, do what you feel is best for you” (Janice).

Everything I looked at was TER rate, and I wasn’t going to be able to get into it ... It was a bit upsetting to start with, but good ol’ Mum said: ‘Look at all your options; there’s back roads of getting into uni ... stop worrying about it’ (Amy).

Other young women described their mothers as encouraging and supportive, but there were particular choices and aspirations that the young women new were more desirable than others. Mia describes her mother’s support in the following way; ‘She just said, “Do whatever you want to do”. She wants me to go to university and get a university degree, but she said, “Whatever it is you want to do, you do it”’ (Mia).
This ‘conditional’ support was not necessarily perceived by the young women as ‘negative’ or limiting. As Lisa describes, her choice to study archaeology was identified as making her mum happy – happy that her daughter would be doing something she enjoys; 

I think my mum was happy with me doing archaeology because she knows I like that sort of stuff (Lisa).

For Lucy, her mother’s nursing experience and support of her own decision to study nursing was seen as an advantage;

She can provide so much knowledge about nursing ... [but] she doesn’t make me feel like ... it’s a duty or anything (Lucy).

Christine’s decision to enroll in a design course at University was supported by her mother, although as Christine suggests, her mother’s enthusiasm for art could sometimes be overwhelming; She went to TAFE for a couple of years and did art and .... She knows heaps of stuff ...but she gets sometimes like, when she’s helping ...if I’m like, ‘Can you help me with this?’ she, like, gets all carried away ... ‘You know you can’t really call it mine if you’re doing it!’ (Christine).

In conversations with some of the other young women this conditional support was considered ‘unhelpful’, a reaction to particular attitudes and choices which their mothers’ regarded as concerning or inappropriate. The conditional support was often played out in a process which the young women described as ‘assessment’ and ‘evaluation’. Adele, Alex and Jo described their mother’s interventions as impeding ‘non-traditional’ career choices or alternate pathways to education. For Adele, her mother’s conditional support was enacted through her discomfort with the ‘messy’ side of being a surgeon;

She feels that I could be doing an easier job [and] not get blood all over my hands (Adele).

Alex’s mother seems unimpressed about the possibility of taking a year off:

‘I said to Mum, “I want to take a year off”, and she said, “What’s the point, what are you going to do for a year?”’ (Alex)

Jo claimed that her mother’s anxiety about her daughter’s career in land management was based upon ‘outdated’ ideas;

She [Mum] thinks it’s doing CALM work, which it isn’t, and I’d be emptying bins all day, which is true when you start, but — it is something I want to do, but she doesn’t think it’s professional... She doesn’t think I’m gonna get a job that pays enough (Jo).

According to Meredith, her mother’s frustration and concern about particular choices can be related to her lack of focus and attention to what her mother understood as a serious process;

My mum always takes everything I say too seriously. Like, I always say stupid stuff, and she says, ‘Now Meredith, you’re not being naughty, are you?’ And she takes it all too seriously, but I have told her not to. I’m always like, ‘I’m going to be a model’, and she’s like, ‘Stop being in La-La Land’. I think she is trying to make me work so that I can get into medicine (Meredith).

Later in the conversation Meredith qualified her earlier comments about her mother’s desire that she become a doctor;

I don’t think she cares. She’s not like, ‘you’re doing medicine and you must sit down and do work ten hours a night — this is all you are ever doing’ (Meredith).
Reflections on ‘my Mum’

As the young women unpacked these stories of maternal knowing, a new reading of their mothers’ views and attitudes was produced. Through this process the young women produced insightful understandings of both their mothers experiences of career and family, and how these experiences may have shaped and informed the positions taken by their mothers in the ‘here and now’. This insight is demonstrated in many of the young women’s stories of their mothers’ advice, such as potential pitfalls, which they interpreted as a result of limited or constrained experiences. Some of the young women clearly identified this as a maternal attempt to ensure that their daughters’ educational and vocational opportunities did not replicate their own experiences of disadvantage (Reay 1998, 203). As Jenny and Tara both describe their mothers’ career experiences are clearly evident in the warnings given to their daughters’;

My mum did an arts degree, and she didn’t want me to do that because she didn’t feel it offered enough jobs from it; that she was a teacher and she felt that she kind of fell into that because of the fact that she did arts because she wanted to, and enjoyed it, but couldn’t really go anywhere from there (Jenny).

I never really thought about [nursing] because my mum is a doctor and is always encouraging me not to go near the medical field, because she found it really hard and she doesn’t like some of the things she ends up treating … so I think I’ll stay out of medicine (Tara).

In making sense of her mother’s questions about attending university, Mia reflects on her mother’s ‘limited’ opportunities as informing her position;

I think it’s also because my mum didn’t want to get into uni when she left school — she went to the nursing college — and my dad got expelled from his school (Mia).

For Janice, her mother’s ‘lack of choice’ as a young woman has informed her hands-off approach to Janice’s current decision making;

She just says to me, ‘Do what you want, do what you feel is best for you’, which is good ... but sometimes I’d like a bit more feedback from her... One main thing she says is enjoy what you do, because when she was younger she wanted to work in the stables with horses, and her mum pushed her to do secretarial work, and I think she’s always resented her mum for that (Janice).

A missed opportunity is identified by Zena as informing her mother’s desire that Zena enroll in nursing;

My mum said to me, ‘Why don’t you get into nursing?’ I think that’s what she always wanted to do, and she would like to see one of her daughters go into it (Zena).

This notion of fulfilling a mother’s career dream was also noted by Lucy in her observations of a friend’s mother;

My best friend, who I’ve known since I was about two, her mum is lovely, but she really wants her to be a doctor — like, really wants her to be doctor — and she’s just like, ‘it doesn’t interest me in the slightest’ ... and I feel like saying: ‘She’s not interested in it. That’s your dream, you know’ (Lucy).

In deciding to prioritise their careers in the context of an imagined family, both Zena and Emily draw on their interpretations of their mothers’ experiences as ‘housewives’;

My mum has been a housewife — she’s a psychologist, but she never worked ... Her kids are sort of grown up, and we are doing our own thing, and she feels really lost (Zena).

Living a life dedicated to the needs of a husband — my mum, she just wants to sometimes just to be able to ... do her own thing, but she has my dad to worry about (Emily).
Alex’s memories of her mother doing night shift was a practice she was determined not to engage; The only thing I wouldn’t do is work at night — that’s the only regret I’ve got with Mum working every night, and we never got to see much of her (Alex).

**Re-thinking mothers as agents of influence.**
In acknowledging the prominent role played by many mothers’ in their daughter’s career decision making journeys, the gendered realities of parental involvement and the significance and primacy attributed to an undifferentiated category of parent are disrupted and exposed. Through this process of unraveling, it is clear that neither the ungendered parent nor the traditional focus on the father, are appropriate or useful. What the young women’s stories provide is an imperative to reassign gender to the ungendered parent within career decision making models.

The maternal knowing (re)produced within the context of the young women’s narratives offer a new and divergent understanding of parental engagement in young women’s career decision making. This maternal knowing forms a narrative of mothers as career advisors and as “principal agents” in their daughters’ negotiations of self(ves) and identity(ies) in the world, establishing their implicit and explicit involvement in their career investment decisions (Quicke 1993, 111). As this narrative unravels, it is clear that career decision making is discursively produced; shaped by diverse social, economic, cultural and political discourses of women and work. Similarly, choice is contextual, negotiated within and by the dynamics of competing agendas, expectations, wants, needs and desires (Lindh and Dahlin 2000). The young women’s interpretations and understandings of their mothers’ engagement can be read as mediated by the politics of choice and the inescapability of context. This awareness of context is evident in the young women’s discussion of the tensions between mothers’ encouraging their daughters’ to “do whatever it is you want to do” and their words of caution warning their daughters’ of potential pitfalls and disappointments (Reay 1998, 203).

Context also mediated the young women’s engagements with their mothers’, informing how the young women interpreted and made meaning of their mothers’ input. As members of the Generation Y, these young women have been educated and socialized within a social world devoted to economic prosperity and the rhetoric of choice (Huntley 2006; Harris 2004). For many of the young women, ‘having it all’, was not a mantra but a perceived reality (Bullbeck 2005; Aveling 2002). Alongside of this grounded optimism the young women also acknowledged the tensions which had constrained their mothers’ career decisions and experience of becoming wives/partners and mothers (Poole and Langan-Fox 1997). In stories of a mother’s ‘regret’, or ‘missed opportunity’ or concerns about their daughter’s future employment and financial sustainability, the young women spoke of the tensions between the gains of second wave feminism and the persistence of a masculinised labour market.

Through their observations as daughters, these young women made sense of their mothers’ experiences, producing understandings that they engaged in imagining their career futures. In this process the young women’s understandings of their mothers’ stories, their capacity to link theory to practice to context, demonstrates a sophisticated awareness of the personal as political. It is perhaps because of this capacity, and the learnings engendered forthwith, that the young engaged with and constructed their mothers’ lived experience as knowledge; knowledge which they brought to their career decision making, using it to shape, and ground the “endless possibility” ethos which feminist sociologist Valerie Walkerdine (cited Bagnall 2002) suggests, typifies their generation and gender.

**Conclusion**
The explicit presence of mothers in the young women’s narratives of career decision making disrupts the privileged father and/or the unidentified ‘parent’ in the career’s literature. In the process of ‘outing’ mothers as significant negotiators in their daughters’ career decision-making, the
young women have contributed to the production of a new reading; a reading which highlights the relational knowing between daughters and their mothers. The gendered experiences of mothers necessitate a re-thinking of earlier models of occupational inheritance and reproduction which can not be updated by simply substituting mother for father. In identifying and focusing on the mother, the social, economic and political landscape of young women’s career decision making is shifted. As this paper has highlighted the young women actively negotiated both what and how they would use their mothers’ input, in creating and recreating career and family lives both similar to and different from their mothers. The young women’s narratives also highlight the importance of understanding these interactions as contextually produced. The tensions between feminist gains and the constraints of a masculinised labour market (and a social world) a constant mediator of the roles performed by women-as-mothers of career-aspiring daughters.

References


Ear Leaders: Australian women sound artists as cultural activists

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Keywords: ideational leadership, creative arts practice, women sound artists, cultural activism, voice, sonic art, identity, new media.

In this paper I explore the notion of ‘ideational leadership’ in the context of creative arts practice. I use this term to refer to the capacity of artists to provoke and persuade an audience through the potency of ideas and aesthetics encoded in the creative works they present in the public sphere. The facility with which artists, intellectuals and journalists can circulate their products without fear of censorship or, more seriously, of political retribution serves as a litmus test for the freedoms of society at large. Yet the vital role of artists as independent commentators and critics of society may be taken for granted in democratic societies. Sallis (2008) comments that:

It is notable that those who communicate through art are also often political dissenters, and silencing them is one of the purposes of controls of freedom of speech in highly controlled societies. The demonstrated ability to use one’s imagination and to communicate about it is both admired and at times feared, although not often nor by many in Australia. (1-2)

It is worth considering, in the context of recent history, Sallis’ point about a prevailing apathy, or perhaps complacency, in this country about the vigour of cultural and political critique from the arts. The Howard government, for example, successfully assembled a highly resourced, centralised and sophisticated media arsenal with which to control the flow of public information and political analysis and attempted to direct community opinion into close alignment with its own conservative nationalist agenda. Post 9/11, this strategy enabled the government to introduce increasingly authoritarian policies and legislation under the guise of counter-terrorism. Manne (2007) suggests that political dissent in Australia was effectively silenced by these means.

In 2008, there is a sense that the demise of the Howard regime and the return to power of a Labor government is steering Australia back from the oppressive trends of the Howard years. Yet confidence in a renewal of democratic values and free expression of ideas took a tumble in May 2008 under the force of a new uprising of an old moral panic about the boundaries of art and pornography. When police raided a Sydney gallery and confiscated dozens of photos of a naked 13-year-old girl – works by prominent artist Bill Hensen – Prime Minister Rudd publically expressed the opinion that the work was “absolutely revolting.” This statement was deemed inappropriate on many levels in the ensuing eruption of community debate. Discourse raged between supporters of a basic right to freedom of creative expression without censorship and a child protection lobby voicing concerns over children’s rights and the potential co-option by child abusers of artistic products such as Hensen’s. The central issue of the context in which creative works are shown was strangely absent from much of this discussion. The resolution of the Hensen affair in favour of the artist and the restoration of the works to the gallery for public show was a validation of the significant role of artists as ideational leaders in shaping cultural identity and provoking serious community debate. The Hensen affair disrupted complacency in Australia about artistic freedom as an assumed element of democratic society and fore-grounded the need to exercise ongoing vigilance in its protection.

To place emphasis on cultural activism through ‘ideational leadership’ strays into terrain beyond the boundaries of prevailing academic discourses on leadership that are, overwhelmingly, preoccupied with management within organizational cultures. Their prime focus is on ways in which individuals can optimise their levels of authority, power, responsibility and influence within their workplace institutions. In this literature we find a plethora of descriptive, prescriptive, aspirational and
inspirational accounts of psychological and operational strategies that might by employed by those who aspire to be leaders. A more radical, though less pervasive, body of writing on leadership offers a critique of the nature of organisational culture itself. It addresses the terms by which leadership as a cultural phenomenon is constructed by specific institutional bodies in certain times, places and circumstances. Such writing may seek to articulate the mechanisms by which leadership is bestowed on or withheld from members of an organization, based on cultural markers such as gender, class, race, ethnicity and age. This literature interroges existing structures and dynamics by which people become leaders and discusses ways in which organizations might change in order to accommodate and gain from diverse participants and an array of leadership styles.\(^3\)

Consideration of the role of artists as leaders tends to be absent from both mainstream and radical forms of leadership discourse, despite a growing interest in the literature in the significance of creativity itself in high achieving performance in organisations.\(^4\) In Australia as elsewhere, artists frequently operate as individuals on the margins of mainstream organisational cultures of our economy. Leadership for artists as artists is contingent on the extent to which they are able to successfully exhibit or broadcast their works in the public sphere. However, many artists also sustain themselves with other forms work related to their creative practice such as teaching, research and media production. Those who are in a position to successfully navigate multiple cultural spheres and audiences are most likely to have optimal influence as ideational leaders. To illustrate this point, I wish to draw attention to the works of a sector of independent Australian women artists who work with sound as their primary creative medium.

Womensound artists hold a precarious position in the context of western culture with its historically privileging of male access to technological resources and arts funding as well as visual experience over aural (Connor 2003, Priest 2005). Yet the five artists chosen here to serve as exemplars of ideational leadership have all succeeded in producing powerful sonic works that provoke reflection on history and memory, political controversies, and questions of identity and belonging in contemporary Australia. They can be regarded as cultural activists by virtue of the political and philosophical themes taken up in their work, by their innovative approaches to practice including command of new technologies, and by their acumen in reaching audiences through various means such as radio, installations in public spaces and specially constructed Internet sites. They work within mainstream organizations as university academics and public broadcast producers as well as from the margins as independent artists. They are: Amanda Stewart, Virginia Madsen, Ros Bandt, Norie Neumark, and Sonia Leber.

A common element that runs through the diverse approaches and aesthetics of this group is a fascination with voice as a powerful instrument, one able to carry meanings both through the sense (or nonsense) of language as well as through an infinite variety of non-verbal sounds. All five artists work with new technologies to manipulate and modify spoken and sung language and the non-verbal sounds of voices to render an immensely colourful and powerful repertoire of sound.\(^5\) Contemplating a recent work, Amanda Stewart comments on the voice as “that unique instrument with the ability to synthesise semantic, musical, analytical and emotional structures.” She suggests that, if we care to look below the surface of speech, “we find beginnings, residues, disjunctions - the flux of complex oral and propositional codes that recombine at the edge of distinction (culture).”\(^6\) This complex, perhaps elusive, sense of what voice/sound as art can offer projects of cultural activism is a departure point for considering this group of artists and examples of their work.

**Virginia Madsen** teaches radio at Macquarie University in the Department of Media. Her research interests span sound and radio theory and history, auditory culture studies, audio arts and the history of public broadcasting radio with a particular emphasis on ‘cultural radio’ forms and their specific development in Europe and Australia.\(^7\) Her academic achievements include the prestigious
Vice Chancellor’s Post-Doctoral Research Fellowship from the University of New South Wales (UNSW). Madsen is an audio artist and works as an independent radio documentary maker whose features have been translated and broadcast in many countries. Her extensive and innovative radio works have been internationally recognised through prizes and invitations to conferences and festivals. Madsen has been an ABC radio producer since the 1980s and was one of the founding producers of the highly innovative ABC Classic FM program, The Listening Room that went to air between 1988 and 2003. This program became a hub for collaborations of a core group of experimental Australian producers and sound engineers who worked with local and international artists to create ground-breaking works for a new breed of radio audience. Yencken (2000) notes that The Listening Room presented creative radio through convergences of drama, new music, performance poetry, documentaries, audio-biographies, ecological meditations, expositions on popular culture, as well as discussions on media and acoustic theory. He suggests that it not only positioned sound art as a serious cultural phenomenon within Australia, but also opened up networks for international exchange and drew attention to the quality of work being produced here. Producers of The Listening Room were able to break with established radio practices in program structure, presentation, use of interview material, density of sound texture, manipulation of sound and other stylistic elements. This radical approach invited a new way of listening to radio and hence a new concept of the medium (Coyle 1990). The program fostered a matrix of ideas, collaborations, expertise, resources, networking and opportunities for promotion that supported the development in Australia of many successful sound artists, poets and producers.

Virginia Madsen’s Taken by Speed (1989) is an early example of how the The Listening Room platform allowed producers to explore innovative approaches to style, format and content. This work was a treatment of key contentions of the French philosopher Paul Virilio focusing, in particular, on his thoughts on war, speed and technology. Coyle (1992) offers a detailed analysis of the radiophonic strategies that Madsen uses to create a radio art treatment of Virilio’s contention that “the city, politics, culture, human presences and values are disappearing due to the speed of life today”. Virilio links this acceleration to an arsenal of new media technologies that have been developed in order “to build the global war machine”. His stated mission is to alter our perceptions of speed so that we can reclaim the time needed to make decisions. Madsen plays on this ethic in developing her aesthetics of working with sound, itself a medium of timing and pace, and her adoption of a dense style of composition that mimics the way Virilio himself writes.

Earleaders: Australian women sound artists as cultural activists

Madsen creates a sense of speed by using short sound bites of recorded interviews, followed by an announced title, excerpt of narrative or academic commentary, readings or sound effects. She sets voices against an array of sonic effects and location recordings and uses contrasting vocal and speech qualities – timbre, pitch, speed – to create a complex mesh of thematic material. Madsen creates a sense of convocation by unleashing on her listeners an ever-unfolding montage of meanings rather than a linear trajectory of events as is typical of traditional radio narrative formats. She bends and twists the traditional linearity of the radiophonic narrative medium to aestheticise a different form made from dense textures, ever-shifting and unexpected rhythms and a sense of randomness. She designs purposefully for non-linear listening experiences using strategic use of repetition, recapitulation and audio signposts (Coyle 1992). The ‘convocation’ of voices includes Madsen’s own voice directing and questioning from the ABC Sydney studio as well as the voices of two children who are positioned as ‘travellers’ on an adventure. The children’s voices play a significant role in the work on various levels, Coyle suggests, by providing an ‘authentic’ quality (rather than the voices of trained actors), conveying essential pointers in the radio text to its layering of concepts, and directing attention to Virilio’s concerns with how modern society is characterised by continuous movement. The children in Madsen’s work serve as naïve explorers as well as storytellers, questioning the meanings of all their experiences and encounters. Madsen’s work in creative radiophonics is thus highly innovative in its close interweaving of the relationships between content, aesthetics and techniques in sound. Her representation of Virilio’s philosophical
theory impacts on listeners from multiple perspectives and voices all at once, calling the act of listening into an intensity of undivided and complex attention.

Amanda Stewart is a Sydney-based sound poet/performer and ABC radio producer who has been working with speech and vocal sounds since the late 1970s. From 1983 to 1993 she worked as a full-time ABC radio producer and has since operated freelance in Australia and a number of countries around the globe. Her early development, like Madsen’s, was shaped and supported in The Listening Room matrix of ideas, expertise, resources, networking and opportunities for collaboration. In the 1980s, she played with the aesthetic of tape cut-up and montage and experimented with returning the effects of these techniques back into live performance by setting them against her vocal improvisations and pre-recorded sound loops. Stewart notes that the audio editing process itself can provide excellent training in observing the fine nuances of expression and meaning in speech:

"When you are cutting up voices all day, you hear different things. You notice how people can be saying one thing, but their voice is revealing something else." Stewart has made much use in her performances of the in-between sounds of speech – the "ums" and "aahs" and sighs that are often thrown into the scrap bin when 'tidying up' radio speech ready for broadcast. She incorporates utterances that shift between speech and song, stuttered rhythms of non-verbal articulations, short bursts of speech – single words or phrases. Stewart’s career is marked by ongoing and highly innovative collaborations with other experimental composers and performers. She was a founding member in 1989 of the experimental Sydney ensemble Machine for Making Sense. This group were interested in exploring relations between linguistics, poetry, speech, music, notions of sound, science and politics and in “re-evaluating” boundaries between text and music, music and sound art, acoustic and electronic, improvisation and composition.

The rapid development of new digital technologies through the 1990s opened up a range of new aesthetic possibilities in live performance. Many of Stewart’s performances are improvisations of live voice in counterpoint with soundtracks of her voice, pre-recorded and re-constructed through cut-up and an array of audio manipulation techniques such as pitch shift, speed alterations, and the looping in fast repetitions of phrases, words and consonants against long drawn out vowels, breaths and coughs. Osborne gives a brief impression of the result:

Stewart’s interplay between the recordings of her voice and the live sound produced in situ was a dance between the left and right microphone. She teased out the narrative of the day, stuttering, masticating, spitting words or their sound parts to accompany or lead herself through inscrutable semantics that made perfect sonic sense. (Osborne 2006: 53)

Critic Keith Gallasch describes Stewart’s approach to performance as one in which her "multiplied voice is all edges, plosives, throat, ssss running in quick breathless overlap like many persons in one."

Stewart’s poems address political and ideological issues and Zurbrugg (1988) characterises her intense approach to performance as one that employs a highly evocative rhetoric with explosive, highly subjective, declamation and satirising banal conversational generalities. In 1998, Stewart produced a retrospective of her poetry in CD & booklet format titled I/T. Details of rendering the electronic effects on different tracks are not provided, but in the short poem 'Sound and Sense' (created in 1991) we hear what seems to be a sampler doubling and looping back the lines of the poem as it progresses. Through this device that univocal line of speech layers back on itself to create a thick texture of rhythmic and musical speech reminiscent of ethereal Buddhist chanting against which odd words rise up and fall back again into the swell of sound. [PLAYSOUND SAMPLE]
Norie Neumark is Associate Professor in Media, Arts and Production at the University of Technology, Sydney (UTS). She is a prolific artist in sound and new media with works spanning radio, performance, the Internet, installation and CD-ROM. Her work has been commissioned and exhibited internationally in festivals, competitions and galleries and she has been a recipient of major arts grants and fellowships. Neumark’s academic activities encompass theoretical explorations of sound, radio and new media and, more broadly, technology, art and culture.

Over the past decade she has collaborated closely with her partner, visual artist Maria Miranda, and many of their multimedia works are available in their online gallery ‘Out-of-Sync’.

Neumark’s works have often focussed on themes of migration, identity and belonging. An example is her sound design for the multimedia installation work Dead Centre: the body with organs (1999) which positions the body and its organs as cultural constructs and explores them in relationship with technologies. The work was devised in a collaboration of Norie Neumark, Maria Miranda, Amanda Stewart and Greg White. Through sound installation and live performance, the artists explore ways in which organs are being reconfigured within computer culture and posit the notion of computers as organs of digestion and excretion, transmission and emission. Among their techniques for conveying the results of their explorations were fictive xrays, mirrored projections, and pulsing sounds/voices. The artists suggest that:

Much recent theory and discussion about computers places them in the realm of the brain or the mind, as if the body (_meat_) has been erased or left behind. But this doesn’t get to the heart and viscera of the matter from an artist's point of view. As you scan in your images or digitise your sounds, you subject them to a digestion process carried out by you and the computer together. As digestion it can be messy, noisy and undisciplined and it can produce unexpected eruptions. Its transmissions and excretions can appear anywhere - downloaded and projected onto unexpected surfaces, transmitted through the Net. (Out-of-sync website)

Dead Centre invites an audience to enter into an imaginary realm in which computers are portrayed as incarnations of human bodily organs. The artists suggest that our understandings of the body and its organs are historically and culturally specific constructs – that is, that the organs are configured and experienced differently in different cultures and in different moments of history. A key point of focus here, in contemporary times, is how human organs are being supported or replaced by integrating technologies into the body transforming recipients into cyborgs. To create a sonic sense of the cyborg experience, Dead Centre incorporates narrative fragments from people of diverse backgrounds set against inner bodily sounds and the outer sounds of performance. The work challenges notions of the “natural” body and constructs it as a cyborgian entity. The computer is presented as an organ of digestion, excretion, and transmission.

Ros Bandt is an academic and internationally acclaimed composer based in the Australian Centre at the University of Melbourne. She has made substantial contributions to the development of sound art in Australia, through both her own innovative artistic work as well as her research and teaching. Over many years, Bandt has received international commissions, grants and awards for pioneering projects including interactive sound sculptures, installations, sound playgrounds and spatial music systems. She has also conducted research into sound, sound design in public space, and drawn attention to the unique ways in which Australian artists have taken up this medium as an expressive form. She has published three books and numerous articles as well as directed the development of an online database of Australian sound art with the support of an ARC grant.

Bandt’s Voicing the Murray (1996) is a sound installation that employs multiple voices to convey a sense of some of the diverse cultures located along the banks of Australia’s longest river. It draws attention to ways in which people’s lives are defined by their proximity to the Murray. Commissioned for the Mildura Arts Festival, the work was designed to interpret impacts of technology on the environment of the river, to expose the effects of overuse through European
farming practices: for example, erosion, salination, and the cultural dislocation of indigenous peoples. Bandt says that she wanted “to give the Murray River a voice, a voice derived from all the voices impinging on its banks and surfaces” (Bandt 2001: np).

Her approach was to record stories and perspectives of people living near the river as well as an array of environmental sounds and then to create a multi-channel mix in an indoors installation space. Reflecting on how sound can contribute to the construction of Australian identity, Bandt seeks out relationships between place, voice, story and time. Each site (along the river), she points out, houses multiple intersecting stories that emerge and dissolve, and change in different contexts of time and space. Bandt is interested in ways in which sound carries layers of meaning beyond those available through the written word:

The breath, the timbre, the speed and the intonation of each authentic voice influence the content and meaning of the spoken word. Each voice has all these qualities, which are further shaped, by the acoustic space of the place of utterance, and the background soundscape, be it outdoor bushland, city street scape, public meeting room, coffeehouse, or tropical rainforest. All of these features are embedded in hearing. Together, they are powerful agents of meaning such as unwritten codes of class, pleasure or displeasure, emotional orientation, group alliance, attitude, confidence of a situation. (Bandt 2001: np)

Bandt argues that sound as a medium surpasses the limitations of the written word by virtue of its ability to convey a gamut of social, political, historical and cultural meanings not only through the nuances of individual voices but also the ability of sound to set multiple voices together in synchrony. Sound installations are capable of delivering “an ever-changing polyphony of multiple voices, which can also be made to change constantly as a living sonic tapestry of an acoustic space” (Bandt 2001). Each voice carries its own distinct story and their juxtapositions can represent diverse cultural locations and narratives of a place, openings for new forms of social consciousness outside of the entrenched political contexts.

Bandt is raising here an aesthetics and a politics of polyphony that has informed, and indeed often been central to, the work of Australian sound artists since the 1970s. Individual voices within the polyphony may run in linear sequence, as in a conventional narrative, or they may play synchronously against one another as in works designed to convey a sonic field of unexpected and unpredictable juxtapositions and rich textures. But, as Bandt points out, the particular characteristics of voice – their pitch, age, accent, speed, dynamics and timbre informs how the listener will interpret their discourse (Bandt 2001 online: np). Bandt constructs the installation space as a kind of democratic platform that can give each voice equal weight – unlike the politics of life itself – and allows us to hear a voice in the context of other discourses that support or run counter to its position. She performs a kind of affirmative action in her installation by programming the cycle of narratives so that “Aboriginal stories, often not heard, and too often silenced, could be played in the space as a solo group, and the aggressive voices could be silenced at this time” (Bandt 2001: np). The voices play against a range of environmental sounds that bind them to the Murray River as a location. Six large ceramic urns distributed around the space house the sound sources and serve both as material and metaphorical resonators, amplifying Bandt’s expressed concern for endangered lives, species and languages. Playback proceeds with a random element so that, over time, “the voices will have varying and unpredictable meetings with each other” (Bandt 2001: np).

**Sonia Leber** is a Melbourne based video and sound artist who teaches video in RMIT’s Department of Architecture and Design. She has won major design awards for her soundscapes that explore themes derived from a strong interest in cultural history and ways in which sound can be used to multiply meanings and contexts. She has been working in collaboration with her partner, composer David Chesworth, since 1993 as WaxSound Media. The pair is prolific and renowned for creating
bold soundscape installations in public art spaces and museums in Australian cities and abroad. Their particular expertise lies in creating computer-controlled soundscapes that are characterised by ever changing juxtapositions of various sound elements to evoke a field of shifting meanings. Leber and Chesworth confess to being fascinated with the human voice and their works all explore its expressive capabilities and the extended palette of sounds made possible by its electronic manipulation.

We have long been fascinated with the acoustic texture and the dynamic range of the human voice - beyond the speech content - its rhythms, sounds, shape, tone and frequency. We are particularly fascinated with the many 'proto-linguistic' vocalisations that people make. These are the sounds we make prior to - or instead of - articulating through language, where meanings are made without recourse to semantics or syntax. Where communication is through the 'shape' of speech, rather than speech content.

A work created in 2000 for the Sydney Olympics demonstrates the powerful effects of working entirely with vocalisations that fall outside of language. Titled 5000 Calls, this soundscape designed by Leber won her a National Association for Women in Construction Award. The work remains installed in the space around Stadium Australia and pays homage to physical human effort. Rather than focussing only on athletic activities, the artists introduce an array of contexts in which the people are engaged in physical tasks and the sounds of human effort are paramount. As well as the vocalisations of athletes engaged in sporting events, they include the sound of someone breathing in an aqualung, the cries of a woman in labour, people expressing grief and mourning, stroke victims working with therapists, fragments of Vietnamese river chants, singing of Aboriginal children, a Maori haka, stockmen herding cattle and the slow breathing of a dancer rehearsing. What emerges is a shifting soundscape of vocal fragments that morph seamlessly from one to another in ever-changing patterns and juxtapositions. The artists travelled widely within Australia and internationally to record the sounds in real world situations, each voice captured 'close up' by attaching radio microphones to people engaged in activities. Leber and Chesworth describe 5000 Calls as portraying “a sonic inscription of the body: stressing, straining, singing, exclaiming.” This work is impressive in its homage to diverse and sometimes troublesome forms of human effort – an inclusive panorama that encompasses illness and disability, rather than one that takes the obvious track for an Olympic installation of featuring the extreme physical exertions of world-class athletes and privileging this form of effort over others. For some, the maintenance of life itself is all consuming. For others, exertion is energised by song or cries. 5000 Calls casts life as a great swelling ocean of richly varied vocalities and invites visitors to respond in kind. [PLAYSOUND SAMPLE]

Conclusion
Ways in which artists can operate as ideational leaders – as ‘cultural activists’ – inside and outside of mainstream cultural institutions is illustrated in the career trajectories and selected works of five Australian women sound artists. These artists address diverse themes, often working against the grain of prevailing political and social discourse, to offer alternative imagining relationship between humans, technologies and environments. They demonstrate innovative approaches to creative practice, including uptake of newly emerging media techniques and aesthetics. They are visionary and versatile, employing multiple modes of engagement to reach out to audiences including radio, public installations and the Internet. Virginia Madsen, Amanda Stewart, Norie Neumark, Ros Bandt and Sonia have all played significant roles in leading Australian audiences to an appreciation of the ear as an organ of pleasure and discernment. In so doing they have raised awareness that attentive listening is, itself, a powerful form of cultural practice.

In this paper, I suggest that vigorous cultural commentary and critique from creative arts practitioners constitutes ‘ideational leadership’ and is an essential element in a healthy democracy. Artists practice leadership to the extent that they develop the capacity to provoke and persuade
audiences through the power and quality of ideas and aesthetics presented in public circulation of their works.

1 Ward (2003) suggests that Howard’s media assemblage amounted to ‘an Australian PR state’.
2 Reported by Martin, Brian (2008).
3 There is a burgeoning literature in this field. Examples that focus on gender issues in organisational leadership are Joan Eveline’s (2004). Ivory Basement Leadership and Amanda Sinclair’s (2005). Doing Leadership Differently.
4 See, for example, Mary Jo Hatch et al (2005). The Three Faces of Leadership: Manager, Artist, Priest and Richard Florida (2002). The Rise of the Creative Class. Jen Brown, University of Tasmania 2
5 Further reading on developments in sound art around the nexus of voice and new media are Smith (1999), Young (2006) and Lane (2006).
7 Virginia Madsen’s biography from Macquarie University, Department of Media.
9 Quote from Amanda Stewart’s interview with Sunanda Creagh (04/07/2006).
14 Norie Neumark’s publications include At a Distance: Precursors to Art and Activism on the Internet, MIT Press (2005) and Writing Aloud: The Sonics of Language (2001). She has given papers about sound and new media at numerous international conferences and symposia and published works include articles in Essays in Sound, Leonardo and Media Information Australia.
15 See the Out-of-Sync website at http://www.out-of-sync.com
16 This work was featured in the ABC’s monthly Arts & Culture magazine, Headspace – see http://arts.abc.net.au/headspace/special/deadcentre/default.htm
18 ABC site Headspace at http://arts.abc.net.au/headspace/special/deadcentre/default.htm
21 The Australian Sound Design Project was sponsored by the University of Melbourne and constructed with the assistance of an Australian Research Council grant: http://www.sounddesign.unimelb.edu.au/
22 See Voicing the Murray http://www.sounddesign.unimelb.edu.au/web/biogs/P000352b.htm
23 Leber won this same award again in 2002 for The Master’s Voice soundscape installation in Canberra.
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Institutional Framework and Cultural Policies in Creative Sectors:
A Rhetorical Tool or Real Facilitation of Gendered Leadership in Scotland’s Creative Environments?

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Abstract
The paper addresses the problematic nature of leadership in creative work in the context of existing policies and institutional frameworks with regard to diversity and equality schemes. Specificity of the cultural sector and conditions such as perceptions of creative freedom, cultures of sporadic success, and blurring of worker/employee and other identities, present particular ‘mindset’ challenges as to how new mechanisms for equality in employment, fairness in working practice relations and enhanced leadership might emerge. A question is what the implications for leadership in creative environments are, where the sector is increasingly required to take account of the equality and diversity agenda, with particular reference to alternative forms of leadership opportunity and experience. We acknowledge multiple forms of discrimination in relation to gendered-biased practices in creative work and following Bruni and Gherardi (2002), recognise the significant role of language in ‘en-gendering a difference’ effectively.

This paper builds on such research and presents evidence from a discourse analysis of cultural policies and comments in Scotland, and where appropriate, the UK more generally. The paper’s contribution is envisaged to be one that delivers further insight into the importance of language to the construction of leadership roles and in the facilitation and the obstruction of what is understood as gendered leadership in creative sectors, with particular reference to the equality discourse in the context of Scotland’s socio-political aspirations and its highly nuanced relationship with issues of gender and equality.

We argue that a problematic of a dual presence, which is, manifested both in the language at the policy levels as well as via historically constructed assumptions and meanings associated with identity related categories such as leadership and perpetuated via media, creates significant barriers for women’s’ way of doing leadership, their socio-economic success as well as underutilisation of their skills and forms of expression more generally.

Introduction
We live in a society that is underpinned by a masculine hegemony where domination of male-biased cultures and ideas results in a perpetuation of a particular common sense (Cockburn, 1991) and ways of expression. On the whole the accepted norms and regulations are related to the ways men are used to acting and doing things. Carter and Marlow (2007) argue that an analysis of gender within wider socio-economic environments is supported by empirical evidence from a comprehensive range of disciplines.

There is a growing interest from within academia and across policy to focus on gender and leadership and to seek appropriate theoretical frameworks, especially encompassing the gender construct that will enable examination of how experiences of women in leadership roles mirror those theories and contribute to policy developments.
Both gender and leadership are reflected in identity constructions. Identity as a construct has been recognised in the literature as core to understanding diversity problems in the organisational realms (Nkomo and Cox, 1996) whereas the extra-organisational dimensions of identities and enacted roles that stem from them, such as a leadership position, can be envisaged as sites for contestation. Gendered identity is one of multiple identities that are contested within the realms of work, in the less visible, embedded aspects of culture, values, meanings and underlying assumptions that stem from them (Foldy, 2002; Burrell, 1992).

Identity formation processes encompass a dialectic relationship between subjectivity and discursive organisational practices, a relationship that evolves, shaping the institutional practices and organisational frames. These frames delineate the boundaries in which gender and identity are allowed as well as the permeability of these boundaries for transgression (Bruni and Gherardi, 2002). Thus, gendered identity processes can be seen as infused by the language, and subsequently, enacted gendered roles such as leadership positioning.

In this paper, we attend to a gendered dimension of leadership via language and acknowledge its complex and context dependent nature, here situated in the context of policy developments in creative communities of practices. Leadership in creative environments, and aesthetic leadership that can involve any form of artistic direction, creation or cultural production, appear elusive. Such leadership embraces ‘rational irrationality’ that supports flows of emotions, intuition and feelings as a source of aesthetic knowledge (Guillet de Monthoux et al., 2007; Adler, 2006). Creative resource can be both challenging and inspiring with its unpredictability. Literature has pointed out that creative practitioners use their emotive resources for exploration and representation of reality. They require flexible and non-restrictive working environments for facilitation of creation and/or collaboration that go beyond a routine and the limits of hierarchical structures at work (e.g. Kosmala, 2007; Scott 1995). Leadership in creative contexts incorporates both imagination and realisation and the task of management in such context is to offer the best conditions for the realisation of projects that place imagination at a core; a task that is somewhat paradoxical (Lindqvist, 2007). Yet, it appears that the problematic nature of leadership roles in creative environments is complicated further by a gender bias.

Acknowledging complexities and paradoxes that can be associated with leadership roles in creative environments, the paper addresses the problem of gender equality in the context of policy developments. We argue that in order to attend to gender and gendered realities of changing societal trends and the labour conditions in contemporary organisational realms, including the facilitation of leadership in environments that are gendered-biased, it is important to engage with the culture and the specificity of the context. We acknowledge the importance of discourse at the institutional level for validation of forms of participation in, for example, the communities of creative practices that are related to and reflected in the social construction of gendered identities and their extra-organisational dimensions.

Drawing on research from cultural and visual studies as well as gender and organisational theory, this paper addresses the discursive position of leadership in creative environments through stated policy and comment. The intention here is to open up this debate further and the paper is structured as follows. First, a brief account regarding the conceptual interface of gender and leadership is provided. Second, the specificity of creative contexts as gendered is discussed. Third, some observations are offered on discursive accounts relating to the cultural and creative sector in Scotland and the articulation of leadership and gender agenda for this sector more widely. Finally, conclusions are presented. We argue that artistic expression and creative practice can map onto a more proactive principle of enactment with a focus not on gender differences but on what differences gender makes.
**Conceptual reflections on gender and leadership**

A notion of ‘engendering leadership’ produces a tension in the meanings between a sense of production (that is associated with a term to engender) and the process of gender attribution (to en-gender), here in a reference to leadership. De Lauretis (1987) introduced the term to en-gender; that is, the process of gender attribution, self attribution and the effects of technologies of gender (Bruni and Gherardi, 2002). Following this line of thinking, engendering leadership relates to processes of situating the leader’s subjectivities in the effects of discursive practices (although not just this) that are rooted in cultural representations, social institutions and occupational contexts as well as the policies that encompass them.

In order to engage with the existing debates of a given community, we acknowledge the importance of the assumptions and distortions these debates create and are responsible for framing arguments in social worlds. Drawing on the symbolic approach to gender in organisational realms (Gherardi, 1995) we recognise the complex and multifaceted nature of gendered identity. By taking a symbolic approach, gendered identity, and extra-organisational dimensions such as leadership, are recognised as powerful symbols of difference that are culturally enacted and positioned in and through language, and our ‘semiotic and material practices’, the things we do and things we think of (Gherardi, 1994). In adopting such perspective, organisational and institutional realms form a signification domain within which gendered leadership is created as both a discursive act and a discursive effect.

‘Symbolic understanding is generated on the borders of ambiguity, where being and non-being merge, where the indeterminate is about to transform itself into the determinate, and where possibilities are emergent...[T]he symbol of difference resides within a symbolic approach to gender; it subsumes a dyadic code which entails constant relation and tension; it symbolises what is separate and what is inseparable’ (Bruni and Gherardi, 2002, p. 22).

We acknowledge this ambiguity in our analysis of policy developments, commentaries and existing literature that either directly or otherwise address the nature of leadership in creative environments. Furthermore, the structural ambivalence of the symbolic order, as pointed to by Bruni and Gherardi (2002) below, is noted later in the context of Scotland in particular:

‘The structuring of the symbolic world of gender differences is expressed in institutions, processes and dynamics which erect a symbolic order of gender based on static difference, but at the same time the collective and global meaning of gender differences is historicized into radically different symbolic and social structures, where the threshold between male and female is crossed innumerable times’ (p. 26).

West and Zimmerman (1987) who introduced the concept of ‘doing gender’ argued that gender can be viewed as a ‘routine, methodical and recurring accomplishment’ (p. 126). In other words, to be perceived as a woman, one must exhibit traits and behaviours seen as female in the relevant culture and performance thereof confirmed by an audience (Butler, 1990). The same line of thinking applies to a process of ‘doing leadership’. The attitudes of others towards the gendered individual, here a leader, might confirm to what is seen appropriate and right for leadership in a given context, and on that basis, be accepted. We can therefore refer to ‘doing gender’, as ‘performing gender’ and ‘gendering’ leadership as the processes of social accomplishments.

The issue of ‘doing gender’ or ‘doing leadership’ not only focuses on the doing, but points at the symbolic structure of gender: ‘the gender we think’ (Gherardi 1994, p. 595). This latter concept is connected to culture, insofar as Gherardi argues that the content of gendered identity is more stable than the form it takes in everyday interactions, in which it is more easily negotiated. Bruni and Gherardi (2001) continued the discussion of gender studies in a way that perceives gender to be conceptualised as a ‘practical accomplishment’ (referring to West and Zimmerman, 1987) and a
‘persuasive performance’ (referring to Gherardi 1994, 1995). They argued that ‘shadowing someone of a different gender from one’s own, for example, may be an opportunity which reveals the gender bias in the relationships’ (Bruni and Gherardi, 2001 p. 181).

Doing leadership is like doing gender. Women and men differ in how they approach and enact leadership ‘effectively’ and understand what is ‘appropriate’ for the leader position. Acker (1992) noted that gender is part of the logic used in organisations, determining what practices and tasks are adopted and how. Holmes (2007) examined the role of language in shaping gender differences in the work context and emphasised the importance to attend to how their social meanings are encoded and interpreted, referring to the problem of the ‘double bind’, a ‘no win’ situation for the women who aspire to leadership positions. As ‘atypical’ leaders, the way women approach leadership is to be perceived as ‘not right’ due to the men-as-default-leaders perceptions (p. 34). Collinson and Hearn (1994) identified a variety of men-related discourses that characterise organisational and managerial cultures, under the umbrella of multiple masculinities. Arguably, leadership falls into a category of managerial masculinities, reinforcing dominant forms of being and acting like a man. Such a perspective has significant implications for the potential for change in organisational cultures via various initiatives for equal participation and equal opportunities policies as well as in challenging oppression and promotion of alternative ‘leadership’ strategies.

Gender stereotyping is identified as one of key barriers to women’s advancement in leadership positions. Women often face obstacles that emerge out of conflicting options, in both the structures and language used in relation to the problem of how to lead. The recent report by Catalyst (2007) the non-profit organization working to advance opportunities for women leadership pointed out that some of these engendering leadership dilemmas relate to high competence threshold for lower financial and non-financial rewards as well as extreme perceptions.

Although the notion of leadership in the literature is still tied to masculine-stereotypical strategies that are task-driven and goal-oriented, more recently transformative power and influence, valuing the group outcome and individual satisfaction are also discussed (Yoder, 2001) which points to an emerging otherness or alternative within the construct of leadership role. In subsequent sections of the paper, we draw on academic and professional literature on communities of practices that explore whether there are differences in the description of female and male occupational roles, and on that basis, attend to leadership characteristics. We also investigate the discourses created and expressed in the institutional framework and cultural policies in Scotland about leadership and gender. The segmentation and sectoral specificity is acknowledged.

The question is not whether the language of equality can be coded other-than-masculine within the existing institutional frameworks in creative contexts, but how and when. This paper is a contribution to charting emerging trends and possible ‘openings’ in policy developments and commentaries whereby creative leadership can be therefore coded as other-than-masculine.

Engendering leadership in creative environments: Reflections on a gender bias in creative sectors

Complexities of creative contexts
The growth prospects of creative work highlight their importance for the employment market via new job opportunities, the inclusion of diverse communities as well as promotion of the ‘life-long learning’ and the ‘equal opportunities for all’ strategies.

The diversity agenda in Europe, includes a position led by Brussels, that in our knowledge-based society we cannot afford to waste talents have become more laudable but also profitable. Research on an international level clearly states that there are problems within the creative sectors in terms of equal and diverse participation, employment opportunities, pay gaps, access to basic employment rights and evidence of cultures of fear, bullying and discrimination (UNI-MEI, 2005).
The working experiences for women and men in creative industries differ substantially across the sector and vary within and between countries; nonetheless, certain inequities are all too apparent. In Europe, women figure more in the PR industries, are under-represented in graphic design employment and in the arts more widely, with many fewer women than men employed as directors, producers or arts managers (Sinclair et al., 2006). These sectoral conditions present particular challenges for engendering leadership in terms of how to shift cultural mindsets more generally and to facilitate new mechanisms for equality in employment, fairness in working practice relations as well as alternative strategies on how to manage and lead. We recognise here that there are ‘hidden’ processes and the functions performed by diverse groups in creative sectors that contribute to the competitive advantage and survival in what can be envisaged as potentially gender and diverse biased professions, such as for instance film industry (e.g. Lantz, 2007) architecture (e.g. Graft-Johnson et al. 2003), design and arts (e.g. Kosmala, 2008, 2007; Bain, 2005) each require appropriate consideration.

For instance, research in the UK has shown that in the field of screen writing there is a gender imbalance with far less women than men recorded in this employment; women make up only a third of the film production workforce and there remains a clear gendering of work opportunities into areas such as costume and make-up (Sinclair et al., 2006). Lantz’s (2007) study of filmmaking points at the gender-bias that is of a double nature in film industry in general. She argues that the director as an artist and the producer are both constructed through language as what could be termed male default identities. She further argues that a portrayal of the gendered roles of the film director as male and the producer as female sets in place hierarchies that may be central in the reproduction of the gender power structures in the film industry.

Sinclair et al (2006) have demonstrated that the practice of screenwriter is an isolated one and generally there is little support for the profession. The study indicated that where support has been offered it has not been ‘well received’. In terms of changing the institution for women in the profession, it seemed that the industry appears both ‘fragile’ and unable to accommodate or ‘formalise’ what might be termed good practice on equality and diversity in other sectors. Furthermore, Sinclair et al. (2006) noted that many of the screenwriters did not wish to be associated with any ‘positive action’ initiatives, women in particular were concerned that they would receive work because they are women and not necessarily on the basis of the quality of their work. These findings reveal complexities and ambiguities inherent in the sector and point at more defensive attitudes from women towards engaging with the policy more generally.

Recent research in the UK reveals a distinct diversity issue within the creative and cultural industries as 39% of employees working in creative and cultural industries are women; 32% in the design industries and 31% in the music industry (CCSkills, 2008). In Scotland, Marcella et al. (2006) examined equality policies implementation and operation from perspective of employer and employees in companies and sole-traders. At the level of policy, only 10 out of 51 examined companies had formal gender-related policies, or if these policies existed, their operation was vague and unclear. The study confirmed the gender-related unequal treatment and gender-related barriers across the sectors. The authors pointed out that on the whole, women tend to occupy roles that are more linked to administration. In cases of women who occupy non-traditional female roles such as film propos or architects, the study revealed the barriers related to more general sexist attitudes. Marcella et al’s (2006) study confirms that there is under representation of women in senior and leadership positions and decision making roles in the Scottish creative sector. The study reports on women’s enterprise in Scotland and revealed under-representation of women in business start-ups more generally (Scottish Enterprise, 2004).

Marcella et al (2006) argued that in case of success and leadership, women seem to adopt male traits, such as being pushy in order to adapt to and work in what can be envisaged as male-dominated environments. In realisation of leadership roles women seemed to play to male rules.
Their study also indicated at the instances of nepotism and cronyism in terms of obtaining employment, funding and enhancing visibility. The prevalence of ‘old boy networks’ poses more tacit, and yet, significant barriers for gendered leadership as the potential for self-promotion appears particularly problematic in a more fluid creative career path. Such issue, however, is not solely gender-related as marketing and promotion management appear more problematic for creative practitioners.

Insights from architecture sector: The UK perspective
Taking a more focused view is useful, and necessary if evidence based research is to play a role in narrowing inequalities. Prior research in the architecture sector, points out that there are substantial differences regarding the conditions for diverse participation across countries. Taking gender into perspective, in Sweden there is now a 50-50 split between male and female professionally active architects, and according to the professional organization of Sweden’s Architects Sveriges arkitekter, there is either none or very small wage premiums for male architects (0-2%), when adjusted for differences in work experience. Since more than 2/3 of the graduates from architect schools nowadays are female, they are most likely to be in leadership positions in 10 years from now, not least, since a large proportion of male architects are now in their sixties. According to the professional literature, industry opinion is that female architects have very good communication and cooperation skills, the skills that appear particularly important for leadership roles in creative contexts. Moreover, the Swedish context appears more facilitative of engendered difference in leadership. Significantly Sweden’s largest architectural firm Sweco has recently appointed a female CEO.

Such developments towards an improved feminisation of the sector in Sweden can be contrasted with a British context where in 2003 only 14% of architects in Britain were female, compared to 38% of graduates students in architecture (RIBA, 2004), indicating a heavily male dominated profession. Furthermore, women leave architecture despite the presence of initiatives to promote equality and gender equality mainstreaming practices, is evidenced by research by Graft-Johnson et al’s study (2003) that revealed how many practices were not abiding by equal opportunities and pay legislation, resulting in poorer working conditions and limited promotional aspects for women.

Despite equality policy, including that pertaining to equal pay and sex discrimination, already having been required to be in place by employers and agencies in the UK, Graft-Johnson et al. (2003) identified a number of interrelated factors within architecture including a low and unequal pay, glass ceiling, sidelining practices towards women, stressful working conditions and inflexible working patterns as well as an overall sexism and protective paternalism that prevent personal development and career advancement (p. 3). Their study pointed at the perceived lower chance of achieving advancement for women in comparison to men, including a lack of opportunity to develop a creative side within the profession. The authors identified that many women suffer loss of confidence because of such treatment and such conditions appear to make job satisfaction and the feasibility of career advancement opportunities and subsequently alternative leadership positions both questionable and ‘remote’ for women in this field.

Research literature points to a persisting macho culture in the architecture profession including gendered biased activities and the ‘be pretty factor’, as well as media bias reinforcing stereotypical attitudes towards gendered abilities and skill (Caven, 2006, 2004; Graft-Johnson et al. 2003), all seem to reinforce the existing gendered roles including leadership and perpetuate the status quo.

On the whole, low participation of women in architecture and for those who ‘persevere’, the glass ceiling problem as well as straightforward prejudice about having women in more senior positions, result in both a skills waste and under-achievement. Graft-Johnson et al. (2003) identified the ‘queen bee’ syndrome for the successful women who appear obstructive to junior colleagues, in
particular women. This engendering of leadership, that is, a leadership role that derives from dominant managerial masculinities strategies can be considered as both outmoded and unhelpful. 

Caven (2006) argued that women architects in the UK seem disillusioned with their employment cultures, where structural and cultural barriers and a male dominant work ethos prevail, and many leave architecture to follow a career in their own terms, either to become self-employed and privilege flexible working over a unitary notion of organisational commitment or to seek other work practice alternatives. Such evidence points at an increasing pattern of feminisation. It appears that the employment patterns and career paths for female architects are adaptive to realities of working environments’ and incorporate individually-driven professional lifestyle (Caven, 2004). She also highlighted the notion of a ‘boundaryless’ career option for women in architecture, drawing from Defillippi and Arthur (1994). The move away from a dependence on the organisational context of work seems therefore a desirable option, confirming the women’s preferences.

Hakim (1996) has pointed out that women are more willing to try something alternative or non-standard and to develop their careers in less defined and linear terms, than men. A pattern of leadership that is based on such fluid terms may be more suitable for career development in the creative sectors. Indeed, the nature of creative work can be envisaged as a boundaryless path with no fixed and non standard patterns of working. In creative careers, work is often project-related, based on informal (word of mouth or personal) contacts and this degree of personalised informality typifies the market in the arts and architecture sectors, for example (Caven, 2004). It could be argued that in this sense of working patterns, individual leadership and entrepreneurial skills are competencies informally developed during the course of working life and in creative practice. An emphasis is on the freedom to control the processes of engagement and creation, self-employment and not on being situated and ‘fit’ within the organisational structures and organisational goals.

We now turn to the policy development in cultural contexts in Scotland and examine possibilities for leadership in creative sectors.

Institutional Framework and Cultural Policies Developments in Creative Contexts in Scotland

Scotland: a context for equality

At a political level, various nation states and economic regions, including the UK as part of a wider European position, have launched the idea of a ‘life-cycle approach’ in order to encourage wider participation in economic and social life. The goal is the integration of people of different ethnicity, age, gender and educational background, into an economy whilst anticipating the demands for a flexible and changeable labour market. ‘Employability’ is a key concern and to this end the ‘well informed individual’s perspective’ is one that embraces continuous updating of knowledge and planning activities that can result in a personalised life-long learning project (European Qualifications Framework, Life Long Learning, 2006). A context for this embrace is well developed through education, training and employment agenda yet access to participation in the economy continues to be defined by iniquity.

There has been a significant move in the UK towards a more defined requirement for institutional leadership in respect of gender equality. Recent legislative shifts, including the Gender Equality Duty (2007), now require both a proactive duty to promote equality as well as an anticipatory duty to
ensure that the sector environment can accommodate a diverse range of people and skill sets. The gender equality duty stipulates that public service bodies and indeed private organisations who fulfil public functions must take steps to proactively promote equality between genders. The shift towards institutional responsibility to promote equality proactively rather than individuals having to evidence that they have been discriminated against is a key change from previous legislation and policy. An institutional responsibility to promote equality duty proactively, takes away from individuals a need to evidence instances of discrimination and/or unequal treatment.

In Scotland, the overarching political institution charged with fostering a climate of social inclusion and equality across gender dimensions is the Scottish Government. The Department of Enterprise, Transport and Life-long Learning has set out an agenda for supporting business growth, entrepreneurial activity and learning in a climate that delivers the Equal Opportunities to All. This Scottish position chimes with a wider EU goal to grow the economy, whilst encouraging a skilled and motivated workforce in a culturally diverse, yet, socially inclusive society where individual political participation in these processes is paramount for success.

In the Scottish Government’s strategy for enhancing gender and equality, the documentation states its commitment to gender equality ‘for all’:

ensuring that those policies meet the diverse needs of that population, by ensuring that they are accessible to all - taking into account the needs which might arise due to an individual’s age, gender, race, sexual orientation, disability and religion/belief...(Enterprise, Transport and Lifelong Learning Department, 2007)

Furthermore, the Scottish Government emphasises the utility of embracing the potential of available talent and notes the problematic of segregation on the grounds of sex, as well as other key discriminatory attributes:

We know that sex discrimination, both direct and indirect, and occupational segregation based on gender (as well as race, age and other factors) inhibits Scotland’s ability to effectively benefit from the pool of talent and inhibits our ability to create a flexible and responsive workforce (Enterprise, Transport and Lifelong Learning Department, 2007)

In short, the political leadership discourse defines broad parameters for gender fairness within the locus of economic labour and enterprise. How, and to what extent, the artistic and creative community in Scotland has responded to the new legislation is something worth further analysis.

What follows next is a short commentary on how the discursive accounts appear to be formulating either explicit or implicit responses to this new legislative position, as well as embracing a ‘mood’ for an enhanced equality and diversity situation, including the possibility for a variety of leadership and entrepreneurial strategies to be enabled across economic sectors and, in the case here, of the creative industry sectors more generally.

3 Following the Stephen Lawrence inquiry, a public sector duty was brought into place in the UK in 2000 to promote race equality and this was followed in 2006 by a similar duty in relation to disability. In April 2007 a gender equality duty was added. The new legislation replaced previous laws where action could only be taken against public bodies after they discriminated on grounds of sex.

4 These duties no longer put the onus on the individual to evidence claims of unfairness against public bodies, rather they oblige public bodies to evidence that they are treating everyone fairly, taking account of their diversity and their differing needs. The 3 public sector duties require a common approach with the onus on public bodies to work proactively to promote equality and eliminate discrimination in all their functions. The duties are similar in spirit although they each have slightly different requirements which need to be met in order to satisfy legal obligations (Fawcett Society, 2007).


Creative communities and equality duty in Scottish context

Within the UK there are a number of publicly funded programmes of cultural and creative development, as well as those supported by private enterprise and various joint initiatives. The institutional framework for support and enhancement of cultural, artistic and creative activity generally in the UK informs the situation in Scotland but there are more nuanced aspects to Scotland’s situation. Scotland is both symbolically and institutionally different from a UK and/or British frame of reference. With the Scottish Parliament reconvened in 1999, Scotland now operates as a devolved power within a wider UK context, but also increasingly asserts more independent authority through a range of cultural, creative and enterprise bodies, a number of which are well defined as ‘Scottish not British’ in their ethos and remit (Burnett and Danson, 2000).

On a more general point, the nature of any politicised voice in the creative communities locally is worth reflecting on. In relation to the creative industries sector it is clear that gender equality duty legislation is affecting organizations in two main ways; firstly, as an employer all organizations are required to not only meet the requirements of this legislation, but they are also charged with fostering an ethos of equality within everyday practice. Creative organizations on the national level such as Scottish Arts Council, or Scottish Screen, local authorities charged with education and arts provision, or smaller visual arts or theatre companies are employers, but their existence is predicated on a need to provide and respond to policy frameworks (leadership) for cultural and artistic activity. Their practice will increasingly require them to create and facilitate climates where creative activity, debate, evaluation and enhancement, including appropriate language for leadership is more successfully realised.

These organisations are required by law to embrace the equality and diversity agenda, yet, how far organisations in the arts and creative fields, as well as other key sectors such as education, health and local government, are delivering change or improvement is subject to ongoing scrutiny (e.g. a role of Engender: Women’s Coalition Campaign). Gender-sensitive indicators arguably can be used in the monitoring and evaluation of gender-related changes in society over time and can provide the necessary evidence to challenge disparities and highlight discriminatory practices. The evidence can be further utilised to assess and where appropriate to enhance the key roles that public bodies play in addressing long standing inequalities and facilitating difference. Perhaps, what remains more obdurate is the perception held and discourse circulated that pertain to gendered practice and expression, and the nature of leadership in Scotland both experienced and facilitated by individuals and groups as discussed in the previous section.

Public bodies in the UK each act as employers in their own terms and they have a responsibility to meet the legislation requirements on gender and diversity. These organizations are charged with making sense of current equality and diversity realities within the wider economic sector as appropriate to their interests of arts, creativity and cultural policy. For example, in the film industry, the UK Film Council undertook to develop a toolkit that is designed to help partner organizations to enhance equality and diversity both in the workplace and in connection to the services that they provide. This toolkit is itself a direct response to a series of research studies that indicate that inequity does exist within the film industry (Sinclair et al., 2006).

9 Within the wider debate over the valuing of creative arts and artists themselves, a number of specific concerns have emerged, such the position of women in the industries, but also ethnic discrimination, disability access, and the situation of ‘new migrants’ working in the creative industries. Legislation at the European level is not sufficient in itself to secure change in social attitudes pertaining to ‘difference’ but rather it is a cultural ethos and political discourse that champions greater equality within the sector that may shape and impact on individual and collective opinion and practice.
10 UK Film Council (http://www.ukfilmcouncil.org.uk/information/aboutus/diversity)
Scottish Screen and the Scottish Arts Council are currently undergoing a transition to form a new body, Creative Scotland, a national development agency for all aspects of the creative and cultural industries in Scotland. This proposal has presented challenges as well as opportunities, including the opportunity to bring together best practice from within the two creative sector institutions to foster and further enhance an ethos of gender equality and diversity awareness generally.

The Scottish Arts Council has made its institutional position clear:

we celebrate Scotland’s diversity and we wish to acknowledge and reflect this in everything we do and fund. In all our work – in the employment we provide, the arts activities and programmes we fund and support, and in the advice and guidance we give, we promote equality of opportunity. We want to go beyond the legislative requirements towards best practice in supporting our employees, working with artists and engaging audiences in an exciting and inclusive way. We need to recognise and address barriers to full inclusion in the arts, whether these are physical, attitudinal, social or procedural. These include gender barriers ... (Scottish Arts Council, 2007).

Elements of such ‘good practice’ discourse are replicated elsewhere, for example Scottish Screen’s Gender Equality Scheme seeks to deliver procedures for assessing its addressing equality issues over time. The organization, like many other public bodies, including universities for example, acknowledges that whilst a key aspect of this scheme is to deliver a fair and just working environment, as detailed in relation to recent changes in gender equality legislation, for the specific employees of the organization itself, the scheme must go much further. It is in the bedding down of a widely articulated discourse promoting gender equality in terms of interactions with its partner organizations and stakeholders in relation to the assessing and reviewing of funding proposals, or in the fostering of wider equality awareness, that particular energies could be directed to good effect. The gender equality scheme itself must then dovetail with other equality policy such as disability legislation and employment law relating to childcare, or harassment, for example.

In general, the creative sectors are characterized by many self-employed individuals and much of the sector is non-unionized. Nonetheless, Scotland has the Scottish Visual Artists Union and established bodies such Visual Arts Scotland, Federation of Scottish Theatre, or the Scottish branch of the Musicians Union, that serve some of the professional needs of a creative community, yet, there is no demonstrable commitment to raising gender equality awareness here other than what would be required of them in the sense of employer bodies.

The interface between the education and training sector and the creative industries sector itself in terms of skills development and employability issues is a crucial area for further focus: how politically intent are such agencies in both debating and countering realities of discrimination and iniquity within visual arts and creative practice employment, for example? What is clear is that the institutional frameworks exist across a range of sectoral interests in respect of equality agenda, but the nature of the creative sector is such that there is no singular defining arena for creative

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11 Scottish Arts Council 2007, Gender Equality Scheme (29 June 2007-June 2010)
12 Scottish Screen, 2007, Gender Equality Scheme (29 June 2007-June 2010)
13 Although architecture is broadly served by its professional bodies (Royal Institute for British Architects), and there are number of specific craft and design guild associations, union membership within the sector UK-wide is varied and often typified by distinctly professional as opposed to ‘labour rights’ agenda. In respect of employment, a number of creative artists, managers and practitioners may well be unionized, as a result of being part of a wider industry cohort, most notably in education and as employees of local authorities, but also as being members of unions such as Equity, nonetheless any specific remit for the engendered dimension to creative and artistic work will be subsumed under more general concerns.

Increased pressure in recent years by lobby groups at a UK level, such as the National Campaign for the Arts (NCA) and in Scotland, the Scottish Artists Union (SAU), suggests a more concerted approach to how creative communities are positioning themselves to ‘voice’ concerns and responses to current policy and practice issues. There has been increased activity across the sectors to raise awareness, promote debate and deliver change in the area of equality and diversity. The National Campaign for the Arts (NCA) is the UK’s only independent lobbying organisation representing all the arts and ‘seeks to safeguard, promote and develop the arts and win public and political recognition for the importance of the arts as a key element in our national culture (National Campaign for the Arts Press Release, http://www.artscampaign.org.uk/press/DiversityManifesto20June2005.html)"
employment and artistic practice, posing additional challenges for gender issues and on how to foster otherness in leadership.

Indeed, this paper stems from the idea that contextual considerations are fundamental in any analysis of the discourse choices operating in communities of creative practice, yet, it is clear that creative contexts are complex, often ill-defined both in institutional terms but also more importantly, lacking an assertion of claim or voice by creative individuals themselves, (i.e. education and training arenas are just one example here). Furthermore gender discourse and facilitation of difference in leadership remain problematically articulated in Scotland.

Historically, Scottish culture has itself privileged an overly masculinised account of itself and this has been both projected upon and mirrored in external representations. And, despite certain tendencies to celebrate masculinised ‘romance’, ‘loss’, and ‘otherness’, within this masculinised national account (c.f. Howson, 1993), Scotland continues to operate textually and ideologically as a ‘female as other’ discursive field. As a nation, discourses of Scottish femininity, and women’s achievement and contribution continue to be subsumed by more inherent tendencies to privilege masculine accounts and positions. Breitenbach and Brown (1998) have argued that a more inherent identity problematic in Scotland exists in relation to how the nation defines itself within a British nation state apparatus and agenda. This has marginalised Scotland’s ‘voice’ more generally but has also doubly marginalised women. It could be argued that this position is especially appropriate to explore in relation to the arts and creative industries where so much institutional power operates from a London centric position despite arts and creative agencies and employers either being located in Scotland or increased efforts to debate and redress aspects of this inequity, such as the recent Scottish Broadcasting Commission. In short, Scotland struggles with a nation position whereby it is frequently discoursed ‘as other’ not least in cultural representational terms (Blain and Burnett, 2008) and as such we would suggest that this leadership discourse at a macro level requires further analysis to ascertain how it may contribute to more micro accounts of leadership and its practice. It is interesting to note following McCrone and Paterson (2002) that whereas men have been more likely to support independence for Scotland, women have been more likely to support a ‘domestic parliament’ (c.f. Brown et al, 1998, p. 161). Furthermore, more recent ethnic labour and social inclusion agenda have raised the profile of equality and diversity across the ethnicity spectrum and other identity related categories in Scotland which is highly appropriate but has arguably seen gender equality discourse lose ground to these other sites of contestation. Further research can and should build upon these nuances of gendered identities and opinions in Scotland.

To focus not on gender differences but on what differences gender makes then is perhaps a more contemporary rallying cry to the questions of how to engendered leadership. But, following our observations above, to what extent this requires to be led ‘from the front’, and in what ways, are questions worth asking. A brief comment follows now drawing on some examples of recent discursive accounts from the particular arena of creative and culture industries in Scotland, and later we suggest how further research in this field might be developed.

Cultural policies developments in creative sectors in Scotland
Recent parliamentary initiatives have sought to further assert Scotland’s cultural authority. In 2007 the Draft Culture Bill was introduced, followed by the Draft Creative Scotland Bill in March 2008. Furthermore, there has been a more informed approach to harnessing the creative sectors from economic development and enterprise positions although there remain questions as to how the sector will be lead in these terms both politically and institutionally.

14 This would include the account of Scotland’s ‘socialist’ history and the labour movement (Stewart, 1990), as well as Scottish history’s overwhelming legacy of rendering women invisible, now countered by collections that seek to account for the complexities and realities of women’s activity and voice in Scotland’s economy and cultural life, such as Breitenbach and Gordon (1992) on history, or Burnett (1998) on rural migration, for example.
At a public debate level it has been suggested (Reid, 2007) that the Scottish Government, has ‘big aspirations’ and that the creative sector is certainly ‘dynamic and ambitious’, yet, there continues to be ambiguity over where arts and creativity sit within a government portfolio for Scotland. There is no Minister for Creativity, for example, and the tendency currently is to push strongly for the sector as an economic leader which is broadly welcome, yet, will not deliver and support for all, in terms of the more fundamental principles of art for arts sake. It is clear that there has been no particular grasping of gender and accounts of equal opportunity map more particularly onto social exclusion concerns that include women but in discursive terms is more often positioned as pertaining to poverty, ethnicity and spatial marginalisation than to women per se.

By way of a recent ‘small country’ account of its vision for cultural citizenship, Linda Fabiani’s MSP, the Minister for Europe, External Affairs and Culture, stated her ministerial vision for ‘culture’ in Scotland in November 2007. It was framed by three themes: (1) our national cultural identity, (2) celebration of Scotland’s creative sector and its practitioners; and (3) our cultural policy. These three themes are certainly appropriate, indeed obvious, for Scotland seeking to embrace all but within these parameters of bounded understanding lie deep rooted cultural and social complexities of identity and practice, not least in relation to how Scotland as a nation produces and receives cultural and creative expression and product for itself, as well as how it articulates this to others. Furthermore, the cultural and creative sectors have been further expanded and imagined more widely with a particular emphasis on enterprise. Tensions resulting from recent changes in national organisational structures are certainly recognised by the current political executive as political rhetoric seeks to keep the cultural and creative community ‘onside’:

When we talk about cultural policy, it’s sometimes too easy to get lost in debate about structures, funding and process. Let’s not forget the core of what we’re about, art for art's sake – before everything else (Fabiani, 2007)

This statement by Fabiani may be a response to more widespread criticism that the draft Culture Bill is ill-conceived, failing to support and to lead on the inherent principles of art and creative practice as worthwhile in their own terms, and indeed, for failing to enshrine the rights of the individual and the facilitation of difference, including accommodating ‘the local’ and ‘distanced’ empowerment to counter a more centralizing tendency for cultural institution and policy within the Edinburgh/Glasgow nexus (Scottish Artists Union, 2007).

On the 12th March 2008 the Creative Scotland Bill (Scotland) was introduced to the Scottish Parliament. This draft bill is nonetheless well anticipated and signifies the trend to improve institutional articulation within Scotland. Enshrined in the Draft Creative Scotland Bill 2008 are a number of key objectives including the new Creative Scotland body being expected to fulfil the following functions: (1) promote understanding, appreciation and enjoyment of the arts and culture, (2) identify, support and develop talent and excellence in the arts and culture, (3) realise the value and benefits of arts and culture, and, (4) support activities which involve the application of creative skills to the development of products and processes.

Interestingly, there is no specific mention here of ‘leadership’ nor indeed do we have a particular sense of ‘directive vision’. The language here speaks of promotion, support and development which is to be expected, yet, overall the discourse is ‘banal’ in the sense that Billig has used elsewhere, whereby it is the singularly unremarkable aspect of the rhetoric that powerfully frames the taken for grantedness of these objectives15. In short, it forecloses on the possibility of alternative positions, and this would include a more detailed privileging of gender and leadership, for example.

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15 This term is well developed by Michael Billig (1995) in reference to national discourses of identity whereby we might better appreciate how powerful the everyday discourses of nationalism and national identity are not least as they are positioned through media.
Closer analysis of the draft Bill reveals more. In exercising the function of promoting “understanding, appreciation and enjoyment of the arts and culture” Creative Scotland must do so with a view to encouraging as many people as possible to access and participate in the arts and culture. In short, the social inclusion and equality and diversity agenda are enshrined in these key caveats. Yet, diverse participation in equal terms is only implied without any statement of intent to deliver absolutely. The discourse suggests little in the form of ‘alternative’ leadership from ‘the top’, and as such it does little to literally engender how this may be facilitated throughout creative and cultural structures.

The Gender Equality duty in Scotland appears to be largely defined around employment and working practice within defined arts and public sector bodies, including what was Scottish Screen and the Scottish Arts Council (which will become Creative Scotland) as well as local authority funded organisations employing individuals to deliver services in the arts and creative fields. Enhancing this is clearly worthwhile but the gender duty extends across all sectors and there appears to be relatively little reflection being given to the nuanced nature of artistic and creative spheres and how a gender equality duty might be enacted upon more creatively and alternative forms of leadership facilitated.

For instance, a comprehensive policy statement relating to the future of Scotland’s architecture and built environment was produced by the Scottish Executive previous to the SNP government, and endorsed by Patricia Ferguson, MSP, the then (Scottish Labour) Minister for Tourism, Culture and Sport. This document was clearly a statement of intent to move forward from 2001, to review, and to set out an agenda for Scotland’s architecture industry and profession for the future. The document, entitled Building our Legacy: Statement on Scotland’s Architecture Policy 2007 takes five arenas as the basis for its ambitions, where leadership receives a key mention alongside delivery and not diversity: (1) leadership and delivery; (2) cultural context; (3) education, skills and advocacy; (4) sustainability, accessibility and inclusive design, and (5) built heritage. In the Building our Legacy statement, the discourse ‘evidences’ a specific ‘leadership’ agenda that chimes with a more historical ethos of Scottish confidence (Breitenbach, 2006; 2004). Furthermore, the document demonstrates this leadership in rhetoric and in the singling out of certain objectives that explicitly or implicitly demand or demonstrate leadership qualities constructed in a language that reinforces historically transmitted patterns of meanings tied to masculine discourse. Objectives that merit mention here on this basis include: (1) design champions, (2) recognition of complimentary institutional leadership and (3) through a range of activities, promote an improved ‘access’ agenda to architecture as a concept and a practice, as well as its product.

To return to our earlier point it may be useful to seek out artistic expression and creative practice that maps onto a more proactive principle of enactment and to focus not on gender differences but on what differences gender makes.

How individuals and organisations are served by underpinning policy to embrace all and facilitate growth and expression, including leadership that is able to support such policy, remains a core area for critique in Scotland. Seona Reid, former chair of the Scottish Arts Council and now Director of Glasgow School of Art has commented on the ongoing shifts, diversified practice and realignments of creative work at the macro political economic level:

Creative Industries used to be a Scottish Enterprise national priority. No longer - they have been replaced with something called “electronic markets” and a focus on digital media seemingly to the

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16 There has been considerable debate and comments on themes of culture and creative enterprise not least fuelled by the proposed Culture Bill, and the Creative Scotland Bill, as well as the recent National Conversation on Culture, and the Broadcasting Commission, announced by the Government.
exclusion of all other creative industry endeavour [...] But why exclude architecture which has the highest employment and, with advertising, the highest GVA per employee. Why exclude music [...] Why exclude visual arts [...]. Scotland could become one of Europe’s leading creative hubs - but it needs political leadership and political ambition to do so.\textsuperscript{17} (Reid, 2007)

By thinking ‘beyond’ this discursive accounting of the shifting sands of institutional and political organisation and leadership in Scotland, we might suggest that so much change is both an opportunity, but perhaps more ominously, a likely distraction from gender equality agenda that seem to obstruct facilitation of a difference. What is clear is that there are widening debates on how creativity and the arts in Scotland are positioned in respect of economic agenda and artistic ethos; the Draft Culture Bill in Scotland, as it stands, requires that greater attention be given to ‘cultural entitlements’ with particular emphasis on ‘local’ entitlement, for example. Such discourse invites reflection for it simultaneously displaces a locus of power to positions of difference and distance from the core, yet, it also places demands upon the local and the particular to assert the right to be accommodated within the Bill’s agenda and how this might be asserted within real practice situations, not least by women would be appropriate to examine further. At the same time, there is a significant structural requirement for all public and many ‘private’ arts related organisations to now actively counter gender discrimination. How these two spheres of influence can act upon each other and create possible openings for leadership that is based on otherness is clearly worth further research and some concluding comment is offered here by way of expanding on the current situation.

Concluding Comments

The levels of women’s participation in the creative sectors as well as the facilitation of leadership via policy appear problematic. In Scotland we would suggest that further research is required to provide a more comprehensive account of local experiences. We acknowledge the complexity of creative environments and their segmentation as well as the different levels of a gender-bias across the sectors that complicate the problematic of engendering leadership. This paper is intended as a contribution to an ongoing debate that seeks to map and evidence gender and leadership realities. Its specific interest is to articulate the situation in the creative and cultural industries sector in Scotland where considerable policy and institutional change is evolving and both a ‘national’ and a professional discourse invite further critique.

Equality and diversity policies and initiatives are created out of particular discourses and norms that characterise their content. These policies when introduced are enacted in such a way that institutional procedures and organisational norms are reinforced. Subsequently, values and underlying assumptions that shape and reshape sense making in a community of practice remain uncontested. As Foldy (2006) has argued, diversity programmes are important as they directly address identity and identity related categories, including leadership, forming a site for the reproduction of power relations however imperfect. At the same time, these policies open up the terrain for possibilities of incremental and localized change and resistance.

From our critique here of policy discourse in Scotland particular ambiguities have nonetheless emerged. New policy developments in Scotland do not appear as directed at all encompassing change as its language remains tied predominantly to legal and employability agenda in very general terms. It could be argued that any discourse of leadership more or less directly sits here at the political governance level. Where are the voices of both individual and collectives of women?

\textsuperscript{17} Continued restructuring both in terms of the newly formed Creative Scotland (consisting of the former Scottish Screen and Scottish Arts Council) and the redefined focus by Scottish Enterprise on ‘electronic industries’ as opposed to a more encompassing digital and creative media, have provoked questions as to how the sector at large is being defined. There appears to be a shift to exclusionary discourse where there had once been a relatively all encompassing vision.
The representation of an identity-related construct such as leadership by the institutional framework and cultural policies in creative sectors reflects an expression of very general attitudes and understandings about leadership as a gendered construct in the society that is ‘used to’ to be mediated by a masculine hegemony.

We argue that a problematic of a dual presence points at the importance of differentiation of what is effective leadership for women and for men and only from such a position differences can be recognised in the specificity of the context. The contexts exist in a continuum ranging from the contexts that are male-dominated, hierarchical and performance-oriented to the contexts that are transformational and inclusive (Yoder, 2001). Creative environments are gender-biased; therefore, how leadership is realised involves processes of cultural enactment of gender roles.  

Leadership positioning requires the strategies and competencies that facilitate transgressing the boundaries of the symbolic order that define gender categories in more fixed terms, via existing language as well as historically transmitted patterns of meanings, with an overemphasis on more ‘masculine’-friendly language. Research confirms that gendered approaches to leadership are socially constructed but also negotiated, including the processes that are less visible and more tacit.

It should be acknowledged that in a process of engendering leadership, gender, language and organisational cultures are closely knit together and as Wicks and Bradshaw (2002) have pointed out, gendered processes create systems of relative advantage and disadvantage, agency and constraint, autonomy and dependence, all in terms of a distinction that is also based on sexual difference, contributing to the institutionalised systems of inequality.

Policy developments that promote diverse conditions in the creative sectors can potentially create improved employment conditions that can attract and retain talents in the long term, especially in balancing the regulatory implementation with a sea change in cultural and social perception of the role of women in the creative industries. Yet, such policies need to reflect the leadership roles in diversity and equality frame that goes beyond the established dominant language, in the frame that is inclusive and accommodating for difference and where creative practitioners can thrive in their own terms. How a collective position on this might be forged more successfully in Scotland and beyond, given its intent to facilitate creativity as well as practice inclusion and equality presents a challenging frame of research reference for comparison and future study.

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18 For instance, a preference for more flexible career path management for women in architecture or film sector via alternative organisational forms of association are often not recognised in professional membership statistics and other accounts. Although the UK research evidence from architecture as male-biased contrasts with the gender inclusive focus in employment in Sweden’s architecture profession, and the feminisation of this sector, the invisible patterns for career leadership for women architects in the UK points at the additional problematic of visibility.


Sinclair, A., Pollard, P. and H. Wolfe, 2006. Scoping study into the lack of women screenwriters in the UK, A report to the UK Film Council, Institute for Employment Studies, University of Sussex, Brighton
**ABSTRACT**
Part-time work has been identified as a key mechanism to retain women in policing. However, its uptake remains low and gendered. In Australia just over four percent of police employees work on a part-time basis. There is also evidence of the variable quality of part-time work in policing with many jobs located at the bottom of the police hierarchy with limited career prospects. The uneven uptake and variable quality of part-time work suggest that the organisational context is crucial. The paper draws on collaborative research with Victoria Police that examines the constraints and options for quality part-time work. The paper starts with and returns to a discrimination complaint pursued by a female detective who wanted to work on a part-time basis. While she was ultimately successful, her case highlights the complexity of the resistance to part-time work within policing organisations. The paper explores the forms this resistance has taken and the organisational interrelationships of gender and working time, specifically around full-time and part-time work.

**Keywords:** gender, working time, part-time work, organisational culture, work organisation

**INTRODUCTION**

**The Case of the Part-time Detective**

In 1996 Victoria Police released its first part-time employment policy, following a successful pilot of part-time work that had commenced in 1992 (see Charlesworth, Keen and Whittenbury forthcoming). Shortly after the introduction of the policy, Detective Senior Constable Debra Robertson applied to work part-time. Detective Robertson, who had worked for more eight years as a detective at this time, had just had her third child and while on maternity leave found out about the new part-time policy. She approached her manager at Nunawading Criminal Investigation Bureau with a proposal to reduce her working hours from a ten day fortnight reduced to an eight day fortnight. Her application was immediately rejected and she then unsuccessfully appealed this decision to the District Inspector. Detective Robertson described his reaction as follows. ‘He told me it was time I decided whether I wanted to be a mother or detective because I could not be both’ and further that ‘it would be a cold day in hell before he would have a part-time detective working for him’ (Robertson 2002).

After she had unsuccessfully pursued all internal avenues of appeal, Detective Robertson sought union assistance from The Police Association (TPA) and lodged a formal complaint under Victorian anti-discrimination legislation. In Australia both state and federal anti-discrimination jurisdictions employ a conciliation process to try to resolve complaints. After Detective Robertson’s complaint failed to be resolved in conciliation, it was referred to the Victorian Anti-Discrimination Tribunal (VADT) for hearing.

The hearing commenced in April 1998. Detective Robertson argued that the failure of Victoria Police to allow her to work on a part-time basis was indirect discrimination on the basis of sex, parental and carer status. In essence her argument was that the Victoria Police requirement that detectives work on a full-time to preserve the continuity of case files was unreasonable and therefore
To support her case she produced evidence that showed that detectives could successfully perform their duties while spending less time in the office or in fact by informally working part-time. She provided evidence of detectives in her unit being granted study leave for one or two days per week; of a detective who worked away from the office one day a week to undertake the role of a firearms instructor; and of male detectives regularly taking full or half days off work on Wednesdays during the football season to play in or support the local Eastern Tigers Football Club in the Victoria Police Football Team competition (Robertson 2002; Hogan 2002). In the hearing Victoria Police argued that Robertson’s assertions were ‘unsourced hearsay and scuttlebutt’ (Sikoda 1998a), at the same time admitting that while detectives were not officially excluded from part-time employment under the policy, it was widely viewed as inappropriate and unsuitable for detectives (Cant 1998; Sikora 1998b).

The VADT hearing lasted only three days before it was adjourned due to the ill health of one of the Tribunal members. While waiting for a rescheduled VADT hearing Detective Robertson lodged a further complaint of victimization due to the hostility that her appearance before the VADT and the accompanying media publicity (see Cant 1998; Sikoda 1998a, 1998b; Harris 1998) had provoked. The public airing of her complaint led to threats of physical violence from one senior manager, phone calls to her parents, scrutiny of her case files and the monitoring of her phone calls (Robertson 2002). Her case was settled shortly after making this second complaint and in July 1998 Detective Robertson finally commenced working on a part-time basis.

Before Detective Robertson’s case went to the VADT other female detectives had requested to work part-time, but had had to take positions that were either not detective positions or non-operational positions (Hogan 2002). Detective Robertson’s case was one of the major catalysts for amending Victoria Police’s original part-time policy. In the revised policy, restrictions on the total number of part-time positions were lifted and employees were provided with a mechanism to reduce their hours of work while remaining in their existing positions. The application process involved the submission of a business case for approval by local management, who retained the right to determine if some positions were unsuitable for part-time employment (Latta, 1998, 8). Although the business case placed an onus on individual employees to justify why their application for part-time employment should be granted, it was nevertheless a major paradigm shift for Victoria Police; and an important move towards regarding part-time work as an entitlement rather than a privilege (Charlesworth, Keen and Whittenbury forthcoming). Today some 434 (17.6%) female police officers and 100 (1.1%) male police officers work on a part-time basis in Victoria, most in operational roles (Victoria Police 2006).

In this paper we draw on collaborative research with Victoria Police that examines the constraints and options for quality part-time work (Charlesworth & Whittenbury 2007). We explore the complexity of the resistance to part-time work within policing reflected in the case of the part-time detective, focusing in particular on the organisational interrelationships of gender and working time,

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1 The case was argued as an indirect discrimination complaint under the Victorian Equal Opportunity Act 1995. In Detective Senior Constable Robertson’s case, the TPA argued that Victoria Police was imposing a requirement that all detectives work full time hours. Detectives who were women with the status of parent or carer (a protected ground under the Act) were more likely than male detectives without such a status to be unable to comply with that requirement for the totality of their careers. The TPA argued that this requirement was an unreasonable one because there were already instances of informal practices which in effect allowed part-time work (see Hogan 2002).

2 According to the TPA, Victoria Police did not dispute whether or not the requirement was reasonable. However, much argument was taken up about whether or not detectives who went to play or watch football actually ‘made up’ the time spent at the football ground (Hogan 2002).

3 This meant that they were denied continuity of their careers as detectives and had to accept a lower salary through loss of allowances (Hogan 2002). Indeed, Detective Robertson was told she would have to take a pay cut and would be demoted to uniform duties if she wanted to work part-time (Sikora 1998a).

4 A review of the organisation’s part-time policy was publicly announced in the same Victoria Police press release that announced the settlement of Robertson’s case (Naidoo 1998).
specifically around full-time and part-time work. We look firstly at the limiting of access to part-time work and the persistence of several institutional and cultural barriers to the acceptance and integration of part-time work, not least what has been aptly described in the context of UK Policing services as a ‘part-time, part able, part committed’ discourse (Jenkins 2000). We then examine the gendering of this resistance illustrated in the case of the part-time detective, wherein access to reduced hours to facilitate women’s caring responsibilities is treated as less acceptable than access to rostering and reduced hours arrangements to facilitate men’s outside commitments, such as study, sport and even family responsibilities.

Finally, we canvas prospects for change. The research findings suggest, on the one hand, that improving the quality of part-time work in policing services is not possible without significant change to organisational culture and practices to ensure that part-time work is an integrated rather than a marginalised form of employment. On the other hand, the findings also suggest that to be effective, such changes need to address the organisation of policing work more generally, challenging both the way in which tasks are allocated and rostering and working time arrangements organised around an assumption of a male breadwinner full-time norm.

POLICING AND PART-TIME WORK

Part-Time Policing: the ‘Imperative’ and Practice
In Australia and internationally there has been growing attention paid to the issue of part-time work in policing services. This is for a number of reasons. Firstly, part-time work is seen as a mechanism to retain women in policing and thus contribute to an increased representation of women (Silvestri 2003, 84). Indeed one of the main barriers identified to retaining women both in sworn and unsworn positions in police work is the limited provision and uptake of part-time work (Rose 2002), with evidence suggesting that ‘family/domestic’ reasons have been a major factor in the higher attrition rate of women than men (Prenzler & Hayes 2000, 28) in most police jurisdictions. Apart from requirements need to comply with anti-discrimination and equal employment opportunity (EEO) provisions, a higher representation of women within police organisations is generally accepted to be desirable to ensure that police services are responsive to, and representative of, the community they serve (Eveline & Harwood 2002), and because women bring specific skills which are seen as vital to police work more generally (Manders 2001). In both Queensland and New South Wales, Police Royal Commissions in have also identified women as a target group, whose recruitment would assist in eliminating the negative aspects of a ‘cop culture’ (Fleming & Lafferty 2003, 47).

Secondly, an increased awareness in police services and in police unions of the issues faced by policewomen as they juggle work and family responsibilities has led to attempts to better accommodate members with family responsibilities through provisions such as part-time work. As in many OECD countries, part-time work is assumed to be at least one solution to the reconciliation of work and family demands faced by many working mothers by providing a ‘bridge’ to allow women to re-enter paid employment or maintain continuous participation, albeit on reduced hours (Fagan & O’Reilly, 1998). Finally, making part-time work and other flexible work options more available is seen as being linked to workforce sustainability (Lynch 2005). This is becoming critical in developed countries as the ageing of the population narrows the employment pool from which employers, including police services, can draw. In many policing services, increasing the availability of part-time work is also seen as an important factor in the recruitment and retention of people.

5 Attrition rates have however been falling in Victoria Police and for women in particular (Victorian Auditor General 2006, 82; see also Lynch & Tuckey 2006, 20). Nevertheless, it is still the case that where women do leave police employment in Australia they are more likely to be in the child bearing/child rearing age group of 25 to 39 years and more likely to cite the lack of flexibility as a critical reason for resigning than their male counterparts (Lynch & Tuckey 2006, 21, 31).
with diverse skills and experiences (Lynch 2005); critical to not only developing a working culture that encourages integrity, innovation and creative problem solving, but also to ensuring a representative and responsive police service (see for example, Victoria Police 2002).

Despite this growing interest, the uptake of part-time work in Australian policing services remains limited and gendered. In Australia just over four percent of police employees work on a part-time basis. While the uptake of part-time work in policing services is overwhelmingly by women, it is also uneven across policing services; ranging in 2005/2006 from 21 percent of Tasmanian female police officers to three percent of female police officers in New South Wales and four percent of female police officers in the Northern Territory. This compares to the extremely low comparable rates for male police officers. Around one percent of male police officers in Tasmania and Western Australia work on a part-time basis. Only two male police officers (0.2 percent) work on a part-time basis in the Northern Territory (WA Police 2007). Interestingly, the take up of part-time work does not appear necessarily to follow female representation. In the New South Wales and Northern Territory police services, which have the lowest take up of part-time work, there is the highest representation of women police officers (26 percent and 27 percent respectively) out of any Australian policing service (WA Police 2007).

In police services, both in Australia and elsewhere, there is also evidence of the variable quality of part-time work. Most of the available part-time jobs in police services are located at the bottom of the police hierarchy in non-operational positions, have poor career prospects, and enjoy ambivalent management and peer support (BAWP 2002; Leane & Durand 2002). These factors suggest that this part-time work is marginalised and of poorer ‘quality’ than full-time work (Edwards & Robinson 2001). The central problem is not so much the inherent work value of these jobs, but rather the disadvantages that are associated with them relative to full-time work. The uneven uptake and variable quality of part-time work suggest that the organisational context is crucial.

The Policing and Quality Part-time Work Project
The paper draws on collaborative research with Victoria Police between ‘outsider’ academics and ‘insider’ police practitioners that followed on from a major internal review of Victoria Police’s part-time policy (see Victoria Police 2005; Charlesworth & Whittenbury 2007). The two main aims of the Policing and Quality Part-time Work Project were to investigate constraints to and opportunities for good quality part-time work and to evaluate intervention strategies to improve the quality of part-time work in specific areas. In pursuing these aims, the focus was on the influence that organisational policies and practices have on the availability and quality of part-time work in policing services.

The Project employed an action research methodology with the researchers and Victoria Police employees taking an active role in identifying the need for, and the implementation of, changes in organisational processes and practices as they relate to improving both access to, and the quality of, part-time work. Integral to this approach was the Project Reference Group, chaired by the Human Resources Executive Director, which met regularly throughout the three year project. Its 15 members were drawn from a cross section of Victoria Police staff, both sworn and unsworn, in senior and more junior positions, in full-time and part-time employment, along with the academic researchers and representatives of the relevant police unions. The Reference Group facilitated the conduct of the Project, provided organisational ‘ownership’, and made links with other relevant organisational change initiatives. Its most significant role, however, was to participate in the conduct and the analysis of the research on an ongoing basis throughout the life of the Project.

6 This Project was jointly funded through the Linkage Grant Program by the Australian Research Council, Victoria Police and RMIT University (Linkage Grant LP 0453912).
The first phase of the Project focused on the conduct of a broad organisational scan, explicitly exploring issues relevant to a consideration of the quality of part-time employment that had been raised in the internal Part-time Employment Review (PTE Review). Fieldwork in this phase included formal in-depth interviews undertaken with 33 individual managers and employees, participation in a large number of meetings and forums, other informal discussions relating to part-time work, quality and related issues, and, consultation with other Australian police services. The interviews, discussions and meetings attended were planned using a ‘snowball’ technique, an ‘opportunistic’ non-probability form of sampling aimed at identifying those people who have information about organisational processes rather than establishing a random or representative sample (Cassell & Symon 1998: 169-170).

The second phase of the Project concentrated on two pilot study sites; a large 24 hour metropolitan police station and a Sexual Offence and Child Abuse (SOCA) unit that services a metropolitan Division of Victoria Police. In each pilot site the aims were to identify the aspects of roles and jobs considered to contribute to quality and integrated part-time work; local and organisational operational and cultural impediments to quality part-time work; as well as innovative ways of supporting, quality part-time work. In this phase, in-depth formal interviews were undertaken with 42 managers and employees at the two case study sites, both full-time and part-time. In addition, informal and on going discussions were held with part-time employees, their line managers, co-workers, and other relevant staff, such as roster coordinators, at both sites. The analysis of this data in a ‘work unit diagnosis’ was then discussed with staff at each case study site and a number of small scale initiatives agreed on, several of which were ultimately endorsed by the Project Reference Group. The third phase of the Project was concerned with the implementation and evaluation of these initiatives that were designed to improve the quality of part-time work both in the pilot areas and more generally across Victoria Police.

Participant observation was an important component of the field research and one academic researcher spent an average of two days a week during the first and second phases at a variety of Victoria Police worksites, including the two pilot case study sites, observing the ‘practice’ of part-time work. In addition, relevant historical and current data and documentation was collected. All data collected was analysed according to themes relevant to the Project and discussed with the Reference Group in an iterative process.

RESISTANCE TO PART-TIME WORK
Resistance to part-time work in policing takes many forms. In this paper we draw on findings from the Policing and Quality Part-time Work (PQPTW) Project to focus on three main vehicles for such resistance. In practice of course limiting access to part-time work, institutional barriers and the use of cultural stereotypes are all linked, interdependent and reinforcing. Indeed practices within policing organisations, such as those around part-time work, need to be understood in terms of the interaction between cultural knowledge or ‘dispositions’ and more structural and historical factors (Chan, 1996: 115).

Limiting Access
Traditionally one of the most common manifestations of resistance to part-time work has been in limiting or denying access to part-time work in the first place, as in the case of the part-time detective. In the Australian context, where almost half of all employed women work on a part-time basis, this might seem to be an unusual employer response. Indeed, in many occupations in feminised industries such as retail, hospitality and community services, work in lower level occupations is predominantly organised on a part-time basis as part of an employer strategy to create numerical flexibility. However in other occupations, such as in the professions and in supervisory and management positions, work tends to be structured around a full-time norm, the unencumbered ‘ideal worker’ who is available to work full time and overtime and whose family and domestic needs are provided for by someone else (Bailyn & Fletcher, 2003; Williams 2000). In such...
occupations refusal of requests for part-time work are not uncommon and are reflected in case law in the Australian industrial relations and anti-discrimination jurisdictions (Gaze 2005). However in such cases the managers who refused the requests have rarely been as frank as Detective Roberson’s Chief Superintendent who stated in a letter produced at the VADT hearing that ‘while I am bound to support part-time policing, I do not propose to have part-time detectives’ (Munro & Cant 1998).

While the number of police officers working part-time has increased since Detective Robertson’s case, limiting access to part-time work at Victoria Police was a key focus of the 2003/2004 PTE Review noted above. In that Review the main formal barriers identified to accessing part-time work included the exclusion of probationary constables, eligibility criteria (which limited part-time work to those combining work and family responsibilities; undertaking a course of study; or meeting specific ongoing needs related to a medical condition or disability), and limits of four years on part-time positions. Other practical barriers identified included the approval process, which required sign off at a number of levels up the chain of command leading to time delays for those who wanted to convert to part-time work, and the lack of manager knowledge both about the formal policy and process and what to do with residual hours left over after a full-time position is converted (see Victoria Police 2005; Charlesworth & Whittenbury 2007: 37).

The findings of the PQPTW project suggest that today such blanket refusals are less common in Victoria Police. Indeed Victoria Police is doing much better than many other Australian policing jurisdictions, with 532 police members (4.5%) working on a part-time basis in 2006. Nevertheless, uptake remains extremely gendered given women comprise 82% of those working part-time. Further, part-time work is unevenly spread throughout the various operational units of Victoria Police and remains relatively rare in male-dominated units such Crime, where in 2006 only 1.2% of police members worked on a part-time basis. This uneven spread of part-time work may reflect employee preferences - and in general the variation tends to reflect the differential proportion of female members - as well as the operation of managerial discretion. But it is striking that a decade after Detective Robertson’s case, part-time work remains rare in what are seen within the organisation as ‘real’ policing roles such as in Crime.

Institutional Barriers

In exploring the resistance of managers to part-time work in a UK police force, Dick (2004) found this resistance was rooted in the institutional and historical context of policing, which influenced the attitudes of managers who attempted to negotiate between the conflicting demands of employees’ desire to work part-time and organisational responses to operational demands. In the PQPTW Project we found these institutional and historical practices were underpinned by the full-time norm of work organisation. In particular, processes and practices around upgrades, promotion and career development are built around expectations of full-time work and access to all three remains limited for part-time members. The findings of the PQPTW Project illustrate ways in which the marginalisation of part-time members occurs through the inadequacies of formal policies as well as the inflexibilities of organisational structures and informal workplace practices (see Tomlinson 2006: 68). The ways in which these policies are interpreted and ‘read’ by supervisors and managers are influenced by other pressures of line management, resourcing issues and traditional policing work organisation.

The broad issue of the management and administration of part-time work was consistently raised in the course of the PQPTW Project by both managers and employees. One of the major concerns was the management of residual hours when a full-time position is converted to a part-time position.

7 In 2006, there were 434 female members (17.6% of all female members) and 100 male members (1.1% of all male members) working part-time (Victoria Police 2006).

8 Internal 2006 Victoria Police Compstat data.
Particular work units may effectively ‘lose’ a certain number of hours when a full-time position is converted to part-time. Not all residual positions are filled, leaving some work units understaffed. While official organisational policy allows residual hours from different locations to be ‘pooled’ to create another position, the lack of accessible HR systems that would enable local managers to understand, track and account for the staff hours they have at their disposal can make this difficult in practice. Another related issue is the lack of backfilling of the positions of members who are on various forms of leave and redeployment where staff are seconded to other work units. In theory, staff on leave without pay should be replaced at their ‘home’ work unit as there are resources to do so. The PQPTW Project findings indicate that in practice this does not always occur. In addition the lengthy appeals process in respect of promotions also means that in practice positions can remain unstaffed until the appeals process is finalised. In this context a request to work reduced hours may be seen as a further threat to already limited resources.

There has been little systematic training for managers in the implementation of part-time employment, nor central support for managers in managing part-time arrangements. Many part-time members interviewed in the course of the PQPTW Project reported that ‘a good manager depends on luck’. While there is support for part-time work in sworn employment at the top of the organisation, we found that there were still some areas of active resistance in the middle/lower management levels such as Inspectors and Senior Sergeants and in some instances roster Sergeants. The fact that work unit managers can ‘lose’ residual hours from a part-time conversion or may be inadequately resourced when it comes to managing a part-time arrangement provide practical reasons for resisting what is seen as the work and ‘hassle’ of putting a part-time work arrangement into place. These institutional arrangements can be used to construct part-time members as the problem rather than the arrangements themselves.

Promotion and access to higher duties upgrading has been very difficult for part-time staff because most upgraded positions are available only on a full-time basis. Significant upgraded experience is required for promotion so part-time staff may miss out on the opportunity to even apply for promotion. There are other difficulties with the promotions process for part-time members. At the start of the PQPTW Project, the process required in practice to progress through the promotions process as a part-time police member was convoluted and usually involved a conversion to full-time duties while attempting to convert the new position to part-time. While this is being addressed though the new Transfer and Promotion System introduced in April 2007 (Victoria Police 2007) there are still difficulties for those who win promotion. Indeed when Detective Robertson was promoted to Detective Sergeant in 2005, she was forced to return on a full-time basis until she was able to negotiate to work on a full-time basis some six months later.

Limited access to training for part-time members was consistently raised during all phases of the PQPTW Project. Training is generally provided on a full-time basis, with part-time members and their work unit making the necessary adjustments to attend the training full-time. However a number of those interviewed in the course of the Project believed that they were refused places on training or development courses because they are part-time. This might be communicated to the member verbally but a more ‘acceptable’ reason may be given in writing or if the member ‘makes a fuss’. One member, who was part-time when she applied to undertake the Field Investigation Course (FIC), says she was required to justify why as a part-time member she should be entitled to training resources that could result in a better return if directed to a full-time member. Another member who successfully applied to undertake the FIC converted to part-time prior to commencing the course. He was advised by his superiors to postpone taking the course until he was ‘back full-time’. This less favourable treatment of part-time members can be masked when there is strong competition for a limited number of vacancies such as on the FIC.

Institutional processes such as those concerned with superannuation, position allocation, the appeal process and additional allowances are all built around a full-time norm. The policy and
practice of fixed overtime allowances in some work units, such as in Crime, can be used as a reason to block part-time and other flexible work arrangements. Members in such units are paid a fixed overtime allowance rather than being paid overtime on each occasion it is worked. Allowing part-time employees in such units is said to be ‘unfair’ to the full-time workers because it is presumed they will have to work more of the overtime without being paid more.

The dominance of the full-time norm also means there is often little clarity around what is the expected workload for part-time staff from either an employee or a management perspective. This can work to not only skew the perceptions of managers and other full-time members that part-time members are not ‘pulling their weight’, it can also shape part-time members’ perceptions of their own performance. The PQPTW Project found some evidence of part-time staff believing they need to be as productive as full-time staff in terms of arrests and reports, while fearing that they were not. Yet benchmark data collected in one case study work unit indicated that part-time members completed the same number of briefs as their full-time counterparts and turned these briefs around in a similar period of time (Charlesworth 2008). The issue of workload allocation can also be a problem more generally as highlighted in the case of the part-time detective. When she was before the VADT, Detective Robertson gave evidence that because she was always scheduled on weekend shifts, she averaged more crime shifts than other detectives in her unit (Munro and Cant 1998). This however did not predispose her manager to grant her request for part-time hours and suggests in her case, if not others, that presence may be more important than productivity.

The full-time norm intersects with the entrenched procedural practice of individual member responsibility for the work generated by arrests or reports. For example, investigation cases are assigned to the individual and not the unit. This has been historically viewed as the best approach when dealing with witness management, consistency in information disseminated to others and continuity when giving evidence at court. This mode of work organisation differs from a case management model of work organisation (such as that employed in some Sexual Offence and Child Abuse units) where members work as a team and share responsibilities arising from reports individual members may receive while on duty. In the former system, what is known as ‘continuity’ is, as described below, seen as a problem ‘caused’ by part-time members because they are less available than full-time members. Yet leaving the member who received the report or made an arrest to undertake all brief preparation and execution results in a considerable continuity and problem for all operational police members, given none are available 24 hours a day/7 days a week/365 days per year. There is also the persistent view that the particular work practices in unit such as Crime make part-time work less suitable. Indeed before the VADT hearing in Detective Robertson’s case, Victoria Police argued that detectives are regularly required to work long hours for court attendances, country travel and after hours call outs and thus that part-time work was unsuitable. It also argued that it was not practical to change an investigator once an investigation had begun. Detective Robertson agreed but said that despite such difficulties, investigators were changed all the time (Munro & Cant 1998). In many areas including Crime, policing services are forced to adjust on an ongoing basis to limits on the availability of members, be they part-time or full-time, because they are on leave, rostered off or ill. The part-time availability of some individual members - in Detective Robertson’s case working an average of four shifts a week rather than five - does not have to be an insurmountable problem, particularly where the ‘residual hours’ are not lost to a work unit and where job design and task allocation are used to maximise the numerical flexibility inherent in having more ‘heads’ in a particular unit.

9 The concept of ‘full-time work’ against which part-time work is measured is itself just a social convention, which has altered considerably over time and continues to change. The fact that some jobs are ‘full-time’ is not a result of natural law but of job design. From the point of view of a hypothetical robot working 24 hours a day, seven days a week and throughout the entire year, the human notion of ‘full-time’ – even in its long hours version – is just another type of part-time work! (Chalmers, Campbell, & Charlesworth 2005: 62).
Cultural Barriers
These institutional practices present practical barriers to the day to day management of part-time work and provide a legitimacy to the resistance to part-time work. They also underpin and reinforce many of the cultural stereotypes about part-time members being less committed to their work than full-time members. In turn the use of such cultural stereotypes, part of every day ‘taken for granted’ organisational discourses about the value of part-time work and of those who work part-time, are an important vehicle through which resistance to part-time work in policing services is expressed (Charlesworth & Whittenbury 2007). Indeed when we delve deeper into some of these stereotypes it becomes possible to see the ways in which resistance to part-time work can be a more acceptable face of a deep-seated resistance to women.

The PQPTW Project found, as did the internal PTE Review, that there remains a strong and widespread perception by managers and full-time members that part-time members are only part-committed to their jobs. Perceptions about the supposed lesser commitment of part-time workers is not only present in policing services, such as Victoria Police, but is widespread even in organisations that specifically recruit those prepared to work on a part-time basis. Janet Tomlinson argues, for example, that the perceptions of part-time workers held by managers and full-time workers are shaped by the occupational structuring of part-time jobs, which are typically located at the bottom of the hierarchy. This means that limiting the access of part-time workers to training and to promotion are rarely seen as discriminatory because of the ‘positional superiority’ of full-time work, set out in organisational discourses regarding commitment to work (Tomlinson 2006: 83).

In a similar vein, by shifting the consequences of work organisation and job design that are built around the full-time norm from the organisation, part-time members are seen to ‘cause’ problems of continuity and follow up. This suggests that despite the increasing numbers of part-time members, the view that continuity can only be achieved through full-time hours persists. In Detective Robertson’s case Victoria Police insisted that it was imperative that a detective maintained full time hours to preserve continuity of case files. Yet Robertson’s proposal of working eight shifts per fortnight, which would allow a rostering of eight days straight if necessary to provide continuity for a case, was rejected outright. Further, Robertson was able to illustrate that there were a number of instances where reduced working hours were culturally accepted, thus showing a detective could successfully perform their duties while spending less time in the office (Robertson 2002).

Likewise the construction of those working part-time as asking for ‘favours’, not only wanting to work part-time but also to work fixed rosters is also belied by the evidence (Charlesworth and Whittenbury 2007: 43). The internal PTE Review found that the overwhelming majority of the part-time staff who participated in the Review and who hold positions where shift work occurs, participate in all shifts; that is they work day, afternoon, night and weekend shifts where applicable. These findings are in contrast to the perceptions expressed by managers and other full-time workers. The PQPTW Project found that while managers may have positive experiences of supervising part-time staff in their own work area, they nevertheless tend to generalize about the ‘problem’ of part-timers insisting on set shifts in other work areas, with the constant ‘telling’ of this problem providing evidence of its existence (Chan, 1996: 114). In this way the problem of the supposed inflexibility of part-timers becomes accepted as organisational ‘knowledge’ (Charlesworth and Whittenbury 2007: 43) and a legitimate rationale not only for resistance to part-time police officers but resistance to women as police officers as we explore below.

The dichotomy constructed between ‘part-time’ and ‘full-time’ positions full-time as the perceived norm. This means that any deviations from that norm are constructed as ‘other’. Yet there is in fact considerable diversity in working time arrangements among Victoria Police members working part-time and among those working full-time, many undertaking overtime, paid and unpaid, or accessing
other informal and more formal flexible arrangements. As highlighted above, the ‘othering’ of part-time work is reinforced through the way in which operational police work is organised.

RESISTANCE TO PART-TIME WORK AS A PROXY FOR RESISTANCE TO WOMEN

The cultural perceptions of part-time work remain a major barrier to its integration within Victoria Police and other policing services. As Dick and Hyde suggest ‘the issues of gender and working patterns are inextricably linked’ (2006: 547). That is, part-time work is seen as a marginal activity simply because those groups who traditionally undertake it, that is women, are themselves marginalised in the work force be they full-time or part-time (Ibid). So part-time work continues to be seen as the province of women, mothers in particular, whose primary commitment is deemed to be to their families. This perception normalises the career barriers faced by part-time workers because of gendered expectations that a trade off between careers and children applies only to women. It also contributes to the view that part-timers are not as committed to their jobs, given their commitment to their families, and that access to part-time work is somehow ‘more favourable’ treatment of women.

There remains, as in the rest of the Australian community, strong and gendered expectations of women as primary carers and men as primary breadwinners. Evidence from other non-policing organisations suggests that having practical access to part-time work and other flexible work options can in fact be more difficult for men, not least because workplace cultures work to reinforce the norm of men’s primary commitment to their work over their families (Bittman et al 2004: 155-160). In contrast, however, within Victoria Police men’s identities as fathers are generally valued and men are also expected to ‘put their families first’. This does not however apparently involve the same sorts of negative perceptions as are directed towards women who work part-time. In the course of the Project a number of examples of full-time (separated and divorced) fathers being rostered ‘off’ every alternate weekend or on specific days to enable them to accommodate their parenting responsibilities were identified. In the VADT hearing Detective Robertson also produced evidence that another detective had been allowed to work part-time for 10 weeks by using accrued leave following the birth of his baby and his wife’s return to work (Munro & Cant 1998). These fathers are applauded as devoted parents in contrast to the experience of many part-time women police officers in the organisation, who feel that their parenting responsibilities are merely tolerated in their work units.

A key aspect of the resentment towards part-time work is that it is seen as evidence of the more favourable treatment of women. A number of men and women interviewed during the course of the Project indicated that they believed that there is an element of hostility toward women in Victoria Police so that any perceived benefits to women, such as part-time employment, are viewed with similar hostility. Young female full-time members also pick up on resentment towards women, with one describing it thus ‘policing is “a man’s world” – women have to fit in’. It has been suggested that there is an old fashioned view, not necessarily limited to older members, that women don’t belong in the job – or if they do that they should take on roles as secretaries and doing administrative work. While men may have caring responsibilities and interests outside work, these appear to be accommodated in a way women’s caring responsibilities are not. The lack of commitment that is attached to women who work part-time is then paradoxically used to deny them flexibility while flexibility for fathers is recognized and accommodated as illustrated in Detective Robertson’s case. In policing then motherhood is transgressive in a way fatherhood is not. Robertson’s case also highlights the use of informal practices in policing more generally to privilege the interests of men by providing them with flexibility from study leave to playing football, even those men who work in the masculinised crime areas.

While this resentment towards women is not necessarily overt not widespread, it persists as an undercurrent especially in the more ‘densely masculine’ (see Lewis 2001) parts of the organisation.
There are mixed views on how to tackle this resistance towards women where it exists. Some suggest that as more women are recruited and more men train alongside women, men will be more accepting of women in the organisation. However hopes that Victoria Police has become more accepting of women with the increase in female police officers were recently challenged when a major Melbourne newspaper reported on a survey it had run with Victoria Police members. With the number of female police members having reached 22% - and for the first time the number of female recruits having exceeded the number of male recruits - a backlash that had been covert for some time came into public view, directly specifically at Victoria Police’s Chief Commissioner, Australia’s only female Police Commissioner, Christine Nixon (Moor 2008). Nixon has publicly supported the recruitment of female officers towards a more representative police force. Apart from the use of gender stereotypes to denigrate Chief Commissioner Nixon’s performance, the comments reported also picked up on what might have been assumed to be outdated gender stereotypes of inferior physical stature, strength and ability:

There are too many females who put male members at risk out on the street,’ one said. ‘I have been injured three times in the past 12 months fighting drunken idiots and getting no backup from my female partner, who is too small or too scared to help.’ Another said there were too many promotions of women based on gender rather than ability. ‘We have this emphasis on promoting females through non-operational positions and putting them in operational supervisory positions with minimal operational experience,’ the officer said. Many police also regretted there was no longer a minimum height requirement for recruits and that the force had scrapped some aspects of the physical training to make it easier for women to pass. ‘They have dropped relevant components to allow below-standard persons in,’ one officer said. ‘I’m tired of carrying the workload of incompetent people. Also, bring back the physical component. Even as a female, I’m embarrassed.’ (Moor 2008)

There are two main narratives that underpin such comments. The first is about ‘real’ policing as dealing with violent offenders and therefore requiring ‘real’ police officers with the physical capacity to do so. This belief has been the major ideological source of opposition to women in police for almost a century (Prenzler 1996: 314). We note that height limits were removed and physical agility tests were modified in most Australian jurisdictions in response to anti-discrimination legislation and apply equally to men and women. It is true that women do not have on average the same physical capacity as men on average, particularly in relation to upper body strength. However research suggests that upper body strength is less important for effective policing than general fitness that reduces injury and illness together with the development of negotiation skills and physical restraint techniques (Prenzler 1996: 321). The nature of policing is also changing with a focus on both community and problem solving policing and different techniques when dealing with violent offenders. This is reflected in Victoria Police with the increased use of capsicum spray in dealing with violent offenders rather than physical force.

The second narrative reflected in the reported comments is about giving inexperienced women ‘favours’ such as promotion. Like so many of the gendered discourses in masculinised workplaces

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10 “‘We need a Chief Commissioner that is not into the kiss and cuddle policing, and that is not afraid to support the police members on the frontline’ one police officer was reported as saying’ (Moor 2008).
11 Currently there is no height minimum for recruitment to Victoria Police, but there are requirements in relation to Body Mass Index. In 2002 the Victoria Police’s physical fitness test was changed to remove the wall climb and bag drop exercises after the height of the wall had been reduced some time earlier (Victorian Auditor General’s Office 2002). Today the physical agility test for recruits involves a handgrip strength component, a physical pursuit course and swimming test.
12 It is noteworthy that after recruits pass the physical agility test, neither physical agility nor fitness is tested again in a police officers career.
13 Victoria Police officers ‘are now using capsicum spray an average of seven times a day – compared to three times a week 10 years ago – the use of batons has more than halved, leading to a fall in injuries suffered by officers and suspects.’ (Bondy 2008).
this assertion is belied by the fact that women remain overwhelmingly located at the bottom of the hierarchy. In Victoria Police, for example, in 2006, 91 percent of female police officers were located at the rank of Senior Constable and below compared to 72 percent of male police officers. In terms of share of various levels in the hierarchy, women comprise still only four percent of police officers in ranks from Inspector and above (Victoria Police 2006). Nevertheless, Australian research consistently shows that most female (and most male) police officers want to be promoted. Indeed studies have indicated that women are as willing as men to relocate in order to accept a promotion, which suggests that the requirement to move for a promotion does not pose a particular problem for women, relative to men (Boni 2005: 5). However this research also suggests that women police officers are more likely than their male counterparts to believe that their male colleagues’ reaction would be negative if they were to receive a promotion, which may deter women from seeking promotion (Boni 2005: 5). The ‘boundary-marking’ role of repeated comments about the more favourable treatment of women can thus be very effective in ensuring the status quo!

The exclusion of women from ‘real’ policing is similar to what has occurred when women have entered other male domains. Using Acker’s analysis of the gendering of organisations, Garcia argues that the doing of gender in an organisation constructs hierarchies, segregation and even exclusion based on gender. Thus ‘efforts to keep women out of male occupations have been the products of society’s gender norms and have resulted in a lack of recruitment and failure to keep women in the profession, an inability or refusal to define women as competent, and to stagnate the occupational culture.’ (Garcia 2003: 335). Important to the doing of gender in a policing organisation is the definition of policing as a masculine occupation. Central to the construction of that masculinity is the cultural stereotype of policing as a dangerous occupation that is primarily concerned with crime fighting. Yet, as is the case in the United States (see Garcia 2003: 340), available Australian data indicates that only a relatively small proportion of operational policing is concerned with active crime fighting. South Australian data suggest for example that less than a third of police time is spent on crime management, a class of activity that covers proactive as well as responsive policing, including targeting crimes against the person, crimes against property and illegal drug activity (Dadds & Scheide 2000: 5-6).  

As suggested by the comment by the female police officer reported above, it is not only men who express concern about the capacity of women for operational police work. Women are as active as men in the doing of gender and positioning themselves within an organisation. Most women do not want to be identified as different or in receipt of special favours and may move to distance themselves from an association with what might be seen as outside the dominant cultural norms. Indeed, the attitudes displayed by policemen have varying affects on policewomen and the gender role style they adopt (Garcia 2003: 341). However, while role styles may vary from neutral-impersonal styles to feminine styles, mixed role styles and semi-masculine styles, there is little evidence that the adoption of a certain style leads to any greater acceptance of women in policing. As Garcia argues, the gender ideology found in many studies of women in policing is ‘not that women are not fit to do the job; the resistance comes from the belief that women are not fit to do a man’s job as well as a man and, therefore, should not make the attempt.’ (2003: 340).

While police officers working part-time were not expressly singled out in the reported comments above, the stereotypes about women as unsuitable for ‘real’ policing work are arguably what sit behind the resistance to part-time work in policing and towards those female officers who work part-time. The positional superiority of full-time work is thus reinforced in a policing organisation by the positional superiority of men. That hostility to part-time police officers is a proxy for hostility to women and their otherness was revealed clearly in Detective Robertson’s case. In appealing the

14 It is noted however that the time spent by South Australian police on crime investigation was higher than that spent by policing services in other states (Dadds & Scheide 2000: 4).
decision to reject her request to work-part time further up the line Detective Robertson found that both her request and then her pursuit of an appeal sparked deeper reactions, extending to the place of women not just within the police service but in society. One senior manager told her ‘i have daughters Debbie, and they know their place and that’s at home where they are happy to be.’ He went on to say, ‘You really should consider yourself fortunate to have your job because you are taking the job of a man that is trying to raise his family.’ (Robertson 2002).

Almost a decade after Detective Robertson’s case was settled, the issues raised by her case, and indeed the conflation of working time and gender embedded in it, are still relevant. In recent media interviews, a former Assistant Commissioner of Victoria Police, Noel Ashby, questioned attempts to seek equal representation of men and women in the service. Ashby said that female recruits were unlikely to remain in the force as long as traditionally recruited young males and were often unwilling or unable to fill important operational roles, including night shifts. He said this is ‘an issue for young mums as they don’t want to be away from their kids’ (Tippet 2008). Ashby further noted that ‘that’s not all women, but it’s just some, and it does hurt the operational balance’ (ABC 2008). These comments reflect a view that mothers are simply unsuitable for demanding operational policing roles (because of their assumed rate of attrition and their desire to be with their children rather than at work) and also a view that the organisation of policing work is fixed and immutable. It is these very issues that were exemplified in Detective Robertson’s case. But her case goes deeper than this. In essence it illuminates how resistance to part-time work works as a vehicle for the resistance to the intrusion of women in what is structured, through work organisation, work practices and workplace discourses, as a masculine domain.

CONCLUDING COMMENTS
There has been significant change at Victoria Police since Detective Robertson’s case before the VADT a decade ago. The steady rise in part-time work in Victoria Police over this time would appear to suggest that at many of the issues faced by Debra Robertson have now been addressed. Not only has part-time work increased in many operational areas, but part-time work is now more accepted in the organisation as a mode of employment. Indeed two of the outcomes of the PQPTW Project have been the increasing visibility of part-time work as a priority for workforce planning and a shift in organisational thinking with a recognition that cultural change is crucial to the integration of part-time work and those who work part-time. Several policy obstacles to part-time work have been removed in the organisation’s formal part-time policy around part-time work and other flexible work options, with the policy ensuring the onus is on line management to justify any refusal of a request for part-time work. Further, the latest enterprise agreement with the relevant police union provides mechanisms to provide for different modes of part-time employment, such as through phased retirement, as well as for reversion to full-time work where the employee seeks this. Importantly the new agreement provides for a panel comprised of union and Victoria Police representatives to consider any refusal of an employee request to work part-time or to vary their hours of work, whether or not the employee makes a complaint. 16

To be effective, however, such changes also need to address the organisation of policing work more generally, challenging both the way in which tasks are allocated and rostering and working time arrangements organised around an assumption of a male breadwinner full-time norm. As Penny Dick put it in writing about a UK police force: ‘Neither education nor time is going to change managers’ attitudes to part-time working. Managers’ responses to part-time working are produced

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15 This assertion, like so many other organisational discourses about women in policing, is not supported by the evidence. The attrition rate of police officers in Victoria Police has declined rapidly. In 1999/2000 it was 6.1% (Victorian Auditor General 2006, 82). In 2006/2007 internal Victoria Police data indicates that the overall attrition rate was 2.8% per annum for all police officers. Indeed, the attrition rate was marginally higher for men (3%) than for women (2.2%).

16 This process is set out in clause 5.2.2 (c) of the Victoria Police Workplace Agreement 2007.
within the web of discourses that constitute the nature and meaning of organisational demands, and it is these sites that require examination and exploration if the situation is to improve’ (Dick 2004: 319). Developing alternative working practices in policing provides an important strategy for bringing about real organisational change, not least to the masculinist construction of police work (Silvestri 2003: 89). However, organisational change also needs to directly address and challenge the dominant discourses and gender ideology that continue to construct female police officers as inferior and inadequate, whatever their working time arrangements.

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References


Preparing our leaders for the future: transforming hearts and minds

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This paper will examine the experience of leadership in the Irish public sector from the perspective of its senior female managers. It considers the systemic blocks and obstacles that women experience and also assesses the impact and relevance of a model, known as the Adaptive Leadership model, from the perspective of the female participants on a Leadership Challenge programme. In doing this the focus will be to understand whether there are any gender issues in the application of this model of leadership. If there are to be greater numbers of female senior managers in the system in the coming years then it is important at this stage to reflect on the experience of the current role models for those coming behind them.

The Leadership & Management unit within the Institute of Public Administration is dedicated to providing training, professional development, consultancy, seminars and conferences that are specifically designed to meet the needs of public servants. Developing leadership capacity at an individual as well as at an organisational level is a key part of its business. The challenge is to move managers away from the hardworking, traditional, co-operative, process oriented, bland/safe, risk averse style to one that embraces new ways of working with a focus on strategy, performance and meeting more demands with fewer resources. According to the Ireland 2022 research project, “if the pace of change matches that of the past fifteen years, a step change will be needed to move beyond processes of reform towards changing ‘hearts and minds’ (pxli)”.

Furthermore, one of the most significant developments in the Irish civil service during 2006 was the publication of the national social partnership agreement, Towards 2016, which advocates that ‘the public service must continue to modernise and at a faster rate than heretofore if it is to continue to meet the expectations and requirements of our increasingly sophisticated, complex and diverse society’ (Mc Namara et al 2007). This demand for change is mirrored in one of the recommendations in a recently published OECD (2008) report that concluded

‘Success in achieving the vision of a more integrated Public Service will require strong leadership at political and administrative levels to move from a traditional control position, to one of vision, support and direction in developing the modernisation and change agenda’.

Thus we can see the system is experiencing strong external drivers of change. The main theoretical model that the leadership specialists in the IPA believe best fits this challenge is the Adaptive Leadership model developed by Heifitz and Linsky, Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University and the Leadership Challenge Programme is built around this model of intervention.

The Leadership Challenge
The Leadership Challenge Programme is aimed at senior civil servants. It is an intensive development programme organised around modules and is delivered at residential venues in Ireland and at Harvard University. It provides a challenging environment for learning new leadership skills and behaviours, and an opportunity for reflection and dialogue on leadership practice. The Programme is highly applied, and learning is designed around actual leadership challenges that are agreed with delegates. Learning takes place at two levels. Firstly, organisation and sector wide through issue-based learning outcomes that is based on analysis, reflection, and practice on the key leadership challenges facing the organisation. Secondly, at a team and individual level through the process of analysing and working on leadership challenges, delegates develop their leadership capabilities and skills as teams and individuals. Significant emphasis is placed on self and group directed learning. Such processes involve what Chris Argyris terms ‘double loop’ learning- bringing one’s actions closer to one’s intentions.
Fundamental to the programme is the concept of Adaptive Leadership. At a leadership seminar at the IPA during 2005, Marty Linsky, Senior Leadership Consultant at Harvard University and Principal of Cambridge Leadership Associates, described Adaptive Leadership as “based on the belief that if organizations must adapt to succeed, so must the practice of leadership amongst its people. Through developing the skills of adaptive leadership, senior managers develop the skills to deal with the powerful resistance that is often elicited by proposed changes to deeply embedded values and patterns of behaviour. Adaptive leadership helps people bridge the gap between values they stand for (the proposed future) and current conditions. Adaptive leadership involves difficult and dangerous work. It is difficult because it involves helping individuals make difficult value choices. It is dangerous because it challenges what people hold dear. But adaptive leadership is also inspiring because it reconnects people to what they care deeply about. Taking the risks involved in adaptive leadership only makes sense in the service of an important purpose, and public service provides such purpose.”

The theory is based on the premise that leadership is behavioural and therefore can be learned and developed. It argues that the adaptability of organisations depends on developing leadership capacity that is reliant on more than authority. A central tenet of the application of the theory is the ability to differentiate between technical and adaptive challenges. Technical problems can be solved through our traditional linear approach to problem solving, whereas adaptive challenges involves changing hearts and minds. This model asks us to consider what it really means to exercise leadership. One of the key aspects of the Adaptive Leadership model is a set of strategies and practices that can help people in organisations break impasses, accomplish change at a deep ‘hearts and minds’ level and develop tools to survive in complex, competitive environments.

To date the majority of managers who have participated in the programme have been male, reflecting the current composition of the top public servants. Cullen (2007) points out, however that ‘women make up the majority of public sector employees, but by 2022 a far larger number of senior managers than at present can be expected to be female’. Women are still under-represented in the senior echelons of the Irish civil service. Some thirty years has passed since the removal of the “marriage bar” (1973) which, it might have been assumed, would have offered women the opportunity to advance in greater numbers to the upper levels. While some progress has been made in recent years, the public decision-making landscape in Ireland still remains very much male dominated. The figures speak for themselves: while women currently make up 64 per cent of general service grades within the civil service, only 22 per cent of the top three grades are held by women.

The Government decided in 2001 to address issues of gender equality within the Civil Service. Departments are now required to set strategic objectives in their Strategy Statement for gender equality for all staff as part of the integrated Human Resource Management policy. Departments are also required to set equality goals for promotion to grades where women are under-represented. The National Women’s Strategy is the Government’s statement of priorities in relation to the advancement of women in Irish society for the period 2007 to 2016. With regard to gender equality one of their strategies is to achieve a target of 33.3 per cent for female Assistant Principal Officers and a target of 27 per cent for female Principal Officers within the Civil Service within five years.

Ireland is not alone in grappling with the issue of the under-representation of women in political and economic decision-making. “Women in decision-making” is a key focus of the European Commission’s Road Map for Equality between Women and Men. The Commission’s Impact Assessment Document notes that

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1 Source: Department of Finance 2008
Despite considerable progress over the last few years, women are still under-represented in political and economic decision-making and in leadership positions in most EU countries. While there are major differences among countries, the Commission’s database shows that in 2005, women made up only an average of 22 per cent of senior ministers, 23 per cent of members of the lower house of parliament and 20 per cent of the upper house. Results are also poor for the private sector, where women represent just 10 per cent of the members of the highest decision-making bodies of the top 50 publicly quoted companies and only 3 per cent of the presidents of these bodies.2

An overview of the key issues raised by the first and by the second Commissions on the Status of Women shows that, while there have been significant improvements across the key areas, there are still concerns that women have yet to achieve real equality and true fulfilment in contemporary Irish society.

On the socio-economic front, Ireland has a well-educated and active labour force and offers excellent prospects for most of its young people. Many women have chosen to remain in or to return to the labour market when they start a family and, in that context enjoy the protections afforded by legislation on employment and equality. However, legislation alone does not assure true gender equality and there are still strong cultural pressures which makes the achievement of equality an ongoing challenge. While a small number of Irish women have risen to play prominent roles on the international stage, the involvement of women in decision-making, at both enterprise and political levels on the home stage is still comparatively low.

A recent pilot Time Use Survey in Ireland3 shows that the traditional pattern of female involvement in caring and in household work continues to prevail. Many women find that the pressures of modern life have impacted negatively on the quality of their lives and on their feeling of wellbeing and fulfilment, particularly where they strive to combine work and family responsibilities. At this point it may be useful to reflect on how our understanding of what constitutes leadership has evolved from its early paradigm.

A Male Paradigm
Early leadership theory began with the ‘Great Man’ concept- the Great Man was considered to have unique and exceptional qualities that distinguished him from his followers. In this body of theory women were not taken into account as potential leaders. Great Man theory led the way for Trait theory which focused on the traits and characteristics believed to distinguish leaders from non-leaders. Trait theories fundamentally described traits in masculine terms, and these characteristics were considered vital for successful leadership (Jogulu & Wood 2006). At the time that trait theory was the dominant paradigm (up to 1950s) women were beginning to enter the labour force in substantial numbers. However the majority worked in the helping professions such as teaching and nursing, and these caring and nurturing roles were not considered appropriate for leadership.

From the 1940s onwards the focus of leadership research, centred mostly in the Universities of Iowa and Michigan, shifted onto behavioural factors in an attempt to identify a set of behaviours associated with leadership. In 1964 Blake and Mouton proposed the managerial grid, using two behavioural dimensions ‘Concern for People’ and ‘Concern for Production’. This research resulted in the beginnings of a recognition of the importance of a concern for people, a behaviour more typically associated with women. Subsequently leadership theory moved on to embrace both the importance of individual traits and the situational aspects, and became known as contingency theory (Bass 1990).

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2 European Commission : A Roadmap for Equality between Women and Men 2006 - 2010
3 Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI) and NDP Gender Equality Unit, Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform (DJELR): Time Use in Ireland 2005 : Pages 10 and 11
Two new types of leadership behaviour began to emerge in the literature, transactional and transformational leaders (Bass & Avolio 1994). The transactional leadership style is associated with competitiveness, hierarchical authority, high control for the leader and analytical problem solving, attributes traditionally associated with masculinity. In contrast, transactional leadership style is characterised by co-operation, lower levels of control, collaboration and collective problem solving and decision-making, which is more of ‘a feminine model of leadership’ (Klenke 1993:330).

In summary, early leadership theory defined leadership from a male perspective. It wasn’t until the 1970s that literature on gender differences began to be published that set out to explore the extent of differences in men’s and women’s behaviour. As the numbers of women in management began to increase, it led to a recognition of and interest in the skills and attributes of women in leadership roles. One significant finding that has arisen from the transactional and transformational theories of leadership is the suggestion that transformational leadership is linked to leadership effectiveness: women managers, on average tend to be more transformational and more proactive in addressing problems. As a consequence, they are likely to be seen as effective and satisfying as leaders by both their male and female followers (Bass & Avolio 1994). A meta-analysis of leadership studies in the USA (Eagly & Johannesen 2003) concluded that women have more transformational styles than men and these styles are connected with greater effectiveness. This is of great significance as it is assumed that organisations would wish to capitalise on employees who exhibit the style of leadership that is most clearly aligned with leadership effectiveness.

Despite this evidence from research, the paucity of women in senior roles in the Irish public sector continues. In 1994 Bass and Avolio called for the glass ceiling to be shattered as it prevents organisations from using the best of their management potential. Indeed part of the driving force and reason for undertaking this study was the premise that if we can understand the various barriers that obstruct women’s advancement, and how some women have found their way round these barriers, we can work more effectively to improve the situation for others.

**Methodology**

Case-study based research was the methodology chosen for this study. Four female participants were selected for an in-depth interview. All four are at senior management level, assistant-secretary, secretary-general or equivalent—these are the highest positions in the Irish civil service. Given the small numbers of women at the top level, to protect the identity of the interviewees the departments they work in are not named. Purposive sampling was used as the most appropriate research strategy in case-study based research, ‘because it serves the real purpose and objectives of the researcher of discovering, gaining insight and understanding into a particularly chosen phenomenon’ (Burns 2000:465).

A review was made of all senior women in the Irish public sector and the four participants were chosen on the basis that they were likely to cooperate with the research process and they had participated in the Leadership Challenge Programme. An email, with a copy of the abstract was sent to all four. The purpose of the study was explained and their cooperation sought. All four agreed to participate and confidentiality and anonymity was assured.

The author decided that a semi-structured interview would be the most appropriate format. Rather than having a strict interview schedule, ‘an interview guide may be developed in which, without fixed wording or fixed ordering issues of the study. This permits greater flexibility than the closed-end type and permits a more valid response of the informants’ perception of reality’ (Burns 2000:424). The author wished not to be too prescriptive in controlling the output of the interview as otherwise some rich data could be lost. On the other hand, it was important to structure the interview sufficiently to ensure the objectives of the study were met. To this end, the author prepared 16 open-ended questions and emailed them to the participants in advance of the
interview. A copy of the interview schedule is contained in the appendix. The purpose of this was to give the women an accurate idea of the areas under discussion thus allowing them time to reflect on their views, rather than giving unthought-out responses. At the beginning of the interview, the author suggested to the participants that the process would be more of a conversation/dialogue rather than a strict question and answer session and that the questions would be used to guide the direction of the conversation.

The interviews were all arranged at the participants’ place of work and permission was sought to tape the interview. The purpose of recording was to enable accurate and full recall of the data, which would facilitate subsequent analysis. All participants readily agreed to the process being recorded. For ease of reference the interviewees will be referred to as R1, R2, R3 and R4.

Key themes

The data was transcribed and explored to see if key themes emerged. A number did emerge. The first concerned leadership style in the Irish public sector. Firstly, in response to the first question regarding the style of leadership in the Irish public sector respondent R2 said ‘It’s still predominantly male’. She referred to ‘traditional leadership ...about managing rather than leading’. R1 said ‘There is a heavy emphasis on input, output and measurement. Going into a tight very economic environment what gets valued is kind of hard decisions. In a sense almost a leadership which is about strength and about pushing people into things they don’t necessarily want to get involved in’ (R1).

When asked about the skills or attributes that are valued in senior management, R1 ‘there is a lot of value on results almost independent of how those results were checked. R2 commented that ‘I think they look for a policy orientation and the ability to think strategically... becoming increasingly important is the ability to manage the ministerial system’. The importance of analytical skills is echoed by R4, although she recognised the value of interpersonal skills. R3 also referred to the constraints of working within a political system ‘It would be a risk-averse culture- keeping the minister out of trouble kind of thing’. She also added ‘speaking for this department and from my own experience I think a core value is problem-solving, fixing difficult issues and there isn’t really too much concern about how you fix it as long as it’s fixed’. R4 suggested that there was a more male-oriented culture particularly in the economic and finance departments.

When asked about their own leadership style R3 ‘I would see myself as collaborative and consultative’. R2 ‘I’m a team based person at getting results’, R1 ‘It’s important to people get on with work and do it for themselves... I want to give people space’.

There was considerable agreement in answer to the question what does it mean to you to be a successful leader. All four respondents wanted to achieve change in order to improve the situation of their clients ‘that I have actually changed things, that I’ve had an effect’ was a typical response. In answering that question, three of the four respondents also talked about success in relation to their staff; about ‘bringing people with me and being part of a team’, I think about getting people getting involved, about getting people thinking outside of the box’.

Interviewees were asked for their views on whether risk-taking and innovation is encouraged in the Irish public sector. The different constraints of the public and private sector, of the accountability for tax-payers money and the demands of Ministers were all mentioned as reasons why there is a risk-averse culture in the public sector. ‘There is a sense that you don’t get the Minister in trouble... You wouldn’t want to get to the front page because a creative venture misfired. ...Thinking up new ways of doing things that doesn’t bring the necessary results certainly isn’t encouraged any more’ (R2) Despite these constraints, all the respondents felt that more innovation should be encouraged more. ‘I do think we need to foster innovation and encourage people to risk-take in a managed way’ (R1).
In summary, the participants describe a culture that is still primarily dominated by males. This culture is risk-averse, respects the traditional approach to getting things done, and being able to problem-solve is a skill that is highly valued. Change was not something that threatened these individuals; on the contrary they welcomed it and, indeed saw it as a measure of their own success. Worthy of note also is the fact that two of the respondents described success in relation to their teams and their ability to develop staff and bring them with them on the journey of change.

Part of the interview was devoted to trying to understand the reasons that these women had risen to the top of the civil service. Why had this minority succeeded where others had not?

Reading back through the transcripts it is possible to identify a number of significant factors that help explain why each of these four women was successful. A defining and significant experience that they all shared was the support of a mentor, who in some instances was also a role model. There were both male and female mentors but where the mentors were female they also acted as role models. The significance for the women’s career and subsequent advancement was in the fact that someone senior in the organisation was prepared to support, advise and encourage them in their jobs, which gave them confidence to take on more challenges.

Interestingly, parental expectations emerged also as a significant factor. Prior to their careers in the civil service, two reported that one or both of their parents either expected or encouraged them to seek out careers and to be successful. One referred to her mother’s frustration at not being able to pursue a career and the subsequent impact that this had on herself and the choices she made. She was determined that she would fulfil her potential in a way that her mother had been denied. Three of the women said that they attended academic/achievement-oriented schools and enjoyed leadership positions in their schools, which gave them a sense of confidence.

When asked whether there were institutional or systemic barriers at play that prevented women achieving top positions, none of them identified formal barriers. R1 did, however, remark that when she sat on interview panels for senior appointments there was a noticeable difference in the number of females who were successful. She believed that women do not ‘sell’ themselves at interview as aggressively as males and for this reason they are often discounted by a male panel, despite the fact that they may as competent, or more competent than their male colleagues. She believes that selection committees should receive training to give them insight into the different approaches taken by males and females in interview.

On the contrary the interviewees spoke about the generous family-friendly work policies in place that allowed for work place flexibility. The observation was made by R1 that it was primarily women who took advantage of leave arrangements but that it was not availed of above a certain level of seniority. The suggestion was made that if women wished to progress in the organisation they had to demonstrate that they were totally committed to their work; applying for flexible leave arrangements would cast doubt on this commitment.

All of the interviewees commented on women’s different approaches to work/life balance. The view was expressed that, at some stage in their career, many women decide not to pursue the career ladder as they perceive that the price is too high in terms of the long hours and the stress involved. All of the women interviewed were very aware of the importance for themselves of maintaining a good balance between work and leisure but all accepted that long hours and availability were an inevitable and required part of the job. Two of the interviewees commented that if a woman with children wanted to achieve a senior position in the organisation, then she would need to have additional supports in her private life to enable this to happen- for example, a mother at home to mind the children and/or a husband who was prepared to take on the main child-care role. In S3’s words ‘So there are quite a complex range of things that need to fall into place to make it happen’. Failing that, there was recognition of the difficulties women faced in pursuing a
career as they still carry the majority of child-care responsibility, and they understood why many women choose not to progress.

R3 commented ‘there is an assumption that if we go beyond AP level then the job must be the most important thing in your life. So if you go beyond that then you will sacrifice other elements in your life’ It is also interesting to note that although there are a variety of family friendly work policies available to staff, for example, annualised leave, flexible working hours and so on, there appears to be an unspoken rule that these are not availed of above a senior level, or in the words of R3 ‘family friendly only extends up to a certain level. At PO level and above it is very difficult’.

A further interesting observation was also made about women’s progression. The common view was expressed that women also hold themselves back from promotional or career opportunities. A number of explanations were posited for this- that women are reluctant to put themselves forward for promotion unless they have all the skills and experience necessary whereas men are more likely to ‘give it a go and believe that they can do it’, that women lack the confidence to promote themselves in the same manner that men do, and that at the interview itself women present themselves differently from men. One woman reflected on her own experiences of sitting on a panel and she observed that while she was looking for the same competencies as her male counterparts, they interpreted the responses differently. ‘When women would come in and be more gentle in their presentations- that doesn’t mean they are less confident or less competent. A guy who’d come in with the same competencies would project differently… The male used words like driving, enforcing, the woman used words like facilitation, partnership and cooperation.’

Another interviewee commented ‘whether they are real or perceived I think there are institutional barriers. They see that senior management boards are made of men and there is a perception. Certainly women at PO level question themselves more than men do, question their ability to perform at Assistant Secretary level. Men by their nature don’t have that doubt. It’s still a bit of an all boys level in some ways.’

This significance of perception was echoed by R2 ‘I do think it is easier for men to get into management roles and to progress… most of the men would never question that they couldn’t do a job, whereas the women would be more cautious and questioning by nature. I think it’s a combination of women’s own life style choices and obstacles’

Leadership Challenge Programme

All of the respondents were in favour of the Leadership Challenge programme and believed it was an effective strategy to enhance the leadership capacity of the public sector. R4 believed that a lot of the learning came from the interaction with others on the programme and listening to how others dealt with their challenges. All of them referred to the benefits of networking. All of them referred to the challenging culture of the public sector in relation to change and the slow pace of change that was the norm, often dictated by budgetary and political realities. No specific gender issues were identified, although R1 suggested that the ability to adapt was a recurring theme of the programme and she felt that ‘women would be more comfortable with adapting because they would be less secure that they would have all the answers anyway’.

However, R2 felt that there was lack of clarity about the skills and qualities necessary for effective leadership in the public sector. R1’s views also supported this and she believed that the development path to seniority was relatively ad-hoc, at times it came down to being in the right place at the right time. One of the interesting comments that emerged from the data concerned the ‘elephant on the table’ which referred to the taboo topic of work/life balance. One of the respondents believed that this is an issue for males also as they may equally not wish to work 12 hour days, however it was never discussed or referred to on the Leadership Challenge Programme.
Conclusion
Legislation alone cannot assure true gender equality and in Ireland, as in all Western societies, the achievement of true gender equality requires systematic positive action. The Irish public sector is governed by legislation (Equality Status Act 2000) prohibiting discrimination on the grounds of gender (amongst other things).

As with any change programme, however, getting more women into senior positions will require more than policies and procedures. It will require commitment and leadership from those at the top of the public sector. This should not be an aspirational approach but rather one based on strong business performance arguments as the benefits will accrue not only to the individual, but significantly to the organisation as well. According to the National Women’s Strategy a review of economic growth in Ireland over the past decade or so shows that much of that growth has been achieved through the significant increase in women’s labour market participation. Furthermore, a transformational leadership style, linked to organisational effectiveness, is more likely to be adopted by women.

What conclusions can we learn from this study? That despite a supportive legislative environment true equality for women is still a far off goal in the Irish public sector. While there are a myriad of policies and procedures regarding equality in the workplace that have removed the significant and obvious barriers to advancement, nevertheless, some more subtle and difficult barriers remain.

The first of these is the role of work and work/life balance in Irish society. While senior staff, either male or female, are required and expected to be available or on call 12 hours per day, this negative impact on quality of life is going to continue to be a deterrent for many women, regardless of whether they have children or not. Furthermore, and more importantly while this remains a taboo topic, so that neither men nor women can even discuss together how they manage to juggle the competing requirements of home, family, work and leisure time, this is unlikely to change.

A further subtle barrier to women’s advancement is the lack of women on selection panels for senior positions. One of the limitations of selection interviews is that there may be unconscious influences at work that impact on the decision-making process. One of these is known as the clone syndrome which refers to the fact that interviewers prefer candidates similar to themselves in biographical background, personality and attitudes (Robinson 2006). This may explain why males are more likely to select other males at interview. A further factor is the necessity to provide training for everyone involved in interviewing so that interviewees are sensitive to the gender issues involved in selection. Furthermore, training in interview skills could be made more widely available for interviewees.

The issue of mentors and role models is also of critical importance, and this could be linked to a more formal, rigorous process of career development. The PMDS is a big step in the right direction in terms of a more systematic approach to career development. Managers need to be encouraged to use this process to identity staff with potential and help provide them with opportunities for them to develop their skills, knowledge and understanding of the system in order to be more competitive for interview.

Finally, and importantly, it is timely that there is a discourse around the nature of leadership in the public sector. If transformational leadership meets the requirements of a modern civil service then perhaps it is women who are best placed to provide this.
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Women in the Legal Profession: The Impact of Male Networks and Work-Family Balance on the Career Advancement of Women Lawyers to the Partnership Level in Private Law Firms

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ABSTRACT
This paper examines the impact of male networks and work-family balance on the career advancement of women lawyers to partner status in private law firms. The qualitative data from a case study of two private law firms in Perth, Western Australia were analysed using Acker’s (1990) theory of gendered organisations. The study highlights that a major barrier to women lawyers’ career advancement is the existence and continuance of male networks which operate to deny women opportunities to form relationships with partners and clients, necessary for promotion to partnership. Balancing work and family commitments was also found to pose a major challenge to women because as primary care-givers, they are unable to fit the image of the ‘ideal’ worker who is essentially male and ‘care-less’.

INTRODUCTION
In the last 20 years women have come to represent at least 50 per cent of law students in Australia. At the same time, women have taken on positions of seniority and leadership in the law, for example, as judges or partners in law firms (Batrouney 2004b; Thornton 1996; Gaudron 1997; Kirby 2002). However, women are still heavily under-represented at the Bar (e.g. as senior barristers or queen’s counsels), in the senior positions of the judiciary (e.g. as justices) and at the level of partnership in private law firms (Keys Young 1995; Kirby 2002; Batrouney 2004b). In private law firms, female lawyers are still clustered at the lower levels, are less likely to attain partnership, (Kremmer 1995; Keys Young 1995; Trifiletti 1999) and more than twice as many men as women earn over $100,000 a year (as stated in an Urbis Keys Young NSW Law Society Survey cited in Merrit 2006). Furthermore, at the end of 2003, the Australian Financial Review conducted a survey of major Australian law firms and found that, on average, females represented only 16.6 per cent of partners (Batrouney 2004b). In Western Australia (WA) in 2005, where the empirical findings were gathered for this research, females made up only 13.6 per cent of partners (resident and non-resident) and 18.3 per cent of sole practitioners (Legal Practice Board of Western Australia 2005). In 2007, females made up 16.2 percent of partners (resident and non-resident) and 21.7 per cent of sole practitioners. Interestingly, females make up over half of the employees who are registered practitioners making up 52 per cent in 2005 and 54 per cent in 2007(Legal Practice Board of Western Australia 2007). In summary, despite significant policy and legislative developments in Australian society, women still dominate the lower levels of the legal profession and are under-represented in the more senior positions. Why is this still the case?

The aim of this paper is to explore the answer to this question by looking specifically at how the operation of male networks and work-family balance affect women lawyer’s career advancement to the partnership level. The paper draws on original qualitative research undertaken in a case study of two large commercial law firms in Perth, Western Australia. Theoretically, the paper’s main contribution is the way it applies Acker’s (1990) theory of gendered organisations as the basis of our argument, namely how women’s exclusion from male networks is normalised alongside a culture that privileges a mythical and yet ideal masculine worker.

The paper begins by defining the terms ‘male networks’ and ‘work-family balance’ before outlining the theoretical framework of gendered organisations. After a brief methodology section we present
the research findings, considering these in relation to the career prospects of women in private law firms. The paper concludes by suggesting some ways through which the problems of male networks and work-life balance for women in law firms might be addressed.

UNDERSTANDING THE EFFECT OF MALE NETWORKS

The literature suggests that a major barrier facing women lawyers with regard to their career advancement is the maintenance of male networks, colloquially called the ‘old boys’ network’ (Gatfield 1996) or the ‘men’s club’ (Thornton 1996). In this paper, male networks are defined, in both their physical and metaphysical senses as the sites in which fraternal values are fostered in an attempt to continue the separation of the imagined masculine and fictive feminine’ (Thornton 1996, p. 167). Accordingly, male networks sustain the ‘imagined masculine’ traits of physical strength, adversarialism, competitiveness and rugged individualism in order to safeguard the network from female intrusion (Thornton 1996, p. 167) Male networks are informally sustained through fostering the bonds of masculine homosociability through the shared interests of men. Such interests include sports, business activities, political affiliations, ethnic or cultural backgrounds and their extended families (Gatfield 1996, p. 189).

Male networks hinder women’s career prospects in a number of ways. Firstly, male networks (or ‘male homosociability’) foster and maintain activities traditionally considered masculine. Activities such as drinking or sport (for example, rugby, cricket, football and golf) (Keys Young 1995) shape and sustain a bonding and camaraderie between men. Women’s relative absence from such masculine activities affects their advancement in two ways: first, it can affect women’s ability to build a client base, (Thornton 1996, p. 173; Gaudron 1996, p. 189) and second, it denies them the opportunity for internal networking within the firm. Internal networking is considered essential in creating access to senior partners and is thus a vital requirement for promotion. Male networks subsequently foster patronage, resulting in the empirically verifiable tendency for men (who usually occupy the senior positions in organisations) to choose other men to be promoted over similarly qualified women (Cooney 1993, p. 34; Gatfield 1996, p. 195).

UNDERSTANDING THE EFFECT OF ‘WORK-FAMILY BALANCE’

To encompass the similarities of various definitions of work-family balance, McLean and Lindorff(2000, p. 7) argue that an appropriate definition for ‘work-family balance’ is ‘a state in which an individual meets a range of needs to an acceptable degree’ through ‘managing time in work and family roles according to the combination of individual priorities and the needs of work and family’. Trying to balance work and family responsibilities is a significant issue for women lawyers (Thornton 1996; Keys Young 1995). Large commercial law firms are characterised by gruelling performance expectations and lawyers are typically required to attend after-hours meetings, professional gatherings and corporate recreational activities in order to succeed (Western Australia. Chief Justice’s Taskforce on Gender Bias 1994, p. 80). This entrenched culture of ‘putting in the hours’ in order to demonstrate commitment presents a major barrier to women’s achievement of gender equality in the large commercial law firms because women are still considered to be the primary care-givers (Western Australia. Chief Justice’s Taskforce on Gender Bias 1994, p. 80). Thornton suggests(1996, p. 233) the pressure placed on women to meet unrealistic workplace standards, in trying to integrate their work and family life, is based on the mythical norm of ‘unencumbered masculinity’. Unencumbered masculinity forms the foundation of the partnership ‘work model’ as it is based on a man whose wife assumes the major responsibility for running the household and caring for the children, freeing him to spend most of his waking hours at work (Thornton 1996, p. 233; Dixon 1994; Western Australia Chief Justice’s Taskforce on Gender Bias 1994). Therefore, the partnership model is more accommodating towards people with no family responsibilities and those who have a full-time partner who has the main responsibility for care (Thornton 1996).
THEORY OF GENDERED ORGANISATIONS

In order to unravel how male networks and work-family balance impact on women lawyers’ career advancement to the partnership level, it is important to understand how organisational life compounds this problematic. Joan Acker’s (1990) work has been useful in this regard as it has extended past feminist writing by arguing that organisational structure is not gender neutral, that is, gender is not an addition to ongoing organisational processes, but rather an integral part of those processes.

Constructing a Gendered Organisation: Acker’s Five Interacting Processes

Acker (1990) describes five interacting processes that generate the gendered organisation. First, the formation of divisions along the lines of gender such as divisions of labour, of power, of acceptable and allowed behaviours, and of locations in physical space including the institutionalised means of maintaining the divisions within labour markets, the family and the state (Acker 1990, p. 146). The second set of processes that produce the gendered organisation is the creation of symbols and images that explain, express, reinforce, or sometimes oppose gender divisions (Acker 1990). These symbols and images are found in forms of language, ideology, popular and high culture, dress and the media (Acker 1990, p. 146). Acker’s third process involves the interactions between women and men; women and women; and men and men, as well as patterns that enact dominance and submission between genders (Acker 1990). The previous processes assist in producing the fourth process, namely, the production of gendered components of individual identity (Acker 1990). This may include consciousness of the existence of the other three aspects of gender in organisations, including choice of appropriate work, language use, clothing and presentation of self as a gendered member of an organisation (Reskin and Roos 1987 as cited in Acker 1990, p. 147). In the fifth and final process, Acker argues that gender is implicated in the fundamental, ongoing processes constructing and conceptualising social structures (Acker 1990).

Acker (1990) applies her framework to the system of job evaluation (1990, p. 149) and argues that filling the abstract job is a disembodied worker who exists only to work. Acker argues that this disembodied, ideal worker is heavily masculinised. The ideal male worker’s life is centred on his full-time job while his wife or another woman takes care of his personal needs and his children (Acker 1990, p. 149). The privileging of masculinity is demonstrated through male sexual imagery, which pervades organisational metaphors, and language, which shapes work activities. An example of this is ‘the male world of sports’ which provides images for teamwork and competitiveness that are considered necessary for organisational success (Acker 1990, p. 152). There are also symbolic expressions of male sexuality, which are allowed and encouraged within the workplace to generate unity; for example, all male groups (work or play) and conversations involving sexual exploits or sports (Acker 1990, pp. 152 –153). These symbolic expressions of the masculine maintain male dominance and act as significant controls over women in organisations, excluding them from the informal bonding between men (Acker 1990, p. 153).

Acker’s theory is useful to this research study because it enhances the understanding of the operation of male networks and the challenge that women face in balancing work and family. Acker’s five processes explain how organisations are gendered in nature, through organisational structure and culture being pervaded by masculine images and identity, and the valuing of masculine working practices. It is argued that the reinforcement of masculine images that create the gendered organisation maintain male networks through the exclusion of femininity (1990, p. 152). The issue of work-family balance poses a problem for women as they cannot fit the notion of the ‘ideal worker’ due to bearing the responsibility of the primary caregiver. Acker’s framework has also been useful in unravelling the dynamics in organisations that affect the participation and career advancement of women. However, it has been necessary to go beyond Acker’s (1990) work to explain the key ideas that pervade the deep structure of organisations, which do not accommodate
women. Refinements of Acker’s theory as proposed by Rao, Stuart and Kelleher (1999), and Kolb, Fletcher, Meyerson, Merrill-Sands and Ely (1998) have been helpful in this regard.

The Deep Structure of Organisations

Rao, Stuart and Kelleher (1999) build on the ideas of Acker by focusing on the ‘gendered substructure’ of organisations. The term used by Rao, Stuart and Kelleher (1999) is the ‘deep structure of organisations’, that is, the values, history, culture and practices that form the ‘normal’ and unquestioned way of working in an organisation (1999, p. 2). Organisations were founded by men and traditionally comprised of only men. Therefore, organisations have been designed and maintained in ways that express masculine identity, which is fuelled by the myth of ‘heroic individualism’ (Rao, Stuart and Kelleher 1999, p. 4). Heroic individualism is stereotypically associated with men through traits such as toughness, aggressiveness, competitiveness, being decisive and achieving individual accomplishments, and is evident through everyday expressed images, language and behaviours (Rao, Stuart and Kelleher 1999; Meyerson and Fletcher 2000). By valuing the person who works day and night against tremendous odds to resolve a crisis, while devaluing the person who works smoothly and thereby avoids such a crisis, (Rao, Stuart and Kelleher 1999) organisational behaviours support and encourage this myth of the crusader and hero. This masculinisation of work means that both women and their work are invariably devalued and rendered ‘invisible’ (Rao, Stuart and Kelleher 1999, p. 4).

Acker’s work helps clarify that the gendering of organisations is located in the separation of ‘life’ from ‘work’ (Rao, Stuart and Kelleher 1999, p. 5). This segregation of work and family in the gendered organisation devalues women’s organisational participation and their unpaid work outside of the organisation (Rao, Stuart and Kelleher 1999). Over time, this gendered way of organising work and home lives is accepted as ‘normal’, with people believing that ‘it is just the way things are’ (Rao, Stuart and Kelleher 1999, p. 7). This discourse embodies ‘hidden power’ as it reflects unquestioned assumptions about how work is done. Consequently, it is a significant way of maintaining inequitable systems, that is, people do not realise that power is being exercised to their detriment. Consequently, there is no resistance or conflict towards the way work is done (Rao, Stuart and Kelleher 1999).

Organisational Interventions: The Three Frames

Kolb et al. (1998) provide a way of seeing how this deep structure of organisation operates by suggesting that organisational interventions must go beyond frames of equal opportunity and celebrating differences, and instead examine ways in which the organisational culture can be reshaped. They begin by critiquing what they call ‘Frame One: fix the woman’, on the basis that its simply aims to minimise differences in skills and training between men and women so that women are able to compete on an equal footing (Kolb et al. 1998). Although many women have gained valuable skills through this approach, and enable some women to succeed, such ‘assimilation’ programmes only marginally contribute to gender equity (Kolb et al. 1998). The second target for Kolb et al. (1998) is what they call ‘Frame Two: celebrate difference’. Strategies that are implemented with this approach in mind include consciousness-raising and diversity training, to promote awareness and understanding of difference which can result in organisations being more tolerant and flexible (Kolb et al. 1998, p. 12). However, this approach fails to acknowledge that masculinity dominates and forms the basis of accepted models of success, leadership and managerial acumen.

The third way of seeing the problem that is examined by Kolb et al. (1998) is the one they call ‘Creating Equal Opportunity’. This third form of framing seeks to eliminate discriminatory approaches and procedures, and implement policies in order to achieve equal opportunity. Examples of tactics include affirmative action policies, revised recruiting procedures, more
transparent promotion policies to ensure fairness, sexual harassment policies and family-friendly policies such as flexible working arrangements, maternity leave and carers' leave (Kolb et al. 1998, p. 12). However, merely accommodating women through changing structural factors and organisational policies has failed to counter the informal rules that regulate workplace behaviour (Kolb et al. 1998, p. 12). The establishment of structures and policies cannot create gender equity on their own. Rather, what is needed is the implementation of cultural change within an organisation (Kolb et al. 1998, p. 12).

For Kolb et al. (1998) the way to effect that cultural change in an organisation is by representing the problem of the gendered organisation through their ‘fourth frame’ or ‘revising organisational culture’ approach. This frame is based on Aker’s (1990) argument that organisations are inherently gendered (Kolb et al. 1998, p. 13). Consequently, everything that is regarded as ‘normal’ at work has a tendency to privilege characteristics that are socially and culturally ascribed to men while devaluing those ascribed to women. These include cultural norms and assumptions in the workplace that value specific types of work processes, define competence and calibre of staff, and shape ideas about the best way to get work done (Kolb et al. 1998, p. 13). An example of such gendered assumptions is the informal rule or expectation that time spent at work, regardless of productivity, is a measure of commitment, loyalty and organisational worth (Kolb et al. 1998, p. 13).

In summary, we suggest that Acker’s theory of gendered organisations and the revisions by Rao, Stuart and Kelleher (1999) and Kolb et al. (1998) provide a useful framework for analysing the impact of male networks and work-family balance on women lawyers’ career advancement to the partnership level. These theoretical insights allow us to ask the following questions in our study of two law firms: are law firms ‘gendered organisations’? To what extent do male networks and the collision between work and family demands inhibit women from advancing their careers to the partnership level in private law firms?

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

A comparative case study of two large private commercial law firms was undertaken (hereafter referred to as ‘Firms A’ and ‘Firm B’). Private law firms were chosen as the majority of legal practitioners are employed in the private sector in WA (Legal Practice Board of Western Australia 2005). Large law firms were chosen as they are considered leaders with regard to policies and practices (Easteal 2001) and are apt to comply to Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) policies since economic loss (costs, damages, adverse publicity and time) are all potential by-products of non-compliance (Easteal 2001, p. 214). Both firms had similar areas of expertise in commercial law, such as competition law, corporate law, employee relations, energy and resources, intellectual property litigation, taxation, finance, property and environment and communications and media, *inter alia*. A major difference is that Firm A is not financially integrated with national offices, whereas Firm B is. In other words, partners at Firm A share the profits that are produced solely by the Perth office and not the profits of all of its national offices combined. Firm B, on the other hand, is nationally integrated and so partners at the Perth office hold partnership shares in the profits made by all its national firms combined.

Both Firm A and Firm B are considered to be ‘large’ law firms, housing over 15 partners. Firm B is the larger of the two with approximately 145 legal practitioners (of which 22 are partners). Women in both firms are clustered at the entry and middle levels of the organisation. In both firms, 50 percent of articled clerks (law graduates) are women. Moving up the ladder, in Firm A, 55 percent of solicitors and associates are women and in Firm B, 50 percent of solicitors and 40 percent of associates are women. At the senior associate level women made up 40 percent in both firms. However, the proportion of women significantly decreases at the partnership level. In Firm A, only 9 percent of partners are women and in Firm B only 11 percent of partners are women.

Sixteen interviews were conducted, eight at each law firm. At both firms, three men and five women were interviewed. Interviewees at Firm A included one female human resources manager,
one female associate, two female senior associates, one male partner (three to five years experience), two male partners (five or more years experience) and one female partner (five or more years experience). In Firm B, interviewees consisted of one female human resources manager, one female senior associate, one female special counsel, one male partner (less than three years experience), one male partner (three to five years experience), two female partners (five or more years experience) and one male senior partner.

Limited information about policies and practices was derived from company publications due to their confidential nature (only circulated internally within each firm). In particular, this included documents concerning promotion, work-family balance and EEO policies. Consequently, information has primarily been ascertained from the interviewees’ responses and checked for consistency by the comparison of responses from other interviewees of the same firm. Given the limited access to company documents, it is important to note that there was significant reliance placed on the information provided by the human resource managers at each firm with regard to organisational structure, demographics, company programmes, and policies and practices concerning male networks and work-family balance. This problem has been partly addressed by double-checking information regarding company programmes against the company web sites.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION
Excluding women from Male Networks

Current international research confirms that the existence and continuance of male networks operate to deny women lawyers the opportunity to form networks with partners and clients (Thornton 1996; Cooney 1993; Kirby 2002; Gaudron 2002; Gatfield 1996). Subsequently, women find it difficult to establish their business case for partnership (Thornton 1996; Cooney 1993; Kirby 2002; Gaudron 2002; Gatfield 1996). Patronage, which is displayed in the promotion process by male partners, further hinders partnership opportunities for women (Cooney 1993; Kirby 2002; Gaudron 2002). Furthermore, women’s family commitments often prevent them from matching the image of the ‘ideal (masculine) worker’ (Acker, 1990), which acts to marginalise their career advancement opportunities. The impact of these ways of marginalising women is further compounded by the gendered structure of law firms, as discussed below.

Networking Events

From the interviews, it was evident that internal networks (between people working within the same firm, in particular with partners) and external networks (relationships with clients and industry associations) were created and maintained through predominantly what are traditionally considered to be ‘masculine’ types of events. Such networking events included going to the football or rugby, having sports days (more specifically, golf days) and going to the pub after work. These were generally not the type of events that women felt that they could readily engage in, and the result was that they were disadvantaged in networking relative to men. Most interviewees perceived networking to be easier for men due to the types of networking events catering for male interests.

In addition to indirect exclusion due to the type of events organised, women were also directly excluded. It was found that in Firm B men often organised client networking events and did not invite or notify women of these events due to presumptions that they were not interested in attending. The majority of women who were interviewed stated that they were or had been denied opportunities to network with other members of the firm and with clients because they had not been notified about networking events.

Masculine images expressed through ‘male’ networking events assist in the creation of the gendered organisation, which sustains the operation of male networks. Acker (1990, p. 146) shows
how a key factor in the gendered organisation is the construction of symbols and images that explain, express or reinforce gender divisions. We found that within both firms, the organisation of football, rugby and golf days reflected the notion of ‘the male world of sports’ which provide masculine images of teamwork, competitiveness, physical strength, adversarialism and aggressiveness (Acker 1990; Thornton 1996). Through reinforcing and maintaining traits, which compose the ‘imagined masculine’, both firms create and sustain male networks (Thornton 1996, p. 167). Moreover, the lack of notification given to women of networking events by male partners maintains and reinforces the separation of the imagined masculine and the fictive feminine as outlined by Thornton (1996). Consequently, the gendered nature of the law firms maintains male networks, which subsequently exclude women.

Women as the ‘Other’

Women’s exclusion also occurs because masculine identities are given a privileged status in professional and public lives, that is, male dominance is normalised. Research continues to show that the bonding and camaraderie created within male networks result in women feeling estranged and alienated (Thornton 1996; Kirby 2002; Gatfield 1996). Such studies show that masculinity is generally treated as normative and this norm is enhanced through femininity being constructed as ‘the other’ (Thornton, 1996 p. 3). This notion of the woman as ‘the other’ and as an outsider (Thornton 1996; Easteal 2001) is a central theme that emerged in our study, with several female and male interviewees describing how females are treated as ‘the other’ within law firms. Such examples included men who used swear words in groups consisting of men and women but making a point of apologising only to women; men chatting to other men while a woman tried to speak in a meeting; men failing to recognise senior women’s contributions during meetings; and men taking the credit for what women contributed in work efforts and meetings. Such ways of treating women differently positions them outside the norm of masculinity.

The effect is that women lawyers continue to be fringe-dwellers in the masculine events that underpin and sustain the bonds of masculine homosociability in private law firms. Even when Senior women did gain access to ‘the Club’, they continued to be singled out for differential treatment in forms of ‘masculinist clubbiness’ (Thornton 1996). For example, a male partner in Firm A described how a female partner in the firm stopped attending golf days because male colleagues continually made the point that she was the only woman there. Such behaviour denies women important networking opportunities that are essential for career advancement to the partnership level (Thornton 1996; Keys Young 1995; Gatfield 1996).

Different Networking Styles between Men and Women

A further way in which women’s exclusion from male networks is justified and normalised is to define what men do as more appropriate to organisational and economic objectives. For example, when interviewees said that women’s networking styles differed, men’s styles were invariably situated as more efficient. Several interviewees located this as a ‘gender thing’, yet it was obvious that they were unaware of the understanding of gender as an effortful process that attributes relevance to men’s work and irrelevance to women’s (Patai 1983). Their understanding of the situation that women found themselves in, owed much too ‘sex differences’ approach, which positions men and women as basically different creatures with unequal abilities and effectiveness. The biggest problem with this framework is that it disguises the way in which the gendering process, in organisations particularly, produces men as more worthy, more privileged and more relevant as ideal workers than women.

Such gendering can be seen for example, in the way that men in our study were positioned as having more confidence in their abilities and therefore, found it easier to promote or market those abilities. Men were also viewed as more straightforward and competitive. Women, by contrast, were described as accommodating, compassionate, supportive and relational and as a result take more time to establish their networks. For example, the Senior Partner (male) at Firm B stated that
while women were effective networkers, they took more time to network due to wanting to get to know people. The majority of interviewees stated that men on the other hand, spoke more directly, making it known earlier that they are there to ‘do business’. While there maybe evidence that men and women are socialised into presenting in these different ways, the problem is that the ways attributed to ‘male traits’ inevitably seem to be the ones deemed to have the most organisational importance and relevance (Patai 1983; Eveline 1994). Therefore, although it was perceived that women still had complementary skills for some forms of networking, men’s networking style, it was inferred, ‘got the job done’ better and faster.

Consequently, masculine networking styles are represented as the most efficient and effective, supporting the assumption that traits associated with the masculine are essential for achieving organisational success. Such traits include assertiveness, competition, decisiveness and rugged individualism(Kolb et al. 1998, p. 12). For the more enlightened of our interviewees, while feminine networking styles were seen to be valuable, these were nonetheless positioned as an addendum. The implication, therefore, was that those skills and indeed women themselves were less effective in networking when compared to the ‘normal’ practice of masculinised networking and the ‘normal’ capacities of men.

Acker’s(1990, p. 146) description of the organisational patterns that enact dominance (male attributes) and submission (female attributes) between genders, provide further clues as to how such gendered assumptions reinforce gendered divisions (Kolb and Meyerson 1999, p. 140). In short, the symbolic effect of characterising male and female attributes within the gendered organisation support images that men are the actors and women provide the emotional support (Kolb and Meyerson 1999, p. 140; Acker 1990). Creating and maintaining such gender divisions normalises the situation in which men are able to succeed and dominate, whilst women are confined to complementary and support roles. Sustaining gender inequity within organisations, therefore, is the way in which the gendered division of labour and the gendered division of power is reinforced (Acker 1990).

Adopting ‘Masculine’ Traits
A prevailing theme in the interviews was the requirement that women have to adopt what are considered ‘masculine’ traits in order to ‘fit in’. Female interviewees cited examples of having to be straightforward, assertive and self-confident in ‘order to be one of the boys’. Similarly, one interviewee stated that she made sure she remembered who kicked certain goals in football matches as it was needed in order to enable her to engage in conversations with men and be included in their networks. Yet it also seemed that no matter how hard women tried to prove that they were suitably masculine, they never fully succeeded. The story (above) about the senior woman who stopped attending golf days was echoed by several other women who felt as though they were still confined to the status of ‘the other’ despite doing their best to simulate a ‘masculine’ way of working. Easteal (2001, p. 213) argues that women, due to being aligned with the domestic sphere, are not readily identified as having what are considered to be male attributes, such as being straightforward, rational and self-confident. Accordingly, in the public sphere of the workplace, women are expected to possess the same qualities of nurturing and harmony building as they are supposed to show in the domestic sphere (Eveline and Booth 2002, p. 173). Therefore, women who take on masculine traits are perceived as engaging in deviant behaviour that is unbecoming to their gender (Cooney 1993, p. 34). Consequently, although women position themselves within the discourse of hegemonic masculinity in trying to maintain their authority and be considered as ‘one of the boys’, they are still excluded from male networks.

Promotion
The processes of exclusion that women experience have significant effects on their promotion to partnership. This study found that the criteria and process for promotion to the partnership level were similar in both firms. Key promotion criteria include excellent people management skills,
technical expertise, financial performance, client base, and ‘fitting’ the culture of the firm. Interviewees agreed that the most important criterion needed for promotion to partnership is a strong ‘business case’, which is achieved through high financial performance and a large client base. Applicants must show that they are bringing into the firm a specified level of profit, meeting their required number of ‘billable hours’, and sustaining and generating new business for the firm through effective client and collegial networks. However, as we show above, men have advantages over women when it comes to gaining entree to client (external) networks, as well as internal (collegial) networks.

We conclude that the exclusion of women from partnership is perpetuated by the operation of patronage within the promotion process, and in particular the notion that merit is not measured in terms of objective criteria but by how well the applicant ‘fits in’. In describing the promotion criteria for their firms, rather than referring to clearly established criteria, common responses from male interviewees who were partners included ‘it’s what sort of feels right about that person’, ‘you just know when a person is partnership material’ and that they are ‘the right fit’. Accordingly, the promotion process involves partners voting for applicants who they believe are the ‘right fit’, rather than measuring them against identifiable requisite criteria. Several law commentators and researchers argue that this practice of ‘getting the right fit’ reflects the operation of the concept of patronage in the process of partner selection in law firms and career advancement in other facets of the legal profession (Gaudron 2002; Cooney 1993; Batrouney 2004a). Patronage is the creation of others in one’s own image. Patronage perpetuates the status quo, secures conformity and protects the prevailing ethos. Given that it is mostly men who are currently partners in the law firms, the gendered direction of this patronage, that is, in favour of males, is clear. For example, in both law firms, a significant majority of partners are male – in Firm A, 2 out of 22 partners are women (9 percent) and similarly, in Firm B, 4 out of 34 partners (11 percent) are female. Therefore, it can well be argued that operation of patronage subsequently hinders women’s ability to advance to the partnership level.

We also found that patronage began long before it was time to admit contenders to partnership. The networks with the highest standing are those formed of privileged senior males who are then able to assist lawyers in developing a client base. Several interviewees claimed that these senior males invariably select only those individuals who are believed to be ‘partnership material’ to be groomed and developed, through introductions to major clients and being given certain work which strategically advances their careers. It was unclear as to how partners actually decided on what constituted ‘partnership material’. However, it was apparent that being ‘one of the boys’ was important in order to get promoted to partner. In effect, privileged individuals are those perceived to possess the desirable masculine traits. Once again this patronage system tends to severely disadvantage female senior associates.

We argue, therefore, that the fraternal values and bonds of masculine homosociability provide not only the basis for male networks but also underpin the operation of patronage. Safeguarding male networks from the intrusion of women is maintained through the shared interests and informal bonding of men (Acker 1990, p. 153). In line with Cooney (1993), it can be argued that ‘men promoting men’ excludes women from the male network of ‘partnership’. A system that fails to promote women to partnership allows the purpose of male networks to continue unhindered; that is, it achieves a separation of what Thornton (1996) calls the imagined masculine and the fictive feminine. At the heart of such male networks is the continued operation of patronage.

**Networking Policies and Practices**

Only Firm B had a specific programme in place to assist women in networking. The programme has two main functions. The first is to provide opportunities for women lawyers in the firm to network with women clients, the second allows women to network with senior businesswomen from a variety of industries. Another purpose of the programme involves having regular meetings with
women and hiring external consultants to assess what areas need to be addressed in order to assist women in the firm. In contrast, Firm A did not have any formal networking programme in place to directly assist women. Both firms did however provide general seminars (for both men and women) on ways to network effectively. Both firms also had a mentoring system whereby partners were nominated to give both men and women advice in their career development. EEO policies were also in place at both firms (in compliance with current Australian EEO legislation) covering areas such as workplace bullying, discrimination, sexual harassment recruitment and promotion.

When asked to assess the effectiveness of current policies and practices relating to networking, women felt that the modus operandi influencing current networking practices significantly disadvantaged their networking opportunities. The majority of women in Firm B believed that the formal networking programme for women assisted in creating opportunities for women to network and reflected the firm’s recognition that women do face difficulties in networking. However, criticisms that were made of the programme included that it created some antagonism from the men within the firm; and secondly, that the large functions involving senior women in business were limited in providing women networking opportunities to build a client base as they were attended by a large number of people. It was suggested that smaller networking functions between women lawyers and women clients would provide a better environment for networking.

While both firms adopt the organisational intervention of ‘creating equal opportunity’, it is evident that those EEO policies as well as the women’s networking programme in Firm B are limited in achieving gender equity. Theory would explain this ineffectiveness as based on the conflict between EEO policies and organisational norms (Kolb et al. 1998). For example, although there are policies that prevent discrimination against women, there is still the operation of male networks and patronage, which significantly disadvantage women advancing their careers. Moreover, in neither firm is there evidence of the fourth frame of intervention developed by Kolb et al (1998). That frame would presuppose the gendered organisation and attempt to intervene more deeply in organisational practices by developing strategies to ‘revise work culture’.

WORK-FAMILY BALANCE

Woman as the Primary Care-Giver
The majority of interviewees believed that it is more difficult for individuals who have to balance work and family responsibilities to advance their career due to lacking time flexibility. While some males may carry this ‘double burden’, the majority of interviewees perceived this to be a challenge that faced women in particular, due to women traditionally taking on the role as the primary caregiver. Whether women had children or not, a key argument emerging from the majority of interviews was that women lawyers were perceived to fall short on the most important criterion for promotion, namely, the ‘business case’. Those women who carry the role of the primary caregiver are significantly disadvantaged because they have less time to spend at work (if they are on a flexible working arrangement, for example, working part-time), and to attend after-hours networking functions. But the concern that women will be the ones who find themselves in this position of care-giver tends to affect younger women without children much more than it affects men who have or who do not have family responsibilities.

It can be argued, therefore, that the promotion criteria of law firms are built on the notion of the ‘ideal worker’ who is not only ‘care-less’ but also most likely to remain so because he is male (Acker 1990, p. 149). Such individuals have no family responsibilities or have a full-time partner who carries the main responsibility for care. In most cases, these individuals are men. Accordingly, gender inequity is maintained in organisations due to organisational structures and processes being pervaded with the notion of the ‘ideal worker’. The ‘ideal worker’ is based on masculinist criteria, which excludes those who are represented as occupying the feminised role of the care-giver. While
in real terms some men are joining this group for a short period at least; in symbolic terms, this group is inevitably women.

The ‘Amazing’ Woman

In the light of this expectation of women as care-givers it was apparent from the interviews that women with family responsibilities needed to be ‘amazing’, that is, to be awe-inspiring and astonishing in order to advance. Oscar, a male partner at Firm B believed that women needed to be ‘amazing’ by working hard against all odds in order to advance, despite the difficulty of having to balance work and family responsibilities:

I think it can be difficult. But you know, the cream always rises to the top and there are certainly a lot of women at this firm who are partners, like one who has several children I think and she’s quite amazing, you know, she was on the phone to her client as she was being wheeled in to give birth!

(Oscar, male partner, Firm B)

In this example, Oscar reflects the expectation on women to meet the masculine myth of heroic individualism through doing ‘all that it takes’ to succeed, notwithstanding their extra burden of having primary care-giver responsibilities. These attitudes, namely that women must work harder and be ‘amazing’ in order to advance their careers maintains the myth of heroic individualism which forms part of the gendered organisation. Rao, Stuart and Kelleher (1999, p. 4) argue that organisations have been designed and maintained in ways that express masculine identity. This is fostered and reinforced by heroic individualism, that is, traits that are stereotypically associated with men such as being tough, aggressive, rational, competitive, decisive and achieving individual accomplishments. This myth is supported through the encouragement of organisational behaviours that reflect a ‘crusader’ or ‘hero’ who works day and night against tremendous odds (Rao, Stuart and Kelleher 1999, p. 4). Therefore, women are expected to take on the masculine identity of the ‘hero’ and reflect an aura of being amazing and awe-inspiring in order to meet promotion criteria that are inherently pervaded with the notion of ‘unencumbered masculinity’.

This is inextricably linked to the argument that, to be successful, women must become the ‘ideal worker’ (Acker 1990). Consequently, it is more difficult for a woman to meet the promotion criteria required for partnership due to the structure and culture of private law firms being one that accommodates the ‘unencumbered man’ (Thornton 1996). Thus, women are forced to work even harder and ‘better’ than what is required by men, due to being ‘encumbered’ with the primary care-giver role in addition to their role as a worker.

Similarly, through the attitudes that women may not have what it takes to be a partner and need to work harder, the norm of masculinity is maintained which sustains gender inequity within the law firms. One female interviewee attributed the lack of women advancing to the partnership level to women not meeting the ‘grade’ or standard required of a partner. In line with the expectation that successful women needed to be ‘amazing’, she stated that the promotion criteria did not disadvantage women but that women had to work harder or give up their family responsibilities. Therefore, the problem is not seen to be the criteria for success, but that women are simply not usually ‘good enough’.

Such thinking fails to acknowledge the deeply entrenched systematic factors that hold many women back. This attitude reflects the first approach in the ‘four-frame’ theory by Kolb et al. (1998) namely, ‘fix the woman’, which assumes that an individual is assessed solely on merit and that men and women have equal access to opportunities. Such an attitude ignores how criteria that are used to evaluate a person’s adequacy for partnership are skewed, perhaps indirectly, to favour males. In addition, that the promotion criteria required to be promoted to partnership is suited to those who do not have family responsibilities, which are more likely to be males. Thus, masculinity is seen as the norm and therefore, the ‘standard’ that women must meet. However, as stated by Acker (1990,
such a standard is impossible as ‘[women] cannot, almost by definition, achieve the qualities of a real worker because to do so is to become like a man’.

The ‘Invisible’ Woman

The majority of interviewees also believed that commitment was measured through how often an individual is seen to be working, more so than how many hours an individual worked. Having visibility is important in the context of career advancement because the partners who have the deciding vote on applications for partnership equate visibility with commitment. In addition, it was also important to be visible at social functions, in order to be seen to be networking and interacting with clients and partners.

That requirement of visibility maintains the norm of ‘unencumbered masculinity’, which creates and sustains the gendered organisation. Accordingly, it is more difficult for women with primary care-giver responsibilities to show their commitment to the firm because they have less flexibility to be able to attend networking functions. Consequently, the masculinist expectations of what it means to be committed to the firm maintains underlying gender inequality in law firms.

It was also believed by the majority of interviewees that it was harder for women on part-time arrangements to advance due to the negative perception that part-time workers are less committed and productive because they worked fewer hours and were less visible. The negative perception towards part-time workers is based on the notion that the part-time worker does not conform to or fit what is deemed to be the ‘ideal worker’. With the ‘ideal worker’ being ‘care-less’, it follows that having responsibilities other than work would render a person unsuitable for a position (Acker 1990, p. 149). Accordingly, part-time workers are believed to be uncommitted and unproductive and thus their suitability for the job questioned.

Work-Family Balance Policies and Practices

Both firms lacked formal policies in relation to flexible working arrangements and flexible working hours. Both firms relied primarily on practice and informal arrangements, in which an employee discusses their desire to move into a flexible working arrangement, or flexible working hours scheme, by discussing the arrangement and seeking approval from their supervising partner and the human resources manager.

When asked about the effectiveness of these policies, several interviewees suggested that due to the lack of policies, women felt they had to ‘fight for the right’ to work under a flexible working arrangement. In both firms, women needed to go through extensive consultation with either their supervising partner and/or all partners and human resources managers, as well as having to create their own proposal (outlining proposed hours, pay adjustment, utilisation rates, that is, the number of billable hours). It is also important to note that according to interviewees, particularly the partners, it was more acceptable for a female who is already a partner to work on a part-time arrangement, than individuals at lower levels. The reason given for this was the fact that once women reached the partnership levels, they had already ‘proved’ that they were committed and hardworking and thus, it was more acceptable in the eyes of the partners for a woman to work under a part-time arrangement. Consequently, it follows that the problem lies not only in the lack of policies that make it difficult for women to balance work and family responsibilities, but also the existence of attitudes that deem it more acceptable for those at the partnership level to work under a part-time arrangement compared to those who are below the partnership level.

Another major concern was that the actual promotion criteria inherently disadvantage women who are the primary care-givers. For example, Tom, a partner at Firm A stated:

The partnership criteria indirectly disadvantage those who are working part-time. And I suppose the assertion is either you change what is required to be partner, which is changing an economic
dynamic of the firm or giving the person (who wants to be a partner) a support mechanism in place that can help with the care of the children and family so that she has time to meet both commitments.

Tom acknowledged the gendered nature of the promotion criteria and showed he had the ability to reflect on how it impacted on women’s career advancement. The question he was puzzling over is one which any strategy to assist women in their career advancement could well address: should the promotion criteria be changed to accommodate part-time workers or should structures in the form of work-family balance policies be established? The politics of that question, of whether the ‘problem’ should be identified as a lack of part-time opportunities or a lack of work-family policies is not going to be resolved in ways which do not advantage men unless both those ways of working become normalised as male activities.

The Way Forward
By offering flexible working arrangements and policies with regard to parental leave and carer's leave, both firms attempt to address the ‘differential structures of opportunity’ that create an ‘uneven playing field’ (Moss-Kanter 1977 as cited in Kolb et al. 1998, p. 12). However, as argued by Kolb et al. (1998), merely accommodating women through changing structural factors and organisational policies has proven to be insufficient in maintaining lasting benefits, as they fail to have sufficient and direct effect on the practices and informal rules that regulate workplace behaviour. In both organisations studied here, organisational norms do not match organisational policies. For example, despite the availability of flexible working arrangements to assist women in balancing work and family responsibilities, the reality is that negative attitudes concerning productivity and commitment to the firm are shown towards those who take up flexible-working options. Therefore, such initiatives are counter productive in effecting any lasting benefit.

One remedy for this problem would be to change promotion criteria. This would allow those who do not fit the notion of the ‘ideal worker’ to have an equal chance of advancing to the partnership level. If both firms were to adopt the fourth frame approach outlined by Kolb et al. (1998), namely revising work culture, their capacity to assist women in advancing their careers may be quite different. What would these firms need to do in order to make their current work processes and practices less gendered? According to Kolb et al.(1998, p. 14) such revision can be achieved by actively engaging in ongoing experimentation and reflective inquiry. However, Kolb et al. (1998) also warn that the firms may not be ready to make such a high level of commitment to a long-term process of organisational change and learning.

Our response to this dilemma of commitment versus outcomes is that law firms could benefit from future research, which uses an interactive strategy to formulate and implement targeted research findings that would enable women to advance. Research using an action research methodology, in which the researcher(s) works directly with law firms and employees in order to uncover their underlying work practices and culture, could create specific strategies to address gender imbalance. The ‘small wins’ approach offered by Meyerson and Fletcher (2000, p. 235) provides an example of how this would work.

According to Meyerson and Fletcher (2000, p. 236) each organisation is different and therefore, unique expressions of gender inequity are generated. Accordingly, the process through which organisations ‘revise culture’ can never be formulaic but must instead be based on qualitative and in-depth case study research. It is suggested that effective ways of investigating causes of gender inequity begins with one-to-one interviews with employees to unearth the practices and beliefs that make up a company’s culture and more specifically, what activities are valued and devalued and what are the existing assumptions about competence and commitment. After an initial diagnosis, managers can then proceed to identify the cultural patterns within their organisations and its consequences. This step involves managers asking which practices affect men and women
differently and why simultaneously, the research should also try to identify and consider which practices have unintended consequences for the business (Meyerson and Fletcher 2000, p. 236).

The following stage in the process involves marshalling a team of change agents to discuss these cultural patterns with people; to enable the development of shared narratives within the organisation (Meyerson and Fletcher 2000, p. 236). This involves experimentation in designing and implementing ‘small-wins’, that is, small initiatives (can be several or one at a time) to try and remove practices that have been identified as creating gender inequity and replace them with ways of working that benefit everyone working in the organisation (Meyerson and Fletcher 2000). Meyerson and Fletcher (2000, p. 236) note that from their experience, groups have little trouble in trying to identify ways of changing practices. However, they emphasise the importance of managers guiding the process in order to keep the number and scope of initiatives limited and strategically aimed at removing gender bias. They suggest that often many experiments are successful; however, some may only remedy symptoms and lose their links to the underlying cause. When this occurs, other incremental changes must be tested. Each single experiment should not be perceived to be an end in itself, but rather each ‘small-win’ is a trial intervention and an investigative tool for learning, intended to make the system better slowly but surely (Meyerson and Fletcher 2000, pp. 235–236). Each ‘small-win’ can be tied together to affect larger, systematic change and reinvent working practices to benefit not just women, but also men (Meyerson and Fletcher 2000, pp. 235–236).

In conclusion, a major contribution of this paper has been to allow a greater understanding of the impact of male networks and work-family balance on women lawyer’s career advancement to the partnership level in private law firms. In doing so, we suggest that the ‘fourth-frame’ approach outlined by Kolb et al. (1998), namely for firms to revise their culture is needed in order to successfully address the factors affecting women lawyer’s career advancement. This can be achieved through future studies being conducted involving an action research methodology in which researchers and firms work together to formulate and implement specific strategies that tackle the gendered culture and structure of law firms.

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Naming it as leadership
A relational construction of leadership as an alternative to heroic masculinity

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Abstract
Traditional leadership theory is based on the conflation of leadership with leaders. Lately the focus has been on heroic leadership, a leadership practice tightly intertwined with masculinity. Male success has been depicted in terms of an independent, aggressive, secure, decisive, worldly leader (Ely & Padavic, 2007). The first aim of this paper is to contribute to post-heroic leadership theory by offering a relational and non-individual/masculine/heroic conception of leadership. I will question the idea that leadership is something leaders do as well as I will try to keep the focus on the leadership that is done, not on the individuals doing it, and name it as leadership. The second aim of the paper is to ask what happens with a relational conception of leadership, is it also gendering? I will therefore analyse the practicing of leadership (in my conceptualization) at the intersection with the practicing of gender and show that, even if leadership as analyzed in this paper is a practicing that does not directly imply heroic masculinity, if gender (and seniority) is not taken into consideration and critically analyzed and reflected upon, inequality and exclusion from the doing of leadership will persist.

The dignity, office, or position of a leader, esp. of a political party; ability to lead; the position of a group of people leading or influencing others within a given context; the group itself; the action or influence necessary for the direction or organization of effort in a group undertaking. - Oxford English Dictionary

Even though leadership is probably one of the most used words, whether to praise its effects or to blame its absence, the concept of leadership itself has been subjected to decades of discussion and research, and still there is no agreement about what we are talking about. Agreement seems to be limited to the fact that we are talking about something important. But are we? The definition above is typical of expectations on leadership, linking it to a physical person, to a position, to an ability and to an action; it has to do with direction and organizing a group undertaking. While the concept of ‘leading’ might suggest that someone is leading, directing someone else ‘by going on in advance’, the concept of leadership has been constructed over the years to encompass a much wider meaning with no longer reference to the leader leading by ‘going on in advance’. Leadership may be considered as the process (act) of influencing the activities of an organized group in its efforts toward goal setting and goal achievement (Stogdill, 1950, p 3 as in (Bryman, 1996))

During the following decades the concept of leadership was often discussed in relation to how to be successful in this process of influencing. Empirical findings anyway did not support one theory over the others. In the 1980s leadership then became the ‘management of meaning’ (Smircich &

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1 Interesting is that this often cited definition says nothing about who is going to influence the activities of the group, that is, it does not specify the need for ‘a leader’. 
Morgan, 1982). While the focus was still on the leader, followers would also have a role in interpreting the message coming from him/her. Despite that, most research within this tradition has concentrated on formal top leaders and their exceptional achievements, keeping followers (and most leaders) in the shadow.

Critique has not been absent. As Mintzberg (1999) puts it, ‘we seem to be moving beyond leaders who merely lead; today heroes save. Soon heroes will only save; then gods will redeem’. Leaders are often depicted as heroes also in the mass media, even though some researchers have started to question their real impact (Czarniawska, 2005) as well as to show the disfunctionality of organizations inhabited by people playing heroes (Ely & Meyerson, 2000). In Alvesson and Sveningsson’s (2003) study, grandiose ideals of leadership were drawn on when constructing what leadership is about, while the leadership done in practice was of a much more operational and managerial character. While this can be interpreted as an indication that leadership as stable and coherent - as “something that matters” - can be questioned (ibid), it also makes it interesting to see if a new perspective on leadership might enable us to avoid focusing on grandiose achievements and to instead appreciate more “trivial”, but important, accomplishments.

The first aim of this paper is to contribute to post-heroic leadership theory, i.e. the strand reacting to the heroic conceptualization of leadership, by offering a relational and nonindividual/masculine/hercic conception of leadership. This paper questions the idea that leadership is something leaders do as well as tries to keep the focus on the leadership that is done, not on the individuals doing it. The definitions of leadership given so far are not precluding the possibility of more persons involved in doing leadership and of leadership being accomplished in interactions. My analysis rests therefore on the definition of leadership as ‘everyday practices that organizational members participate in to construct the very ‘rules’ of organizing that they follow’ (Uhl-Bien, 2006, p. 670). I will therefore offer a non-heroic conception of leadership and show in which way such leadership is done in everyday (inter)actions in an organization, I will thus ‘name it as leadership’. Moreover, even if leadership has been traditionally presented as a genderneutral concept, researchers have questioned this assumption and analysed how leadership is a gendered construction, in particular when the leadership discourse is centred on heroic ideals. Male success has, for example, been depicted in terms of an independent, aggressive, secure, decisive, worldly leader (Ely & Padavic, 2007). But often researchers have failed to name men as men and to reflect on the conflation of leadership and management with masculinities (Collinson & Hearn, 1994; Kerfoot & Knights, 1993; Wahl, 1992). The second aim of the paper is therefore to ask what happens with a relational conception of leadership, is it also gendering?

My interest will therefore be on the practice of leadership at their intersection with the practice of gender. As several researchers have recently done (cf. Whittington, 2006), I turn to study what people do in organization. I also borrow from Yancey Martin (2003) the distinction between the ‘said and done’ versus ‘saying and doing’ as discourse on leadership in organizations is based on research on expectations on/construction of formal leaders or managers. Moreover, even though it could sound appealing to distinguish between the handling of change, leadership, and the handling of complexity, management (Kotter, 2003), at the practice level these two aspects are often intertwined.

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2 There are also authors making a distinction between leadership and management (cf. Kotter, 2003), while there are others problematizing such a distinction (cf. Alvesson & Sveningsson, 2003). In this paper I will not consider leadership as separated from management since most of the academic as well as the societal discourse on leadership in organizations is based on research on expectations on construction of formal leaders or managers. Moreover, even though it could sound appealing to distinguish between the handling of change, leadership, and the handling of complexity, management (Kotter, 2003), at the practice level these two aspects are often intertwined.
regards the dynamics of practice. Gender is thus conceptualized as social institution (see also Lorber, 1994; P. Y. Martin, 2004) of which practice is an important aspect to study. Her analysis is then about the twin dynamics of gendering practices, the practices that gender as an institution makes available (p. 351), and practicing gender, that is how gender is done ‘quickly, (often) nonreflexively, in concert or interaction with others’ (p. 352). I will do a similar analysis as regards gender. As regards leadership, things get a little more complicated since I will first describe leadership practices, by which I mean shared understandings and expectations on what leadership is, and then practicing leadership, by which I mean those (inter)actions in everyday activities at work that are instances of doing leadership even though a leader is not (necessarily) involved. While practicing gender makes sense (or not) in reference to gendering practices (even though one might not be aware of it), practicing leadership (in my terms) is not commonly interpreted as such just because of the leadership practices that do not envisage ‘trivial’ (inter)actions among non-leaders. In other words, as regards leadership I see a gap between how leadership is conceptualized/narrated as a practice and what is going on in organizations. On the one hand, I agree with those researchers identifying a gap between leadership practice and leaders practicing leadership (Alvesson & Sveningsson, 2003), on the other hand, in this paper I focus on making visible the practicing of leadership by non-leaders.

Leadership practices are intertwined with gendering practices and, therefore, they are excluding those who are not practicing masculinity from being constructed as leaders. Studying leadership as done in (inter)actions means to study what is going on in the ‘space’ between individuals and, consequently, not being normative on how individuals should be in order to participate to leadership. While we could expect that this would open up for recognizing how more people than a (male) hero are involved in the doing of leadership, I will show that even the practicing of leadership by non-leaders is intertwined with the practicing of gender. The paper is therefore organized as follows:

- I briefly review the reactions to heroic leadership practices
- I analyse how leadership practices and gendering practices intersect
- By analysing an empirical case in a department of a large industrial Swedish company, I show instances of practicing leadership by non-leaders
- I finally analyse how practicing leadership and practicing gender are intertwined in this case too. I reflect on the implications of my analysis.

Post-heroic leadership
Post-heroic leadership is a label used for different contributions. On the one hand, there is an increasing acknowledgement that leadership is not necessarily an individual matter and there are descriptions of individuals sharing leadership functions in organizations. Different names have been attached to this phenomenon (for an overview see (Crevani, Lindgren, & Packendorff, 2008))³. On the other hand, there are researchers proposing to change the unit of analysis abandoning the focus on individuals and trying to concentrate on leadership instead. Uhl-Bien’s (2006) Relational Leadership Theory is a framework for studying leadership as ‘a social influence process through which emergent coordination (e.g., evolving social order) and change (e.g., new approaches, values, attitudes, behaviours, ideologies) are constructed and produced’ (p 654). It is thus possible to conceptualize leadership as happening in those interactions contributing to advancing organizing, to provide direction and meaning in the constant organizing processes. Such an approach

³ The main focus is on analysing the possible forms, advantages, challenges, and drawbacks of this new form of leadership and on giving advice on how to make it work (Crevani, Lindgren, & Packendorff, 2007).
implies a focus on interactions, an interest in the local and the small, the ordinary or ‘trivial’ (cf. Samra-Fredericks & Bargiela-Chiappini, 2008), instead of a focus on lone extraordinary leaders.

Other approaches downplaying the leader’s role are writings focused on co-workers, followers or subordinates (Eriksson-Zetterquist, forthcoming; Tengblad, 2003). Leaders have no power themselves, rather it is followers who not only can decide to let the leaders have an influence on them, but also are the ones that do the preparing work before decisions are made and the ones that can act in the organisation in order to get things done (Eriksson-Zetterquist, forthcoming). The focus on individual leaders is meaningless since things are done in organizations through interactions (Pfeffer, 1992).

Moreover, if, according to new institutionalism, organizations and actors are constrained and guided in their actions by norms, values, rules perceived as dominating in the external environment, what role do leaders play? They translate the institutional norms and ideal to communicate them inside organizations (Strannegård, 2007); they help legitimizing the organization and its actions (Czarniawska, 2005). It becomes then interesting to look at what is going on at a local level: if most of the time we are speaking of small changes, small influences, then these are the phenomena indeed to be studied.

Leadership practices, gendering practices
Not only have traditional leadership studies focused on a single leader, the concept of leadership itself is not ‘neutral’. Leadership is positive (Calás & Smircich, 1991): leadership is a solution, lack of leadership a problem. Leaders are special, they are/should be different (better) than the rest. And the concept of leadership is not gender-neutral either. Leadership is a construct built during the years in a social and cultural context by research on leadership, but also by the doing of leadership. Each time that leadership is practiced or talked about, the construct of what leadership is becomes re-constructed, although possibly in a (mostly) slightly different way.

Starting by looking at research on leadership
A ‘masculine ethic’ can be identified as part of the early image of managers. This ‘masculine ethic’ elevates the traits assumed to belong to some men to necessities for effective management: a tough-minded approach to problems; analytic abilities to abstract and plan; a capacity to set aside personal, emotional considerations in the interests of task accomplishment; and a cognitive superiority in problem-solving and decision-making. These characteristics supposedly belonged to men; but then, practically all managers were men from the beginning. However, when women tried to enter management jobs, the ‘masculine ethic’ was invoked as an exclusionary principle. (Kanter, 1993)

Male success has been depicted as an independent, aggressive, secure, decisive, worldly leader (Ely & Padavic, 2007). But researchers have coherently failed to name men as men and to reflect on the conflation of leadership and management with masculinities (Collinson & Hearn, 1994; Kerfoot & Knights, 1993; Wahl, 1992). Other terms used to describe leadership are assertiveness, dominance, (self)control, individuality, autonomy, confidence (for example (Kark, 2005)). Now we can even read about paternalistic leadership, ‘a style that combines strong discipline and authority with fatherly benevolence’ (Farth & Cheng, 2000, p 91 in (Pellegrini & Scandura, 2008)) and how it relates to positive work attitudes. Strands of writings promoting heroic leadership have strengthened these kinds of images, even though empowerment is a more usually used concept than paternalism. Such expectations have contributed to maintain a situation where women have entered the managerial ranks but have not made it up to the top echelon. Being heroic leadership mostly focused on these few top leaders, there are few female bodies to which heroic leadership is attributed. Women’s difficulties with having a career leading to top positions have been discussed a lot. There are conscious prejudices and stereotypes (Eagly & Carli, 2003), but probably more difficult to grasp are expectations and assumptions on what leadership is about and what femininity is about (Eagly &
Carli, 2007). Heroic women may be judged as ‘too aggressive’ (Ely & Meyerson, 2000), at the same time as managerial jobs are for men dedicated to full (over-)time work (Acker, 1990). The token position of the few women at the top (Kanter, 1993) and homosociality among men (Holgersson, 2003; Lipman-Blumen, 1976) play also a role.

It becomes particularly interesting to analyse how newer leadership writings deal with the fact that they are proposing an ideal elevating qualities traditionally constructed as feminine, for example orientation to people and empathy, to skills essential for leading in the knowledge economy. Not only post-heroic leadership, but also transformational leadership stresses the importance of, for example, establishing emotional bonds. One way to handle that is not to mention that at all, thus avoiding a reversal of the subordination of femininity to masculinity in management writings (Fondas, 1997; Kark, 2005). The opposite stance is to write about the ‘female advantage’ (Helgesen, 1990).

What impact do such discussions have in organizations? Fletcher (2004) shows how new postheroic leadership ideals tend to disappear in organizations: the stories told need a hero. Femininity inherent in the post-heroic leadership idea makes it difficult not only to implement, but also to narrate this kind of leadership. The interesting point here is to take into consideration the construction of gender (identity) and leadership. Focusing on how women lead or if there is a gender advantage increases the risk of alimenting gender essentialism.

When interpreting, attributing, practicing, narrating leadership, people in organizations draw on leadership practices above described. They are both prescriptive and descriptive notions of what leadership is about and how leaders are. These are gendering practices as well, since leadership and masculinity are so tightly intertwined. It is not only about how to be a leader, but also how to be a man.

Naming it as leadership
Given my interest in analysing how people do leadership, I set off for studying ‘normal people’ at work and for observing ‘scenes’ of leadership, i.e. how people within an organization worked and how order and direction were created. My study includes three departments at two companies. In this paper I will limit my attention to a department at a large industrial company (base process industry), SM, which has a long tradition and has recently undergone reorganizations. Scenes for leadership I found are meetings, both formal and informal. I had the possibility to observe some meetings, but I also asked in interviews about meetings and how work was carried out. In other words, I asked them about their reality and how they make sense of it, something to add to the reality constructed by managers that is so dominant in leadership writings. The persons involved in most of the meetings are represented in an organizational diagram in figure 1, Andreas, David and Hasse are seniors, they have worked for many years with these issues, Jörgen, Ingrid and Robin are quite new (seniority and gender become confounded).

Figure 1. Organizational diagram
What I looked for in this setting were leadership (inter)actions defined as those (inter)actions enhancing the organizing activities/interactions taking place within an organization by giving a sense of order and direction. In this way I do not assume that the leader/manager is doing these (inter)actions. In Uhl-Bien’s (2006) words ‘leadership can result from everyday practices that organizational members participate in to construct the very ‘rules’ of organizing that they follow’ (p 670). I identified five leadership (inter)actions, a distinction more analytical then empirical, i.e. in practicing leadership the five (inter)actions are intertwined.
**Constructing and shaping images of how reality looks like**

While in leadership theory gives the leader the privilege to ‘manage meaning’, in my observations this matter is more complex. Meaning is constructed in different parts of the company. People have to rely on what others tell them about how ‘reality looks like’. As Hasse says: Yes, it is difficult to explain, but, because I need, I feel like I do not need to know all details, but, on the one hand, but on the other hand it comes up a lot, if I sit down and talk to Anna a little, then I get to know a little about how, ah, how it is going, is there any special, is there any problem that I should beware of in the future, what happens on that market, has it happened anything I didn’t know about, yes, that and that hauler have sold so and so many trucks, she knows, so she will maybe have to deal with shortage of capacity here and there. Ah, it is this kind of details that are so good to know about, [...], in some way you process this things and they become, for me they become a good picture of the whole organization, it is my way of keeping track of what, what is happening in this world.

Co-workers have an important role in shaping the images of how reality is and participate in constructing it. They also think it is important that ‘their’ images are taken seriously. Robin, talking about the ‘Strategy days’ (an internal conference, a typical ‘meaning management’ initiative), claims that one important part was when employees got the chance to write down questions/comments to the board, since then the board could understand what the problems are and act consequently.

Leaders have a privileged position as to the possibility of shaping images, but nevertheless this is an activity going on at all layers in an organization and leaders themselves rely often on images constructed by someone else (cf. Eriksson-Zetterquist, forthcoming). Two or more persons can also do this together and, for example, co-edit a text. Since a text fixes meaning (Czarniawska, 2005), time and energy are dedicated to it in order to get ‘the right picture’.

**Constructing and shaping issues and tasks**

During meetings people agree upon what needs to be paid attention to, what should be ‘bracketed’. I call it constructing and shaping ‘issues’ (cf. Dutton & Jackson, 1987). There are not people identifying issues already present, but people constructing those issues by agreeing that there is something deserving attention. Several persons contribute to such constructions and often the resulting issues are documented in minutes. This construction is often based on the images of reality the different participants agree upon. Tasks are also created during meetings. Such meetings can be formal meetings aiming at ‘creating’ tasks, but can also be informal meetings without the manager’s involvement. The construction of tasks and the construction of borders are intertwined.
Constructing and shaping of borders and interfaces

Borders are borders delimiting what one’s job is or borders delimiting what the department’s job is. Much work is done together by persons from different departments and there is a need for deciding who is going to do what, who is going to do what ‘officially’, whose problem this is, etc. This need for working together depends on many factors. In a process-based company a job depends a lot on other’s job. Moreover, re-organizations did not mean that the persons involved changed their work, they often kept at least part of previous responsibilities.

Robin: [...] yesterday L-E, Ann-Louise, Frank and I had a meeting about, still about the latest re-organization, who should do what, where the borders are, what should you do, what should we do, how should we do. For example, when we open a new warehouse, we are not even sure about it yet, just because we are as we are from an organizational point of view, it is like it is, that we belong to Transport and Distribution, and Frank, he belongs to another department, and L-E, belongs to Production today. [...] we agreed, eh, we will pretend that this re-organization has not taken place, [laugh], rather we will work across the interface and, ah, I think we all agree, because I mean, we all want that the result will be good, and it will not be good if we work as we have done. Rather we, we are so dependent on each other, because I do a little, and someone else does, and L-E does a little here, we have to do this together.

How work is divided can depend on knowledge, competence, informal hierarchy, who has time, who has the best contacts. Sometimes people just work together. Similar discussions are also conducted on more formal levels in order to negotiate departments’ borders.

Constructing and shaping of roles

There are no job descriptions to follow. Roles ‘take form’ as one works and constructs borders/interfaces.

If one comes here and expects to get a work task nicely limited by a fence that looks like that, within it I am responsible for mowing the grass and then I have to, whatever, that is not the way SM works. SM is very informal, and, in most cases it works very much across the borders. So, if I am employed as transport buyer, it can happen that I also work with something else, besides, something that someone else maybe should do ‘on paper’, but now it so happens that I have the best contacts and he has some other contact, ok, but then we can help each other. (Hasse)

Roles become ‘robust’ when people act as if the person had that role. So, even after reorganization, people go on talking to L-E about IT systems. Not only roles are created through interactions, they are also maintained, shaped and changed through interactions. A role is also coupled to a network enabling that role.

Achieving co-orientation

Co-orientation means that people discuss some issue and agree on the direction to take, ‘they see the same thing’. For example, in ‘departments meeting’ every participant tells about his/her projects. Such meetings are appreciated since they give the possibility to know what is going on and help others. This is important since their jobs have no fixed interfaces, rather they intersect.

With co-orientation I want to emphasize that more persons contribute with their own images and a common image is shaped pointing in a certain direction. At the end of the meeting they know what is going on, what they are going to do, how things will look like in the near future.

[...] ‘how should we solve this now?’. Because you can’t just take that and that person, because, you will not, you never get any [noise] with the problem. But if you succeed in gathering all the people and understand in a meeting how important this is, and it affects that, and it affects that, and it affects that, because, and then we got such a meeting one time, and it is one of the best meetings,
it was almost unbelievable. And everyone understood what this implied, with this meeting, so two projects were launched [...] we also got resources and money in order to do these investigations, since everyone understood what this was about, that it cost indeed a lot of money [...] This is what I call a successful meeting. When one can in some way achieves something concrete, ‘now we do this way’ and everyone is ‘on board’. (Robin)

All those who could be ‘hit’ by the decision to be taken (not only those formally in charge) are to be invited to participate and this is part of the culture. This can cause frustration if meetings become long, frequent and crowded, but they think that this means quick implementation for decisions since everyone is ‘on the same wave length’. The possibility to have a discussion with persons with different competences, experiences, etc is also appreciated as a way of improving how decisions are taken. Of course, not always co-orientation is achieved, but when it is, then I think we can talk of doing leadership.

Summarizing, I see the construction and shaping of images of how reality is, issues and tasks, borders and interfaces, roles as well as the achieving of co-orientation as intertwined (inter)actions that should be named as leadership. They are activities providing direction and ordering to the organizing processes. Even though the leader/manager is in a position enabling/requiring him/her to play an important role, there are anyway more people involved. Leadership is part of what any person does, the difference is just how and at what level. What the leader does will not necessarily have more influence. Re-organization was promoted by leaders, but in everyday practice no big change happened. Sometimes they are pretending the re-organization didn’t happen in order to be able to do a good job. On the other hand, a meeting when co-orientation is achieved can have important consequences on how organizing will develop.4 Focusing on the leadership done, naming it as leadership, has also meant to be able to study and describe what is going on between individuals, in (inter)actions, something that one misses when the focus is on individuals and the dichotomy leader-followers.

**Practicing leadership, practicing gender**

A consequence of my analysis is to make it visible how more persons than leaders are doing leadership, contributing to the critique of (heroic) leadership theory and its conflation of leadership with leaders, and to the appreciation of more trivial activities having important effects. However, this does not mean I am necessarily speaking of more democratic leadership. Not everyone participates in these interactions, not everyone can mobilize power, not everyone is perceived/interpreted as contributing. Moreover, if leadership practice is conflated with masculinity, as discussed, the question is, is my conceptualization of leadership gendering too?

My conceptualization does not promote heroic masculinity and, on the contrary, highlights interdependence and empathy. Practicing leadership is therefore not necessarily conflated with practicing masculinity. But practicing leadership does not become practicing femininity either. Practicing leadership does not happen in a vacuum. The practicing of gender is also done in (inter)actions and there is an intersection of the two. Other categories can also be relevant: seniority is very important in this case.

And now it is so that Andreas is our boss and we are loyal to him, at least David and I are terribly loyal to Andreas at the end [...] we should agree on how to run this these questions so that we conclude it in a soft and nice way without [a power struggle] breaking out. (Hasse)

Hasse and David have worked with each other and under the supervision of Andreas for many years. They like and trust each other. At least they speak as they did. If leadership is done in (inter)actions constructing order and direction, these phenomena become an important part of the doing leadership itself. Not only they create homosocial arena (Holgersson, 2003; Lipman-Blumen, 1976) where only (certain) men are allowed, thus limiting the access to interactions, but the
(inter)actions themselves are both practicing leadership and practicing gender at the same time. Martin (2001) analyzed men mobilizing masculinities as, for example, self-promoting, that is men asserting their abilities or accomplishments as extraordinary or needed, primarily to other men. They are thus creating their roles through relations (mainly) to other men. While they are doing masculinity, they are also doing leadership, in my terms. In the organization studied, the practicing of gender intersecting seniority means different possibilities and terms for the practicing of leadership. An example: one of the leadership (inter)actions identified is the construction of roles. Roles are constructed both by actions and talks. Hasse explains that the one in charge of leadership should have good knowledge of the department’s activities: You have to know the basic structures, how it works, how, how transports and stock and such things work; if you have no idea about that, then it is very difficult for you to be in charge of this department. [...] Jörgen has evident difficulty with that, because he doesn’t know enough about these things. [...] It is so that it is not easy to get it [knowledge], when you have such giants as David and I around, that, we have sort of not time to wait, we have not really time to teach in a good way either. David and Hasse are ‘giants’, both of them speak of ‘dominating’ the area, of few problems they can’t solve, of people coming to them for help. They also distinguish their kind of competence, the practical knowledge, from Jörgen’s competence, ‘an administrator’. Practical knowledge means to get things working, an administrator is instead concerned with information systems and the like. In the company in general, jobs are segregated with men working mostly with technical and ‘practical’ matters, for example production, sales (external), production planning, product development; and women working mostly with ‘administrative’ tasks as sales back office, delivery control (the ones customers phone to complain), invoicing. David and Hasse clearly put a positive value into ‘being practical’. For example, Hasse admits he is one of those criticizing these ‘27 years old persons on a mountain bike with a knapsack’ who come to the company and think they know everything just because they have a degree. But he also adds that some of them have turned out to be very skilled. For example, one woman, grown up on a tractor and who as worked in a gas station, or a man, who has been UN soldier. That is, the two examples he gives are again related to ‘being practical’. Failures and unnecessary jobs are, on the other hand, exemplified referring to two ‘administrative’ women.

Both Ingrid (a technician) and Robin say they prefer to work with men (they do not express preference for femininities), but they give a different opinion on Jörgen’s role: they both like his leading style and humbleness. So, while the two men see Jörgen as different from them and in certain ways lacking legitimacy, the two women construct his style as just what is needed in order to lead a group of experts. How people’s roles and the value of these roles are constructed intersect with gender and seniority system. Two experienced practical men have the possibility to construct their role as valuable while doing masculinity (to be practical is to have been doing some masculine practical activity, as for example growing up on a tractor) and while doing seniority (‘there are few problems we have not already seen and solved’). How roles are constructed will also influence who is going to participate in which discussion and even though people might think that Hasse and David are slowing change down, they will probably invite them (or feel obliged to) in discussions and their voices will be heard, ‘giants’ are assertive. Therefore, leadership as analysed in this paper is a practicing that does not directly imply heroic masculinity, but it still may intersect with practicing masculinities and, in this way, be based on and foster inequalities between men and women.

Moreover, people in the organization often speak of solving problems, only seldom of making decisions and one common complain is that no one can make decisions, it takes always long long time for top managers to make a decision. This could be seen as an illustration of what I have tried to describe: people are doing leadership everyday, they just do not name it as leadership, while those in charge of doing leadership are seen as often failing to do their job. Even without ‘decisions’ things keep going on and developing. It is probably SM’s strength, that everything is so informal, not everything of course, but many things are dealt with informally, and very committed people work here and they take their responsibility, and they arrange things without any guideline coming from above, it works, but if you want to structure it up, it becomes very difficult to find the main thread [...] (Jörgen, the manager)
This example shows how it is possible to see the intersections of the different practicing: leadership, gender and seniority. It shows that it might not be enough to criticize traditional leadership ideals and try to come up with new ideals. It might not even be enough to name it as leadership. To show that leadership is, in practice, something done, at different levels and in different ways, by most persons in an organization offers an alternative conceptualization and could be an important step toward a ‘de-gradiosization’ of leadership. This has consequences not only because leadership discourse is normative and excluding (because of its inherent masculinity), but also since this leads to expectations on managers that might be too high (even those included might suffer from it). But without problematizing gender and other systems we miss a part of the phenomenon (cf. Benschop & Doorewaard, 1998; Ely & Meyerson, 2000; Fletcher, 2004). To achieve more inclusive leadership practices we have to bear in mind that practicing leadership is intertwined to practicing gender, seniority and in other cases other systems as race or ethnicity. If such practicing is not taken into consideration and critically analyzed and reflected upon, exclusion from the doing of leadership will persist.

References


Engendering Leadership for Business Excellence

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Abstract
The adoption of appropriate forms of leadership in response to modern organizational needs has become a major strand of management theory that underpins the pursuit of Total Quality/Business Excellence. With some notable exceptions, most of the leadership literature ignores the gender dimension of leadership. This gender blindness and the association of management and leadership with men is challenged through feminist/gender studies. Changing gender roles have been evolving in parallel with the quest for Total Quality/Business Excellence.

The paper reviews traditional and emerging theories of leadership and management and examines them in the context of changing organizational needs demanded by the adoption of quality and excellence approaches.

Drawing upon an international study of leadership, the paper presents the findings of business leaders in terms of their professed management style. To validate and elaborate on these results, a small national sub sample of Irish political and business leaders were interviewed about differences in the leadership styles of men and women. The responses from interviewees indicate that gender differences exist and that these are reflected in the self-descriptions of how women and men believe they lead.

INTRODUCTION
The adoption of appropriate forms of leadership and a preoccupation with new responses to modern organizational needs has become a major strand of management and organisational texts (Bradford and Cohen 1998; Thorne 1992; Zand 1997; Champy 1995). Some theorists have revisited and refined the works of earlier management theorists (Grint 1997; Wright 1996) while others stress the transformational and learning context for new forms of leadership (Lessem 1991; Tichy and Devanna 1990). With some notable exceptions, most of the leadership literature ignores the gender dimension of leadership and implicitly management and leadership are seen as male roles. This gender blindness has been challenged by feminist/gender researchers. The paper reviews traditional and emerging theories of leadership in the context of changing organizational needs, demanded by the adoption of quality and excellence approaches and gender roles.

Drawing upon an international study of leadership, the paper presents the findings of leaders in terms of their views on gendered management. To validate and elaborate on these results, a small national sub sample of Irish political and business leaders were interviewed about differences in the leadership styles of women and men.

Traditional Models of Leadership/Management
Classic notions of what constitutes successful management and leadership have been ‘gender blind’ and oblivious to the qualities which women offer. This section provides a brief overview of the key concepts and theories pertaining to leadership.

Building upon Weber’s (1947) work relating leadership to power, early research sought to identify the traits most commonly associated with leaders. The results of these studies proved inconclusive (Stogdill 1974). With the contribution of the human behaviourists the emphasis shifted to the importance of style and how leaders behaved towards subordinates. Researchers used different
taxonomies of style, usually varying between two (autocratic/democratic) and four styles (Likert 1961) categorised as: task-oriented versus people-oriented; directive versus participative (Wright 1996). None of this research established a consistent casual link between style and effectiveness, or outcome, in terms of subordinates' performance.

The Blake and Mouton (1964) grid advocated a more complex model which integrated the two independent dimensions of concern for task and concern for people. Their work, like previous theories, perpetuated the notion that there was a one best style (Team Management or 9,9). Subsequent research showed that the quest for a 'best way' style was just as elusive as that of identifying the traits held by leaders.

Situational or Contingency theories sought to take account of other variables involved in leadership, in particular the task and/or work group and the position of the leader, Fiedler’s (1964) Contingency Model suggested that the most effective leadership style is contingent upon the degree to which the situation enables the leaders to exert influence over group members. These depended upon the leader’s position power, the structure of the task, and interpersonal relations between the leader and members.

Without exception, these theories of leadership ignored the issue of gender and diversity and stressed the manipulative ability, innate or learned, of managers to influence the behaviour of subordinates. As Klenke (1996: 85) states “Early leadership models have evolved from unidimensional individual-centred approaches (e.g. traits) to multidimensional conceptualization, which takes the individual, the group, the situation, and the larger environment into account”.

Emergent Leadership Models
The gender blindness inherent in the earlier research on leadership continued in the contributions of 'emergent' theorists. For example, Hickman and Silva (1984: 25) argued that "Individuals, not organizations, create excellence. With their unique skills they lead others along the pathway to excellence, carefully cultivating those who will later assume the controls. To groom future leaders successfully, the mentor makes sure he passes on both his gift for strategy and his flair for building corporate culture" (author’s emphasis). This quotation neatly summarises the importance of the individual and the notion (not necessarily deliberate) that the individual manager/leader is a man.

Along with other writers, Handy (1996: 4) was critical of current models of organisations, noting that the way they are used “has hardly changed for a century”. In seeking a 'distributed leadership' based on trust, Handy mentioned the attributes for such leadership: belief in oneself; passion for the job; a love of people and a capacity for aloneness.

Champy's (1995) work revisited Weber’s notions of power in the context of re-engineering management to meet the business and market challenges. In arguing the case for market freedom, Champy claimed that "It's the freedom at the center of the paradox of power: that the best way to get it is to let go" (1995: 204).

Other authors advocated 'Transformational Leadership' (Tichy and Devanna 1995) and have returned to earlier notions of 'trait' theory in identifying the characteristics associated with transformational leaders as: self-professed change agents; courageous; believing in people; value driven; life long learners; able to deal with complexity, ambiguity and uncertainty; and visionaries. Atkinson (1997) distinguished between 'Transactional' and 'Transformational' leaders. Transactional leaders influence the behaviour of their followers by exchanging one thing for another, while transformers seek to satisfy higher needs and to engage the full person such that the leaders and the led have a relationship not only of power but of mutual needs, aspirations and values (Wright 1996). Hence transformational and transactional leadership were seen as complementary alternatives.
Another strand of the leadership literature has stressed the context in which leaders must operate within 'learning organisations'. For Senge (1996: 42), the belief that only top management can cause significant change was 'deeply disempowering'. In an organisational context of 'perpetual learning', in which change is the only constant, Schein (1996) described how leaders of the future will need extraordinary levels of perception, motivation and emotional strength along with an ability to involve and elicit the participation of others and to share power and control. Lessem (1992: 267) took Total Quality and the learning organisation as the basis for reconstituting the functions and skills of business and management, which he categorised into "conventionally recognised managerial skills and leadership skills which encompass the more instinctive, survival-orientated influencing, learning, facilitating and creative skills".

A not dissimilar message is evident from the work of Kouzes and Posner (1995) who advocated 'exemplary leadership' to enable leaders to get extraordinary things done by: challenging the process; inspiring a shared vision; enabling others to act; modelling the way and encouraging the heart. Gilley (1997) used this idea of leading from the heart to promote creativity, continuous improvement, and learning together, courage and eliminating fear. Zand's research (1997: 23) sought "Effective leadership...[which] depends as much on knowledge and trust as it does on formal power". He strongly advocated teamwork. Bradford and Cohen (1998) developed the teambuilding theme in their quest for 'post-heroic leadership' which would involve: creating a tangible vision and enhancing power through mutual influence.

The new millennium brought another wave of leadership in the form of 'corporate social responsibility' which has been used for addressing issues of ecological damage, environmental sustainability and social justice (Holliday et al 2002), in response to complex issues such as climate change and global poverty. Like its predecessors, the field of corporate social responsibility is male dominated and ignores gender as an interwoven theme (Marshall 2007).

Overall, unlike the work of the traditional leadership theorists, the emergent schools consciously advocated the holding, or acquisition, of key characteristics among leaders and/or alternative ways of leading including: the importance of vision, sharing of power, self-control, creativity, the importance of people, knowledge, working in teams and trust.

**Feminist Perspectives on Leadership**

Few of the authors listed in the previous section alluded to the gender composition of leadership, nor to possible differences in the ways that women and men might choose to lead. The contribution of Mary Parker Follett represents a challenge to these orthodox views and paved the way for feminist critiques of leadership and management. Follett (1924) was an early proponent of ideas on the role of manager: not as head of the team but as an integral part; recognition of the whole person - including the supposedly irrational half; the dangers of over-conformity and the importance of 'connecting' (Graham 1991). Graham (1991:108) claims that Follett was the first "to import the study of power into management teaching" and to champion the notion of 'power with' as opposed to 'power over' in situations where both managers and workers could pool their respective powers.

Kanter (1977) introduced gender into the world of business and management. Drawing upon the experiences of both women and men she proposed a new form of managerial work (1989: 85) advocating interdependency, as managers "watch traditional sources of power erode and the old motivational tools lose their magic". More recently Kanter (1996:90) stated that leaders must become cosmopolitans to operate across boundaries and to forge links between organisations, in response to greater "customer power".

Rosener (1990: 119) described the first wave of female executives as adhering to male rules of conduct, giving way to a second wave of women who were "drawing upon the skills and attitudes
they developed from their shared experiences as women”. Her empirical study examined the question of leadership style and its variation by gender. Results of her survey of high-level executives in the USA indicated that women use a more "transformational" style while men are more "transactional". She found that men were more likely to use power based on organisational position or formal authority, while women ascribed power to personal characteristics like charisma, interpersonal skills, hard work or personal contacts. Women engaged a participative style in sharing power and information, encouraging participation, and self-inclusion in a group identity. Indeed, their descriptions went beyond that of a participative style to what Rosener calls an "interactive" style, a concentration on enhancing the self-worth of others due to a belief that to do so is a "win-win" situation for both manager and others.

Feminist concepts of power include: "power-to" and "power-with" in contrast to "power-over"; sharing power rather than hoarding it; and a belief that individuals who share power in a group can yield a result more valuable than the sum of the parts. To bring these new bases of power into management may be to witness how they can augment a woman's leadership thus using, in a positive and conscious way, the synergy between personal sources of power and a woman's own position power (Ragins and Sundstrom 1989).

Loden (1985) and Helgesen (1990) also emphasised a feminine leadership. For Loden (1985) the feminine style of leadership was not a replacement for the traditional style, rather both styles could have their own strengths and leaders would need to call upon a range of styles. Lipman-Blumen (1996) addressed the issue of women managers in the context of 'connective leadership', based on a nine-style model, mainly applicable to political leadership. According to this model there are three main leadership styles: direct (masters own tasks); instrumental (maximises interactions) and relational (contributes to others’ tasks). In considering whether female leadership was distinguishable from men's, Lipman-Blumen (1996) found that the results of existing research were inconclusive. However, within a complex overall pattern she observed that "we can take some hope from the next generation of female leaders. Research on their achieving styles suggests that these young female leaders seem to know how to combine entrusting strategies with intrinsic and power styles" (1996: 323).

UK based research by Vinnicombe (1987) showed that men tended to be 'traditionalists' (57 per cent compared with 26 per cent of the women sampled) and that, in general, women managers are significantly more likely to be 'visionaries' and 'catalysts'. Not all studies and literature reviews have established such clearly definable gender differences in the traits, style and effectiveness of female and male leaders. Powell’s synthesis work (1993) presented the findings of a range of studies: one found that women managers had higher needs for both achievement and power than men managers. In another, women managers reported lower basic needs and higher needs for self-actualisation; were more concerned with opportunities for growth, autonomy and challenge and less concerned with work environment and pay; while other studies showed no gender differences in the task and interpersonal styles of fe/male leaders.

In a survey of members of the British Institute of Management in 1991, male and female managers were asked to rate themselves according to a common scale. The results show that women perceived themselves as being more likely to show their feelings and were more sociable and intellectual than men. The study noted that: "there is a tendency to discount and repress the expression of feelings at work, based on the pervasive model that work is more about achieving organisational objectives at the expense of, or ignoring the developments of, individual's needs" (Alban-Metcalf and West 1991:158).

Comparing the work preferences of the female and male managers in the private sector, there were significant differences in some key areas. The following were rated more highly by women than by men: a challenging job; opportunities for development, feedback and making a contribution to
society; being creative; working with friendly people, where accomplishment is appreciated; a job which fits in well with life outside work; location; and working for an organisation that is highly regarded. The four items that the men rated significantly more important than the women were fringe benefits; high earnings; job security; and the opportunity to influence organisational policies.

The authors confirmed findings from previous US studies into women's career commitments and/or 'motivation to manage' by demonstrating that the "women in this sample were as concerned as the men with opportunity for advancement and were in fact more concerned with challenge, development, and feedback than the men" (Alban-Metcalf, West 1991:160). Yet despite these positive findings, O'Leary and Ryan (1994:75) have argued that "critical mass alone is not sufficient for substantive transformations of the workplace. As long as sex continues to be characteristic of workplace interactions, women's relationships at work will continue to be characterised negatively".

Marshall's study (1995:314) of women managers suggested that women's styles were "open, collaborative, person-oriented, empowering, based on consensus and equality". She also demonstrated that some women had adopted 'males' style early in their careers through being "more directive and assertive" (1995:315), though some had deliberately shifted to more 'female styles' in response to dissatisfaction or where the organisation facilitated more flexibility in style.

Klenke's (1996:161) review of the “gender-differences-versus-no-differences argument” supports the view that organisational culture and selection criteria “decrease the probability that women and men, once they occupy leadership roles, differ substantially in their leadership styles, performance, and effectiveness as leaders and their interactions with their followers".

Work by Bass and Avolio (1997) supported Rosener's (1990) findings that "women managers, on average, tend to be more transformational and more proactive in addressing problems...Unfortunately, the glass ceiling may keep organisations from the best use of their management potential, and perhaps it is time the glass ceiling was shattered". They endorse the views expressed by Peters and Waterman (1982) that women should not seek success via learning men's games; rather that men now have to learn to play women's games. As Wajcman (1996 276) notes, to achieve genuine equality in which women do not accommodate to pre-existing norms, "will require more fundamental changes in the gender relations of management".

Fletcher's (2004: 657) critique of postheroic leadership, claims that in order to capture its transformational promise it would "require theoretical framings that acknowledge, recognize, and name the radical nature of its challenge and the gender and power dynamics inherent in it". Without this recognition she suggests that the postheroic model cannot achieve its transformational potential.

Despite the ignoring of gender as a factor in leadership of organisations, there is a growing consensus among feminist researchers that it is critical to our understanding of organisational culture, leadership and change. Based on their exploratory study, Paton and Dempster (2002:546) state:

“In particular, females favoured ‘softer’, empowering approaches, they preferred non-diagramming based mapping and analysis techniques (less systematic and formulaic). They appeared to be better equipped for multi-tasking than their male counterparts (moving forward on a number of initiatives, possibly related, in ‘simultaneous’ time frames), and in general, favoured more holistic (big picture), participative and open approaches to change management”.
This paper now examines the macro quantitative evidence from a survey of political and business leadership across 27 industrialised countries, followed by a micro level qualitative analysis based on interviews with Irish leaders.

Gender and Leadership Style: Empirical Results
Evidence was sought on similarity or difference in the professed leadership styles of 1,686 women and men, in business and politics, across 27 industrialised countries (Moore and Vianello 2000). The 902 top business leaders were asked the extent to which the label 'democratic' was characteristic of their own personal leadership style. The results, from the 467 women and 435 men surveyed, showed that the female business leaders were significantly more likely to state that a democratic style was characteristic of their personal style than the male business leaders\(^1\). Similar results were not evident among the sample of male and female international political leaders, among whom no significant differences were recorded.

To validate and elaborate on these international results, a small national sub sample of 13 Irish political and business leaders were interviewed about differences in leadership style between men and women and to describe their own leadership style. The Irish political (three male, four female) and business leaders (two male, four female) were interviewed and asked "Do you think there is a difference in leadership style between men and women?". The interview responses are set out in the following section\(^2\).

Differences Male and Female Leadership Style
A woman in politics (aged 49, married with three children) expressed uncertainty about any gender difference:
"I'm not sure it's gender based really, it depends on the milieu you've worked in to some degree.....[but where there is a high representation of women] you get a different style of discussion, it's more open, it's actually very honest....I think it's much better and the men love it actually...it frees them up as well...having more women there can free up the women who have to adapt more to the more...what I call, the more hierarchical style".

However, having acknowledged a difference she made a point, that recurred in other interviews, concerning survival "within the system you obviously have to have adaptive behaviours around it because you won't survive in it if you don't".

A second woman politician (aged 48, married with two children) also began uncertainly "I think there is [a difference]...then again I think it's...perhaps changing.....I don't know if women are any better at motivating than men are but I think they are much better about bringing people along with them and listening to them and valuing them".

A third woman politician (aged 59, married with three children) was more adamant:
"Well, there is, I think the confrontation business...I think men enjoy that a lot of the time...I really think they do...and then they find it very difficult to back down and women are much more interested in consensus, much more and find give and take much easier, I mean they sit and discuss things and they don't have to talk so long!".
She ascribed this female ability to get to the point and make decisions to the fact that:
"We're looking at our watches and thinking of doing the shopping. I think that women find it much easier to make decisions. I don't think women find being decisive difficult at all, women are making decisions from the time they get up in the morning.... ".

\(^1\) using Pearson’s chi squared test the difference between male/female results were statistically significant at the 1% level, P-value .0004
\(^2\) Interviews were taped and transcribed for later analysis.
The fourth woman (aged 52, married with four children) in political life stated: "I think the styles do blur and are blurred but there is a male style, a masculine style, and a female style". She described the male style as:
"A bit limited...good at making decisions, not good at explaining or involving people in the decisions.....Females would be far more likely to develop consensus, women are better at changing, dealing with change".

Male politicians also recognised the deficiencies associated with the 'male style'. The first interviewee (aged 50, married with three children) acknowledged a difference:
"I think there is, I don't know how to articulate it...I mean I think almost in all men there is a certain macho kind of defensiveness and aggression and so on. Whereas I think most women in politics are probably better rounded human beings .... I mean I think intuition and sensibility are important in politics and I think that arguably women are better at that but adversarial politics demands stamina and can be very confrontational and I think that the domineering male usually wins out in that battle".

Not surprisingly the behavioural responses of women facing into such battles was mentioned by another male politician (aged 52, married with four children):
"I have to say that in my experience that women who have achieved political power in all parties in this House [of parliament] are much harder. I think that they have a hard edge to them in that they believe that they have to try harder and consequently they lose some of their humanity. That's where I think there is a difference between men and women. Maybe it's because you expect men to be hard all the time anyway....".

The third male politician (aged 54, married with two children) also believed there was a gender difference:
"I think men probably believe more in rational argument......without paying attention to sensibilities than women. I think women are more intuitive and better at weighing what particular bits of an argument will influence the people they're talking to. I think the ideal would be to combine the rationality of the male with the intuition of the female and most of life and its difficulties revolve around that conflict I think".

In the world of Irish business, similar gender differences in leadership style were noted by the men and women interviewed. The most jaundiced male view (aged 61, married with four children) was expressed as:
"Well I don't like to use the word...some women can be very bitchy, some women can be very jealous, some women can be very autocratic...males are more tolerant I think, from what I have observed".

Another male executive (aged 48, married with five children) acknowledging that it was hard to generalise was aware of the important contribution of life outside the workplace:
".......when I'm hiring people the optimum criteria/scenario for me is a female manager with a high degree of competence because they are just so less inhibited and so less burdened ......I can see [based on his own staff]..... that women can think clearer than men given that there is some basic level of competency......they don't have as much baggage - period..... they just accumulate more experience from leaving school......they're managing huge amounts of life outside of here like having children, like they're gaining a huge amount of managerial experience outside the business environment and of course that sets into play immediately when they're in a business environment".

One woman business leader (aged 47, married with three children) expressed less certainty about difference:
"It is very difficult because you're always confined to making comments about particular people that you know and it could be just their style but...do they manage differently? I think that there are good
and bad management practices in both to be honest and I think that even on the people side I still feel women work harder at everything...that would be my general observation”.

Another woman leader in business (aged 54, formerly married, no children) reiterated earlier comments by men and women in political life:
"..... I think in general men tend to have a far more directive and, at times, autocratic style of leadership whereas I think women tend to be more...encompassing of all who work with and for them and prepared to listen and adapt and amend their thoughts and processes with far more ease than sometimes men can”.

The third woman business leader (aged 57, married with five children) noted that:
"men tend to have a less...emotional is the wrong word...they tend to take ownership of a problem and say this is a way I want it done, they find it harder to do the coaching/mentoring bit and I have often noticed that men want to take the kudos for a solution whereas the women in our organisation would say 'well this is the problem let's all find a solution'”.

Leaders’ Personal Styles
Having established that both male and female leaders, in Irish politics and business, believe that there are differences in the management styles of men and women, the interviewees were asked to describe their own leadership style.

Three of the women leaders in business claimed that they used a democratic style. The first (47, married with three children) said:
"Well I don't dictate to people what to do, as a group we decide what needs to be done......I err on the side of giving them all the information I have about everything, we share a lot of information in this organisation".

A second woman in business (aged 54, formerly married, no children) stated:
"I suppose my personal style would be one of giving people as much freedom to operate as possible, I would give guidelines in terms of how we may wish to proceed or the strategy but I leave room for people to interpret that”.

A third business woman (aged 57, married with five children) described her own style:
"Well I would have a very coaching/mentoring team approach in business in that I never try to impose [my view] and I would sit down with people that work with me and say 'this is what we want to achieve, how are we going to achieve it?' and I get them to give their ideas because I find that when you develop that approach they feel part of the solution and it's much easier then and they would be much closer to the customer than you are so they actually know what's going on at the coal face”.

The fourth woman in business (39, married with three children) displayed a more traditional 'carrot and stick' approach to getting things done:
"I don’t use a particular philosophy or approach! Well the main thing I try to do is to get people to take responsibility for there own goals and let them see the consequences of doing the job well or not well so that if they do it well they get the praise and benefits and if they don't they see the repercussions”.

The two male business leaders gave contrasting responses to their female counterparts. The first (aged 48, married with five children) referred to his former autocratic and confrontational style:
"Well there’s no question about it, I have changed hugely. I mean I was quite autocratic, somewhat dictatorial kind of thing... to a much more supportive scenario but I think also the other big change was trying to get rid of some of the negative personal traits out of my interaction with people...I still do lose my temper at meetings, it’s just not as bad as before but I still get annoyed".
The second male business leader (aged 61, married with four children) circumvented the question about his personal style with a response about staff selection which echoed the trait theory literature reinforced by 'think manager - think male':

"Well let me give you an answer on a CV for instance. You've got two CVs here in front of me and I look at the photograph. One is head and shoulders - you can get that from anyone but the other is a guy walking through Trinity College [Dublin] with that 'I'm going somewhere' showing what he thought of himself....".

There were also strong contrasts between how female and male political leaders described their personal styles. One woman politician (aged 52, married with four children) acknowledged that a dictatorial approach is unlikely to work:

"Very rarely do I instruct people to do something knowing they are totally opposed to it, I would try and tease out a particular problem before...I would rely, for example, on the experience of civil servants before making a decision. So maybe too much of the engagement rather than simply hierarchical approach but I suspect that if you don't have that [hierarchical] approach, things don't get done, they find ways to subvert you!".

This view was reiterated by a second woman politician (aged 59, married with four children):

"I would probably make a determined effort to avoid being confrontational because...it's not very successful and intelligence is supposed to be the ability to apply experience to new situations".

In contrast, a third woman politician (aged 49, married with three children) believed that she moved between consensus-seeking and persuasion:

"Well I think I'm very much a consensus politician...I hope in dealing with people I would be reasonable and would try to communicate the way I feel about something, listen to what anyone else has to say....if I want something to be done, I would be very direct about saying 'well I think perhaps this is the way we should do it', I mean direct without trampling all over people".

The fourth woman in politics (aged 49, married with three children) referred to team-building and the payoffs from this in terms of better decision-making:

"I have a particular leadership style which is a team approach and it's a sort of a systems approach and it comes out of my background....I'm very keen on getting just a good team working with the different talents and experiences......that means listening to what everybody has to say and working out a plan jointly and then making a decision....".

Male politicians spoke about their leadership styles in more combative and transactional terms. One such man (male, aged 52, married with four children) stated with great honesty:

".....so I learned very quickly that the best way to achieve your political objectives was to cultivate a personal relationship with those who are in power or who might be in power, consequently my whole philosophy in terms of getting people to do what I would like them to do is based on cultivating a personal relationship with them across a wide variety of areas, that would be acknowledging their strengths, a great deal of psychology and also by the way a lot of genuine feeling.......".

A second man (aged 50, married with three children) in political life stressed his role as a decision maker with no reference to consensus, persuasion or agreement:

"Well I mean I think I have a capacity to make decisions and I think that's important, I think people around you, people who can make decisions, and I think government is about making decisions even if you occasionally make wrong ones. I think that nothing affects morale nationally, or in your intermediate entourage, as much as paralysis decision making. I think after that you either inspire allegiance and motivation amongst people around you or you don't".
The third male politician described his personal style as persuasive and borderline coercive: "I'm not conscious of having a particular philosophy or approach. What I like to believe is that I can bring people with me by convincing them or bring people with me by finding how much we agree on and persuading them that it's worth doing that... I have a much more deliberate approach to people I know are not going to agree with me - heavy doses of sarcasm".

These in-depth interviews illustrate how gender is perceived as affecting the leadership styles of women and men in political and business life in Ireland. It shows that the female discourse consciously seeks consensus, involvement, sharing of information, teamworking and a 'power with' approach. In contrast, the men in politics and business spoke in terms of 'power over' and leading via mechanisms such as persuasion, establishing personal contacts, inspiring allegiance and bringing people along. Among the business men the self description was of having moved from being autocratic and, at times, dictatorial to a more considered approach.

LEADERSHIP FOR TOTAL QUALITY/BUSINESS EXCELLENCE
Of fundamental importance to future organisations operating in increasingly competitive environments is appropriate leadership that will translate into results. The context for examining leadership in this paper is in terms of self assessment models all of which place leadership as the driving force. In the Baldridge Award criteria, leadership is number one of eleven core values and concepts. It is the leadership role to drive the system to meet the organisational goals, which relate to the customer and business results. The leadership criteria accounts for a weighting of 9 per cent of the available score (Porter and Tanner 1996). In the EFQM Model, leadership operates through policy and strategy, people management, resource deployment and processes, to achieving Total Quality/Excellence in business results. In this self-assessment model, leadership refers to how the executive team and all other managers inspire and drive Total Quality as the organisation's fundamental process for continuous improvement by their visible involvement in creating and maintaining a consistent Total Quality culture; through timely recognition and appreciation of the efforts and successes of individuals and teams; and support of Total Quality by provision of appropriate resources and assistance (Porter and Tanner 1996). The weighting assigned to leadership in the EFQM Model is 10 per cent of the total score.

A Total Quality approach represents a challenge to traditional forms of leadership involving the application of quality management principles to all aspects of business, including customers and suppliers. The British Standards (BS.4778) Part 2 definition states that Total Quality Management is "a management philosophy embracing all activities through which the needs and expectations of the customer and the community, and the objectives of the organisation are satisfied in the most efficient and cost effective way by maximising the potential of all employees in a continuing drive for improvement". Without total commitment of the Chief Executive, immediate executives and other senior managers, nothing can be achieved. The onus on the leader/manager to increase effort from everyone in the organisation requires a fine balance between “getting things done” and allowing staff to make decisions. James (1996:144) argues that “management must cultivate a culture of leadership from top management through all levels in the organisation, where team-based leadership measures are emphasised”.

Like traditional approaches to leadership, business excellence and Total Quality Management ignore gender. However, what is significant is that the self-assessment models and approaches involved advocate an alternative and transformational leadership that is much more congruent with female leadership - as captured in the empirical data presented in this paper.

From a feminist perspective, Antal and Izraeli (1993:63) state that “probably the single most important hurdle for women in management in all industrialised countries is the persistent stereotype that associates management with being male”. Martin (1993: 291) in setting out the case for feminist management states that “a feminist vision of management fosters ways of seeing and
doing that are fair, inclusive, and affirming of women” but she states that the "means by which feminist management can be instituted remain unspecified”. Collinson and Hearn (1996:23) express the need for “explicit, critical, feminist/pro-feminist and self-reflexive studies on the enduring dominance and interrelations of men, masculinities and managements. How is it that the ‘great’ and ‘classic’ theories of management have consistently managed to avoid these obvious questions?”.

The empirical findings reported on in this paper are supported by Eagly and Carli’s (2003: 825) work which showed that, given the constraints of operating in male-dominated organisations, transformational leadership may be especially advantageous for women "because it encompasses some behaviours that are consistent with the female gender roles" referring to supportive and considerate behaviours. This is reinforced by Eagly and Johannesen-Schmidt's Meta-analysis (2003: 587) of 45 studies showing that "female leaders are somewhat more likely than their male counterparts to have a repertoire of the leadership behaviours that are particularly effective under contemporary conditions - specifically, transformational and contingent reward behaviours" that would foster organisations' long-term success.

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The gendered nature of leadership and power within policing

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(Note, the views expressed herein are the personal views of the author and are not the official position or view of the WA Police.)

“Power is the pivot on which everything hinges. He who has the power is always right; the weaker is always wrong.” Niccolo Machiavelli

ABSTRACT

The paper provides a practitioner’s insight into the gendered nature of power and leadership within Australian policing. The author reflects on her unique career path in achieving senior rank (i.e. Assistant Commissioner) and how she has managed the obstacles to achieving and maintaining her own power base. She outlines the sources of power and provides her personal observations of how power is controlled by those at the top of policing organisations. She suggests some strategies for women for acquiring more power and influence. In particular, she stresses the importance of women being aware of their own power and participating in appropriate “organisational politicking” if they are to bring about much needed change and gain acceptance for doing leadership differently.

INTRODUCTION

The paper is written from a senior policewoman’s perspective. It draws on the academic literature, although there is little on the issue of gender and police leadership or management (Silvestri 2003, pp.2-3; Mitchell & Casey 2007; Meese & Ortmeier 2004; cf. Adams 2001).

The paper also reflects on personal experience and observations, including lateral entry at senior rank to two Australian police agencies in 1992 (NT) and 2004 (WA), secondments outside of policing (involving the management of lawyers and academic researchers1) and the stewardship of a “National Common Police Service” (the then Australasian Centre for Policing Research (ACPR)) for over 5 years. The paper provides a practitioner’s perspective/insight on the current situation in relation to gender and power, in the context of police leadership.

The paper commences by setting the scene in relation to the percentages of women in policing in Western Australia and Australia, and also provides figures on the percentages of Commissioned Officers (Inspector and above). It highlights the very low numbers of women in the Senior Executive (Assistant Commissioner and above).

Whilst significant reforms have occurred in the last decade or so in relation to organisational structure, culture and management style (Etter 1996 & 2007a), policing organisations are still essentially hierarchical and militaristic organisations that value “heroic” leadership, a male managerial model and a command and control style of management. For instance, some still retain or have reverted to the concept of a police “force” as opposed to a police “service”. Mitchell & Casey comment that this is indicative of “a swing back to a seemingly more hard-line combatitive approach” (2007, p.20)

1 At the NT Attorney-General’s Department and the ACPR.
Against this background, the numbers of senior women have not reached critical mass. For many women it is still a challenge to be accepted and there is often a need to prove their worth and “fit in” as best they can.

The paper discusses the nature of power generally and the exercise of it within policing. It highlights obstacles to women acquiring power and some strategies for senior women to acquire power and influence within policing. The paper provides a personal insight into the author’s experiences of developing and maintaining a power base as a senior policewoman.

BACKGROUND

My interest in gender and power was piqued when I read the book *Nice Girls Don’t Get the Corner Office*, a couple of years ago. It talks about the many (101 in fact) unconscious mistakes that women make that undermine their credibility in the workplace and sabotage their careers. I could particularly relate to two of the common mistakes which were that women avoid “office politics” and deny their own power! (Frankel 2004, pp.38 & 234). I was guilty at the time of those particular misdemeanours (there were others!). However, my time at the top of policing in several jurisdictions has very much convinced me that I need to get a lot better at playing the power games and understanding the Machiavellian nature of some of my colleagues, our organisational dynamics, industrial and media relations, and governmental processes. It is a complex world indeed! Amanda Sinclair refers to the need to understand the “web of power” around you (Sinclair 2007, p.81; see also Jacobs 2007). I think that this is a great analogy because we often underestimate the reach of the power networks, their strength and potential deadly effect.

The extensive “web of power” in police leadership involves a number of interfaces, namely, with (Etter 2007b):

- The workforce;
- The Minister and Government;
- The DPP;
- The media;
- The unions;
- The oversight bodies; and
- The community and special interest groups.

In reference to the above book’s argument that “nice girls don’t get the corner office”, I love to point out that I currently do inhabit a corner office on the 7th floor of WAPOL HQ, directly above the Commissioner’s office, with superior river views!!! So I must be doing something right! I also have purple and lavender feature walls, a first for Police HQ!

As a lateral entrant to policing at senior levels in two Australian jurisdictions, particularly at a time when it was ground-breaking and quite controversial, I have experienced first-hand the challenges of establishing credibility and an effective power base, although I didn’t think consciously about concepts of power and influence at that time. Earlier in my career, I was very fortunate to have had significant networking opportunities as a result of national leadership roles and projects (as Chair of the Police Commissioners’ Policy Advisory Group from 1989-1994 and as a secondee and then employee (as Principal Research Officer) of the then National Police Research Unit (1986-1988)). I also had some very senior male sponsors and mentors (at Commissioner rank) who significantly impacted in a positive way on my career path.

I’d first like to set the scene in relation to women and senior women in policing in Australia. You will see from the figures that advances have clearly been made. For example, when I joined the NSW Police in 1981, women only made up 5% of the agency. In more recent times, we have seen percentages of sworn women in Australian policing increase in 1995 from 13.5% overall (Wilkinson
and Froyland 1996) to much healthier figures ranging from 18.91% to 28.3% in the jurisdictions in 2006/07 (WA Police HR Benchmarking Report 2007)). With a current percentage of 19.7%. (as at 30 April 2008), WAPOL has the lowest percentage of policewomen in Australia. We also have the lowest percentage of women overall (including non-sworn) at 29.29% (WA Police HR Benchmarking Report 2007).

In relation to more senior women, the numbers of female Commissioned Officers in Australia has increased significantly from a mere 28 officers in 1995 (Wilkinson and Froyland 1996) to 190 as at 30 June 2007 (WA Police HR Benchmarking Report 2007). Despite this increase, there are still very few women at the highest levels of policing (i.e. Assistant Commissioner or above).

WA has experienced a significant increase in the number of senior sworn women over the last few years. When I arrived in Perth in September 2004, there was 1 female Superintendent and 2 Inspectors. Today, we have 1 Assistant Commissioner, 4 Superintendents and 11 Inspectors – 16 Commissioned Officers out of a total of 186. However women still only make up less than 9% of all Commissioned Officers in WA, with the percentages of female Commissioned Officers ranging from around 4.48% (in Tasmania) to 17.65% (in the NT) (WA Police HR Benchmarking Report 2007). So, once again, WAPOL has one of the lowest percentages in this area. We have a task ahead of us and strong and genuine efforts are certainly being made to attract and recruit more women, at the lower levels.

While there are more female role models and senior women available to assist more junior personnel, senior sworn women are still clearly in the minority. The numbers of senior women are well below the suggested figure of 25 to 30% required to develop a critical mass in order to gain acceptance for their own leadership/management style and dynamics. Our “difference” can lead to a range of experiences such as tokenism, high visibility and isolation (Sinclair 2005, p.107 citing Kanter 1977).

Australasian policing experienced its first ever female Commissioner when Christine Nixon was appointed Chief Commissioner of the Victoria Police in 2001. We have seen her in various power struggles throughout her time, particularly with the Victorian Police Association and certain sections of the force such as detectives and those opposed, within and external to VICPOL, to increasing numbers of females in that agency (Moor 2008). There was the disbandment of the Armed Offender Squad, strong and justifiable disciplinary action against the Drug Squad, and the relatively recent Office of Police Integrity (OPI) inquiry into the apparent compromising by senior police personnel of a sensitive murder investigation. The latter led to front page headlines in the nation’s papers (see for example Hughes 2008 “Charges Urged over Plot to Unseat Top Cop” in The Australian).

OPI’s inquiry (2008, p.13) found “repeated examples of betrayal, collusion, deceit, and abuse of authority” within Victoria Police. Further, “Public officers with obligations to act with integrity were exposed as individuals prepared to deceive and plot to undermine their colleagues in their pursuit of personal ambition”. It was suggested in the report that Christine was targeted as an “outsider” and a proponent of a reform agenda that challenged the old style of policing. It is hard to say definitively whether gender was an issue, as Deputy Commissioner Simon Overland, another lateral entrant, outsider or import, was also heavily targeted. From my own observations, Christine has certainly brought a different style and approach to policing which has seemingly threatened the “old school” who continue to believe in formal authority, strong discipline and more traditional ways of doing policing. But my personal view is that these same people are also uncomfortable with having a woman as Commissioner.

\[1\] QLD 24.25%, NT 28.3%, AFP 23.35%, VIC 22.12%, TAS 24.84%, NSW 25.94%, NZ 17.54% (from HR Benchmarking Report 2007).
DISCUSSION

There are still many challenges for senior women, both sworn and unsworn, within policing. While junior women probably grapple with issues like proving that they can actually do the job, sexual discrimination, sexual harassment and bullying, as well as the demands of the job on their relationships and families, senior women have to grapple with the more insidious and less often seen facets of our gendered society and leadership structures. An ACPR study (Adams 2001) of senior female managers in policing found that the rates and types of discrimination changed as respondents were promoted to managerial levels. Early in an employee’s career, discrimination was primarily sexual harassment or gender-based discrimination. As an employee moved into a managerial position, being “undermined” by one’s peers based on gender, or due to being non-sworn, was the primary form of discrimination.

As a lateral entrant to policing and a relative newcomer to this jurisdiction, I do not have local, long-established networks and allegiances both within and outside of WA Police. Whilst in many respects the lack of allegiances and networks within the job is of assistance, particularly in my current role in Corruption Prevention and Investigation where objectivity and a degree of independence are essential, I have certainly had to tread carefully in developing relationships and placing trust in people.

I have found it necessary to think consciously about power and influence in the context of my gender and leadership within policing.

As we all appreciate, power is an abstract concept that is challenging to define. However, most writers seem to agree that it is the capability of a person to overcome others in achieving their desired goal or result (Huczynski 2004 p.319). Flowing from this, power is said to be the basis of influence. Politics, another related concept, is said to be the study of power in action (Huczynski 2004, p.318).

As Kanter (1977) strongly argues, the problems of women and leadership in organisations reveal themselves as matters of power, not “sex” or gender. So it is therefore essential to understand the impact of power in relation to women and leadership.

French and Raven (1959 in Ciulla 2003, p.4 and Brennan et al. n.d.) developed a taxonomy to classify different types of power according to their source. This model is based on the concept that power refers to the ability or potential of an agent to influence a target (Brennan et al n.d.). This classification has influenced much of the research on power. In 1965, French and Raven proposed a sixth base of power, namely information power which refers to the ability to access and distribute (or withhold) important information (Brennan et al. n.d.).

Whilst French and Raven’s taxonomy is useful, Kanter points out that there are other bases of power that are specifically organisational (Kanter 1977, p.174). She argues that the politics of a large-scale system are more complex and often do not seem reducible to such simple elements. Nevertheless, I find an understanding of the French and Raven model useful in understanding power.
FRENCH AND RAVEN TAXONOMY OF POWER

Reward power
The target person complies in order to obtain rewards he or she believes are controlled by the agent

Coercive power
The target person complies in order to avoid punishments he or she believes are controlled by the agent

Legitimate power
The target person complies because he or she believes the agent has the right to make the request and the target person has the obligation to comply

Expert power
The target person complies because he or she believes that the agent has special knowledge about the best way to do something

Referent power
The target person complies because he or she admires or identifies with the agent and wants to gain the agent’s approval

Information power
The target person complies because the agent has the ability to access and distribute (or withhold) important information

It should be noted that only expert and referent power are likely to produce commitment in the influencee. Huczynski (2004, p.337 citing Carli 1999) states that women enjoy higher levels of referent power than men, but that the latter are perceived to possess more legitimate and expert power. There is a perception that men have a greater right to exercise authority and leadership.

Another conceptualisation of power sources that is widely accepted is the dichotomy between “position power” and “personal power” (Ciulla 2003, p.5).

Position power includes potential influence derived from legitimate authority, control over resources and rewards, control over punishments, control over information, and control over the organisation of the work and the physical environment (ie. legitimate, reward and coercive)

Personal power includes potential influence derived from task expertise, friendship and loyalty, and a leader’s persuasive and charismatic qualities (ie. expert and referent power)

Personal power tends to be more closely associated with transformational, as opposed to transactional, leadership.

In my view, senior policewomen, whilst endowed with certain power as a result of their rank, tend to rely more heavily on developing personal power. Over the years, I have certainly tried to develop my expert power through tertiary study, publications, involvement in peak decision-making

3 Numerous journal articles and co-editing of Police Leadership in Australasia (Federation Press 1995) with former Commissioner Mick Palmer of the NT and AFP.
forums and research at the national/Australasian level, particularly during my time as Director of the ACPR, and broad experience both within and outside of policing and across several jurisdictions. Sadly, it is only in more recent years that tertiary qualifications have been somewhat valued within policing. However, in the future, with the move to “professionalise” the policing occupation and change it to a recognised and formal profession, the role and importance of education should be more highly regarded.  

Referent power is said to be obtained through qualities such as friendliness, respect, sensitivity to and concern for others, authenticity, character and integrity (Brennan et. al. n.d.). I have also tried to increase my referent power through a caring and consultative approach, a strong reputation for integrity, an interest in the professional development of others and, as an aside, my involvement in fitness training and sport. Commentators have noted that importance of strength and stature to policing, or the criticality of use of force and “presence” to enforce the law (Blok & Brown 2005). I note too that Amanda Sinclair comments that “physicality” can be an important part of leadership (Sinclair 2007).

On a more general note, Amanda Sinclair in Doing Leadership Differently (2005, pp.93-107) lists the obstacles to women acquiring power as:

- The look of leadership: conflicts of style (and a reluctance by women to label themselves as leaders);
- Pressures for conformity and camouflage;
- Sexualisation of women in the workplace;
- Maternalisation of women in authority;
- Getting administrative support;
- Responses from families and friends; and
- Loss of self, body and sexuality.

In my view, many of these apply to policing although I can’t say that I have ever had any problems in getting administrative support (maybe because I was pretty self-sufficient in that regard!). Similarly, family and friends have always been supportive and encouraging. I think that the “look of leadership” is an important point. As Amanda Sinclair points out (2004) when discussing whether the leadership of women is different to that of men, it is not necessarily that women do things differently but that they are PERCEIVED or JUDGED as doing it differently.

In addition, as is highlighted in the literature, many men appear threatened by women with power (Sinclair 2004). It is simply not something that they are used to dealing with.

Because of the factors outlined, senior women in policing can often be ostracised or marginalised. I think that the greatest obstacles for senior women in policing in relation to power acquisition involve:

- The lack of allies (including some senior women), supportive networks and sponsors at senior levels within the workplace;
- Role traps in that we are often attracted to areas other than strictly operational portfolios which are not as highly valued;
- Lack of female role models and sponsors within policing;
- An entrenched belief that women are too consultative, indecisive and not tough enough;
- The potential for undermining by male colleagues (with comments like “She only got the job because she is a woman!” or “She’s only interested in women’s issues”);
- The reluctance by women to be involved in organisational politicking; and

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4 Chief Commissioner Christine Nixon is a strong advocate of the professionalisation of Australasian policing.
• The difficult balancing act in gaining enough traction to be effective and fit in, whilst still maintaining personal integrity, autonomy and our own sexuality (illustrated by, for example, an unwillingness to trade sensitive or confidential information which also means that you can miss out on valuable information and organisational “intelligence”. Victoria’s OPI (2008, p.17) commented on its concerns with “the cavalier attitude” to sharing confidential police information with others that exists amongst some police. In many respects information is the “currency” of power within policing).

As to how I have achieved my current rank? This is probably due to the fact that I had several very senior and high profile mentors and sponsors and I was prepared to take calculated risks by moving between jurisdictions and roles. One former Commissioner who still remains a mentor to me gave the following advice, “Just keep ducking and weaving Barb, just keep ducking and weaving!” . I think you have to have a degree of personal “agility” to negotiate your way through the upper levels of policing.

I am also very aware of my strengths and weaknesses and my personal management style and work consciously to counteract inaccurate perceptions. I am not afraid of conflict or confrontation and will react to inappropriate practices or attempts to undermine my authority. I like to remain calm and professional and have no intention of yelling, swearing or adopting a “Gordon Ramsay” style of management in order to appear more forceful and decisive. Projecting a decisive and forceful manner without seeming arrogant or abrasive is an essential skill (Kellerman & Rhode 2007, p.21).

Power is a far more obvious issue in organisations like the military and policing. At a structural level, the police organisation remains governed and demarcated by hierarchy and rank (Silvestri 2003, p.176). Power is exercised quite visibly through uniform and rank insignia, and is almost palpable in language and metaphor (the “troops”, the “war” on drugs etc – see Ryan (n.d.)), and practices and corporate rituals such as maintaining the integrity of the chain of command, promotional customs such as “getting your boards”, disciplinary defaulter parades before the Deputy Commissioner, “visitations”! (which are merely visits by more senior officers) and in forums such as recruit graduations or “passing out” parades. The current Commissioner of WAPOL has certainly tried to do away with many of the traditional protocols like bracing or standing when a senior officer enters the room, and saluting and calling more senior officers “Ma’am” or “Sir” in more informal settings. This did meet with a degree of opposition. He has certainly tried to imbue a more collegiate approach, has an open door policy, and has not insisted that the chain of command be followed blindly.

Niland states that policing is one of the world’s most masculinised occupations (2002, p.33). Silvestri refers to policing as a “gendered site” and states that a key element of police culture is the “cult of masculinity” which has been noted for its “ruinous” effects on women and some men (Silvestri 2003, pp.21-22). She comments that policing is not a gender-neutral organisation but is instead deeply gendered at structural, cultural and individual levels (2003, p.172). Silvestri’s study in the UK which involved in-depth, semi-structured interviews with 30 senior policewomen found that some of the women described the police leader of the 21st century as “tough and forceful”, with “aggressive, competitive and performance traits” (2003, p.42), which is of itself somewhat disappointing. We need to get support for doing leadership differently.

Kellerman and Rhode (2007, pp.19-20) state that “Putting women in positions of power is not the same as empowering women”. Similarly, Silvestri states that “getting to the top” in policing does not necessarily equate with “getting in” and similarly “being there” does not necessarily equate with “being heard”. She further comments (2003, p.132):

Senior women were accused by their colleagues of not displaying enough ‘muscle’, of not making enough ‘din’. Women remain silent, being constructed as submissive, passive,
docile, lacking in initiative, weak and helpless. By implication, men are not silent; they are active, rational, scientific, and instrumental.

From my own observations, senior police, particularly the men, appear quite conscious of power. There are many obvious ways in which those at very senior levels of Australian policing control power including through:

- Determining the composition of the peak corporate decision-making body – the Corporate Executive Team in WAPOL currently does not include any women;
- Deployment/transfer, particularly of Commissioned Officers (which in WA is at the discretion of the Commissioner and the Senior Executive);
- Promotion (but which at the very senior levels can also include a sometimes unpredictable political dimension);
- Access to confidential or sensitive information about key developments or strategies, or the movement of people;
- The availability of acting opportunities;
- The conferring of awards such as the APM, commendations etc;
- The use of short term contracts (for instance, Assistant Commissioners within WAPOL only receive 3 year contracts at a time);
- The lack of effective and timely performance management regimes, which is admittedly a difficult issue (with performance management invariably undertaken by men);
- The careful management of the interface with the media;
- Granting access to professional development opportunities such as courses, interstate and overseas conferences or “study tours”; and
- The unspoken, but well understood, requirement for deference to authority and loyalty to colleagues and the organisation/profession.

In many respects, apart from involvement in actual formal decision-making processes, access to information and physical access to the most senior people in the organisation and other important stakeholders, allegiances, and the ability to informally influence important decisions, are the keys to power.

As is well known, organisations have an informal power structure co-existing alongside of the formal delegation of authority (Kanter 1977, p.275). Policewomen, like other women, are often reluctant to involve themselves in the informal processes or so-called “organisational politics” (or what Eveline refers to as “micropolitics” (2004, p.29)). Huczynski (2004, p.318) defines “organisational politicking” as “engaging in activities to acquire, develop, retain and use power, in order to obtain your preferred outcomes in a situation where there is uncertainty or disagreement about choices”. I took special note of his following comment (2004, p.319), as I used to be a proponent of this view:

It has been noted that a common trait amongst those who do not progress up the organization, despite their potential, is a belief that their ability and performance will shine through. They feel that they can keep their head down, get on with their jobs, and are not required to do anything more. However, it seems if you want to get on, you need to engage in politicking, and opting out is not an option.

Huczynski (2004, p.319 citing Mann 1995) states that there are three reasons for women’s reluctance to engage in organisational politics: lack of confidence; a lack of competence; and a distaste for politics.

While policing has come a long way, there are still signs of heroic, ego-driven, control-seeking leadership with some individuals in policing. Power is very much polarised at the top of the organisation, despite significant devolution of power in some areas over the years.
As in other organisations, “relational” work, or the focusing on relationships rather than tasks and on collaboration rather than competition (Kellerman & Rhode 2007, p.366), is not really valued.

For women police leaders, there is still a real challenge in accessing, maintaining and utilising power to achieve organisational outcomes and to prove their competence, whilst at the same time maintaining their own identity and personal integrity. There is real pressure to conform and to not “rock the boat” or challenge the status quo in any significant way. Conformity and compliance are also required, with women who speak out and challenge corporate positions on issues and decisions, acting to their own detriment.

Undermining can also be a common experience for senior women (see Adams 2001, pp.vi & 41), in the form of not being taken seriously by males or not being kept informed or included in key decision-making processes. I certainly experienced significant undermining during my policing career in another jurisdiction but I have also had additional hurdles having been a lateral entrant on several occasions.

Sinclair states that the strategies used by women to acquire power or influence are (2005, pp.108-128):

- Focus on making a contribution;
- Submerging ego;
- Being a confidante;
- Persistence and professionalism;
- Surprise, shock and challenge;
- Seeking advice and creating a network;
- Building a team;
- Defining boundaries; and
- Avoiding “slanging matches”.

Sinclair also states (2004) that many women have learned in most leadership roles to strenuously conceal and camouflage their sexual identity as women.

Based on her research, Silvestri states (2003, p.136) that policewomen’s coping strategies are characterised by working harder and achieving additional qualifications. This seems to have some basis to it. Silvestri makes some telling comments when she states (2003, p.178):

The majority of women in this study who articulated success grounded their achievements in their own individual drive, commitment, determination, and hard work. In the face of structural constraints, senior policewomen have used innovative routes and have carefully crafted their way to the top. They have skilfully made judgements about the direction of their careers and the behaviour they exhibit in order to achieve success. The secret of their success has involved weaving in and out of positions, often minimising their high visibility as women. In many ways, senior policewomen have negotiated a path of contradictions, conflicts, and dilemmas.

The main strategies that I have used to build my own power base and to be influential in more recent times include:

- Getting the job done and achieving results ie. focusing on my role and responsibilities;
- Networking strategically, outside the organisation and within the business community, particularly following the award of WA Telstra Business Woman of the Year in late 2006 (although I need to get better at this and involve more non-women’s groups);
- Increasing my self-awareness through external corporate coaching and 360 degree feedback;
Thinking critically, reflecting and making thoughtful choices and decisions (see Sinclair 2007);

Gaining a positive profile/image internally and externally through a variety of activities and through appropriate dress and grooming (I am not one for bland androgynous pants suits!);

Taking on key and influential roles outside of my portfolio role;

Regularly attending informal networking opportunities with my (male) senior colleagues such as the 8 am coffee each morning in the Senior Executive Conference Room;

Focusing on strengthening my personal power by doing the right thing by people and building a reputation for integrity; and

Being true to myself, which hopefully will mean that I am perceived as offering authentic leadership. I particularly like Rob Goffee’s recommended approach of “Be Yourself - More - With Skill!” (Goffee & Jones 2006).

Having said this, my main motivation for my actions are to ensure that I do the right thing, in my personal behaviour and in my current role, even if this means a diminution of my personal power.

CONCLUSION

In 2003, Silvestri stated in the Conclusion of her book entitled *Women in Charge: Policing, Gender and Leadership* (2003, p.172):

Just as the police role remains intact and unchallenged, the culture, climate, and values of police leadership remain untouched with a steadfast and unchanging perception of women as unsuitable leaders in policing.

I agree that we have a way to go. Women in policing need to understand power and influence, and the associated organisational politics, in order to succeed and to become much-needed agents of change. Domination and marginalisation are not attractive options. Senior women need to achieve a degree of traction or fit in enough so that they can be effective within organisations. Goffee & Jones (2006, p.133) refer to it as having “a necessary degree of clever conformity”. Women also have a critical role to play in cultural and structural reform and the development of organisational corruption resistance. They need to help diminish the importance of “heroic” leadership and support a less individualistic and more relational concept of leadership (Sinclair 2007, p.3 citing Fletcher 2004).

It is clearly not just about the women themselves. There are major changes that are required in relation to changing cultures and structures and destroying well entrenched gendered stereotypes and archetypes (Sinclair 2004 & 2007) of leadership.

One of the big challenges is to convince our current leaders, nearly all men, that there is indeed a problem. Unfortunately, many seem in denial about the male-centric nature of our policing organisations. Disappointingly, even senior women come out quite frequently and announce that there are few barriers to women progressing up the corporate ladder. Organisations such as the Australasian Council of Women and Policing Inc (ACWAP) have an important role to play here, in a local and global sense.

Externally, we need to increase the level of support for women in extremely male-dominated organisations, such as policing and politics, to give them the much needed support to bring about essential change. As senior women it is essential that we leverage off key supporters in industry,
community and academe and use our combined influence. We also need to identify and utilise our male champions and engage our male colleagues in the gender debate more effectively (ACWAP 2008).

Policewomen need to work on building their personal power and tapping into the more hidden political processes as they cannot just rely on formal positional power. Even for men, coercion and formal authority generally are no longer a realistic option (Huczynski 2004, p.5; Frankel 2007, pp.16-17). Over-reliance on formal power may lead to employee compliance but not commitment. As outlined by Sinclair (2007), a more liberating and empowering type of leadership is what is needed in modern organisations. As she states (2007, p.75) “The question of how one finds enough power to act and do leadership differently seems to me to be at the core of leadership.”

Policing needs significant cultural and managerial reform to succeed in the future and women need to be powerful contributors in this regard.

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Growing Indigenous Arts leadership

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ABSTRACT
The arts inspire and express the many cultures and societies of the world. They reflect the spectrum of the spirit, from the inspirational to the darkness of humanity. The arts and culture in Indigenous communities function on many levels – as tradition, as expression, as story - song, - dance, and as an economic activity. Through the arts, Indigenous communities link the past, present and future. The Indigenous arts and cultural sector is vibrant, complex and the site for much consideration of the leadership artists and arts managers play in Indigenous cultural and economic development.

This paper aims to explore what’s known of Indigenous leadership development in Australia through a scoping study of the literature available. This will then be compared with other Indigenous leadership development literature from around the world, I seek to clarify key themes and concepts for the development of Indigenous leaders like the acknowledgement of the diversity of Indigenous approaches and the importance of place and community in leadership work. I will place this body of knowledge into an arts and cultural context through a case study on the Wilin Centre for Indigenous Arts and Cultural development.

The Wilin Centre is situated in the Faculty of the Victorian College of the Arts at the University of Melbourne. It is a unique Indigenous centre in that it is 95% philanthropically funded and based on a strategic purpose of cultural transformation. The paper will explore how the Wilin Centre supports the leadership development of individual Indigenous artists and their communities.

Key Words: Indigenous Leadership, Leadership development, Arts and Cultural Development

Growing Indigenous Arts Leadership

This paper expresses the journey of my mind and thoughts as I have come to understand ‘leadership’ from my own cultural perspective. I am an Aboriginal woman and I do not know my tribal origins – a long search of twenty years has left me displaced, longing for belonging. This cultural perspective shapes my leadership and the way I view leadership – the desire to create a new way to understand leadership is a drive for my research.

I situate myself in the Indigenous arts and cultural sector, specifically in an arts training environment supporting Indigenous artists. I am interested in how these Indigenous artists become arts leaders through their training experience and commitment to an Indigenous form of leadership – a generative leadership which calls us to give back to community, to organisations, people, and family who have supported our journey. Can a creative way of living life and approaching work be a springboard to a new type of leadership? Is this how to do leadership differently, by simply being different?

The Function of Art

The arts inspire and express the many cultures and societies of the world. The role of artistic, cultural and creative expression is fundamental to the interior and exterior life of humanity – it is
the way we communicate and tell our stories, the way we express ourselves as individuals and a way to touch a sacred moment. The arts reflect the spectrum of the spirit, from the inspirational to the darkness of the soul.

The arts are about building knowledge of who we are. But what is the function of art? Is it to purely express, the domain of artists and creatives? Is it to act as a tool to liberate ordinary people? Is it to decorate our otherwise mundane lives? Is it a way to transmit and build knowledge? Is it and economic activity? Or, simply, to bring people closer to our story and family? This question – what is the function of art – has come through the ages and will be answered individually, with as many responses as there are people to respond.

Georges Braque said, “The function of art is to disturb. Science reassures.” E.M Foster said “To make us feel small in the right way is a function of art; men can only make us feel small in the wrong way.” Anais Nin said, “It is the function of art to renew our perception. What we are familiar with we cease to see.”

How you perceive the function of art will colour the way you see its purpose in your life. For me the role of art is core to my being. I enjoy engaging with artists and as an artist myself; I spend my time devoted to the development of creative outcomes. I am in a life long process of building knowledge about myself, my place, my family, my communities and the world. The arts function as a way to explore and expand my life journey.

The function of art is to free the spirit of man and to invigorate and enlarge his vision – Anonymous

Art functions in a similar way to leadership, by engaging an individual in the pursuit to express what is envisioned. Pushing artists and leaders to articulate their dreams, visions, ideas and thought process is one of the building blocks in leader/artist development. Articulation asks us to develop a rigor in our practice, which in turn requires a higher order of thinking - the pursuit of the ability to transform learning in to context. A practice-based path is a way towards innovation, the development of new knowledge and excitingly unpredictable outcomes.

Introducing the Wilin Centre

This is the convergence that I am primarily focused on - the confluence of art, Indigenous knowledge and leadership; and furthermore, those who are leaders, artists and Indigenous – expressing their leadership in different and new ways. This is also the foundation that the Wilin Centre for indigenous Arts and Cultural Development was created upon.

The Wilin Centre (Wilin means fire in the Woi Wurrung language of Melbourne), established in 2002, is the indigenous student centre at the heart of the Victorian College of the Arts. The Wilin Centre is 95% philanthropically funded by an anonymous foundation and due to its small size (both physically and staff) primarily works in partnership to achieve our large reach. The Wilin Centre supports 24 Australian Indigenous students in all of the seven art disciplines at the VCA – Dance, Drama, Art, Production, Music, Community Cultural Development, Film and Television. We manage three major cross-sectoral partnership projects on behalf of the College, as well as pursuing our recruitment, talent identification, relationship building and community cultural development programs.

This paper aims to describe the importance of leadership in creative contexts, and the role and the place of the arts for Indigenous Australians; in order to then explore the literature surrounding Indigenous leadership development, the tensions I have encountered throughout my leadership
development and in the work of creating a centre for community with the development of Indigenous Arts Leaders as one of the outcomes of our work.

**Leading in creative contexts**

“I think everyone can be creative, but you have to prepare for it with routine.”

Twyla Tharp

To understand the work of the trained artist, you will see a life dedicated to honing and exploring through their selected craft. And it is a craft, a multitude of skills sharpened through repetition, exploration and experience. This technical approach is blended with artists’ ability to surrender to a creative process – a space created in which ideas, movement, colour, and emotions grow and build upon each other. The artist understands that each time that movement is attempted or that text is performed; nothing will be exactly the same, yet the routine and dedication of the preparation creates a memory within.

Leading in creative contexts requires deep understanding and compassion towards the process of making art. In a world of ‘ends justify the means’ and stock exchange obsession; this type of leadership draws focus to your approach – how you do leadership? Similar to any business leadership role, arts leadership also requires a commitment to understanding the policy, theoretical, legal, historical and cultural frameworks of the industry you are working within, as well as excellent management skills. So what makes the specific skills of leading in creative contexts a candidate to influence or ‘lead’ the leadership field? And can you reconcile these multidisciplinary skills within one person?

I have been thinking that Creativity in leadership builds on three understandings, which shape this type of leadership – *living with change, living with ambiguity and living with a commitment to articulating during the process of creating*. Furthermore, I think that these abilities shape robust leadership within. The assumptions that I have made in highlighting these three underpinnings to a new type of leadership come from my experience as an artist and arts manager. I encourage students to reflect personally on their work and the way in which they work in order to cognitively understand their choices, ideas and how they enact their values. I embed this into the pedagogy of the subjects I teach by actively making time to reflect, by having one on one time with each student in active engagement where I want to understand their motivation and where they are going, as well as by assessing reflective journals, blogs and contextual work.

Being comfortable with change is a fundamental choice that managers and leaders need to make. In the creative context, change is the way forward, backward, up and down. Embracing the transformative power of change is the only choice you have as an artist, and it is a powerful way to build a dynamic organization and work. How do leaders enact the skill of working with change? Perhaps by remaining open to options, seeking to delay judgement, listening to intuition and noticing what you project into the environment. Change from within, precipitates change in the broader environment. Joseph Jaworski states, “To think that the world can ever change without changes in our mental model is folly.”

If you were to surrender to the winds of change completely as a leader, achieving vision would be of little consequence. How do you strike a balance between striving, future driven work and the importance if being present and understanding your leadership work day by day? The ability to live with ambiguity is becoming increasingly important in contemporary society. We are all in the

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situation of not knowing what tomorrow could bring and how it might affect our work and ourselves.

As a leader, can you deal with the multiple, conflicting and demanding contexts that govern your work? Vision work asks us as leaders to imagine and then discover how to achieve. This is a process of dealing with the uncertainty of the threats and opportunities in the environment and how you might come to understand and respond to them.

There is also another type of ambiguity creative leaders need to be open to is new ideas and thoughts, offers and options. This approach builds knowledge and allows thoughts and ideas to settle until they develop form. This is a creative approach, which is by definition unpredictable; it is also where innovation lies. Can you create space in the work environment to allow ideas to percolate? An example of this is my idea to create a talent identification program for the Wilin Centre – I understood that this was important, innovative and exciting but I have no set ideas how to do it, I have allowed this one to percolate through conversations and, eventually, three years later we have created a pilot to model this.

Whilst this creative process is happening creative leaders must be committed to finding a way to speak about this process. The importance of leaders articulating ideas and thoughts – even if they are not articulating the process – can mean they may be creating space for the process to occur, or defending ground, or establishing an organisational understanding that creates time and space for creativity to arise in its own time. This leadership is a leadership of contradictions and tensions, and is the way in which I, as a creative leader, lead my organisation and create space for myself. Continuing the example about the talent identification program, the conversations I had around this idea lead me towards the pilot program we are initiating this year. This visualisation of the idea with trusted and new colleagues encouraged me to develop the idea, to see what I already had to contribute to and commit to the idea.

The role of the arts for Indigenous Australians

The arts and culture in Indigenous communities function on many levels – as tradition, as expression, as story - song, - dance; as a way to transmit and build knowledge’s and in contemporary society as an economic activity. Through the arts, Indigenous communities link the past, present as well as the future. An Indigenous way of knowing is encapsulated through the way time is viewed – past, present, future all happening at once, a depth to understanding place and time. This depth of seeing and knowing expands the reflective practitioners’ approach to work by asking where are you now, how is this placed, what and how is it connected and whom do I need to work with. The breadth of the arts within an Indigenous Australian context, is complex in nature, role and expression.

Indigenous arts have developed over the past 60,000 plus years as the way in which we record, transmit and build upon our way of seeing our world. Our worldview is constructed by painting, carving, etching, dance, song cycle, ceremony and story. Today the arts are segmented by disciplines, like the way the schools at the Victorian College of the Arts are established – dance, drama, art, production, music, film and television. Yet, even today, Indigenous artists skills and experience span the spectrum of the arts. Surprisingly many are visual artists, performers, writers, film makers, dancers - Clinton Nain, Arthur Pambeğan Jnr, Sally Morgan, Bronwyn Bancroft, Richard Frankland, Lou Bennett, Ray Kelly, Rhoda Roberts and the list goes on!

These artists are sometimes responsible for the transmission of the cultural and historical stories that frame their lives. What position does this place Indigenous artists in, seeing this is a weighty task to take upon? The work of some Indigenous artists embraces the paradox of the indigenous arts industry, that being, the work is both cultural object and economic commodity. This is especially exemplified by the work of Arthur Pambeğan Jnr, a senior elder of the Winehanem clan of
the Wik Mungkan language group, from Aurukun. Arthur is a master sculptor and his work embodies the importance of a family member – the carving is a family member – and therefore must be placed within the context of ‘economic’ art object through ceremony – it must be sung into the gallery ‘space’.

The leadership Indigenous artists demonstrate is a cultural transformation point of bringing Australian and international audiences into the circle of that family, historical or cultural story through an arm length artistic and economic exchange. This further illustrates the complexity of the Indigenous arts. How do Indigenous artists lead the arts sector and exemplify ‘leadership’ for us to take note from? Is there an understanding of ‘Indigenous leadership’ and how we might develop Indigenous leadership, which can begin to show us a new approach?

**Australian Indigenous leadership development programs**

There are three significant Indigenous leadership development programs in Australia that I have chosen to highlight – the Australian Indigenous Leadership Program, FaHCSIA Indigenous Leadership Program and the Indigenous Education Leadership Institute. Each program targets both established leaders and emerging leaders for their programs, and encourages personal development as a part of the learning journey.

**Australian Indigenous Leadership Program**

The program was established in 1999 after momentum was harnessed from Indigenous organisations keen to address the complexities that Indigenous leaders and emerging Indigenous leaders were facing. These organisations included the Kimberley Aboriginal Tourist Association, the Australian Rural Leadership Program and the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS). The organisations commissioned a research project *Concept Study Into An Australian Indigenous Leadership Development Program* by Ms Marg Cranney and Ms Dale Edwards. This report detailed the sort of outcomes, parameters and issues that an Australian Indigenous Leadership development program should address and became the foundation for the current course’s Certificate II and IV in Indigenous Leadership.

The courses combine competency based learning units from different Industry training packages including Business Services Training, Community Services Training and the Sports Industry Training; with a focus on cultural and historical understandings of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and philosophy. The combination of articulated learning modules focus the participant on skills development like working in organisations, advocacy, media management, work and stress management as well as working in community settings. Whereas, the cultural aspects of the course aim to contextualise these competencies into an Australian Indigenous community setting.

An aside at this point about Indigenous education. I think we devalue the complexity of this contextualization work, the burden of preparation to ground the teaching and learning environment so that we do not alienate students, families and communities is inherently larger than the task we are generally employed to do. I was once a Co-ordinator and teacher within the TAFE sector, specifically in an Indigenous Performing Arts course. Having come from a primarily subject driven, project driven arts training the competency based learning model of TAFE frustrated me. With the latitude to do what I saw needed to be done, that fabulous long rope we as Indigenous educators are sometimes allowed (yet that rope does not necessarily include support or a real understanding

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of the challenges) I started the curriculum afresh, designing projects and productions, bringing in local Indigenous artists to drive the curriculum. This experiential learning approach to ticking the boxes of the competencies the students had enrolled to learn, was the only way I could see to make this course not only relevant but attractive to Indigenous students.

**FaHCSIA Indigenous Leadership Development Programs**

The Australian government coordinates Indigenous programs through its Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, including the governments’ commitment to Indigenous Leadership Development. Specifically, FaHCSIA established the Indigenous Women’s Development Program in 2004 because it, “…recognised that Indigenous women often carry significant responsibility for the well-being of their communities but are severely underrepresented in formal positions of influence.”

The success of this program was then converted into three streams – men’s, women’s and youth leadership development programs.

The program logic centers on four key factors: firstly, the selection of participants who answer a leadership readiness assessment form (are you ready/are you willing/are you able?); secondly the development of management, advocacy and community focused skill development in a learning environment that encourages participants to locate the development of skills and theories within their experience; thirdly, the participants are supported by a Delivery Support Program and a range of ‘coaches’; and finally the program contextualises this learning, by providing one on one work with students to place the learning within the policy context of the Australian government Indigenous affairs programs, budget, and directives they work with and within.

**Indigenous Education Leadership Institute**

The Indigenous Education Leadership Institute is a partnership between Education Queensland and the Queensland University of Technology, that seeks to deliver leadership development programs to principals and teachers along with further corporate goals regarding research into this area, partnership development and community development.

Due to the institute’s focus on education, it differs from the previous two programs in that it highlights school environmental and Indigenous educational challenges as problems that will be addressed by developing leadership capacity in teachers and principals.

The program overview for 2008 includes a residential program, data gathering and planning at a school level, follow up workshop, school based project and action research and finally the publication of writing by the participant on the research and learning they have developed over the program. The leadership development program actively pursues a research driven agenda towards knowledge development in the area of Indigenous leadership and creates further rich investigation for the field.

**International Indigenous leadership development programs**

In the international arena, North America leads the field in Indigenous leadership research and development. I have found that Pennsylvania State University’s American Indian Leadership program, the Native Nations Institute for Leadership, Management and Policy and the Banff Aboriginal Leadership and Management program to be exemplars. These three courses serve to

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build capacity of Indigenous North American peoples to dream about the best way to shape their nations through self-determination and within negotiation with government.

**Pennsylvania State University**
American Indian Leadership Program has been working with American Indian and Native Alaskan leaders since 1970. The program is located with the College of Education and frames leadership development through an education speciality, specifically in relation to the Indian Education Act (1972) amendment in 1974, which granted special funds to develop graduate programs to develop Indian teachers.

This program exclusively focuses on Indigenous education and excludes other Indigenous peoples of the United States of American, namely, Native Hawaiian peoples. Does this result in the program being seen not only successful but exclusive? Warner and Grint (2006) name the elite alumni of this program as the “Penn State Mafia”. Such an approach in Australia would be seen disapprovingly I believe, because it would fail to embrace the diversity of cultures within Indigenous Australia. Exclusivity would raise problems within the Australian context, unless it was specifically localized within one area for one tribal group, otherwise this type of approach in Australia would raise eyebrows.

**Native Nations Institute for Leadership, Management and Policy**
The Morris K Udall Foundation in partnership with the University of Arizona established the Native Nations Institute in 2001 to resource Indigenous nations in their efforts to achieve self-determination and governance. The Institute works in partnership with the Harvard Project on American Indian Economic Development to deliver an executive education program in leadership. This program specifically addresses economic, governance and leadership issues through attention to ‘nation-building’ for Indigenous Native Americans.

The well-regarded Manley A. Begay – both Co-director of the Harvard Project and Director of the Institute the Native Nations Institute – has developed an executive education program that is built upon twenty years of research into what works economically for Native American communities. Begay’s personal contribution to this wealth of research and experiential learning that frames these two significant organisations, is felt beyond the organisations themselves and into the many communities and individuals who have had contact/participation in these executive programs. In contrast to Penn State, the Institute also encourages Indigenous people internationally to enrol in the courses on offer, broadening the potential for an understanding of the many faces of Indigenous leadership.

**Banff Aboriginal Leadership and Management Program**
The Banff Centre is a globally recognised centre for the training and professional development of creative practitioners and artists. Uniquely, at the heart of this cultural centre sits a leadership development program, and at the heart of this program sits the Aboriginal Leadership and Management program directed by Dr Brian Calliou. The programs within this department are built upon the Sacred Circle of Life, which dually embraces nation revitalisation and capacity building.

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Centered on personal development, the program model honours knowledge and skills development along with a commitment to nation building.\(^\text{13}\)

The key course offered at Banff is the Certificate in Aboriginal Leadership, Governance, and Management Excellence. This qualification creates the opportunity for students to study the short courses (the Department has been running for 34 years) like Indigenous Women’s Leadership or Negotiation Skills training and scaffolds them with attention to governance and leadership.\(^\text{14}\)

**Themes for the development of Indigenous leaders**

From the research into the six leadership development courses outlined I have identified three themes in working with Indigenous leaders:

1. Commitment to ‘grounding’ the leader in community
2. Commitment to understanding community based role in the context of contemporary management and leadership
3. Challenge to create a decolonised leadership

The first two themes lead Indigenous leaders towards growing a unique leadership – that of innovation through translating the learning into the leader’s experience of work within a community context. Indigenous leaders must ground themselves within their organization and community, and realise these new skills and ideas within the community development context of Indigenous communities, as well as through grasping contemporary management and leadership theory/practice. The role of the leadership development course is to grant individuals a reflection space to spend time with other people who do work similar to themselves, who experience the same challenges and together refresh their perspective, their practice and process.

How do you create a decolonised leadership approach? Hooks (1992), Smith (1999), Ranzijn, McConnochie, Nolan, Day & Serverino (2006), Maryboy, Begay & Nichol (2006) and Nakata (2007) are a few scholars exploring how we might work in this way. There needs to be a commitment to deconstructing the stories and revealing what’s underlying in our organisations and work. It’s a mentorship with elders and an understanding of our impact as well as knowledge of whom we are excluding. These are the tensions for Indigenous leaders as we walk day by day, constructing a less colonial, more community-based, collaborative and generative leadership.

The dynamics of power in Indigenous communities are deeply embedded – from traditional to historical roles, through colonisation, assimilation, separation towards a reconciliation of our contemporary existence as intercultural. The power of the individual is challenged daily by the surfacing of trans-generational trauma\(^\text{15}\) from within and without. Hooks (1992) speaks of the research agenda for indigenous people as movement through four tides – survival, recovery, development and self determination.\(^\text{16}\) Indigenous leadership is framed within the politics of self determination, so what happens when leaders find themselves drifting in and out of these tides, responding to pressures of poverty, abuse, violence, racism colour the ebb and flow of this area of leadership.

\(^{13}\) Aboriginal Leadership, Banff Centre


\(^{14}\) Aboriginal Leadership, Banff Centre


The pressure from expectations and assumptions experienced by Indigenous leaders is built up inside. Ottomann (2005) speaks of this leadership being 'taxing' and that the satisfaction is internalised rather than material.\textsuperscript{17} A major challenge for Indigenous leaders is to work out the best way to let that pressure out. An interesting example for me is the role of being 'boss' – the one that pays people, that manages people, the one who decides. At a recent festival I witnessed a high profile artist acting up towards me and the staff of the Wilin Centre, watching for us, making sure we were watching them, repeatedly asking what we thought, calling me and staff of the Wilin Centre boss. For me, seeing this pandering not only saddened me, it made me want to call the artist on this behaviour but in action I ignored it. Why? I didn’t want to shame the artist, and I didn’t want to play the game. I find my personal reflective practice crucial in unpacking the heaviness associated with being ‘the boss’.

Some old thinking that I have begun to interact with is the return to traditional Indigenous models of leadership where there is not one leader, but a leadership group. I have been speaking to elders and Indigenous artists about traditional leadership roles in community, in a way to understand what is innately different about Indigenous leadership. The conversations all echo each other – there are at least three major roles in traditional leadership. This is supported by Native American research as well. Warner and Grint in \textit{American Indian Ways of Leading and Knowing} outline the Tahdooahnippah/Warner Model that features four leadership roles – the elder, the author, the role model and the social scientist – as well as the one who speaks for us at all times.\textsuperscript{18}

The style of leadership I have found resonant when thinking and speaking about Indigenous leadership as a generative approach to leadership. Within Indigenous communities and individuals rests this responsibility to ‘give back’ to community. The way in which an individual does this is highly personal and yet it is a public, or at least, semi-public act of service to community. This commitment to community, this generative consciousness is one of the most significant and core differences Indigenous leadership brings to the leadership arena. And it is also a burden for Indigenous leaders, as we struggle with the tension to privilege our own needs with the needs of the greater family/community.

\textbf{Returning to the Wilin Centre}

The Wilin Centre was established in a rare moment. In 2002 the Victorian College of the Arts was approached by an anonymous foundation with an interest to build upon the fledgling Indigenous development program established in 1997. The foundation asked the College to construct a strategic vision, with no limits on timeframes or budgets. The result was a seven-year strategic plan and a contractual relationship with the foundation of $3.6 million. The Wilin Centre has achieved success in a relatively short space of time\textsuperscript{19}, and is now poised to envision a new strategy for a renewed contract with the Foundation within the next twelve to eighteen months.

On most barometers the Wilin Centre has been very successful – retention rate, application rate, scholarship program - however, my experience as Head of the Wilin Centre highlights many of the ongoing challenges working in Indigenous leadership development. There are tensions about working in a university environment that is trying to ‘do well’ yet in action the work and commitment to Indigenous students, community and knowledge falls squarely in the lap of the Indigenous centre/Director of the Indigenous centre. There are tensions with being a manager of an Indigenous centre with Indigenous staff. I find myself acting as a protective layer between the university bureaucracy and the centre in a bid to protect the staff form the structural racism of the

\textsuperscript{17} Ottomann, J (2005) \textit{First Nations Leadership Development within a Saskatchewan Context}, unpublished PHD thesis, University of Saskatchewan: Saskatoon


\textsuperscript{19} Appendix One
university system. The downside of being in a role like mine is the challenge to create a nurturing space for students, staff and community and to protect it from the bureaucracy and mainstream – not to isolate, but in fact that is exactly what happens, no matter how open and welcoming you are, or how much free food and festivities you put on.

Another tension for Indigenous education and support within universities is the rate and nature of change. I have found rigidity within the bureaucracy at times of change that is frustrating and alienating to all staff, however as an Indigenous leader within this environment I cease to be able to understand how to move or work within this environment. The ease with which I can turn my back on that and concentrate on the internal work of the Wilin Centre is perhaps evidence of a choice to isolate, which compounds problematic relationships with management, the mainstream and the bureaucracy. So what’s working and how do you keep light, engaged and not distressed in these hostile places?

What I think the Wilin Centre is doing is leadership development and effectively growing Indigenous arts leaders. I say this plainly because the results speak for themselves, our graduates and students emerge into the arts sector armed with networks, opportunities and confidence that has seen a shift in the sector. They are intercultural leaders:

- Mark ‘The Black’ Olive: Graduate of Bachelor of Film and Television; now one of the faces of Tourism Australia and owner of Outback Café business – Pay TV show, catering business, foundation for young Indigenous Australians, tourism and business work
- Jacob Boheme: Graduate of Post Graduate Diploma and Masters of Puppetry; choreographer, writer and director of idja, opening and closing ceremonies of The Dreaming Festival, presented solo show at the ASSTTEJ World Congress of Children’s Theatre
- Andrea James: Graduate of Bachelor of Dramatic Arts; writer/director Yanagail Yanagail! Which toured the UK, former Artist Director of the Melbourne Workers Theatre, and now Community Arts worker for the Koorie Heritage Trust
- Gayle Maddigan: Graduate of Masters of Fine Art; exhibiting artist including solo exhibition Burial Grounds at Tandanya 2002 and winner of the Telstra Indigenous Art Award (Drawing) 2005

Our success is seen in the success of our graduates and their generative leadership return to the Wilin Centre. Our success is seen in or connections with communities and organizations and our dedication to the development of a thriving Indigenous arts sector.

The impacts the Wilin Centre is having across the country, is through our commitment to Indigenous arts and sector development through the establishment of the Graduate Certificate in Indigenous Arts Management and our partnerships with organisations like Berry Street Victoria, Ausdance Victoria, the South Project, Melbourne International Arts Festival, Brotherhood of St Laurence, Foundation House for Survivors of Torture and Trauma.

The connectedness that the Wilin Centre has built over the past five years in Victoria and further into a national scope, has invited others into our place to work together. The Centre is small in size and staff, situated in a weatherboard demountable built in 1924 and a staff of 5 our Centre is home to many and open to all. The consistency the Wilin Centre has shown to artists and community in our approach and the standard of the talent of the artists engaged is the key to the strong foundation of trust and connectedness that we have built upon which we grow some of Australia’s most exciting Indigenous artists.

Munro, K. (2007) Illuminate: Shining the Light on VCA’s Indigenous Alumni, Wilin Centre for indigenous Arts and Cultural Development University of Melbourne: Parkville
One of the questions I have, as Head of the Wilin Centre is how can we create a ‘place’ where Indigenous artists can feel at home in a foreign environment (university), and grow their own voice, confidence, vision and leadership? Much like Dudgeon & Fielder’s “emergent third space”\textsuperscript{21}, philanthropic funding, external partnerships and community/artistic engagement approach has created a protective place for the leadership to develop. Artists are encouraged to develop their own voice during their study, and the rigor of the training in the art disciplines demands commitment. The Wilin Centre creates a reciprocity relationship with students which results in a two-way exchange, basically what we do is build relationships that move Indigenous students away from a place of receipt into a powerful role of contribution.

\textit{Returning to the themes of Indigenous leadership development}

So how does the Wilin Centre, as an example of an Indigenous arts leadership incubator address the key points of Indigenous leadership development?

1. Commitment to ‘grounding’ the leader in community
2. Commitment to understanding community based role in the context of contemporary management and leadership
3. Challenge to create a decolonised leadership

The Wilin Centre has created a community on campus for the students, staff, key cultural advisors and VCA staff and students to belong to. This family is exemplified by the relaxed and open nature of the Centre and the practice of the students and staff in their support of each other. This community grounds the Indigenous artists as they study at the Victorian College of the Arts. This open environment is perfect for the informal conversations and opportunities that arise for artists to engage with projects, to speak about their practice, to meet other artists who are practicing in the sector like our annual artist in residence. These informal opportunities act as provocations to our students to engage beyond their course with a broader cultural dialogue. And all of these actions continue to remind us to ‘decolonise’ ourselves, to act genuinely and to express our own voice.

The Wilin Centre supports Indigenous artists through engaging and supporting their dreams in applying to an elite training institution like the Victorian College of the Arts; supporting, profiling and promoting them whilst they are studying at the VCA and employing them, promoting and profiling their achievements beyond the VCA, into their chosen career and the arts and cultural sector. Our alumni are the face of the small and dynamic Indigenous arts sector. Artists like Trevor Nicholls (The first Indigenous artist to exhibit at the Viennce Biennale), Mark Coles Smith (Film maker and Musician), Maroochy Barmbah (Opera Singer, Actor and Cultural Worker), Kylie Belling (Director, Actor and Writer), and Liz Cavanagh (Jazz singer, founder of \textit{The Liz Cavanagh Quintet}, member of the Black Armband).

\textit{Conclusion}

When we act in the leadership development area, contributing to the growth of leaders, do we consider whether ‘leadership’ is sustainable? Indigenous arts leaders have many responsibilities weighing on their work – community expectations and needs, public perceptions, and ultimately they have a voice that can transmit cultural stories and knowledge in innovative ways. For me, leadership in the area of the Indigenous arts is demanding, confronting as well as fantastic and satisfying. I find in myself that I want to protect younger artists from the burden of responsibility of being a ‘leader’ or a ‘role model’, yet I know and they know that this is their road to walk. So from

within myself I need to understand why this work attracts and repels me, why I don’t privilege my own needs and burn out on a regular basis. If this is the nature of Indigenous arts leadership, do I want to be in it? How do we create sustainable leadership in this complex environment?
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Appendix One

Achievements of the Wilin Centre 2003 – 2007
From: Strategic Review of the Wilin Centre 2007 by Helen Kemp

- A significantly higher retention rate for indigenous students compared with most other tertiary institutions (84% compared with 42%)
- Increasing numbers of indigenous students successfully applying to enter VCA – from 10 in 2003 to 24 in 2008
- Establishment of Wilin Words – the Centre’s quarterly newsletter
- Establishment and ongoing development of Wilin Week, a week-long celebration of indigenous talent
- Establishment and development of the Artists in Residence Program
- Initiation of the Graduate Certificate in Indigenous Arts Management
- Establishment of the Wominjeka program for orientating indigenous students
- The provision of relocation grants to 100% of students requiring relocation
- The effective use of VCA indigenous alumni to showcase indigenous talent, and provide role models for current students
- Capacity to give financial assistance to those students/applicants requiring support
- Employment of indigenous academics within the VCA
- Increase in the availability of indigenous reference materials in the VCA library/resource centre
- Building of Indigenous scholarships in the VCA from no scholarships in 2003 to a portfolio of 11 scholarships in 2008
Always masculine and always hegemonic? Intersections of leadership and gender in an engineering company in Sweden

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WORK IN PROGRESS – NOT FOR CITATION

The main purpose of the paper is to describe and analyze how leadership and gender is socially constructed in organizations, placing a particular focus on the relationship between men, masculinity and leadership. The paper draws on theories of doing gender in organizations, hegemonic masculinity, as well as research on men and management. The empirical data in the paper consists of qualitative interviews and observations of male managers working at three different organizational levels within a production unit of a Swedish industrial engineering firm. Parts of the empirical material are interpreted as organizational processes that contribute to the social construction of gender in accordance with a traditional gender order. However, the observations show the variation of different masculinities in this particular context. Initiating from the dominating pattern, the concept of ‘leadership masculinities’ is suggested to be used for analysis of the locally situated discourses and practices where leadership and masculinity intersect. The leadership masculinities also convey the dominant position of certain masculinities, while others are interpreted as kept implicit in the organization.

Keywords: doing gender in organizations, leadership, managers, men, masculinity

Introduction

It is a fact that men continue to dominate on management positions. With a total of 72 per cent men on management positions, there is still an over representation of male managers within the private as well as the public sector in Sweden (SCB, 2004). In addition, researchers report on a strong analytical connection between the concepts of leadership and masculinity (Collinson & Hearn, 1994; 1996). Within the field of critical studies on men, there is a considerable and growing body of research on the relationship of men, masculinity, organization and management. The concept of hegemonic masculinity has for example been used to study high positions within trade and industry. In this paper, the concept of masculinity in relation to leadership is discussed: what kind of masculinity is connected to leadership – is it always hegemonic masculinity? And is masculinity always masculine?

Aim and research focus

The main purpose of this article is to describe and analyze how leadership and gender is constructed in organizations, placing a particular focus on the relationship between men, masculinity and leadership.

 Initially examined is how leaders discuss and talk about their work, leadership, women, men, feminine and masculine. Secondly the actions and interactions of leaders are studied: what they do and together with whom. Thirdly the organizational context in which the leaders find themselves is described and analyzed. The organizational context is studied from the perspectives of gender distribution, organizational structure, company operation and its location, physical working environment and artefacts (products and production technology) as well as policy values. The empirical data in the article consists of qualitative interviews and observations of managers at three
different organizational levels within a Swedish industrial engineering firm (Fogelberg Eriksson, 2005).

Analytical tools
In this paper several concepts are combined: masculinity, gender and leadership. How these concepts are used in the paper is shortly described in this section.

Masculinities and hegemonic masculinity
Masculinity, masculinities and hegemonic masculinity are indeed widely used concepts (for an overview: Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005) – but also problemized and critiqued (Hearn, 2004). The definition of masculinity used in this paper is:

In using the term ‘masculinity’ we are invoking a definition that pertains to the socially generated consensus of what it means to be a man, to be ‘manly’ or to display any such behaviour at any one time. (Kerfoot & Knights, 1996, p 86)

In order to emphasize aspects of variation and hierarchy, masculinity is often used in the plural form: masculinities. For example, the often cited Masculinities by Connell (1995) discusses the interplay of hegemonic, subordinated, complicit and marginalized forms of masculinity. Connell’s definition of hegemonic masculinity refers to ...

Hegemonic masculinity may be understood as a norm for masculinity at a certain period in time. This norm is not necessarily performed or practiced by the majority of men, rather it may exist as an ideal. Hegemonic masculinity has been discussed in relation to doing gender in organizations (Gherardi & Poggio, 2001) as well as in relation to management and leadership in transnational and local contexts (Connell & Wood, 2005; Holgersson, 2003). The social construction of masculinity and leadership is often referred to as interrelated (Collinson & Hearn, 1994; 1996 Eds.), for example in terms of masculinity being a norm for management and leadership (Wahl, 1996).

In this paper, the interest is directed towards both men’s practices and the concept of masculinities in relation to leadership, despite the critique of the concept of (hegemonic) masculinity.

Doing gender in organizations
In order to find an analytical tool to discuss how masculinity and leadership is socially constructed in organizations, I use Joan Acker’s (1990; 1999) theoretical framework of doing gender in organizations, where construction of gender may be understood through four interacting processes: 1) Production of gender divisions. Professions, wages, hierarchies and power are distributed in a way that produces divisions between men and women, masculinity and femininity. 2) Creation of symbols and images. Corporate values and metaphors for describing for example leadership may be used to explain, confirm – and sometimes contest – gender divisions. 3) Interactions between individuals and groups. Interactions display inclusion and exclusion as well as horizontal and vertical gender divisions. 4) Internal mental work, which relates to the individual sense making concerning gender divisions.

The concepts of gender and leadership are used and understood as processes in the paper; herein meaning that gender and leadership is done in an organizational context.

Leadership
The definition of leadership used in this paper is the process of influencing others to understand and agree about what needs to be done and how to do it, and the process of facilitating individual and collective efforts to accomplish shared objectives. (Yukl, 2006, p 8).
With this type of definition of leadership the focus is placed on relations and processes. In a similar way to the majority of leadership literature, the focus in this article is directed towards the managers in that process. One distinction that is often made is that between manager and leader, where manager denotes the person who has formally, by some higher level, been appointed the authority to act on behalf of the employer, while leader denotes one who has gained the employees’ confidence and acceptance. Despite the distinction between leader and manager, these designations are often used as synonyms in studies of leadership, due to the fact, which is even the case here, that studies of leadership often use actual managers as a starting point.

Methodology

The empirical data in the article consists of qualitative interviews and participant observations of managers at three different organizational levels within a Swedish industrial engineering firm.

The interview material consists in the first part of 14 separate interviews with managers; 13 men and one woman. The youngest was 24 years old, the oldest 55. The interviews included questions on the managers’ family situation, personal background, work (contents, interactions, work load), competence requirements, characteristics of a good leader and their experiences and opinions concerning gender and leadership. The interview material consists in the second part of separate interview conversations (nine in total) in connection with the observations that were also carried out. These interviews mainly consisted of reflections of the specific working day. All interviews were tape recorded and transcribed.

The observations were carried out over 13 working days, a combined total of 109 hours. Five male managers were observed by each and every one of them being “shadowed” (Czarniawska, 2007) during different working days in order to gain access to aspects of the working environment, what the manager did and said and whom they met during the day. Short notes were made continuously during each day and at the end of the day the notes were written out.

The empirical data has then gone through a qualitative analysis of the contents. The result is summarized thematically, following the research questions of how gender and leadership is constructed in managers’ talk (mainly interview data), interactions as well as the organizational context (mainly observational data). Quotes from the interviews as well as excerpts from the observational notes are used to illustrate the described themes.

The local context

The company that has been studied is located in an industrial community (“bruksort” in Swedish) where it has a one-hundred-year-history. The local gender order can be understood as traditional (Forsberg, 1997) at the geographical site where the firm is located. The community has a tradition of male activities in terms of engineering firms and manufacturing spirit combined with a working class culture. The company has undergone a number of changes over the last decade; organizational, ownership and policy-wise. During recent years the firm, for example, has implemented new policies concerning basic values, work-life balance, leadership and gender equality. The newly introduced company policy concerning leadership, ‘the leadership guiding lights’, deals with aspects such as communication, to listen actively, caring by establishing strong personal relationships with co-workers etc. During a couple of years during the late 1990’s, the company attracts attention for winning a prize due to their systematic work with gender equality. At the same time as these changes have taken place, the business and product appear to be relatively stable in nature, for example via aspects such as the product’s durability/lifespan or the number of long-serving managers employed within the firm (cf. “brown-field company”, Morgan & Sayer, 1985).

The company has approximately 2000 employees; 83 per cent men, 17 per cent women. Women and men tend to work with different tasks, at different places and at different hierarchical levels within the company. Within the studied department, the production unit with 500 employees, there
are three management levels: one head of the production unit, six middle managers and 16 first line managers. The management positions are held in 22 of 23 instances by men. The typical first line manager is a man, approximately 50 years old with a long working experience within the company. The recruitment route is described in many cases as informal, with the majority of first line managers describing that they were asked (by male managers) if they were interested in becoming managers. All of the managers in this research group live in heterosexual couple relationships, the majority with children, and in different circumstances during interviews and observations the managers refer to their family lives.

Managers doing gender and leadership in their talk
When dealing with gender in the interviews, the managers emphasize above all on the differences between women and men, even if there are elements of an individualizing argument, that “the person/personality is more important than the gender”:

...we are all individuals with different personalities – leadership style is an individual thing.

The clearest impression however is that differences are emphasized, exemplified by the answers of two managers:

Women would focus more on personal relations./.../Women and men are different, we just have to look at each other to see that.

Men are more competitive generally, and focus their leadership on competition...I don’t think girls are competitive in that way.

The construction of femininity dominates in the interview material despite the limited experience of the managers of working together with women at management level. When talking about women, the managers mainly reproduce gender stereotypes: women are said to be particularly interested in personal relations, stay longer at each position, interested in the “soft” parts of leadership, have an adaptable language, broader perspectives, accuracy, gentleness and humility etc. There also exists a notion of women being more inclined to struggle among themselves when working together. Only four explicit descriptions of men’s gender characteristics appear in the interview answers: men are more competitive, men use few words, men want to move on faster within the company and men can be very tough on each other.

When faced with the question, gender equality among managers is comprehended as something positive – in principle:

My opinion is that there will be another atmosphere when women and men work together, you will get rid of the sexist jargon with women present.

You can form better teams with increased diversity.

However, a few managers state that gender equality measures, such as allocating gender quotas of management teams, should not occur just for the sake of it. Sufficient competencies for a management position must always be prioritized before a gender balance among managers, they state. Femininity in women managers is presented as something positive when it can contribute to supplementing the leadership that already exists. At the same time, there is a notion that women’s terms and conditions can be other than men’s in relation to leadership. One male manager says that he probably has benefits that he is not even aware of due to the gender order in society. The only female manager says:

Your really have to show them that you know what you are talking about before they will really listen to you.
The issue of gender equality is therefore an arena that both concerns a complementary femininity and women’s (worse) terms and conditions. Leadership is constructed as an individual project in the interviews. There, the committed, multi-competent, strong, stress-resistant, overtime working – but at the same time humble, listening, communicative and personable leader, appears. Three managers say:

You have to be a pushing strategist, push issues forward. Also analytical in order to do the right things.

You must be independent as a first line manager. He must make decisions, he must act on existing problems and solve them. Action is what counts. /…/ Also an interest in people and the ability to handle people and their conflicts.

He must be committed to what he is doing, and not least to the people he is managing.

From their answers, leadership may be understood to be “total devotion” – leadership is no ordinary job. The picture of the hero manager is disrupted, however, by the descriptions of the manager’s efforts to limit their work. The picture of the manager who sets the agenda and steers strategically towards formulated goals is shattered by the description of varying and shifting power bases and negotiation room – the managers describe that they are steered by what is happening in the business operations:

I usually look in my calendar to see what I am supposed to do every day in order to predict what I will be doing. However, my day does usually not turn out the way I have planned. /…/ I am controlled by the things happening around me.

In conclusion, there is an overwhelming agreement and similarity in the interview answers concerning representations of gender and leadership. One way of understanding this is that the discourses on leadership and gender are strong (Furusten, 1999; Hirdman, 2001). In addition, the common discourse concerning leadership seems to uncouple leadership from gender. The leadership that is described comprises the norm, and in this male dominated context it is so “normal” that the norm is male that there is no reason to make a connection to gender other than if there is an explicit question about this.

Managers doing gender and leadership in interactions in an organizational context
The notes from the observations, or shadowings, include descriptions of the working environment, work contents and interactions of the managers as well as their talk. Here a comparison of three first line managers – Sven, Lars and Anders - is extracted from the shadowings. These three managers were shadowed three days each. This example has been chosen to illustrate the similarities and differences between leadership practices.

Sven is 55 years old. He is managing welders, but he is not a technical expert in this field. Sven has been working in the company since he finished school, and he has been a manager for 18 years. Sven repeatedly mentions that it is important to cultivate the personal relations and contacts within the company, to keep in touch with certain people and to exchange information. This is crucial in the leadership role, he says. He is active within the managers’ union, and he finds it an important network for him. When shadowing Sven, he walks around his department several times per day in order to check on the operatives and if they need any specific equipment. When talking to his operatives, he mainly discusses what technical support they need. He mentions that it is difficult to manage welders as teams, they tend to work more individually. Sven stands out as more distanced to his operatives than the two managers described later. In total, he spends a few hours at his desk preparing meetings, scanning the financial situation and personnel matters. Sven likes to talk about his life outside the company. For example I get to know that he is a member of the local fire brigade.
He has grandchildren and he is a relative of his own boss. During the shadowings, he drops a number of comments that there is a female sphere of life, e.g. cooking and cleaning, that he does not wish to be part of.

Lars is 46 years old. He has been working in the company for 30 years and has been a manager for five years. He was asked to become a manager already ten years ago, but then said no due to personal reasons. Lars is responsible for teams that manufacture certain details of the product. Planning is a central aspect of his work, and he is the leader of five formal meetings concerning production planning during the three-day-shadowing. During these meetings, Lars plays an active and pedagogical role by structuring the discussion and he proceeds methodically through the meeting agendas. Several other formal meetings take place. Lars “runs out” to his teams in the workshop several times each day: to check the production status when next shift is about to start, sick leaves, staff changes, how the work is coming along etc. Lars mentions to me that he finds it important to adjust his leadership in relation to the needs of the individual members of his teams. Certain individuals need thorough guidance and support while others are self-governed, he explains. During short periods of time, Lars sits down at his desk to prepare meetings, read written information and he writes e-mails, makes telephone calls. Lars is, as Sven, an active member of the union. Lars does not talk so much about his private life, but he tells me that he has two teenage children and that his wife works as a nurse.

Anders is 53 years old and he has been working in the company for 35 years, as a manager for 20 years. He was recruited by a colorful manager of the old stock, he tells me. Anders is managing assembly teams, and he used to belong to an assembly team himself as an operative. Anders says that he has a strong orientation towards the operatives in the assembly teams: that is where I belong, he says. He wants to take care of his operatives without patronizing them. During the days I spend with him, he shows a strong relational focus in his leadership. He walks around the assembly teams several times a day and talks friendly to his operatives. Anders explains to me that he wants to influence his operatives in a subtle way, for example by asking them questions that will guide them, rather than giving plain orders. He also has several contacts with other functions in the company as his teams operate at the end of the production line, closer to delivery of the product. Anders carries a telephone and he makes and receives numerous calls every day. Anders always wears working clothes (overalls). The working environment is brighter and cleaner in the assembly area than in welding and manufacturing. The product and technology are brought up a number of times by Anders as something inspirational, interesting and personally motivating for him. Every day, he checks the financial budget situation of his teams as well as time reports. Orderliness and control of the economical situations is essential, he states. As Anders has been working for a long time in the company, he knows a lot of people and he always explains to me who different persons are and how he knows them. A couple of times, we meet Anders’ brother who works in the company. He also tells me about his personal interests and his family. He mentions that his wife is a house wife and they have chosen to organize their lives in accordance with what comes natural to them: “my wife is really good at house work”.

A similarity in the leadership practices described above is that they contain an almost constant contact and interaction with other people: operatives, colleagues, superiors etc in formal and informal meetings. The purpose of the interactions varies from decision making, to get or give information, to guide or coach operatives etc. Dependent on the situation, the manager plays a central or peripheral role. Concerning the interactions within the company, the organizational structure and current gender distribution give the conditions for how these interactions can be moulded in terms of gender. The major part of the interactions consists of interactions between employees and managers who are men - as a result of the organizational structure, as well as the gender distribution. The interactions that could be seen during observations when women as well as men were present, have above all strengthened the traditional construction, reproduction, of a gender imprinted organization, for example through interactions between male managers and
female secretaries, interactions in the production department management group where the female participants receive the administrative duties or are assigned a peripheral role. Via the observations there are also examples of how the introduction of a female manager has had the result that questions about gender have become a reality and partially associated with trouble (cf. visibility and contrast effects, Kanter, 1977).

Another similar aspect of the practice of these managers is the strong relational focus in their leadership. They spend substantial time walking around their teams in order to talk to their staff. According to themselves, not only to check on how the work is coming along, to guide or coach, rather to keep informed on how their “lads” are feeling not only as employees but in their private lives, how their families are doing etc in order to create a personal relationship to each operative. Creating personal relationships appears to be crucial aspects of leadership in these leadership practices. Networking is mentioned several times as important for the managers in order for them to perform their leadership in a satisfying way. One of the middle managers explains that networking is an active strategy for him in order to gain information on what is going on in the company.

Networking may even be connected to the interests in sports – one manager explains that he plays golf and visits trotting races with certain colleagues. During the shadowings there are numerous conversations between managers, managers and co-workers as well as between co-workers on sports, competitions and competing. This stands out as a kind of adhesive or common interest. Current international, national and local sport results are discussed and commented upon. The managers also talk about their own sport achievements and activities. The coach as a metaphor for the ideal leadership comes up in various situations during the observations as well as during interviews. In addition to the conversations on sports, competition and competing between the different production teams seem to create a sense of fellowship. Several of the observed managers point out that it is important to compete among the teams as it encourages good performance.

The local usage of language also create a sense of “we” or fellowship. When addressing each other or when the managers talk about their co-workers, they often use names as ‘boys, lads or old boys’. At one occasion when I was shadowing the production manager, a middle manager comes by and addresses us “Hi lads!”. After a second he changes it into “-and girl” while admitting that he always says ‘lads’ even if women are present.

The differences between the leadership practices relate to a number of conditions, for example the task of the teams and placing in the production line; the competence and commitment of the teams; as well as the background, opinions, personality and strategies of each manager. These three managers devote different amount of time for technical issues, for example.

Leadership masculinities
As mentioned before the firm’s history and traditions are imprinted by male dominance. Different types of relationships within the company, such as mentorship and networks, relatives, friendship and homosocial contexts, in addition to the male “adhesive” such as sport and technology, function as a stable foundation from which masculinity can be constructed. The masculinity that comes to the fore appears as “natural” and safe. What contributes to this security is the company’s external and internal context. Leadership is reproduced even through interactions as a male practice. To summarize some of the empirical impressions, leadership stands out as a long and male, dedicated as well as uniform story in this particular firm. When talking about gender the differences between men and women are preferentially described, where, above all, beliefs about women’s gender-typical characteristics are expressed. These beliefs are in the most part gender stereotypic.

Based on this background, the construction of masculinity and leadership may be understood as interwoven (Cockburn, 1991; Collinson & Hearn, 1994; Roper, 1996). The concept of ‘leadership
masculinities’ is suggested to be used for analysis of the locally situated discourses and practices where leadership and masculinity meet in reciprocal interactions. The ‘meeting’ between leadership and masculinity takes place in the managers’ descriptions and opinions of desirable leadership, traits of women and men as well as in the situated interactions. In accordance with intersectional terminology (Crenshaw, 1995), the constructions of leadership and masculinity are reinforced by each other. The leadership masculinities may be read as metaphors that describe the notions and practices displayed in the empirical material. The leadership masculinities answer the interconnected questions ‘what is leadership’ and ‘what is masculinity’ in this particular context. The description will be presented in the form of a typology of different forms of leadership and masculinity in the local context. Overlapping occur – each person (each male manager) may perform all leadership masculinities.

The Son of the District
A man and a manager functions as an inheritor and perpetuator of traditions in this context. The managers have strong local ties, through connection to the firm and involvement in the local society. Several managers have long working experience in the firm and can relate their own working life experiences to other men, colleagues and managers. Anecdotes regarding older, male, managers are told. Some managers have been recruited, hand-picked, of other men who chose them as suitable, helping them onto a management position. In that way, several managers may be understood as sons, that are taken care of by other men and that are being allowed to grow familiar with a leader role in the company. Also family relationships and kinship between managers contribute to the social construction of leadership as a practice of sons in this particular context. Aspects of informalism (Collinson & Hearn, 1994) occur as the managers use their informal relations in their leadership. Informal relationships are also developed in relation to traditionally male interests as sports. The metaphor ‘son’ indicates these informal relations and common interests between father and son that can function as an adhesive in a family. Another construction which applies to the family as a metaphor for the male relations in the workplace is:

The Father
The Father functions as a metaphor for the manager’s and the man’s “adult” leadership responsibilities. The manager is the one who must be mature enough to make difficult decisions, to be impartial and deal with conflict situations as well as having responsibility for the working relations of others at that workplace – which are some aspects of leadership. The adult responsibility as a Father also comprise other aspects of the relational work of leadership: to care for, create adequate working conditions, support and listen to the operatives. The male managers explain that they “naturally” have the traits and capacities necessary to deal with these, fatherly, missions. The Father even functions as a father figure in relation to younger managers (men) in mentor like relations. Leadership and masculinity include ‘hmosocial caring’ (Holgersson, 2003; Collinson & Hearn, 1994). All managers that participate in the observations and interviews also relate themselves as fathers in their private lives, by mentioning their children and even grand children.

The Dedicated
A manager, a man, is a dedicated person who is prepared to work hard and invest extensive energy and interest in his leadership: “he must be committed”. From the interview answers, leadership may be understood to be total devotion (Kanter, 1977) – leadership is no ordinary job (Hatcher, 2003; Singh & Vinnicombe, 2000). The dedication is directed to the attaining of goals regarding production and budget as well as co-workers. The dedication is also linked to the local ties, there is an extra dimension of belonging to the local community, the identification with the company and the product – to be a son or a father in the company. Notions of women’s difficulties working as managers fortify this leadership masculinity. The ideal leadership in the company includes a readiness to jump into a taxi in the middle of the night if necessary in order to deal with any
occurring crisis. This dedication in leadership is not possible for women, several male managers express.

The above three leadership masculinities are interpreted as in some sense dominating in the empirical material, in other words they may be understood as local versions of hegemonic masculinity and leadership practice. One leadership masculinity that stands out in the rhetoric surrounding leadership is:

The Feminine

Femininity is valued as something desirable in relation to leadership when formulated as concerning an adaptable language, broader perspectives, accuracy, focus on personal relations, gentleness and humility. This leadership masculinity captures something of the variation and contrast to the dominating pattern that is also found in the material; for example in the form of family and relationship orientation at both a policy and practice level. The company policy concerning leadership for example, deals with aspects such as communication, to listen actively, caring by establishing strong personal relationships with co-workers; aspects which may be understood as “non-masculine”. The male managers’ strong orientation towards personal relations may very well be interpreted as something different from homosociality, rather an other kind of masculinity separated from the hegemonic forms – rather femininity.

Discussion

It is not particularly surprising that the organizational context is dominated by traditional gender patterns, given the firm’s history of male dominance. Using Acker’s analytical entries (1990), we can see that within and throughout the organization (structure) a number of gender divisions are (re)produced: women and men work with different tasks, at different places and at different hierarchical levels within the company. Not least of these, the latter contribute to the image of leadership as male. The gender division process is supported for example by the informal recruitment procedures applied to management positions - men being recommended by men. The homosocial camaraderie, with amongst other things sport as a common “adhesive”, as well as a difference creating language about the genders is perceived here as contributors to gender dividing processes in the organization. Parts of the empirical data can in this way be perceived and understood as organizational processes that contribute to the construction of gender that follows a traditional gender structure. The organizational context is in this case an example of “the hegemony of men” (Hearn, 2004).

However, against the secure picture of leadership and gender in the business operations there are potential threats or challenges. Within the organization different guidelines for management have relatively recently been introduced, for example in terms of ‘leadership guiding lights’, which can partially be interpreted as an expression for femininity, for example to care about and to communicate/listen. In the company’s basic values there are even guidelines for how individuals can find a balance between their professional and private lives that does not advocate a professional behavior based on long working hours. The firm’s equality policy also puts gender in relation to leadership under a magnifying glass and functions as a challenge to the traditional gender order in the company’s management organization. The organizational changes that have been carried out bring with them a shift in how management should be defined, and possibly who or whom can be considered suitable managers.

Thus, the strong, uniform and intact descriptions of leadership and gender exist together with variations, different emphasis, complexities and paradoxes in the empirical material. Similarities and dominating patterns can be understood via theories of gender order (Hirdman, 1988; 2001), homosociality (Lipman-Blumen, 1976; Lindgren, 1996; Holgersson, 2003) and hegemonic masculinity (Connell, 1995). Acker’s (1990; 1999) analytical entries, which in their parts function as parallel arguments to a gender system (for example preconceptions/symbols and structure/division
of labor) also illustrate the stable and reproductive constructions of leadership and gender. The variation is represented by the different persons taking part in the study – they share the fact that they are men and managers, but their preferences and experiences as men and managers may vary (cf. gender as seriality, Young, 1995). Thus reproduction and change exists in parallel (Forsberg & Grenholm, 2005). I suggest that there are a number of leadership masculinities that coexist side by side and that these can be perceived as establishing the norms within the business operations, where the emphasis indeed lies on masculinity, but with a streak of femininity.

Gender-aware organizational research has demonstrated time after time that the conditions for women and men respectively as managers differ. Conditions are coupled to the strong male image that surrounds management; for example to that the male dominance of the management positions remains, to the rhetoric surrounding leadership as well men’s conception of women (as managers). How then should we understand the results in relation to the context in this article? That it can be difficult for women to become and to work as managers we can formulate a hypothesis about – but can we also possibly question which difficulties male managers can experience in relation to the dominating discourses and practices (Ekenstam et al., 2001)? There are norms and traditions that are “in with the bricks” that, for example have to do with that it is good to be at work a lot and that it is good to have long-serving experience within the company; even different traces of something that can be described as male imprinted industrial working culture (for example sexist jokes, demonstrations of physical strength and mechanical competence, Wajcman, 1991; Collinson & Hearn, 1996). A majority of the managers express the view that a “macho” or sexist jargon can be toned down only when someone “different” comes into the group, i.e. the arrival of a woman can automatically confer legitimacy for changing the tone and discussion theme. The managers present a changed jargon as desirable and this could be interpreted as an attempt to criticise the norm. Homosociality in this context can be understood as a process that does not just reproduce male dominance, where men can take advantage of or profit from homosociality’s dividends in terms of security and access to power. Lindgren (1999) for example has demonstrated that there is a strong conformity in relation to the gender order at the homosocial level – which not all men feel comfortable with because the individual male’s relation to women can deviate strongly from the logics of the gender order. As also other researchers have shown (e.g. Holgersson, 2003; Connell, 1995) the homosocial processes also exclude certain men. The homosocial processes can therefore function as a limiting norm that encroaches on the repertoire of actions for those who exploit the dividends of homosociality.

Conclusion
Even in this essentially single gender environment and by tradition male dominated workplace, with a number of dominating leadership masculinities, there are variants and variations of masculinity. One conclusion is that male managers are allowed to be mutually different as individuals – but at the same time form the entirety (cf. Höök, 2001). The expression of an interest for family matters and the strong relationship angles are two aspects that could be seen as expressions of characteristics of femininity in men. Femininity is presented also in the interviews as something which can provide a potential for change, an opportunity to effect the construction of manliness in another direction; from rawness and sexism into something “softer”. At one and the same time as those who participated in the survey contribute to the reproduction of “the mega-pattern” they question also, more or less explicitly in their conversations and actions, the stereotypic perceptions of gender and leadership. The variation is certainly expected when assuming a ‘masculinities-perspective’, but this perspective may function as a contribution to the tradition of mainly using structural/patriarchal theories of gender in studies of organization and management in Sweden.
To return to the title of the paper, is the leadership of men always masculine and always an expression of hegemonic masculinity? Being a male manager in this organization indeed implies a dominant position on a collective level. As noted before, the organization is characterized by the hegemony of men. The leadership masculinities also convey the dominant position of certain masculinities, while others may be interpreted as silenced or kept implicit in the organization. On
the individual level, there is also a greater variation amongst the male managers in their practices as men and managers – and it is possible to interpret these practices as not always masculine or hegemonic.

References
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The MR Game: ‘Deal or No Deal’ Reality in Higher Education

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Abstract
The contention of this paper is if leaders, leadership and institutions/organisations are to be transformed an awareness of their cultural consciousness and projected reality is vital. This is an ethnographic study that reveals the perceptions by female academics that there is a ‘career advancement game’ accompanied by a tacit understanding of how this should be ‘played’. The song “you’re so vain, you probable think this song is about you” comes to mind. The point being if there is a sense of player identification it reflects how endemic playing the game is. The practice of the game is not that tacit as the phenomenon can be observed and experienced as male and female misogyny. For those who do not want to play the game and have a career the questions being asked are, how did this become a reality and is it infallible? Answers to these questions can be found with Jean Gebser’s (1949/85) foundational work on cultural consciousness. He demonstrates that reality is a cultural construct, which we have co-created. It is Gebser’s work that helps demystify the game. He suggests that the cultural reality being projected by the game is a mentally rationalised one. The game is predominately a mental rational (MR) construct that reflects a meaningless reality and another is emerging that has an integral nature.

This paper is an attempt to reflect an integral consciousness, making transparent the presence of all structures of consciousness in the tertiary workplace and how they contribute to the career ‘advancement game’ that is dominated by a (deficient) mentally rationalised (MR) view of reality. The deficient aspects of the mental rational reality that have come to dominate are hierarchy, patriarchy, power, competition, ego, oppositional thinking, fragmentation, and only a three dimensional/linear sense of space and time. The MR game I argue presents a meaningless reality and by playing the game, accepting the deal inhibits engendering leadership. Sinclair (1998) also highlights that the “traditional understanding of leadership have become exhausted – cynically exhort, barren of meaning and unable to offer us hope” (p.1).

To find meaning and hope involves recognising and understanding the presence of cultural consciousness within Western organisations/tertiary systems. Jean Gebser (1949/1985) suggests that cultural consciousness constructs reality. Culturally we are reality makers. He identifies the (reality) structures of Western consciousness as archaic, magical, mythical, mental and integral. It is crucial to recognise that the structures are not hierarchical but co-exist, and that there are efficient and deficient reality projections. When the deficient dominates reality becomes meaningless and a further (plus) mutation occurs. The mutation of a structure is the systemic disruption of the human generative system, which allows another structure of consciousness to unfold. Gebser argues that a fifth structure began unfolding in the 20th Century; the integral. The integral he argues will provide transparency of all structures of consciousness. To understand the role and impact of consciousness in engendering leadership transparency is vital. To assist in the transparency an ethnographical approach has been adopted. Ethnography allows for the emergent culture to manifest. As Pat Arneson (1993) highlighted in The Expression of Lived Experience, “the master’s tools will never dismantle the master’s house” (p.98). Or in engendering leadership, the tools of rationalism will never dismantle the MR game. Jean Gebser’s view was that “contemporary methods employ predominantly dualistic procedures that do not extend beyond simple subject-object relationships: they limit our understanding to what is commensurate with the present Western mentality” (1949/1985 p.7). The following paper is based on my communication notes and conversations with my colleagues in different tertiary institutions, faculties, schools and departments that have accumulated over the past four years. Although at the time I did not know these would emerge as a paper or as I now intend as stimulus for future research. Consequently, as this was not a designed study but an emergent one I have since asked people if I could use their workplace experiences. All
names and identifiable aspects have been changed to protect the non player the no deal women in the workplace.

Making Transparent Magical Consciousness in the Workplace
The tertiary workplace could be described as tribal places where people belong to certain groups (faculties, schools and cliques), where rituals bestowing accolades, induction processes, retreats, meetings, Friday night drinks are observed. Those outside a nominated group are feared and what Gebser (1949/85) describes as sorcery is used to dis-empower the other and empower the sorcerer. This can manifest in many forms. One such way is self inflation; say it often enough and people will begin to think about that person as being an authority. Self promotions appear common practice and can take many forms. Asking a colleague for support in solving a problem, as it is their area of expertise can result in a response being cc’d to the senior leadership ‘team’ outlining how busy they are lecturing, researching and supervising higher degree candidates. Or there is the entire department email thanking three or four people who attended an event organised by the e-mailer. The personal thank you abandoned for the MR game. There is also the sorcery of maligning another and the attempt to manipulate those in the upper hierarchy. There is also the ‘smoke and mirror’ aspect of management in not insuring governance is transparent. Withholding knowledge is a form of empowerment. All of this suggests in cultural terms the dominating presence of the deficient aspects of magical consciousness being enacted (Gebser 1949/85). The desire to belong as social beings can make us complicit or isolated in the MR game.

Making Transparent Mythical Consciousness in the Workplace
Mythology is present in the tertiary organisation. The female shaman is a powerful (magical/mythical) figure in the MR game. The shamanic myths as Mickunas (1994) highlights in Nepal, ‘Tibet’ India and South East Asia are paradoxical as there exists within the female shaman both desirable leadership and terrifying acts. The efficient aspect of the mythical consciousness is they provide visionary advice that can protect. “They are able to establish working agreements between sources of energy... they can sense the environment to be more than what appears directly and acts on this insight” (p.7). There are also the terrifying acts of death heads with female shamans calling for the (be) head (ing) of another and then being adorned with it (Mickunas 1994 p.8). We are well aware of those metaphors surrounding management ‘speak’ ‘heads will roll over this’.

Recently Mary shared her story with me where she came back from long service leave to find someone else’s possessions on her desk, the telephone message bank was recording messages for some else and her computer password was not working. Her female ‘superior’ called her aside showing Mary to her ‘new’ working space. Part of the explanation for this was Mary had ‘a personality problem’, But she ‘was going to work with her on this’. Prior to going on leave Mary had been quite vocal about her disbelief that another female colleague had not been given an advertised position that she felt her colleague was well suited. Mary felt that her head had rolled as a consequence.

The mythical manifests also in the vitality of strength. This strength can be life saving or makes possible terrible acts in learning organisations. Consequently it would seem that it is essential for engendering leadership that the female paradox not be separated through rationalised categorisation. With this omission of the whole the effect is the empowerment of the deficient element by denying the efficient other. Paradox is an important part of the balance and the transparency of an integral consciousness allows for the a-wareness of the potential imbalance.

Making Transparent Mentally Rationalised Workplace
Gebser’s (1984/85) work identifies how the mental rational way of thinking, is oppositional, and engineers progress through force and might. Oppositional or binary thinking in the area of management has contributed to the disenfranchising of the other which is especially observed with
those who are: ethnically different, economically impoverished, gays, women, children and Gaia. Engineered progress by management has resulted in the ‘Tragedy of the Commons’ (Senge 1990) whereby those in power have acted independently without recognition that their actions have advertently brought about social and environmental degradation. This tragedy has been aided, also ironically, by rational academics both in the workplace and through research. Mavin et al (2006a) are aware that universities are uniquely placed to play a crucial role in enabling individuals, organisations and professional bodies to critically challenge their ways of working and thinking. The danger with ignoring this role is that it leads to impoverished learning, an anathema to the knowledge society. (p.33)

What we perhaps should be discussing is the lack of fit between management/leadership and the ecology (social and environment) of tertiary institutions. Presently the mis-fit, is aligned with the presence of a closed system – where there is little if any opportunity for organic renewal let alone sustainable practices. There is a tragedy of the commons happening and consequently universities run the risk of emerging as barren places noted by the absence of an intellectual capacity of a diverse integral nature. Managers have been mining and exploiting the mental rational (MR) way of knowing so much that it presents a meaningless reality for the 21st Century. Integral leadership and CEOships have not been encouraged. There is a growing awareness aided by chaos theory and systems thinking of the autonomous interdependency that exists with open systems where adaptation and co-operation (rather than survival of the fittest) allows for sustainable practices. The management mystique of the MR masculinity is no longer as captivating or sought-after in 21st Century leadership. The MR reality is cultural created and is fallible. Gebser (1949/85) documented that when a culturally constructed reality loses meaning it implodes and another forms.

How often have your heard the phrase from your female colleagues “you have to play the game if you want to get on”? This appears to be ironically the dominant sentiment, which is freely shared, although in private. Female academics appear conscious of the game and the rules and yet they appear blind to being co-creators (with their male colleagues) of a discriminatory and dysfunctional reality. Many authors on engendering management and leadership write about the ‘male career world’ and the game for women is to become a significant member of the patriarchal hierarchy where attributes such as power, quantifiable successes, aggressiveness, competitiveness, firmness and being just are highly prized (Mavin et al 2006a). The word game has many associated connotations: players, winners and losers, rules, luck, strategy, team, individual, goals, progress, beginning and end, competitive and manufactured. These words are prolific in management and leadership texts. Many authors including Mavin et al. (2006a) argue that the “language of management is resolutely masculine (p.36). Terms such as independent, objective and competitive are cited as examples. Building their argument Mavin et al (2006a) refer to Coates’ view that “the suppression of femininity is a prerequisite to joining the corporate crusade” (p.37). They support their argument also by referring to Wacjman’s thesis that the presence of women “in the world of men is conditional on them being willing to modify their behaviour to become more like men or to be perceived as more male than men” (Mavin et al 2006a p.37). However, what I would like to suggest is that what is occurring is more complicated than the binary opposition, which is so often written about as a gender argument. A transformation in our understanding, which could lead to a-gendered leadership, seems paramount if organisations are to encourage toxic free work environments.

**Workplace Experiences**

It is the western cultural consciousness of men and women that together have co-created a dominating mental rational view of reality. This sounds harsh and it is. The powerless collude in the hope for attaining power. The phenomenon of the mentally rationalised reality (in the extreme form) is characterized by the dominance of fragmentation, hierarchy, ego, a temporal ...and the emphasis is materialistic, all of which leads to the disenfranchisement of self and the other (within and between genders). These are some of the identifiable characteristics adopted when playing ‘the
game for self advancement’ in a mentally rationalised reality. The following work place experience highlights the subtlety of self advancement at the expense of another. On this occasion the academic involved was a non teaching fellow although in the same department, but not work in the same area, or with the female colleague Samantha. Initially the academic points out to Samantha that she was not ‘around’ to answer a ‘confused’ student and that there were due to mistakes she had made. The language implies the academic is more conscientious by her very presence. The emphasis on there being confusion over a timetable is purposeful as it allows them to pursue the notion that ‘mistakes’ have been made by the lecturer. The message was based on the hearsay of one student and how the author chose to interpret the student’s concerns. It seemed opportunistic that the academic made the most of a student’s confusion and possible mistakes.

A student saw me today because you were not around. Many students are confused and need clarification from you. She said the message you sent had a few mistakes

The message could simply have been a student came looking for you can you contact him/her on the following number....

The argument by Nieva and Gutek (1981) is that “the price extracted from women even peripherally included in a predominately male work group a willingness to turn against other women, to ignore disparaging remarks about women and to contribute to the derogation of other women (in (Mavin 2006b p.74). The following workplace experience involves a senior academic reporting on a ‘subordinate’ female colleague to their supervisor. What is clearly stated at the outset is that the senior academic does not and has never regarded Jane highly, nor ever will. For the senior person Jane does not have the depth or experience required and if she had been consulted the junior academic would never have been hired. What is communicated further is that Jane does not even seem to know what she should be doing or what is going on. Instead the senior academic goes on to promote the male members of the teaching group even suggesting that they not only have excellent knowledge, but they are kind and helpful lecturers. The implication being that Jane does not even have the attributes of being kind or helpful. This communication about Jane was done without her knowledge. The senior academic had not and continued not speak to Jane and their communication was only ever via email. What is present in this example is a demonstration of the willingness to turn against another and to contribute to the derogation of women by women. Mavin (2006b) reflects on Greer’s (2000) comment that “women are still more likely than men to be disloyal to their same sex – colleagues (p.74).

When male academics display the MR attributes (power, quantifiable successes, aggressiveness, competitiveness, firmness and justness as identified by Mavin 2006) this can lead to misogyny in the work place. Equally, when female academics act out the MR behaviours this can lead to female misogyny. What Madden’s (1987) research shows is “women … zeroing in on woman” (p.xvii). What she found 21 yeas ago was rivalry and not co-operation. She describes techniques such as “lying, character assassination, back stabbing and sabotage” (p.1) as being the modus operandi. The irony is, however “few of us would accept that, in either our personal or social lives, force, or power leads to any genuine intimacy or sense of community” (Zohar & Marshall 1994 p.69). This projection of reality as having to be ‘dog eat dog’ to survive is sabotaging efforts for an engendered leadership and with this the opportunity for healthy and vibrant workplaces. The transparency of the MR game will assist co-creators (players and none players) to acknowledge the damage this bestows on people, (who are the) organisation and the culture.

Madden’s (1987) research 21 years ago raises the question: Have things changed? More recent research and literature indicates that the answer is no. The following is another workplace experience, which suggests that the status quo is the same in the 21st Century. What manifested was an attempted character assassination, by a senior academic again about a ‘subordinate’ female person to the leadership group. This communiqué was delivered without prior warning or to the
knowledge of the ‘targeted’ person ‘Sally’. The event that the senior academic was responding to they had not been involved in any way, nor was she present, unlike other leading academics. Sally in fact had had no communication with this senior academic on any topic/issue verbally or via email. The senior academic began her disparagement by suggesting she had her theory about Sally but at that time would not elaborate; perhaps this is an indication she would at a later date if asked to. It does seem likely that there is the possibility that the senior person chose the opening statement as a means to create an invitation for her theorising. What came next was the intimation that the senior knew Sally and her behaviours patterns so well due to her familiarity with her. The senior academic then spent a page and half explaining and building an image of how caring and concerned she is for students and administration the connotation being Sally is not. After creating the shadowy intrigue about Sally and the positive attributes of her own demeanour the senior then makes the statements that Sally has in particular caused her emotional stress that no-one on the leadership group could envisage. The senior academic has created an atmosphere of her suffering in silence; martyrdom a quality to be admired. Her parting words suggest that it was Sally who had forced her to give up one of her previous roles, thus creating a very damning picture. The final powerful remark for the leadership group was who would believe her now or if she were to elaborate, creating an oppositional picture of the two women.

When Sally discovered what had occurred and conversed with some of her colleagues they laughed and said she has blamed other people in the past for why she has had to stand down from positions, don’t worry. Other male committee members shrugged Sally’s dismay off with comments “don’t worry that is what she is like” or comments such as “she is mad ignore it”. As Madden (1987) highlights men fight also but usually the outcome is a winner and a loser. When Women fight both are losers (p.2). In this case both women were losers, one a victim the other ‘mad’. In Sally’s case an apology was sought, it came in the form of an email to the leadership group apologising for sending the email and Sally was ‘cc’ on the email. This example reflects how “in an ego society we are self-centred but rational. We balance our desires with respect to those of others through rational self-interest. We calculate, and we relate through a personal calculus. We manipulate to get our own way” (Zohar & Marshall 1994 p.70). The writer of the communiqué wanted to elevate herself at the expense of another. “Powerless people typically protect their territory, establish themselves as indispensable and become rigid and authoritarian” (Jacobson 1985 p.188).

As Jacobson (1985) points out “the way women behave is the way all powerless people, male or female, tend to behave” (p.185). What we are perhaps not recognising in our behaviour towards others is that there is systemic collusion that maintains the dynamic equilibrium of the closed tertiary system it does not entropy nor is there negentropy. This is collusion by the powerless in an attempt to gain ‘power’ and usually over the powerless. However, this is not gaining freedom, which necessitates a transformed system (Briggs & Peat 1999).

The dominance of a patriarchal culture is also a mental rational (MR) reflection of reality. The feminine in leadership and workplaces (in general) has been categorised via separation thus the creation of two separate entities. There is the vital aspect of nurturer and empathic listener and in opposition the cold and calculating female someone to be feared as exemplified in the film ‘The Devil Wears Prada’ (TDWP). As this film so aptly reveals what has manifested generally from this fragmentation of the female, as a consequence of the MR game is androgynous ‘power dressing’ women, who often become other women’s worst ‘enemies’. Andrea the main character in the film is faced with the meaningless reality of the MR game as she attempts to join it as a means of survival and consequently has to squarely face verition (truth of the world – a transparency of consciousness) where authenticity versus playing the MR game is the (efficient) integral choice. Just as clothes labels display power and influence in TDWP There also appears to be ‘devils’ that wear hierarchical labels in the tertiary scene. Sitting in on an Early Career Researcher (ECR) committee meeting I noted that TDWP experience is common across faculties. ECR are often reliant on the support of a senior academic (at least) when applying for grants and pursuing publications. Some
times kowtowing is an important magical ritual that is performed in the MR game. Kowtowing can be seen by career game players as an act of diplomacy and for others it is viewed as maintaining the mental rational ego of the individual and hierarchical system. One ECR relates a time where there was minimal support for an application as it was seen as being too ‘ambitious’ as there had not been a successful application for a smaller grant prior to this attempt and the ECR had not sought sufficient instruction from the academic overseer (AO). Although the grant application had been written with a grant writer and then read, edited and supported by three other well established international researchers the ECR had to meet continually with the AO redrafting the application (changing points such as – the application to be replaced with this application etc) to find that when it went before the board for consideration the application was not supported by the AO. The Devil indeed wears Prada (labels).

When ECR shared her early thoughts about the ‘imposed arduous mentoring’ process with a colleague she was told “you will have to play the game”. The ERC questioned this logic wondering how the colleague would know when it was no longer a game but a reality, she was assured that self reflection would aid in her knowing it was ‘only’ a game. The ECR walked away feeling that her colleague had missed the point as the game was a reality, deal or no deal we are all co-creating. There is also the presence of (deficient) didactic mythologising that abounds learned halls. When listening to some of the more senior female academic there is a sense that ‘they did it tough’ and the implicit message is so will every other newcomer, but at their bidding. “Research has shown that women are often narrow in their views of what their position of authority is and end up with an authoritarian style (Jacobson 1985 p.188). Female misogyny has become an initiating ritual it would seem. It does appear from workplace experiences that mythologising the past legitimise such attitudes and actions. The perpetuation of the mythology then occurs when people play the MR game and do unto others as have been done to them. Verition (world as truth) indicates female misogyny is part of the MR game.

Feeling extreme pain at the suffering of some, and yet able to see him[her]self as one who might cause such suffering... There is the potential to be all of these things, to be all others. (Thich Nhat Hahn in Zohar & Marshall 1994 p.169)

There are many assumptions about what motivates people. A part of the motivation mythology that is present in so much of the leadership management literature is what Levinson (2006) terms the carrot and stick method. People are motivated to play the MR game to receive the carrot and less of the stick. What Levinson (2006) highlights is the dualism that underpins motivation: trust and rights. What is being advocated is the need for “trust and openness among employees and mangers, but at the same time they acknowledge that the more powerful have a natural right [mythology] to manipulate the less powerful ... a blatant mask of paternalism (Levinson 1996  p.136) The consequence of this dualism outlines Levinson (2006) is “increased inefficiency, lowered productivity, heightened absenteeism, theft and sometimes outright sabotage (p.163).

What should not be ignored also is the bastardisation of the masculine projected by managers in the hierarchical halls of the ego. This form of bastardisation is apparent in Johnson’s (1997) argument who highlights the existing mythology that “every man is diminished if he can’t sustain a self-image in which somewhere, in someone’s eyes his seen as triumphant, a winner, dominant hero or at least in control. Control is a crucial element of the mental rational reality and therefore is present in the MR game. Human beings since the industrial and scientific revolutions in the West at least have come to see themselves in control; they are the designers of destiny. Yet the irony is we are not in control rather we are ceaselessly pursuing the idea of being in control. What Johnson (1997) also highlights is how “men’s participation in patriarchy tends to lock them in an endless pursuit of and defence against control for under patriarchy control is both the source of the only solution they can see to their fear” (p.29). However, with the manifestation of an integral consciousness this irony is made transparent. As Mavin et al (2006a) points out “Patriarchy is not
optional – it is a complementary social process between men and women and can only be liberated through a struggle to change the system” (p.35). The efficient of integral mastery in leadership does not have to be about control of ideas or people. Mastery can present instead as a “required entry and complicity with the event, becoming the event and undoing it in accordance with its own ways” (Mickunas 1994 p.10). The latter requires a transparency of efficient and deficient ways of creating reality. The entry, complicity and becoming the event, are present in the MR game; although it would seem the latter part remains dormant through its invisibility. Verition (is “perception in truth, seeing things as they really are. It is a seeing through things” (Feuerstein, 1987, p.221) is not fully present in West’s cultural consciousness. However, inadvertently the mental rational reality is becoming unraveled or undone in accordance with its own ways: the logic and the exaggerated rationality of a controlling fragmented, oppositional hierarchical system of management are becoming more meaningless with the growing awareness of the need for sustainability as the key to survival. What is desirable is allowing for open systems within organisations via engendering leadership, where flexibility, non hierarchical shared decision making and accepting responsibility, knowing that one’s actions have an impact on the visible and the invisible trends and drivers.

It is not only control that is a characteristic of the mental rational reality that plays out in the MR game. Notions of competition, Herbert Spencer’s legacy of the ‘survival of the fittest’ (Egan 2002) abound rather than adaptation for organisational sustainability. “While the bureaucratic structure, with its heavy emphasis on internal competition for power and position is often touted as a devise for achievement, it is actually a [closed] system of defeat” (Levinson 2006 p.136). This imported power-struggle of the mental rational reality Levinson (2006) argues breeds “infighting, empire building, rivalry and a sense of futility” (p.137). The MR game is the least democratic game to be played. Women, Madden (1987) argues see each other as “adversaries in the quest for job security, promotions, mates and more (p.1). This too seems to still be prevalent today in tertiary and other educational institutions. There are two incidences that I have recorded that best reflect Madden’s point the first one is a conversation that was relayed to me by a young and experienced administrator Janette, immediately after she had been told by a colleague that their workplace is like ‘Survivor’ we have to vote off the strongest link, you have been showing us up… so Sorry Janette.

Janette quickly realised she was not seen as part of the winning ‘team’ and the implication being she was going to be voted off literally. When she reflected on the conversation she had known this for some time, as there were the hushed conversations and silence when she walked into the staffroom. Although Janette was officially at the same level as the other ‘team members’ she had previously held a more senior position elsewhere, but had changed roles due to family commitments. It would appear that her previous experience was threatening to her all female ‘team member’. Janette continues to experience female misogyny which includes comments about senior management being attracted to her.

Another incident involving a junior lecturer and a senior academic who rarely spoke. Then one day the senior female started a conversation, which revolved around her wanting to know what the ‘junior’s’ ambitions were? To which she answered ‘there were none really other than to be in a stimulating work place and to have a sense of happiness about going to work’, the senior academic laughed and said ‘this will change’. That was the end of their conversation. What Madden (1987) suggests is “because women are not advancing this becomes a breeding ground for boredom, frustration, anger, resentment, jealousy, hostility, suspicion, insecurity, mistrust and fear” (p.3). What Madden describes is the breeding ground of the mental rationalised view of reality in the workplace.

What the MR game reflects is a closed system and survival is based on the fittest, yet eventually even the fittest succumb when faced with someone more powerful, they lose their power and position, which was only ever temporary as it was relative. The MR game appears cyclic but this is
not sustainability. Cycling often only reproduces and replicates, it does not generate new ideas, practices, improve worldviews, leadership, vision, or equity. Engendering leadership relies on an open system where there is the transparency of consciousness whereby we are a-wared to our being co-creators of the reality and the impact we have on the ecology (socially and environmentally) regardless of whether immediately visible or presently invisible. There is also veritication – world as truth, not a fragmented rationalised truth. Adaptation is a crucial element rather than compliance dominating. Finally and equally significant is the a-waring of complexity; being autonomously interdependent rather than emphasising categorisation, hierarchy and gendered leadership, competition and ego. Engendering leadership is not about facilitating the game’s continuance; it is about saying no deal!

References
DEVELOPING SUCCESSFUL WOMEN LEADERS:  
THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION FELLOWS PROGRAM

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ABSTRACT
This narrative research study focuses on the experiences of a group of American women who participated in an experimental program funded by the National Institute for Education (NIE) from 1979 to 1982. The program was designed to provide opportunities for women and minorities to participate in advanced study and research on problems in education. At a 2007 reunion attended by 10 of 15 surviving program participants, it was confirmed that all had completed their doctorates and had achieved career success as presidents of their own consulting firms and as professors and administrators in higher education. The women’s stories demonstrate how the program helped developed their leadership abilities and contributed to their later career success.

Keywords: women in higher education, women leaders, gender and degree completion, graduate education.

INTRODUCTION
Acker (1991) describes gendered organizations as those where “advantage and disadvantage, exploitation and control, action and emotion, [and] meaning and identity are patterned through and in terms of a distinction between male and female…” (p. 167). Many problems that women face in organizations, such as sexism, are a result of the women’s structural placement (Acker, 1991): tightly bunched at the bottom and so scarce at the top that they stand out as tokens (Kanter, 1977). In the gendered university in the United States, women are clustered at the bottom of the academic career ladder as assistant professors, instructors, and lecturers, while men are clustered at the top as full and associate professors (U. S. Department of Education, 2008).

This narrative study focuses on the experiences of the women who participated in an experimental program at the University of Tennessee (UTK) from 1979 to 1982. The program was funded by the National Institute of Education (NIE) and was designed to help women (and minority) doctoral students receive the advanced training and development they needed to enter and succeed in the field of educational research. In this paper we first discuss the history and current status of women in academia in the United States, then provide a brief overview of the NIE Fellows program, and present findings from our narrative analysis. We conclude with implications for practice.

HISTORY AND STATUS OF WOMEN IN ACADEMIA IN THE UNITED STATES
Thirty years ago, the landscape for women doctoral students in the United States was bleak. In 1979-1980, women earned just 29.7% of all doctoral degrees (U. S. Department of Education, 2007). In engineering and the sciences, the statistics were especially grim: women earned 12.3% of the doctorates awarded in the physical sciences and 3.9% of those given in engineering. Moreover, women doctoral students encountered few professors who looked like them; only 21% of faculty members in 1972 were women (U. S. Department of Education, 1991). Based on this limited number of professors, and with so few women entering the pipeline to become professors, there were few role models in the academy who could serve as mentors for women students. Indeed, women who are now university presidents reported that when they were in graduate school, they had difficulties in finding mentors (Madsen, 2008).Yet mentoring is a key element in degree completion (Nettles & Millett, 2006) and relationships with faculty are critical to success at the doctoral level (Girves & Wimmerus, 1988; Lovitts & Nelson, 2000).
Women entering American graduate schools in the 1970s and 1980s had an advantage over those who tried to pursue doctoral degrees in earlier decades: the Civil Rights and Women’s Liberation Movements of the 1960s resulted in affirmative action mandates that opened the doors to graduate education leading to academic careers (Bronstein, 2001; Moody, 1988). Taking advantage of these mandates, women began seeking academic careers in greater numbers. Yet their progress was slow. In the 1980-1981 school year, only 49.7% of women professors were tenured, compared to 70% of men professors; five years later, the numbers were 51.7% for women and 71.3% for men (U. S. Department of Education, 1991). In addition, women began to encounter perceptions that they were unfairly benefiting from affirmative action legislation because they (1) had improved their status in academia and (2) no longer faced obstacles to their career aspirations (Clark, 1977).

These perceptions were and continue to be erroneous. As noted by Trower and Chait (2002), “Despite 30 years of affirmative action, and contrary to public perceptions, the American faculty profile, especially at preeminent universities, remains largely white and largely male” (p. 2). Although women’s overall numbers in academia have increased over the years, they are still disproportionately represented in lower ranks. Women are also slower than male faculty to be tenured and promoted, and earn less than their male counterparts (Keim & Erickson, 1998; Krefting, 2003; Trower & Chait, 2002). Acker (1991) noted that men are generally found in the highest positions of organizational power. This is certainly true of the academic world, as demonstrated by the statistics in Table 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>% Women</th>
<th>% Men</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Professor</td>
<td>25.1</td>
<td>74.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate</td>
<td>38.8</td>
<td>61.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant</td>
<td>46.0</td>
<td>54.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructor</td>
<td>52.8</td>
<td>47.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lecturer</td>
<td>52.3</td>
<td>47.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Digest of Education Statistics 2007

Women professors may be as productive as their male colleagues, more actively involved in research, and more likely to receive fellowships, and yet still feel they are not recognized and are excluded from the informal networks that are important in any job (Elg & Jonnergård, 2003; White, 1970). These feelings are exacerbated when, as assistant professors seeking tenure, women are advised to avoid conducting research or teaching about marginalized issues such as gender (Krefting, 2003).

A BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE NIE FELLOWS PROGRAM
In the late 1970s, the University of Tennessee (UTK) applied for a grant from the National Institute of Education (NIE) to develop an experimental program designed to provide advanced educational training and research opportunities for women and minorities. The project was selected for funding and began in the summer of 1979 with the selection of six predoctoral fellows. Over the three years for which the project was funded, a total of 18 predoctoral students participated in the program. The NIE Fellows received full tuition plus a stipend; this funding allowed them to pursue doctoral study full time. Funding was also available for travel to conferences, workshops, and internship experiences. All but one of the Fellows were women; five were African American.

A key goal of the program was to engage the NIE Fellows in activities generally known to lead to degree completion and subsequent career success. To develop the skills and acquire the experience needed to become leaders in the academic world, the NIE Fellows wrote research proposals, conducted research on “real world” issues, made presentations at key meetings, and developed support networks by interacting with peers and faculty. They were also involved in the planning,
management, and evaluation of the program. The NIE Fellows participated in special leadership workshops that provided training such as conflict management, nonverbal communication, and applying for grants. They were also exposed to organizational issues through workshops on women in higher education administration and activities of UTK’s University Commission for Blacks. Senior faculty provided instruction, served as mentors, and directed the students’ research and writing efforts. Senior faculty and postdoctoral associates accompanied students to conferences to co-present papers and to introduce the NIE Fellows to key people in higher education and educational research.

An important aspect of narrative research is capturing the historical, cultural, and/or political factors that influence a person’s narrative. During the years of the NIE Fellows program, 1979 to 1982, most university departments were dominated by white males. These male professors were often autocratic with their female advisees, and some expected sexual favors. Sexism and sexual harassment were widespread, both in the university context and in the macro context of the United States (Clark, 1977; Gray, 1977). The widespread sexism and harassment of the era are illustrated by two episodes recalled by women who attended the reunion meeting. In the first, a woman who wore a sundress in class was admonished to wear more conservative clothing by a professor who said he could focus on nothing but her breasts. In the second, another woman reported that a professor exposed himself to her during a conference trip and raged at her afterward when she did not respond to his advances.

METHODS
We used a narrative research methodology (Riessman, 2008) for this study. Narrative research can be defined as “any study that uses or analyzes narrative materials” (Lieblich, Tuval-Mashiach, & Zilber, 1998, p. 2); it contains elements of realist, postmodern, and constructionist perspectives.

DATA COLLECTION
A reunion of the NIE Fellows program in 2007 brought together 10 of the 15 surviving graduates to talk with the project administrator about their experiences in the program and to share their subsequent career stories. The discussion, more than two hours in length, was tape-recorded and transcribed for analysis. Other than a brief introductory question posed by one of the authors of this paper, the conversation was unstructured; no interview protocol was used. Three authors of this paper participated in the group discussion, while the fourth author joined the research project at a later date.

DATA ANALYSIS
To analyze the audiotaped reflections of the 10 women, we used thematic narrative analysis, which is considered appropriate for a group meeting such as the NIE fellows’ reunion. Group interviews have some advantages over individual interviews in that:

Stories told in group settings are less likely to be rehearsed, that is, they may not have been told similarly before. They typically emerge in fragments, with each speaker adding a thread that expands (or corrects) what another member contributed (Riessman, 2008, p. 123).

Because the NIE Fellows had not been together for 25 years, and had never reflected together about their doctoral experiences, their stories had certainly not been “rehearsed.” Commonalities among participant experiences soon became evident, however. As members of the group shared key memories and stories, there were frequent nods of recognition and verbal affirmation of these commonalities, e.g., “Oh, yes!” “Right!” and “Absolutely!”

After removal of all identifying information, the transcript was read aloud and thematized by an ongoing interdisciplinary interpretive group that has been meeting weekly at a large United States university since 1994. In the meetings, transcripts from qualitative research projects are read aloud;
the group stops frequently to discuss any words or phrases that seem to shed light on the meaning of participants’ experiences. Members of the group sign confidentiality agreements, asserting that they will not discuss contents of transcripts outside the meetings.

For the present project, three two-hour meetings were required because of the length of the transcript. A total of 10 readers, from disciplines such as psychology, education, nursing, and political science, participated in the sessions devoted to this transcript. None of the interpretive group members was aware of the location of the NIE project, or that the group’s co-leader had been an NIE fellow. Discussion was lively as preliminary themes and patterns were identified and labeled; labels were often modified as the text presented new evidence that would cast earlier conclusions in a different light. This iterative group process was recorded in notes kept by the co-leader, providing an audit trail. After each of the three group analytic sessions, preliminary themes were discussed among the research team members via telephone conferencing. Ultimately, the team achieved consensus regarding eight themes. In this paper we highlight four of the themes that pertain to leadership and mentoring.

FINDINGS
The narrative analysis research group identified four themes relating to leadership and mentoring: (1) We Became Our Own CEOs, (2) It Was the Opposite of the Queen Bee Syndrome, (3) You Don’t Have To Be the Top Banana, and (4) Paying it Forward. The names of these themes were closely aligned with the actual words used by study participants. Each of these themes is described below and illustrated by excerpts from the narratives of the NIE Fellows who attended the 2007 reunion.

THEME ONE: “WE BECAME OUR OWN CEOs”
The title of this theme, taken verbatim from the transcript, captures the essence of a heady time of leadership training, during which the women students were entrusted with the management of the NIE grant and experienced a variety of leadership roles. This is in keeping with Maxwell’s (1993) assertion that “leadership is developed, not discovered” (p. ix) as well as Sample’s (2002) suggestion that “leadership is learned through study, apprenticeship, and practice” (p. 2).

Study participants viewed their hands-on experience in leadership roles as invaluable to their later careers. Participants credited their remarkable level of responsibility to the project director. One woman, speaking to the project director, said, “One of the things I found so engaging and surprising was that you did hand that over to us…You supported us, but you said, ‘this is yours.’” Another participant echoed, “I did not anticipate it being nearly that self-directed, and it was great!”

The position of Chair rotated periodically among the students, giving several the opportunity to be “Chief Executive Officer” (CEO). One woman, now an academic dean, recalled what it was like to be selected as the Chair:

*I was told [by the project director] ‘your peers see you as a leader, so we would like for you to step in as Chair’...I was like, ‘Oh my God, I don’t even know what I am doing here.’ But that vote of confidence made all the difference...When you realize that people see something in you that you might not see in yourself, you begin to trust those people...You begin to say, ‘well, there must be something here.’ And that’s always been in the back of my mind, and that has given me the confidence to step forward in many other situations throughout my career.*

Opportunities for leadership experiences, in roles other than Chair, were abundant. For example, one student would assume the responsibility of arranging workshops and sack-lunch colloquia. Topics considered in these sessions included finance in higher education, women in government, communication and proxemics, and preparing for job interviews. Another student would edit the newsletter. The students created a logo that was used on their business cards, newsletters, and other printed materials. They conducted their own meetings; made decisions about allocating funds...
for their peers to travel to conferences; and wrote major portions of the required quarterly reports for the federal government about the progress of the project. Students also made a number of presentations about the project at professional conferences, in collaboration with the project director and/or various faculty mentors. Suggestions for consultants, research collaborators, and internship experiences were generated by the students themselves and submitted to the project director. Each cohort except the first participated in interviewing student applicants seeking to become part of the next cohort, evaluating the applicants on a 25-point rating scale they had devised.

One might suppose that these project-related responsibilities could become burdensome, given that the NIE Fellows also carried a full academic course load, but the following quotes negate that supposition:

*It was a fun experience. It really didn’t feel like work. I remember writing presentations and preparing them, but it didn’t feel like work.*

Second speaker responds: *You’re right, it didn’t feel like work.*

**THEME TWO: “IT WAS THE OPPOSITE OF THE QUEEN BEE SYNDROME”**

The key to student comfort with their diverse leadership responsibilities was the support and mentoring they received from the female mentors associated with the project. One woman pointed out:

*Before I had the NIE fellowship I was your stereotypical female graduate student, in that I had four male committee members who guided my life at that point...They were not role models, they were not necessarily very strong researchers, they were not supportive.*

Participants spoke of “strong, intelligent women, women who wanted us to succeed.” This is the opposite of the Queen Bee Syndrome, a term used to describe the behavior of some women in senior positions. Queen Bees do not help other women and may even attempt to neutralize or sabotage the efforts of other women to reach the senior level (Camussi & Leccardi, 2005; Joel, 1994).

Other participants elaborated on the “different world” and “different assertiveness” the project facilitated:

*In my department, we had only two female faculty members, so interaction with females was not a part of the reality. When I got the fellowship, it was like a whole different world. I was among women. Being with this group of women was empowering.*

*This was women facilitating, supporting women, encouraging women...women bringing women and giving women opportunity to advance and do better.*

*We had a different assertiveness about us, or a different confidence.* Second speaker adds: *We were validated in a way we didn’t have to fight for it.* First speaker resumes: *...and that was very different.*

**THEME THREE: “YOU DON’T HAVE TO BE THE TOP BANANA”**

Although some of the graduates evolved to be “top bananas” (e.g., deans, directors, executives) across the intervening 25 years, others displayed nontraditional kinds of leadership behaviors that they had observed, and modeled, within the world of women supporting women. Interesting metaphors were used to describe these nontraditional roles and behaviors. For example, one woman described herself as a “mole,” implying that she works unobtrusively to accomplish her goals:
I didn’t want to be the top banana...I never wanted to be an administrator...I got involved in a professional network by being very collegial, very cooperative, reaching out to engage people, which is what I learned in this group [the NIE project].

Other women spoke of being “connectors” or “bridges” to help people communicate. They fostered environments of inclusion and collaboration, whether in academic, governmental, or private enterprise endeavors.

The NIE Fellows’ stories relate to the view that leadership has more to do with relationships and connecting with people than with positions and titles (Kouzes & Posner, 2003; Maxwell, 1991; White, Bunch, & Davidson, 1999). Maxwell (1991) defined leadership simply as influence and asserted that good leadership begins with effective communication. Women leaders interviewed by members of the Institute for Women’s Leadership at Rutgers University expressed similar sentiments (Hartman, 1999). Some were uncomfortable with the term “leader” while others believed the time had come to rethink theory and practice regarding leadership.

THEME FOUR: “PAYING IT FORWARD”
The NIE Fellows unanimously voiced a sense of responsibility to “pay forward” to mentees what they had been privileged to experience as doctoral students. Faculty and postdoctoral associates provided mentoring for the women in the program. This mentoring was especially beneficial to the Black women doctoral students because Black women often have great difficulty finding mentors (Madsen, 2008; Woods, 2001). The idea of “Paying It Forward” is also consistent with Madsen’s (2008) finding that a desire to help others develop and succeed motivated women university presidents to take on leadership roles. The NIE Fellows do this by one-on-one mentoring (“growing people”) as well as by creating structures to perpetuate what they do after they are gone. For example, one participant currently directs her university’s diversity initiative; in the past, she has co-chaired an anti-harassment team and started a support service for gay, bisexual, and transgender students. The following quotes illustrate this theme:

We were to be teachers, we were to be researchers, we were to do something in the community. We have to mentor those that follow, and I see that as a privilege.

You need to provide those qualities that would make another individual want to emulate some of the things you do...openness and willingness to be a mentor to others...you need to give back.

I see myself in a mentoring role, and I think [that] comes from being in that supportive environment...I was always the one who would take on a student.

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS
This research adds to a meager body of literature about graduate programs (Girves & Wimmerus, 1988). Unlike the few extant studies about doctoral education (Golde, 2005), this study describes a successful program that can serve as a model for an innovative approach to doctoral education and leadership training for women. This study also demonstrates the importance of federal government support of education through fellowships and funding for programs, although this type of support is no longer available to American doctoral students. Research on graduate education and leadership training for women is still needed because women continue to be underrepresented in the higher professorial and administrative ranks of American universities.

The NIE Fellows program was designed to address many of the issues that hinder the success of women doctoral students and to provide real-life experiences that help to develop leadership and research skills. In addition, the program provided the financial support that made it possible for the women to study full time and to travel to conferences. Mentoring from senior faculty was an
integral part of the program, and peer relationships were encouraged and nurtured through group projects. These peer relationships also were an important source of support for the women. As one commented, “... the most important thing to me was just the friendship and developing a relationship with these wonderful women.”

Madsen (2008) reported that learning from experience is one of the best ways of learning to be a leader. The NIE Fellows program demonstrates that providing women with a variety of formal and informal leadership experiences in an atmosphere of support and easily accessible mentoring prepares them to assume senior positions in higher education, consulting, and other fields. Among the 10 women who attended the reunion were academic deans, professors, founders and presidents of consulting firms, a therapist, and a business owner. The overall impact of the NIE Fellows program can be summarized by this quote:

“When I listen to everybody’s story, what becomes clear to me is that society has gained so much that they invested in us...In many different ways we have given so much in all our different fields, and all the different ways in which we contribute. That may not have been possible without the fellowship.”

References
Is the Concept Leadership Gendered?

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The main questions addressed are if the concept of leadership is gendered and how to proceed in research. This is a conceptual paper, based on a literature review but also grounded in my own research on women and leadership in Iceland. I maintain that neither research where gender is ignored nor research with a focus on what women leaders have in common are satisfactory. Neither approach challenges masculine hegemony because all theories and texts display a binary (duality and hierarchy) and the positive elements of leadership are associated with masculinity, hence the leadership concept and the discourse of explanations seem gendered even if defined in a gender neutral way. While men can use their gender and sexuality to empower themselves as self-confident credible leaders, women have to renounce their femininity and thereby part of their humanity, and thereby their authenticity as leaders. To focus on feminine qualities is restrictive as it increases the likelihood of women being situated as “softer” or “emotional leaders”, as there is a spillover between traditional gender roles and leadership. A more promising way ahead is to adopt a poststructuralist viewpoint, avoid all essentialism and realize that both the concept and the context of leadership are gendered; focus on leadership in context, from many different perspectives, including the organizational and the cultural, not only the individual, even during neoliberal times. Diverse leadership is not only an issue of the market and better results, it is also a human rights issue which should never be forgotten. Political means to change the situation via mainstreaming are recommended.

Introduction

Identifying true leaders is what Women’s business’s Hall of Fame is all about. Leadership has no gender, ethnicity or religion - only the desire to build trust and act responsibly.

(Women’s Business Boston, October 3rd, 2005)

The quotation above from the editorial of an American business journal reflects the view that men and women have equal opportunities to be leaders. But how can we then explain the low number of women leaders in most areas of public life? In The Second Sex de Beauvoir notes that women cannot be complete as authentic human agents, if they have to renounce their gender and sexuality. While strengthening the power, credibility and influence of male leaders, gender and sexuality seem to be more problematic for women leaders (Sinclair, 1999). Could it be that the views presented by Simone de Beauvoir (1953/1972) that women are “the other” because they are not male are still of relevance? What does research and theory tell us about the importance of gender and sexuality for leaders and administrators?

Although magazines regularly feature articles on women as leaders and administrators, research on leadership has surprisingly often ignored gender. In recent years much research has focused on women leaders and gender and leadership in general (Sinclair, 1999; Avolio and Gardner, 2005; Hogue and Lord, 2004; Carli and Eagly, 2001; Carli, 2001; Schein, 2001; Yoder, 2001; Eagly, 2005; Eagly and Johannesen-Schmidt, 2001; Fletcher, 2004, Grisoni and Beeby, 2007; Heilman, 2001; Marshall, 2007; Michie and Gooty, 2005; Rippin, 2007; Rudman and Glick, 2001; Ryan, Haslam and Postmes, 2007; Indvik, 2004; Broadbridge and Hearn, 2008; as well as on women as leaders and managers in education (Young and Skrla, 2003; Shakeshaft, 1989; Blackmore, 1999; Guðný Guðbjörnssdóttir, 1997, 2001, 2007; Marshall, 2004; Rusch, 2004). The topic is debated and challenging and involves conflicting arguments with deep theoretical, philosophical and cultural roots.
It is increasingly considered a drawback for organizational units not to include women in their leadership due to reasons of image and the democratic demand for broader leadership or workforce diversity (Coffey, Huffington and Thomson, 1999; Catalyst, 2004). The solution is often to include a few “safe” women in key positions and repair the image. “Safe” in the sense that they do not provoke the accepted conventions of the organization (Sinclair, 1999). Women however are doing well as leaders and managers in many fields of society and research suggests that women as leaders have strengths that are often linked to gender, but also conform to today’s ideas on what it takes to be a good leader, including being democratic and having good communication skills (Shakeshaft, 1989; Blackmore, 1999; Gudbjornsdotir, 1997, 2001). So how can we explain the slow progress in getting women into leadership or top management positions? The discourse on the lack of women leaders can be summed up in the following four kinds of explanations, based on available research (Sinclair, 1999; Shakeshaft, 1989; Indvik, 2004; Blackmore, 1999; Gudbjornsdotir, 1997, 2001; Coffey, Huffington and Thomson, 1999; Carli and Eagly, 2001; Yoder 2001; Fletcher, 2004; Eagly, 2005):

1. It is not considered a problem; the gender of leaders does not matter.
2. The women themselves are said to be the problem. They lack the appropriate education, interest, necessary political insight, experience as top leaders and managers and they have to go through a tug of war between work and family. The so-called pipeline theory has been popular, i.e. that women are gradually coming into leadership because they are getting better education. There is however little evidence that the pipeline theory is correct and it has given way to the idea of the glass ceiling (Carli and Eagly, 2001; Indvik, 2004; Sinclair, 1999).
3. The third kind of explanations involves obstacles related to the organization itself, or the spillover between gender, leadership and management in the leadership context/community/society. More is expected of women; the corporate culture is hostile towards women; it is considered better have the leadership team of the same gender; men in leadership positions silence the issue; lack of training opportunities; prejudice and gender stereotypes; lack of encouragement and support; exclusion from informal networking and lack of mentors; their work is devalued; they are thought of as different leaders that do not belong at the top because of stereotyped essential gender differences (Sinclair, 1999; Coffey, Huffington and Thomson, 1999; de Beauvoir, 1953/1972; Schein, et. al 1996; Schein, 2001; Heilman, 2001; Rippin 2007; Rudman and Glick, 2001).
4. It is accepted that a change in attitudes is needed in society. The culture and leadership of organizations need reshuffling. It is acknowledged that leadership does not take place in a genderless vacuum, both context-and gender sensitive analysis is needed that also bring in other social markers of power and status. This view is evident in the gender mainstreaming policy of the European Union, which calls for the equal opportunities of men and women in leadership and management. Women have to be able to work with integrity and show authenticity, without facing prejudice and an unsuitable/hostile working environment (Yoder, 2001; Rusch, 2004; European Commission, 2006; Pollack and Hafner-Burton, 2006; Hogue and Lord, 2007).

These explanations focus on individuals (2), organizations (3) or the society(4), but in a poststructuralist sense all of them rely on the binary opposition of gender, where men dominate as traditional male oriented representations are the norm and women are submissive or the “other” (Bendl, 2008; Lacan, 1977).

This article is an attempt to deconstruct the discourse on women, power and leadership. I will discuss prevailing ideas and theories on leadership and the position of women as leaders and managers in order to see whether leadership is gendered. The main question addressed is if the concept of leadership is gendered, and how that is reflected in research. Finally an attempt is made to look ahead and theorize on how to proceed in research and in practice.
Is the concept of leadership gendered?

There are many definitions and theoretical approaches to leadership. Those theories and points of view have historically gone through extensive development as there has been much research on the topic. Goffee and Jones (2000) point out that the faith in human perfection which prevailed during the rationalism of the 19th century receded with the influence of Freud and Weber in the 20th century, when ideas on bureaucracy and human imperfection arose. Until 1940 theory and research on leadership had focused on trait theory, later (until 1960) on style theory and until 1980 contingency theory was in the limelight. Since 1980 the emphasis has moved to the leader’s responsibility for motivation and transaction/transformation in regard to goals and means. As for the situation today there seems to a twofold picture; on the one hand an emphasis on an agentic or instrumental leader with emphasis on hierarchy and leadership behavior in terms of power over and power from; on the other hand the transformational or charismatic leader who emphasizes influence and empowerment of self and others, or power to. Instead of task performance as the most important indicator of leader effectiveness, group outcomes and individuals’ development are valued (Yoder, 2001). Leadership teams, in organizations or in schools, which do not have one distinct leader are increasingly getting more attention. Senge (1990), for one is critical towards the leadership concept and says it is time to give it a rest, as it is more useful to talk about learning organizations. This shift from the heroic actions of few individuals at the top to a more collaborative leadership practices throughout an organization, is sometimes referred to as post-heroic leadership (Fletcher, 2004).

It has pointed out that at least 65 different theoretical frameworks exist that cover the concept of leadership (Northouse, 2004). Some focus on group development, others on individuals’ personality, and others on behavioral patterns. Leadership has been defined as a power relation, ways to reach goals, or as skills or knowledge possessed by individuals. Those who emphasize individual traits usually mention factors such as intelligence, self-confidence, decisiveness, integrity and communication skills. Skills include technical skills, communication skills and skills in working with concepts and theories, and there are in addition many models of leadership styles. Psychoanalytic strands of thought emphasize the importance of upbringing and the individual’s relationships with family and friends as a precondition for good leadership. Usually the core of the leadership concept concerns processes, influence, groups, organizations and goal directed behavior. Northouse defines leadership as a process whereby an individual influences a group of people to reach a common goal (2004, 3). Common definitions of a leader are: “someone who has followers” (Drucker) or “who has influence” (Maxwell) or „a leader knows himself, has a well articulated goal, builds up trust among his followers, and is active in the leadership role (Bennis) (Leadership definitions http://teal.org.uk/leadership/definition.htm). Yoder (2001) maintains that there are no singular definitions of leadership, because of the two extremes of the heroic leader and the transformational one and that most leadership exists along the continuum between these two extremes.

But what is meant by the question if the concept of leadership is gendered? This is a reference to gender as a cultural concept that covers the characteristics we assign to people or phenomena based on cultural expectations or symbols of femininity and masculinity (Shakeshaft, et. al, 2000). Gendering is then “a integral, deeply embedded dynamic of social orders ... an organizing process expressed as multiplicity rather than one gender-order... Within gendered contexts, people create and enact gendered identities, and perceive others as doing so” (Marshall, 2007, 176). Although, as discussed later, the concept of gender has itself become more problematic recently (Broadbridge and Hearn, 2008) it is clear that gender and sexuality are not parts of the definitions of a leader above or of most theories on leadership, for that matter (Avolio and Gardner, 2005).

What suggests then that the concept of leadership is gendered or that there is a connection between leadership, gender or sexuality? Some theories of leadership emphasize the concept of charisma. Charisma was investigated by Weber (1968) and defined as personal characteristics that
few people possess and are almost supernatural, which lead to them being acknowledged as leaders. Those personal characteristics have been defined and include being decisive, assertive, having a strong longing to influence others, good self esteem and a strong feeling for their own moral values (Northouse, 2004). In analysing the discourse of leadership by rereading available research and texts on leadership, Calás and Smirich (1991) conclude that leaders can only be males according to the texts because the symbols and metaphors used are based on hegemonic masculinity and that a circle of seduction assists in maintaining gendered powerknowledge relationship, with men as the norm and women as “the other”. Stivers (1993) also suggested in the nineties that the leadership concept is gendered and pointed out that in Western societies leaders are expected to be decisive, to have a vision, be courageous and be creative thinkers. Masculinity is not a part of the definition but because the leader’s qualities coincide with characteristics of masculinity the concept was in fact gendered. The gendered idea of the leader was then used to justify the continuity of white, male dominance and reluctance to call for political or economic changes. Similar views have been presented by others. Boucher found that women managers she spoke with about leadership “reject the stereotypical male values of a leader (emotional distance, objectivity, unconditional confidence, etc.) and developed a clear sense of their own values” (1997, 155). Masculine and feminine values have been well articulated (see Linstead, et al. 2005) and many women do not want to fit into a male dominated company mold, and leave these organizations or start their own (Catalyst, 1998; Wajcman, 1998). 

This last decade has been lively in research on leaders, managers and gender, sometimes without reaching the public debate or mainstream sources neither in education nor management (Young and Skrø, 2003; Eveline, 2005; Heilman, 2001; Yoder, 2001; Tyler, 2005; Hogue and Lord, 2007; Linstead et al., 2007; Fletcher, 2004; Grisoni and Beeby, 2007; Broadbridge and Hearn, 2008; Marshall, 2007; Rippin, 2007; Ryan et al, 2007; Bendl, 2008). Amanda Sinclair (1999) argues that leadership is in need of a revision not least because it is gendered. Gendering leads to women being perceived differently than men in the same situation, i.e. the expectations are different. The reasons she traces back to dualist ideas about gender. All texts display a binary (duality and hierarchy) with the traditional male oriented representations (A) as the norm and female oriented representations (not A) as “the other” (Bendl, 2008; Lacan, 1977). It comes as no surprise to anyone that women and the feminine are discriminated against and that their gender is not valued as highly as men’s, as well expressed in various feminist sources. What is probably of surprise to many however, is the acknowledgement that masculinity and leadership go hand in hand in people’s eyes. This is reflected in a title of a research article „Think manager - think male” (Schein, Mueller, Lituchi et al. 1996), and the association seems to be formed early on as seen in research on teenagers’ ideas of leaders (Magnusdottir, 2003).

Sinclair (1999) theorizes that the association between leadership, prevailing ideas on masculinity and the male stereotype is one reason for why it takes such a long time for the number of women leaders and managers to grow and why they feel they way they do when they do get into leadership positions. She found that the main values in the leadership of large companies in Australia were maleness, club culture (excluded women), solidarity, interest in sports and language with metaphors of combat and conflict. The women leaders in Sinclair’s (1999) study were likely to hesitate in calling themselves leaders, experienced pressure to conform to the male culture at the top, felt that women were either seen as sexual beings in the work place or mothers when they got older, felt that their assistants gave their work and needs lower priority than the men’s work in similar circumstances, and reported that their family’s support had limits. Last but not least they thought it was easy to lose the feeling of themselves, i.e. by experiencing a loss of self, body and sexuality. Sinclair (1999) maintains that gender and sexuality are important parts of people’s identity, not least for leaders. She believes that power, gender and sexuality are closely connected and shows how men can use that to their own empowerment, but not women. The latter have to renounce their sexuality to avoid insults, harassment or abuse. Sinclair reaches the same conclusion as Simone de Beauvoir (1953/1972): in order for women to be complete beings and strong leaders
and have a possibility to stand equal to men, they must not renounce their femininity or sexuality. While being a leader reinforces the self-esteem of men, the connection between leadership and the female self-esteem is much more complicated. Being seen as a woman – being pregnant, talking about family, wearing feminine clothes, speaking for women or feminists – often weakens their leadership ability in the eyes of others. This is why women often choose to undermine their gender and sexuality in order to fit into the group. But by trying too hard to be one of the boys they lose their uniqueness, authenticity and credibility and weaken themselves as leaders.

This theory is in line with Goffee and Jones’ (2000) research which points out that if one gender is in minority in the workplace (less than 20%) then gender stereotypes are often formed (Eagly and Johnson, 1990). A common response of women leaders and managers to such stereotypes is to make themselves invisible, wearing clothes like and even talking like men. At the same time they lose their uniqueness as leaders. Daring to be different or unique in any way is precisely a characteristic of good authentic leaders, in addition to being sensitive to the situation, demonstrating understanding and team spirit but also having and admitting a weakness. Another common response of women leaders to gender stereotypes is admitting to them, i.e. by adopting a “nurturing and supportive” image and thereby supporting the restrictive stereotype. There seem to be two options and neither of them is good; either to admit to the stereotype of women leaders and maintain them, by being a caring or a flirting leader, or trying to be like the male leaders and thereby losing authenticity as a person and credibility as a leader. The third option is to resist collectively, which can also be problematic. Similarly Calás and Smircich (2004) argue that the rhetoric of welcoming “feminine” characteristics into management in the 1990’s, but since partly disappeared, accepted only some stereotyped qualities like caring and nurturing and suggest that there are other qualities of the feminine that should be valued more, qualities that resist the consumer society and crimes against humanity in the name of economic rationality. Essentialism is still going strong!

In education there has been a call for new directions in research on leadership (Skrla and Young 2003; Bank, 2007). In interviews with women it is common that they either renounce their femininity and try to be one of the boys, or describe themselves and women leaders in general in a traditional “feminine” way which is often exaggerated. The women often fall under the glass ceiling if they are white, and if they are black the glass ceiling seems to turn into concrete. Linda Skrla (2003) after analyzing the discourse on women superintendents in the US agrees with the view of Ferguson from 1984 that the discourse on female leadership style was an unsuccessful attempt to enable women to be accepted as women and as leaders, without changing anything that matters in organizations or schools including gender discrimination. Women often describe the leadership style in this feminine way, and often they add that they themselves are different, more masculine (Gudbjornsodttir, 2001). Early research on women’s leadership styles often looks at women leaders’ characteristics, which is conducive to stereotypes (Shakeshaft, 1989; Eagly and Johnson, 1990). By doing so they reinforce traditional stereotypes of women as leaders and managers even if mentioned that these qualities are not fixed or essential to all women. The underlying processes seem to be a spillover of traditional female and male gender roles onto leadership behavior and the prejudices women encounter in leadership (Eagly and Johannesen-Schmidt, 2001). Yoder (2001) points out that not only is leadership itself gendered, but also he fact that the leadership process occurs within a context which itself is gendered.

Poststructuralist research sometimes overcomes this problem by viewing people as subjectivities situated in dominant discourses (Blackmore, 1999; Gudbjornsodttir, 2001; Young and Skrla, 2003) or focusing on gender expression (Butler, 1990) and the interplay between factors such as age, race, situation or context. A more sophisticated picture emerges, but the hegemonic masculine value attached to the concept of leadership is not challenged, at least not in practice.
Conclusion and Discussion

My conclusion is that even though traditional definitions of leadership do not account for gender as a factor, this is gender blindness, as the concept and process of leadership is gendered in a gendered society. The binary opposition man/woman and the culturally conditioned ideas on the difference between men and women is in my view one root of the problem and one of the explanations for why there are not more women in leadership positions in most areas of society. Research suggests that either women think that their gender or the gendered context of leadership does not matter, as prevailing definitions and theories suggest, or that women have special characteristics as leaders and managers which often conform to traditional female behavior or is gender-stereotyped. Sometimes they say that they themselves are different from this stereotype, more masculine. For women it is hard to use their gender, age and sexuality to empower themselves in the same way that men seem to do (Sinclair, 1999; Gudbjornsdottir, 2007). They have a tendency to reject their uniqueness as leaders in order to avoid prejudice or conform to harmful stereotypes, maintain them and at the same time impairing their leadership. Men are celebrated as having certain positive characteristics, and women are excluded as having opposite values, despite gender neutral definitions of a leader as someone who leads or has influence. Since this dualist thinking permeates all Western culture and places one gender above the other it should not be a surprise that concepts such as leader or leadership are gendered. By definition a woman leader is placed above or over others which is in contradiction to the dualist thinking which places women in the submissive position. All explanations for the lack of women leaders mentioned above are essentially based on the old dualism or prejudice with roots in dualism, regardless of whether the woman herself is in focus, the organizational context or society as a whole.

Even though emphasizing feminine leadership styles can benefit women, because they seem to coincide with effective leadership, it can also be problematic and conducive to gender stereotyping and grand narratives (Shakeshaft, 1989; Gudbjornsdottir, 1997, 2001, 2007; Blackmore, 2002; Ahl, 2006; Ryan et al. 2007). Most theories do not address the personal cost of being a leader and how being a woman and a leader goes together. Women are too often seen as one mass, and differences in culture, race and politics overlooked. Most theories do not challenge the traditional view of leadership as masculine because the dichotomy of the genders is unchanged, the female always being both different and inferior. It is not enough to look at women as leaders or managers in a gender-vacuum and stick to individualistic accounts, even during neo-liberal times. Discourses 3 and 4 above, the social ties in organizations need more thorough attention – as well as the prejudices and social structures themselves. Alternative language that can avoid the traditional dualistic account of the genders is also being called for, an appropriate third term (Bendl, 2008).

Whether and how we can get away from this dualist thinking is a topic for another article in itself. The French difference feminism does not deny the binary opposition, but rejects that one part of the binary is valued more than the other. The right to be different (différent) is celebrated without any submissiveness. In equality both genders should be the Other for the other gender, just as individuals are the Other to each other (Erlingsdottir, 1999). According to this we should not evade the fact that there are male and female leaders, but try to avoid making the values associated with masculinity (which are not genetic but culturally conditioned) a norm for all real leaders, and the “feminine” values for other or “othered” leaders. To be gender sensitive (Yoder, 2001) or focus on better or “real” feminine values (Cálas and Smircich, 2004) fits this theoretical view, but it can also be restrictive, and increase the danger of women leaders being situated as “softer” or “emotional managers” or “social workers of management” whereas masculinity is integral to effective top management (Ernst, 2003; Tyler, 2005).

A more promising way ahead theoretically in the author’s opinion is to adopt a post-structuralist viewpoint and avoid all essentialism. Judith Butler has responded to the dualist thinking about the genders by putting forth a pluralistic theory about „the other genders“, thereby escaping the bondage of women being placed as the submissive “other”. This is one way out but there is doubt
whether her method works in the political battle for gender equality even though it can be productive as an academic theory. Her idea to look at people as individuals with different bodies, who make their own choices - *doing gender*, is an interesting alternative to thinking about gender as a cultural arrangement of sex differences (genetic or socially conditioned), as the sex-gender difference is itself culturally constructed in terms of the heterosexual matrix. Gender is contested, complex and differentiated and its intersections with other social divisions and oppressions such as class and race are well acknowledged and demand further theorization (Butler, 1990, 2006; Broadbridge and Hearn, 2008; Clegg, 2008).

Regardless of theoretical approach it is important to examine leadership in action or leadership in context rather than how leaders say they lead as well as having a diverse perspective to ensure a more critical view on the problem. One fruitful way to address the credibility problem is to focus on the concept of authenticity, which is vital for leadership and seems to be problematic for women (Avolio and Gardner, 2005; Eagly, 2005; Goffee and Jones, 2000). Although the research approach will hardly change the present situation of gendered leadership, it is important to deconstruct discourses on masculinity and femininity, because traditional views are incredibly tenacious and restrictive, based on dualistic accounts of dichotomies such as female/male; feminine/masculine. Great challenge to a simple dualistic view of gender comes from sexuality studies and queer theory. (Broadbridge and Hearn, 2008; Butler, 2006; Pringle, 2008).

It is a complicated task to find the best theories and methods to examine the relationship between leadership and gender, which is more “complex than generally acknowledged by social scientists or writers of popular books on management” (Eagly and Johannesen-Schmidt, 2001, 794). It is important to escape modernist grand theories which often ignore gender as a factor in leadership or strengthen gender stereotypes. We need to look at the diversity of men and women leaders and the influence of gender, age and institutional factors in different schools and organizations. Does Sinclair’s claim that age, gender and sexuality increase men’s authority but not women’s come as a surprise to anyone? We also need to examine better the relationship between the leadership role and private life of both men and women leaders and the discourses of leadership in different organizations and cultures (Gudbjornsdottir, 2001). An interesting way to escape the dualist thinking could be to look at the issue from many different perspectives at the same time, without centering any one perspective (Law, 2002). Another work that deserves mention is Brunner’s experiment (2003) in which she made leaders in education overlook gender and race in their communications by making them talk together in cyberspace, where everybody was without a name, gender or other characteristics. The participants reported a transformational experience, of the influence of not knowing the gender or race of their communication partners.

A reflection on research methods is one thing and increasing the numbers and well being of women leaders and managers is another. Sinclair (1999) is moderately optimistic towards the future of the female leader, both because of improved state laws on gender equality and some on gender quotas, and because of the increasing education and experience of women leaders who serve as role models to other women, and their solidarity and networking. She also points out that the battle will not be won without resistance and struggle. Seeing women leaders as sex objects in organizations or as mother figures when they are older suggests a certain fear of the feminine in the public arena, especially at the top. This reaction will continue to be a powerful tool to undermine, mock or denigrate women as leaders. I agree with Sinclair that the best hope for change resides in the individuals who escape those obstacles by having a different leadership image and thereby change the traditional expectations leaders have to live up to in regards to who they are and how they should behave (see also Coffey et al., 1999). Many men and women have much to learn from these models.

The democratic demand for a diverse leadership has its roots in the economy of globalization, the demand for increased flexibility of institutions, an organizational structure which is more flat, more
teamwork, multi-skilling, powerful communications, professional independence and other factors which women are often experienced in. In the era of neo-liberalism and the new public management there is often more faith in the power of the market than that of the government or legislation (Blackmore, 2002). A recent decision of a networking meeting of women leaders in Iceland to support a law on gender quotas in board membership is understandable, and not surprisingly the proponents of the market resist or object (Hauksson, 2006). The public as well as the private arena belong to both genders and rationality as well, as seen in the ever increasing education of women. Gender mainstreaming is in my opinion preferable to affirmative action like a gender quota by law to pull through the changes mentioned above (Rees, 2001; Gudbjornsdottr, 2007). Institutional leadership should be more diverse because of democratic aims and also we cannot afford losing talented people, so there is a strong economic argument for more diverse leadership (Catalyst, 2004). The important thing is that women and other minority groups get ahead on their own terms– the best means are politically debatable (Stratigaki, 2005). It is to the advantage of society as a whole to have a diverse, democratic leadership, both in education and organizations in other spheres. Diverse leadership is not only an issue of the market and better results, it is also a human rights issue which should never be forgotten.

References


Gendered Justice: the impact of masculinist leadership models on how justice is dispensed in our communities

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Abstract
There is little gendered analysis of how the masculinist leadership models that prevail in policing impact on how justice is served or not served in our communities. It would appear that previous research has been inhibited by a lack of understanding of how to study the culture of policing. At the same time, stereotypical images, myths and false conceptions about women feature prominently in research on women in policing. In this paper I describe how a feminist research methodology was able to address this lack (and at least some of the misconceptions) through the application of a “gender lens” approach to an Australian policing jurisdiction. The outcomes from this participatory action research project (Harwood 2006) indicate that the notion of women as leaders in policing continues to be resisted, contested, and challenged by their male colleagues and by some members of the community. This PhD research project engaged insider teams of men and women over an intensive, three year period in learning and applying a “gender lens” to examine the day to day processes, attitudes, behaviours and policies that had contributed to an “excess of men” (Sinclair, 2004) in leadership positions in their own organization. The non-hierarchical, teams-based methodological approach contributed to some very positive outcomes; notably, some tools and techniques for redressing “densely masculinist” workplaces. I argue that fundamental changes to the gendered practices of policing are necessary if we are to improve how justice is dispensed to women (and to men) in the broader community.

Introduction

In this article I focus on findings from my doctoral research that relate specifically to the gendered nature of justice. For this reason I only provide cursory reference to major components of my research project including: the methodological framework underpinning the project outcomes (below), the role of my reference group, the topics undertaken by project teams and, the role and function of an implementation group. These and other components are mapped and reported in full in my dissertation (Harwood, 2006).

I begin by providing a summary of my research project methodology and follow this description with a short history of women’s involvement in policing. While necessarily brief, I also discuss what other researchers have to say about the role of women in dispensing justice in our communities. In introducing some of the key findings from my own research project I make links between these findings and the gendered nature of justice. My analysis of two of the case studies from the participatory action research project amplifies these links. The first case study is described from both participant observation and feminist ethnographer perspectives and affords some closer

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1 This paper draws on material that first appeared in the author’s PhD thesis (2006) entitled “Gendering Change: An Immodest Manifesto for Intervening in Masculinist Organisations”, UWA, Perth Western Australia.

2 A term used by Amanda Sinclair in an address to a group of women police participants on a leadership course in Melbourne 2004. Rather than using the more commonplace term “lack of women” to describe skewed gender ratios in masculinist workplaces such as policing, Sinclair refers to an “excess of men”.

insights about the experiences of a woman police leader when tasked with the role of dispensing justice in a remote community. The second illustrates the benefits of engaging senior men in applying a gender lens to their workplace. I argue that both case studies provide some important perspectives on how gendered practices within policing impact on the quality of justice delivered to the community.

The PhD research project referred to in this paper was funded through a collaborative research grant between my university and the research site. This arrangement provided me with an unusual level of sustained access to all levels of a policing organisation over a three-year period. Importantly, the contractual requirements of the grant created the mechanism for a close reporting relationship between the researcher and the chief executive throughout the life of the project. This relationship underpinned the integrity of the research process and resulted in my being able to hand the final report on the project outcomes directly to the chief executive.

The Research Methodology

My methodological framework comprised a complex interplay between four qualitative models: participatory action research, Quality Management, a gender lens interventionist approach and feminist ethnography. That combination of feminist goals and action research techniques drew men and women into insider teams for the purpose of conducting a thorough, forensic examination of the gendered organization of their workplace. The goal was to develop recommendations for change, linked to a framework for successful implementation.

There was a strong emphasis on the establishment and maintenance of teamwork and effective communication in setting up the research project. As a quality management practitioner I had many years experience working with and facilitating teams on difficult problem-solving projects. My theory was that if I could bring these same group process tools and a scientific approach to the contentious field of sexual harassment and discrimination that we should have a greater chance of redressing the seemingly intransigent problem of gendered workplace cultures. Further, as a feminist researcher I was very interested in seeing what would happen if we were able to shift the focus from “the problem is women” to “the problem is the culture of the organisation” (Sinclair 1998).

For these reasons I designed a research methodology that engaged both men and women from within the organisation in applying a “gender lens” to the key policies and practices of their organisation. Researchers at the Center for Gender in Organizations (Simmons, Boston) designed the “gender lens” approach (Kolb and Merrill-Sands, 1999: 196; Kolb and Meyerson, 1999: 129) to link gender equity with organisational effectiveness; they describe this approach as a way of viewing what goes on below the organisation’s surface activities. The gender lens allows a view under and around these activities, to examine the gender dynamics that lie beneath. These gender dynamics, they suggest, are a core product of inequalities between women and men.

In keeping with the quality management approach, I established a reference group that reported directly (through me) to the chief executive and I conducted this group as a quality management team. In adopting a feminist framework I was already suggesting a reworking of the normative terms of engagement for women. To this end I wanted to move women from the margins into the mainstream, bring their voices into the dialogue, and enable them to impact on decisions that affect their daily working lives. Deming (cited in Scholtes, 1992, 2-4) suggests that the best teams are those that are created on the basis of both a “vertical” and “horizontal slice”: through the

4 The research project was entitled: “Redressing the Gendered Workplace Culture of Policing”.

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organisational hierarchy as well as across internal organisational boundaries. Therefore, to achieve this outcome and, to maximize our opportunity for success I had to ignore the institutionalised model of choosing people on the basis of their rank and level. I collaborated closely with the organisation’s equal opportunity coordinator and by this means we were able to ensure that each of the participants was selected on the basis of our robust selection criteria: (a) credibility within the organisation; (b) demonstrated ability to embrace change; (c) perceived to be “real” cops; (d) women who could work with men (not too deferential); and (e) men and women, from different levels, different ranks, different locations, police and public service officers.

Once established the reference group spent some time discussing the purpose and function of the overall project, “unpacking” the research problem and identifying possible topics for further exploration. Having identified a particular aspect of the problem that they wanted to investigate each team member presented drafts of their project proposals at team meetings; once their project had the endorsement of the reference group, each of the new project team leaders in turn established a group of colleagues around them. I facilitated all project team meetings, thereby ensuring that the same problem-solving tools and group process practices were brought through from the reference group into each of six groups. The team leaders reported back on a very regular basis to the reference group meetings and used this forum to seek support, provide progress reports and to share feedback on their findings. The feminist underpinning to the research plan, combined with the participatory action research model and the quality management team ethos, acted to reinforce and legitimate some democratic, non-hierarchically based practices within the reference group and project teams.

What was not clear to any of us at the outset was how and why the profile and presence of women in policing was so small, especially when this organisation (and all others in Australia) had been subject to equal opportunity legislative requirements since 1984\(^5\). Part of my role was to provide the insider research teams with a continuing flow of external research that would inform their understanding. My initial review of both the historical and international antecedents to women in policing in this country provided some useful background to our research journey and I outline some of this history below.

**Historical Overview**

Women’s entrance into policing has been marked by its slow pace and subordinate place, relative to women’s entrance into other occupations and into the paid workforce generally\(^6\). However, as Frances Heidensohn (1992:27) notes, women’s entry into police work was not a sudden move at the beginning of the 20\(^{th}\) century; rather, the move occurred within the context of the previous half-century of changes to women’s role in society:

> History is very important as background: women did not suddenly enter policing in the early twentieth century from nowhere; they had at least half a century of increasing participation in public life in which many of them had sought to control social ills through voluntary action, and through increasing use of state agencies.

\(^5\) Catharine MacKinnon’s (1979) early work in the United States on the benefits of legal redress underpins much of the contemporary legislative response to sexual harassment and discrimination.

\(^6\) The greatest distinction compared with other occupations is that women in policing are not moving into management roles at the same rate as women in other occupations. For example, between 1994 and 2004, the percentage of women in the Senior Executive Service of the Australian Public Service has nearly doubled, from 15% to 27% [Government of Western Australia: Women’s Report Card, Department for Community Development. Office for Women’s Policy (2004)]. Over the same period the number of women who moved into senior management roles at my research site expanded from zero to 1; the more recent appointment of the first woman to a senior executive role occurred as a result of this research project.
Given the concomitant advances in women’s rights during the one hundred and eighty years since Peel’s first police force in England, why has women’s participation in policing been such a struggle? Heidensohn (1992: 42) describes this anomaly in the language of invasion, occupation and exclusion:

...women’s entry into policing is a version of *The Secret Garden* [author’s emphasis] in which some uppity women laid siege to a male preserve and gained admittance, only to find themselves regularly being excluded from most of the garden’s primary activities for more than fifty years.

Such exclusion is difficult to understand in the face of contemporary research supporting the argument that more women police – and more women police leaders - means better policing and in turn, a better quality of justice for the variety of communities that police officers serve. Frances Heidensohn proffers some explanation for this view in suggesting that social control is something at which women excel: “...women’s involvement in social control has often been outstandingly successful, if by success we count the curbing of vice or crime, or the reduction of public disorder” (Heidensohn, 1992: 26).

Similarly, Diana Grant (2000) suggests that the unifying theme in much of the scholarly literature is based on the benefits that gender differences bring to policing:

The view that policewomen will create a positive impact is illustrated by Martin (1980), discussing how women’s greater role flexibility means they are able to display more range and adaptability than men in their approach to policing, because they can draw upon both masculine and feminine ways of communicating (Grant: 2000: 54).

Grant’s (2000) research on gendered stereotypes of women in policing is supported by Lonsway, Moore *et al* (2003), who cite the advantages to organisations of hiring more women. Other research conducted by Lonsway, *Wood et al* (2002), involving seven large policing organisations in the United States found that “women officers are substantially less likely than their male counterparts to be involved in problems of excessive force” (2002:2). On the basis of these findings these authors suggest that if police executives and community leaders had a “better understanding of the gender dimensions of excessive force” that this knowledge would lead them to select more women (Lonsway, *Wood et al*, 2002: 2).

Taking another perspective, Metcalfe and Dick (2002) explore the issue of police employees’ commitment to policing – and find that women are just as committed to the job as their male counterparts. Further, these researchers assert that “cultural masculinism” ensures that gendered descriptions of women’s role and function prevail and act as a powerful mechanism for inhibiting the progress and profile of women in policing:

...the dominance of cultural masculinism, and its role in reproducing gendered task allocations within police work accounts for female officers’ limited career progression and social status (Metcalf and Dick, 2002: 395).

Earlier studies focused on issues such as why policemen don’t like policewomen (Balkin, 1988); gender integration in European police services (Brown, 1996); male violence towards women in policing in Australia (Hatty, 1989) and male resistance to women in policing in the United States (Martin, 1993). All of these researchers appear to share a common conception: that while women police continue to be resisted, contested, challenged and challenging, the community wants more women police.
The dominance of masculinism within policing goes hand in glove with the subordination of women to male power within that gendered culture. Prenzler’s research indicated that the resistance to the laws introduced in Australia during the 1980’s had taken different forms in each State, and that this resistance has been successful in maintaining a workplace culture that is not receptive to women (Prenzler, 1996: 315):

Despite major organisational changes in the last few decades, policing still presents a hostile environment to women. Policewomen report continuing problems with high levels of sexual harassment and job segregation. Male officers report distrust of women’s ability and admit to opposing parity for policewomen.

While describing sex discrimination and harassment as “forms of internal corruption”, Prenzler (2002b: 74) also highlights the fact that so few of the official enquiries conducted into policing in Australia have considered these aspects worthy of further investigation. Given that corruption is also about an abuse of power, this lack of connection between corruption and the gendered power relations within policing is surprising.

In Sue Lewis’ project within a fire and emergency service, she employs the term “dense masculinity” to describe cultures that are particularly masculinist, such as those of policing, defence and fire and emergency services. Studies such as these have shown that when new attempts are being made to eliminate work-based sex discrimination, the work must begin from a deep understanding of the extent to which members imbue the occupation with masculine characteristics. Lewis and a range of other researchers make the point that such attempts must also include the development of strategies to counter the unthinking acceptance of anti-women behaviours as ‘normal’ (Eveline, 1998; Rao et al, 1999; Acker, 2000; Eveline and Booth, 2002).

In his analysis of what he describes as the “hegemonic masculinity” of policing in the United Kingdom, Fielding (1994) acknowledges that important links identified earlier by feminist thinkers have been virtually ignored by those examining police reform, until recent times:

The archetypal police perspective is hard-bitten, cynical and drawn to rigid in-group/out-group distinctions. Until recently, the relationship between these cultural values and gender has passed unremarked outside feminist thought. (Fielding, 1994: 46).

Questioning the absence of empirical research on gender in studies in workplace democracy, Joan Acker (1990) suggests that some of the explanation can be found in the way in which organisations are subsumed by a prevailing masculine ethos. Organisations, according to Acker (1990:142) are imbued with a masculine view of the world, a view that obscures any other: “As a relational phenomenon, gender is difficult to see when only the masculine is present”. What does this

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7 A commission into police corruption was conducted over the same period of time as the PhD research project and was commonly referred to as the “Kennedy Royal Commission”. It was made clear to this researcher that “gender issues” were not deemed to be part of the Commission’s Terms of Reference (personal communications between the researcher and two members of the Kennedy Commission’s research team, 2003). However, the Commission changed its view and did make reference to some contemporary research, including the research project, to Prenzler and Ransley’s (2002) research on police reform and to Chan’s (1997) work on police culture. By these means some important links were made between the absence of women, the presence of corruption and the need to create an organisation more conducive to attracting and retaining women. See Kennedy, 2004, Vol. II: Chapter 5, 75-95.

8 Dr Sue Lewis, formerly Swinburne University, Victoria, has coined the term “dense masculinity” to describe the gendered work practices at her research site at a fire and emergency services organisation. There, the excess of men, comparative to women, results in practices, policies and behaviours that are imbued with masculinist characteristics. Personal communication, September 2005.
“prevailing masculine ethos” mean for the way in which justice is served by policing organisations in contemporary Australia? To illustrate my response to this question, I refer to some of the findings from two of my research teams; my discussion is placed within the context of key observations made by the reference group when confronted with the data from the Why do Women Resign? and the Woman in a Goldfish Bowl projects.

Harassment and Corruption From Within

Through the regular team and reference group discussions, the insider teams working on my research project began to appreciate that women’s careers in policing could be punctuated by varying degrees of harassment, discrimination and hostility. The range, pervasiveness and seriousness of some of the sexual harassment “war stories” produced both useful and challenging discussions within the reference group and the project teams. These behaviours could commence at recruitment level, continue from that time onwards, and have an impact on women long after they had left the organisation.

At the same time, findings from the Why do Women Resign? team indicated that the issue of sexual harassment appeared to be framed differently by the women who had left the organisation. When these women were asked to reflect on their experiences while in policing, there were some surprising revelations about how they had prioritised the impact of the behaviours enacted towards them. What the reference group came to understand was that these interviewees identified, but minimised, the sexual harassment issues experienced while on the job. They focused instead on other grievances they had with the organisation. While group members often responded with horror to these women’s individual accounts of the sexual and sexist harassment, the interviewees tended to make light of such events when comparing this behaviour with the other issues that they raised.

On several occasions when this data was being discussed around the reference group table, knowing glances were exchanged between men and women who thought they recognised some of the patterns of behaviour as belonging to colleagues they knew. From the hints of locations and descriptions provided by the interviewees, group members believed they could collectively piece together enough information to identify known and alleged perpetrators of gender-based harassment. These moments of (possible) recognition, while fleeting, nonetheless registered with the participants. Later, the reference group would attempt to address the issue of known perpetrators continuing to be promoted by recommending the implementation of an “EEO/Integrity Check” for all applicants for promotion.

Hearn and Parkin’s (2001: 16-17) findings on the nature and extent of “organizational violations” provides some useful insights here: their descriptions of sexual harassment as “subtle”, “endemic” and “normalized” seem particularly apt for the picture that was emerging from this research conducted by our insider teams. Hearn and Parkin (2001: 19) suggest that the apparent lack of appropriate response by management to women’s complaints provides further indications that such behaviours are allowed to continue because they reinforce “relations of domination and subordination”. This appeared to be the case for at least one of the women who had left; she reported that in her experience, harassment was not high on the agenda for management accountability:

9The introduction of this “EO/Integrity Check” recommendation is discussed in greater detail in Harwood (2006, Chapter Eight, 8.4). As far as the author is aware, this particular recommendation has still not been implemented at the research site.
People got away with a lot in terms of behaviour and comments...they were all accepted by senior officers who turned a blind eye and condoned what they should have taken responsibility for.

Data from this particular team project turned the research teams towards examining how women experience this organisation in other, related ways. Although most of the interviewed women had mentioned forms of sexual harassment, they also claimed that they had more pressing reasons to leave than sexual harassment. Closer analysis of the data indicated to the researchers that these women’s decisions to leave were preceded by the realisation that neither they nor their contributions were valued by this organisation. The researchers began to hypothesise that the lack of an exit process, and the absence of support programs for workers with families, indicated a continuum of hostility and discrimination enacted towards women. Those with responsibility for managing the needs of a diverse workplace, including managers and human resources staff, had seemingly been willing to abrogate their responsibilities towards many of these women. This was particularly the case with women whose family responsibilities required some different work arrangements, as is indicated in one interviewee’s response:

I felt under-valued because [1] I was a woman; [2] I was part-time, and [3] I had a child and family...I felt that I was treated as second class, and I regard this as an overall police issue...

Some of the reported hostility towards women, while overt, was described within the context of particular people and particular locations. One of the interviewed women commented that “people that I worked with had lots of anti-female attitude...at one location I worked at, one or two males were pigs, [while] the rest were great”. Reflecting on the experiences of women in her study, Fletcher (1999: 119) suggests that in negative environments, women will “opt to leave”, rather than remain frustrated by attempting to change or challenge organisational norms.

The reference group was sometimes overwhelmed at the prospect of recommending adequate measures for redressing these issues. One of the senior males was particularly galled by the unlawful behaviours that were reported from interviewees on the Why do Women Resign? project. In his view there was more than a hint of corruption, as well as harassment, in this data. For example one woman who had left after two and a half years reported that in those years “she had more to fear from her male colleagues on the job than she ever did from any criminals on the street”. Several men on the reference group and project teams expressed disquiet in response to this data. While their participation on this project placed them apart from other men in this organisation, they were still perceived as being part of this organisation’s masculinist culture. This woman’s description of the same culture created a disturbing picture of men’s hostility towards women and placed the male researchers within the same frame.

Halford and Leonard (2001: 151) suggest that it is the “combination of structural power and gender power” that makes it so daunting for women to speak out; further, that it is the “organisational context of power” that “may encourage women to remain silent”. Clearly, the power of policing to silence criticism and “whistle-blowing” is still perceived as pervasive by women interviewed for this project. Such power is viewed as capable of reaching beyond institutional boundaries long after employees have left. My brief account of key elements of the Woman in a Goldfish Bowl project affords a closer examination of the constraining forces that some women have to deal with while they attempt to deliver justice within their communities. This case study shows what happened when a woman leader was confronted with the dual burden of hostility from within and from without her organisation.
"Woman in a Goldfish Bowl" Project

For the purposes of this case study I referred to the woman officer as “Gail”. Whereas my role was to interact with Gail in my capacity as a feminist ethnographer, she played the unusual, dual roles of being both subject and narrator of her own case study. Our joint accounts enable me to provide a comprehensive analysis of some of the discriminatory practices Gail encountered on the job, as well those that related directly to her participation on this project.

Gail and I were in widely disparate geographic locations and did not meet face-to-face during the entire two-year period of this project. There were a number of elements that at times made this distance seem even greater: the communication gap created by the distance in rank between Gail her boss; the isolation among women engendered by the gendered practices of this policing organisation; the distance travelled in time and space as we journeyed through this project; and, the gaps and silences in-between our discussions, created by the constraints on Gail’s overly busy professional and private lives.

As she was also the first officer with young children at this location, Gail was provided with better accommodation than the small dwelling previously occupied by a series of male officers who were either single or married with grown children. These “firsts” created some unwanted attention for Gail and it would be fair to say that being part of our project undoubtedly added to the scrutiny. For example, Gail’s boss was on my reference group and therefore maintained a level of interest in Gail’s new role that was noticeably greater than the prescribed terms of engagement between their ranks. He had placed Gail in this isolated post at her request; on deciding to make this placement his project, he was then obliged to monitor her performance in this role. As one of two relatively senior males on the reference group this officer obviously felt very responsible for Gail’s welfare when things began to go wrong. However, he only became aware of the extent of the chauvinist behaviours and practices to which Gail was subjected when this project was completed. As I will show, when these organisational practices coalesced with the particularly discriminatory attitudes of her community, Gail was faced with some overwhelming, unnecessary burdens.

I made many journal entries reporting my discussions with Gail over the life of this project. Early amongst these notations was the following entry, which signalled some of the difficulties that lay ahead for both of us in this process:

This interview took place by phone, late in the evening...The job is clearly a very busy and demanding one, and as a last resort to get to speak to each other with minimum disruption and for an extended period, we agreed to speak later at night, when Gail’s [three young] children were likely to be in bed, and when she had completed her paperwork back at the office.

...We also made several early morning phone appointments that she was unable to keep due to the workload; she reported that this town had experienced a surge in local crime that required her to work extensive hours with her new team. She was also learning a new software system... (Journal Entry, “Gail”, August 2001).

Very soon into her new role Gail clearly understood that her entry into this male-dominated community would be contentious, and that men in particular would not only have difficulty with the concept of a woman officer in charge of their local police station – they would also be watching her every move. She had not expected the same level of scrutiny from her male supervisors (who were located hundreds of kilometres away in a regional headquarters). Collinson and Hearn’s (2002) use of the term “paternalism” is particularly apt here to describe the practices engaged in by these
males, who, seemingly unused to interacting with a woman officer-in-charge, resorted to enacting some kind of father/daughter relationship around Gail. According to Gail, these officers’ close surveillance resulted in every aspect of her life being placed “under the microscope”.

Reporting on her interaction with one of these officers, Gail remarked he openly questioned her suitability for the role on his first site visit. Rather than a woman, he told her, what this town needed was a “knuckle man”. Reinforcing his point, he told Gail that their superior was “a wanker” for putting her there – and that if it had been up to him, he would not have made this appointment. Later, when Gail made use of an opportunity to speak directly with her superior officer about her role in this case study, the same supervisor reprimanded her, reminding her of the importance of deference to rank, and instructing her to speak directly to him and not go “over his head”.

Before long Gail was overburdened by inadequate staffing, a hostile community and the pedantic demands of this new male supervisor. She described his demands and his scrutiny of her paperwork as excessive, and his feedback to her as largely negative. It appeared that some members of the community were in agreement with her supervisor’s assessment of her unsuitability for the role, complaining bitterly that a woman was not adequate for this town. Gail told me that some of this animosity was undoubtedly related to her tough stand on domestic violence among indigenous community members, and her vigilance for maintaining the law on drinking hours at the local hotels. As one of the women police officers in Gerber’s study comments, community members see women police officers differently:

> When you’re in uniform, and you’re a man, people see a cop. If you’re a woman and you’re in uniform, people don’t see a cop, they see a woman (Gerber, 2001: xiii).

Explaining that she liked to “tell things as they are”, Gail often used colourful language to describe the situations in which she found herself, and did not try to hide her emotional responses to stress. For example, Gail told me that after a particularly long shift over a three-day period with no sleep, she expressed her level of stress at a new incident by swearing during a conversation over the two-way radio. As a result, she was reported and subsequently chastised by a superior for using an expletive. Reflecting on this lapse and the reaction to it, she commented to me: “it is like they are trying to make a case to get rid of me”.

I was aware by this stage that other project teams had extensive data reporting examples of men using swearing to belittle and demean women. In this context alone, and given the prevailing masculinist practices of her mining town clientele, the reaction to Gail’s outburst appeared to be disproportionate to the level of this incident. Clearly, such language appears to have been normalised for and by men. Meanwhile, as Gail discovered, even when under high levels of stress, women in her position are measured against different standards of conduct. Gerber’s (2001) research on women and men in policing shows that women are in a “no-win” situation when facing dual standards about how they should present themselves. Gail soon found that her feminine attributes would never enable her to pass as an appropriate incumbent in this role. Despite having to deal with this intense and ongoing speculation about her suitability and performance in her management role, Gail’s persistence, capacity and sheer determination ensured that her experiences were recorded for this project.

Ultimately, Gail had to make the hard decision to move from this isolated location to a much larger rural town when one of her family members needed to be much closer to a large hospital for ongoing medical treatment. Gail told me that when she was leaving the remote community for the last time, an indigenous elder stopped her in the street to congratulate her for the excellent work she had been able to achieve in highlighting the level of domestic violence and in attempting to provide a permanent refuge for victims of abuse. Later, Gail reported to me from her new location that the leadership experience she had acquired in her previous role was quickly quashed by her
new, overbearing, bullying officer-in-charge who swore at her in front of her colleagues and shouted abuse when she dared to speak during a “team” meeting. When we last spoke she was trying to find an alternative to working in such an oppressive environment where her skills were both unrecognized and underutilized.

In the next case study I reveal what can happen when the “gender lens” approach is applied to the sensitive issue of improving the quality of police responsiveness to family violence and domestic homicides.

The Gender Lens: a Shift in Focus to “DV”

After the reference group and project teams had presented their final reports to senior management for endorsement, we were able to move forward with a key recommendation, which was to establish an implementation group comprising very senior men and [less senior] women to oversee the implementation of all of the project recommendations. An “up and coming” senior male (who had been nominated as such by his superior) initially expressed reluctance to me when I formally invited him to join this group; however, when I met him for the first time he gave an entirely unexpected and very incisive perspective on the importance of this group’s work to his organisational role, and to the wider community. This officer was charged with responsibility for trying to improve the quality of policing responses to family violence and domestic homicide. Similar to many other jurisdictions at this time, his policing organisation had been criticised for not always responding appropriately to domestic violence incidents. Various external reviews and reports had suggested that this inadequate response had resulted in some preventable deaths of domestic violence victims. The victims were largely women and children. A government investigation known as the Gordon Inquiry had especially targeted poor police handling of family violence among Indigenous members of the community. Sharing with me his perspective on the relationship between this issue and the research project, the senior male commented that he had carefully read through every word of the our teams’ project report. He stated that as a result, he had understood for the first time the importance of his being on this implementation group. Whereas before he had seen the problem for his domestic violence team as being one of improving service delivery to the community, he now understood that before domestic violence could be reduced in this policing jurisdiction, male officers’ attitudes towards women, *per se*, needed to improve. He resolved to bring this understanding into his subsequent work.

Several months later this officer reported to the implementation group that he had developed and delivered an awareness program focused on confronting the reality of men’s hostility towards women within policing. He decided to make a tangible contribution to changing the internal culture of this organisation by “walking the talk” within his own sphere of influence. Conscious of the need for senior managers such as himself to take the lead on domestic violence, he was delivering his own presentations to large groups of men and women in this organisation. As he presented current data to these groups, he also made a very tangible link between male officers’ attitudes towards

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10 The term ‘DV” was in common use at this time, inside and outside of policing as a “catch-all” term to describe family violence and domestic homicide.

11 Gordon, S (2002): “Inquiry and Response by Government Agencies to Complaints of Family Violence and Child Abuse in Aboriginal Communities”. This Inquiry was established as a direct result of a coroner’s report on the suicide of a young Aboriginal woman. Entitled “Putting People First”, this report is referred to in my dissertation and more popularly as the Gordon Inquiry. Magistrate Sue Gordon found that violence and sexual abuse is endemic in many Aboriginal communities and that police response was inconsistent and lacked internal support. The Office of the Auditor General and the Ombudsman also referred to the inconsistency and fragmentation of police response and it was also noted that there was a perception by police, public and stakeholders that family violence is an issue of low importance.

12 See Carolyn Johnson’s (2005) research, published as *Come With Daddy* in which she cites the lack of effectiveness of police responses in preventing the men in her study from carrying out their threats to harm or kill their estranged wives and/or their children.
women inside the organisation, and the poor quality of policing response to women involved in domestic violence outside in the community. His aim, he told us, was to improve the quality of that response by helping male officers to “see” their own need for attitudinal change towards all women, including their women colleagues.

Meyerson and Fletcher (2000: 136) canvas the crucial role of leaders such as this man in bringing about change; they call on leaders to act as “thoughtful architects”, and, to reconstruct buildings “beam by beam”. At this research site there were too few leaders willing or able to do this. The subsequent and very sudden demise of the leader described in this case study is noteworthy: in something of a surprise to at least the external members of the implementation group, this officer was no longer deemed to be “up and coming” and found himself on the outer when a new executive team was established by the new chief. The officer resigned from his job, from the implementation group and, from policing. Outside their researchers’ forum, and inside the wider organisation, the advocates for change to the gendered power relations within policing are working in a highly politicised, competitive environment. One of the paradoxes of my research project was that despite the crucial, highly supportive roles played by two successive chief executives during the research and implementation stages, each was only able to gain tacit and temporary buy-in from their senior management teams for the implementation of the project recommendations. Yet despite this major drawback, each presided over some major changes to the gendered practices of their policing jurisdiction.

Partial Success in Contested Territory

What is reinforced by my research, known yet hidden from view, is that there is no “magic bullet” for redressing gendered workplace cultures. The context I chose is an incredibly hard research area to engage in and for good reason: the everyday manifestations of the anti-women culture are brought to bear on the research process, on the insiders who engage with it, and on the outsiders whose methodological approach is interventionist. The contested territory of harassment and discrimination at my research site, when combined with the potential for unlawful behaviours to be exposed, meant that subversive responses and tactical manoeuvres were enlisted on all sides, by committed participants as well as those who attempted to block our projects.

The criticality of the extensive timeframe should not be underestimated when assessing how and why collective action became such an important part of this project. The research teams worked long and hard on their projects, investing considerable time to gather and analyse their data and to develop some meaningful recommendations for change. This investment of time to reflect on gendering processes is rare in policing, where there are few opportunities for men and women to engage in a collegial forum in which reflection and discussion are the main game. For all of these reasons, we came to understand and value the importance of engaging people at all levels of the organisation in an ongoing, informed and shared dialogue about the gendered practices of their workplace. For example, late in the life of the research project when I conducted interviews with all members of the (then) senior management team, most welcomed the opportunity to discuss gender issues. However, many of this group initially indicated that they had neither the language nor the experiences to describe or understand the gendered practices of their workplace (see Harwood, 2005; 2006). Thomas and Davies (2002: 181) suggest there is a need to understand “the many and complex ways” in which individuals respond to the dominant discourse in the organisation. Further, while Hearn and Parkin (2001) examine gendered processes in organizations through the lens of violence and violations, they suggest although men’s dominance is profound, it is neither monolithic nor unresisted. It has to be continually re-established, and in the process it can be challenged, subverted and destabilized (Hearn and Parkin, 2001: 10).
As my research project demonstrated, some of the middle to senior ranking men at my research site were more than willing to participate in a research methodology that enabled them to redefine the ways in which they engage with women and men in this workplace. In turn, many of them were able to acknowledge that such redefinition could only be positive for improving the quality of justice in the community they serve. At the same time, my findings also showed that many men did not know how to position their women colleagues as other than sexual and/or subservient beings. Most men and women have been in this master-servant relationship since recruitment school and this relationship is consistently reinforced, with many male officers reporting that their wives don’t work because they are at home looking after their children. Further, the women around them in the workplace are far more likely to be secretaries, support staff, and public service officers, unable to meet male standards for leadership and hierarchical status.

Acker’s (2000a: 629) concepts of “partial success” and the “timing and rhythms of ordinary organizational activities” both offer some constructive ways of reviewing the limitations and disappointments associated with culture change initiatives of this kind. Much research still needs to be done to close the gaps in our knowledge about resistance to change in gendered workplaces. In particular, there is a need to examine the highly sexualized nature of densely masculinist cultures, including policing, to determine how to attract and retain people whose attitudes to the “other” are more reflective of contemporary values. I argue that a feminist methodological approach can contribute to some very positive outcomes, including a greater understanding among men and women of the link between a hostile culture for women leaders in policing and poor quality of response to women in the community. The same understanding is articulated in a recent UNIFEM (2007) report:

> Increasing women’s representation in police services is an important element of gender-sensitive police reform...it is expected to support more effective community relations, since a police service whose composition more adequately reflects the population it serves may result in greater legitimacy. It can potentially moderate extremes in the use of force, and above all can result in a police service that responds with greater alacrity and commitment to preventing abuses of women’s rights (UNIFEM, October 2007: 8).

In 2002 when Lonsway, Wood et al published their findings on excessive use of force they suggested that the imperative to hire more women “has never been more urgent” (2002:10). Some six years later the participation rate of women in policing in the United States has actually declined. The picture is not entirely the same everywhere; for example, there is a pleasing upwards trend in the numbers of women in policing in several countries, including Australia and the United Kingdom. However, the gendered nature of justice continues in terms of power and decision-making, with few successful challenges to the excess of men in leadership roles and to the masculinist cultures of their policing organizations.

References


Leading Positions for Female Engineers through Research and Practice

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Abstract
In Germany the combination of career and family is a problem, especially for women working in leadership positions. We wanted to know how (future) engineers deal with this problem. In a recent study we found out what male and female engineers expect of their employers when they want to combine career and family needs. The study shows that many students in engineering study programs want to reach a leading position within five years and at the same time wish to start a family and spend time with their children. Employers were asked how they react to these wishes. The study was initiated by VDI, Association of German Engineers, the biggest engineering association in Germany with approximately 135,000 members and realised by Gender Studies in Science and Engineering at Technische Universität München (TUM).

The results of our study are transferred to TUM and support the implementation of family friendly structures: Employers like TUM competing with other companies for the best engineers have to change their management and human resources strategies if they want to win well educated experts with family responsibilities. With a modern family policy TUM can underline its status as role model for other universities and companies searching for engineers.

Introduction – gendered universities in a changing process
German universities – especially technical universities – are up to now very male dominated institutions in their education, student and academia structures. European research in science has shown that there is a so called “leaky pipeline” when it comes to academic careers among women, meaning that the higher the position in academia gets, the lower get the amount of women on the position (comp. European Commission 2001). Part of the problem is due to the fact that women researchers very often still have to decide between family needs and career opportunities much more than their male colleagues. Several studies have shown that women and men differ in their career options – and having children is only one of the possible reasons, because it could be proven, that those women who do not have children differ in their career perspectives from men as well (comp. Abele 2002) and that sometimes women in leading positions are not less successful when they have children than when they have none (comp. BMBF 2006). That means even more important than the “child-rearing problem” are the gendered structures at universities. It seems that the gender of a person still plays an important role. But what does “gendered structures”, “male structure” or “male domination” mean? The so called “male structures” have for a long time not been analysed but were simply seen as the norm (comp. Baur/Luedtke 2008: 7) – meaning that women coming into these systems were regarded as failing the norm and thus need special treatment, to make them fit into the structures. Typical structures at a gendered university are built on traditional role models, taking the man as the norm and saying that a male professor can work twelve to 15 hours a day because he has somebody – usually his wife – at home who takes care of the rest of his life, e.g. social contacts, household work, child care etc. This means he can easily take part in late at night network events, work in the evening hours/weekends, go on longer business trips etc. and that this is seen as necessary if somebody wants to become a professor. We can also find the “old-boys network” as part of the structural problem for women with and without a family. Both – the leaky pipeline and the male working structures – have to be changed if a university wants to get rid of gendered structures and gender gaps in numbers of students and researchers. Especially technical universities see themselves in a changing process because they are still those with the most traditional structures. Furthermore, the situation does not change “by itself” as it
seems to do at universities with other main subjects like languages, business administration or law schools where more than half of the students are women already. To change such structures they first have to be analysed carefully.

At Technische Universität München for example, a university that has started a changing process long ago, a lot has changed in the past 20 years: the ratio of female students at TUM could be raised from 22.4% to 31.1%, the ratio of female researchers from 14.4% to 25.3%. But still we find only 9% female students in mechanical engineering and 12% in electrical engineering in 2007 and of all TUM professors (without clinical professors) only 7.6% are women (compared to 1.5% in 1989). Being a professor at a university means to be able to decide about money, about personnel structure and about research topics. The numbers show that most of the decision making positions are still male dominated. The influence of female expertise and research interests remains thus low. For a long time – and less audible still today – some people claim that women could reach these positions if they wanted to and that they simply “are not made for a researching career”. But those people ignore the structural barriers make it difficult for many women to follow an academic career (comp. Höppel 2002: 114).

For more than twenty years universities and research institutions are now investing in changing this situation. In 1985 German universities were for the first time forced to work against disadvantages for women as part of their daily work. From the beginning on women’s representatives were introduced at universities (comp. Löther/Mühlenbruch 2004: 23). The main task of this voluntary position was to focus on structural disadvantages for women – which led to the fact that women’s representatives were not very prestigious and not liked by those people who wanted to keep old structures alive. At the same time they belonged to the best informed persons at a university and took part in all tenure processes – and many professors thought they were “dangerous” (Höppel 2002: 113). From the 1990ies onwards the situation of women’s representatives improved a little, as there were special programs developed to support women in research careers, including stipends for those women who had spent some time with child care duties. Women’s representatives were usually in charge of these programs. But still up to today structures did not change enough and other additional programs have to be found. Due to the success in the German excellence initiative (see below) TUM is strongly encouraged in implementing gender and diversity aspects into everyday university life. A lot has been reached, e.g. two of the vice presidents are women by now, one of them even with an intercultural background – but still, the university can be named a gendered institution at least at the level of power and responsibility as most professors, deans and members of the presidency are still men. TUM sees it as important to change the structures so that men and women have the same opportunities for a career in academia and in engineering as well. The so called glass ceiling effect – the invisible line that stops women from reaching higher positions has to be analysed and if we understand why it is still there – efforts have to be made to destroy this ceiling1. In the following concrete wishes of engineers in leading positions towards their employers will be presented and put into relation to the gender issues action plan of Technische Universität München, where a lot of engineers find work.

Family friendliness – what engineers in leading positions expect and what employers already offer

In the following we present our recent study for which we have done research in the past 1½ years on engineers in leadership positions and their possibilities to combine career and family needs. This special focus had hardly been analysed so far. In 2006 another research project “Arbeitswelt in

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1 The name “glass ceiling” comes from experiments with fish. The animals experienced that they were stopped from eating their food by a transparent glass plate inside their aquarium. After a while the experience was so strong that they stopped trying – even when the plate was removed (from Knaths 2007: 10f. our translation).
“Bewegung” (Labour market on the move) (BMBF 2006) had been the first to deal especially with the labour situation of men and women with an academic background in sciences and technical professions. This was a huge quantitative comparative study on people with career options and can be seen as one of the basics we built our study on. One of the results of this first study is that men and women differ in the tension field between work and family. Women in technical and scientific subjects usually live in dual career couples, while more than 50% of men in these subjects have a wife with no academic education (BMBF 2006: 17). This leads to different constellations for women to make a career in engineering subjects. While many of their male colleagues have a wife who takes care of their children (if they have some), household, and social contacts, women often find other strategies to make a career possible. They usually rely on external day care for their children, have external help in the household and often feel more responsible for their family wellbeing than their partners do. Our own study’s results can add some interesting facts. The research was split into a pre-study and a main study. In the pre-study we focussed on young professionals. It works out that many students in engineering study programs want to reach a leading position within five years and at the same time want to start a family. Most of them (31 of 36) hope to be able to spend time with their children when these are young and thus hope for future employees who support combining career and family needs. Most impressive for Germany was the result, that all but two male participants mentioned this wish (VDI 2008).

From January to March 2008 the main study was realized. Therefore we asked engineers in Germany about their experiences with the combination of career and family. We got more that 650 questionnaires back – which was overwhelming and presented to us the urgency of our topic. Of these 650 answers we could filter out 223 engineers in leading positions, with and without children.

While more than 48% of the male leaders say, that their career is not influenced by their children, only 25% of the female leaders say so. Knowing about their family background helps explaining these differences. We also asked them about their wishes and needs towards their employers to make a career and family combination simpler. Nearly all of the managers mentioned the wish to reduce their working hours and work in flexible time contracts. While most of them (68%) work about 40-55 hours per week, about 60% said they preferred to work not more than 40 hours per week, which is a usual working week without extra time.

Next to students and engineers we asked companies about their measures and opportunities for managers to combine career and family needs. This was made in expert interviews and by a questionnaire. 25 companies took part in this detailed study. One focus was laid on flexible working hours. We asked human resources managers about their company’s acceptance of part-time and flexible working managers. In most of the companies it is principally possible to work part time in a managing position – some have experiences already. Those managers who tried an experiment like this were mostly women, men in leading positions are often not even thought of as being fathers and having family responsibilities. Still most human resources managers think of secretaries and administrative employees when it comes to part time work. Fathers who want to reduce their working time due to family reasons consequently face different conflicts (comp. Buschmeyer 2008). The answer of a human resources manager towards the question: “What would you do if a father in a leading position wants to take parental leave for half a year and come back in a part time

2 Exact database: 223 participants are in a leading position (meaning they have budget and/or personnel responsibility and thus can have influence on personnel structures and matters). Thereof were 141 men and 82 women. Most of the men have children: 67.1%, more than half (54%) of the women don’t. Altogether 59% of the participants are parents.
position?” was: “... we would tell him, that we try to find something adequate but that it is difficult. We could be more flexible if his wife was ill, his child was ill, so that he needs additional support. But with a normal birth, a normal child, I think you should talk open to this employee, whether he wants to be a house husband or a manager...” (Translated by the authors)

In this company the complete executive board is filled with engineers working 50-60 hours a week and additionally at many weekends. Part time working managers do not fit into the structures and this human resources manager does not want to change anything about it.

In 23 of 25 other companies we asked about their flexible working times, it is possible to work part time, even though it remains difficult in managing positions. Still in eleven of them managers have already tried to reduce their working hours. Usually this is regarded positively by colleagues and employers. A further important point for combining family and career needs is the time parents spend at home after child birth and the possibilities of external child care. Both are in Germany very special topics. Child care opportunities for children younger than three are hard to find and many women stay at home for at least three years with their children. Our study shows that especially for engineers in leading positions this is not true, because they plan much shorter parental leave of 3-6 months and thus need child care opportunities very quickly. Especially highly qualified women need these opportunities (Mikrozensus 2004) to come back into their careers. Because there are so little public child care opportunities, companies are now opening their own kindergartens and crèches. They see it as an opportunity to keep especially well qualified female employees in their companies and to prevent a de-qualification, save money for new recruiting and training (comp. BMFSFJ 2004a: 17). In our study nine of 25 companies offer regular child care opportunities and eight have child care opportunities during school vacation.

If child care opportunities were not a problem any longer human resources managers expect the parental leave to be shorter and would thus not influence the career. 19 of 25 companies think that parental leave or other forms of time out are possible under special circumstances. All 19 think it is important to talk to the supervisor before and make a plan about re-entry and working time structures. Nine of them claim that parents should come back as fast as possible – even if it is only part-time. Most important is to keep the contact. Colleagues and supervisors should know that the parents want to come back and take their plan seriously. Furthermore, clear substitution rules have to be made.

To go on parental leave without any influence on the career is dependent on the re-entry process but also on the way contact to the company is kept throughout the leave. In 17 of the participating companies, parents in parental leave have the opportunity to take part in conferences during the time out and in 18 companies they can visit qualifying seminars during that time. Five of them offer child care during these events.

Still, all these measures do not change the fact that children do influence men’s career less than a women’s career. Our research shows that of the managers in industry who have children 48% male and 25% female participants say that their career plans were not influenced by their children.

TUM as an example for a women and family friendly university
The first steps to contribute to a strategy of TUM as women and family friendly research employer have been made during the past 20 years. Next to family friendliness we also find new approaches at TUM to follow a career as female researcher without “leaving the pipeline”.

3 At TUM the definition of “family” is formulated very broadly. It is based on responsibility rather than on kinship. Translated into English it says: “Family” includes people who are raising children and students or employers who care for dependants.
As we have seen before, TUM is still very male dominated but in a changing process towards becoming Germany’s most attractive technical university for female students and scientists. Studies like the one presented above add to this process by giving foundation to the process. Companies, which are – because of a forecasted lack of engineers in Germany – competing with other companies for the best engineers, have to change their management and human resources strategies. TUM faces the same problem if it wants to win and keep well educated experts with family responsibilities.

In Germany an excellence initiative was started in 2005 by the federal states and the government. Goal of this initiative is to make German universities more successful in international rankings and to support important developments in research at certain universities. The initiative aims at supporting three funding lines: research clusters, graduate schools and universities’ future concepts. Technische Universität München was successful in all three funding lines and may now be called University of Excellence. One important aspect in the application was the inclusion of “Gender Issues”. At TUM the professorship Gender Studies in Science and Engineering coordinated the concepts during the application processes and managed to come to an overall concept, which is now integrated into everyday university life. It is also task of Gender Studies to do accompanying research on the process now.

One first important step to guarantee the implementation of Gender Issues was the introduction of a gender board, in which members of the university leadership come together with women’s representatives and those working on gender in research. The gender board meets regularly every second week to discuss gender topics as well as financial aspects of the newly invented funds with a gender component.

Part of the application and now introduced were a gender consulting position, a Dual Career Office, a Family Care Structural Fund, the Gender Issues Incentive Fund, the Vocational Training Fund (after parental leave) and the fund to finance compensation during mother’s leave at the departments. Additionally, new child care facilities are opened and possibilities to work at home and reduce working hours are invented (compare Ihsen et al. 2008). Seven million Euros are reserved for Gender Issues at TUM for the years 2006 to 2011.

The Munich Dual Career Office of TUM in cooperation with other universities and two non university research institutions has been founded in the beginning of the year. It can contribute to improving the ratio of female researchers at TUM and in the Munich research community. The idea behind such a centre is that in academia it is standard that professors and assistants are mobile and searching for jobs all over Germany, Europe and the world. At the same time they may have a family, a spouse or partner, who usually follows his or her own career. Especially in academic work it is usual that partners work in academia as well, which makes it often hard for partners to work in the same city, and universities claim that they have already lost professors, who could not take the position because there was no job opportunity for a partner. The Munich Dual Career Office will give an opportunity to support partners in this situation.

Many of the further measures target at the family friendliness of the university. These are for example the development of elder care support for members of the university who have to care for their parents or other family members.

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4 For an overview on newly invented funds and positions have a look at: http://portal.mytum.de/tum/exzellenzinitiative/index_html/document_view?
An introduction of a family service position
- Widening of the provision of laptops and internet access for fifty new workplaces at homes of employees

Next to family friendliness we also find new ideas at TUM to follow a scientific career without “leaving the pipeline” through better career planning and career opportunities for women. Parts of the program are platforms for female engineers, a mentoring program, and tutorials for female students, etc.

To achieve further advancement in the numbers of female researchers it is important to examine with non-gender biased recruitment and to intensify the measures of non-gender biased recruiting. All TUM members have access to guidelines for non gender-biased recruitment and can get support by gender consulting. Gender neutral recruitment means a gender sensitive and gender equitable approach and design of measures of personnel planning and personnel recruitment which contribute to the reduction of disadvantages for women and help to promote gender equality. But how can gender biased and discriminating personnel strategies be avoided? And what is the reason for the fact that application procedures contain frequently discriminating elements or at least those that follow stereotypes and are not gender sensitive at all? And why do women often feel less approached in recruitment advertising?

With the definition of the requirement profile the conditions for recruitment advertising and the application procedure are set. The description of the requirement profile often contains key words, which are assigned to the male behaviour spectrum and this fact can deter women from applying at all. The modality how job titles and job descriptions are formulated has to be looked over in view of discriminatory elements and to enhance their attractiveness to women. That means job descriptions have not only to be formulated gender neutral but also have to point out the specific requirements on that particular function and the occupational aptitude. In the requirement profile the description of the activity has to come to the fore, that way the essential abilities and characteristics can be associated. The advertising copy should give information about desired problem solving, expected benefits, objectives as well as results. Additionally, job descriptions at TUM can refer to the numerous elements of family friendliness that are implemented at the moment and interesting for male and female scientists alike.

Further measures to implement gender and diversity aspects into all parts of the university, the administration as well as research and personnel development were named by the TUM in the application of the excellence initiative and are now in the implementation process. This is:

- The implementation of Gender Mainstreaming on all levels, in all internal processes, especially when recruitment, personnel development, quality management and controlling are regarded. This leads to intensified cooperation between women’s representatives and a stricter implementation of equality acts and equality reports. Gender controlling will also be introduced to integrate equality aspects in public relations, planning and controlling.

- The gender consulting position can be asked for by faculty who want to develop plans to integrate more women into their teams and who need ideas to change towards more gender and family friendly structures. By inventing such cooperation between academic research (Gender Studies in Science and Engineering) and consulting (positioned closely to the universities leadership) it becomes easier for all university members to integrate the ideas of gender and diversity into their own research and development programs. By this gender consulting position members of university will have the possibility to get sensitised for gender and diversity aspects in their own teaching and research.
All measures and plans have been based on the idea that a technical university like TUM cannot longer ignore the task to change from a gendered university with a strong male bias into a university of equal opportunities. Being an attractive employer for successful engineers and fulfilling the task of educating future engineers are only two reasons why TUM decided for this gender action plan.

Conclusion
Family friendliness and support for women’s careers is still on the agenda even twenty years after the introduction of the first women’s representatives at German universities. The structures at male dominated institutions, e.g. employers in the technical field, still do not fit to the wishes of men and women who want to combine career and family needs. Structures in academia prevent female researchers from taking over higher and highest positions, numbers of female professors remain low even though the numbers of students grow.

Parents in engineering managing professions expect support from their employers when it comes to flexible working hours, child care opportunities and the possibility to take parental leave.

Technische Universität München, as one of the leading universities in Germany, aims at becoming Germany’s most attractive university for female students and researchers. Therefore, it takes these wishes of future engineers and managers seriously and invests into a gender concept that aims at family friendly structures and support of careers of female researchers through gender sensitive recruitment strategies and support of family needs.

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Andrea (Ed.): Erfolg und Wirksamkeit von Gleichstellungsmaßnahmen an Hochschulen. Bielefeld.

Abstract
In the 1970s Sandra L. Bem (1974) developed the Bem Sex-Role Inventory (BSRI), a widely used inventory that treats masculinity and femininity as independent dimensions. The inventory was originally used as self-reporting, in which the respondents were supposed to indicate on a 7-point scale how well they matched a number of personal characteristics, which, in turn, was considered as masculine, feminine or androgynous. In this article we explore the possibilities – and limitations – of using the BSRI as an analytic tool of interpreting and coding narratives, concerning conception of leadership and how they work among first level managers. The empirical material consists of 26 interviews with first level managers (20) and their closest executives (6), within two large Swedish working organizations (one manufacturing industry, one in the public elder care sector). With help from the BSRI, the interviews has been interpreted both qualitative (concerning how the respondents talk about gender and leadership) and quantitative (how often they express different views). Through a combination of qualitative and quantitative text analysis one can make use of the BSRI. Some of the results show that narratives in both working organizations are comparable with the BSRI masculinity scale, but it has little resemblance with the femininity Scale. The results also show some limitations concerning the cultural dimensions of the BSRI-scale, since some of the characteristics have a different value in the Swedish context than in the American.

Key words: Leadership, Sex-Roles, BSRI, Narrative, Gender.

Introduction
In the 1970s, Sandra Bem challenged the established dichotomised view on gender, by her well-known Bem Sex-Role Inventory (BSRI). The dominating view on gender had long been bipolar. A person was usually considered as either feminine or masculine, not both. One of the main points by the BSRI is that gender is measured as two independent dimensions, thereby making it possible to characterise a person as both feminine and masculine. If a person scores high on both the masculinity and femininity scales, he or she can be classified as androgynous. On the contrary, if a person scores low on both scales, he or she can be classified as undifferentiated.

With help from her students, Sandra Bem constructed an initial pool of items. 200 of the items were considered as typically feminine or masculine, and positive in value. Another 200 items were considered as neither stereotypical masculine nor stereotypical feminine. Of these, supposed gender-neutral items, half were positive in connotation, half were negative (Bem 1974: 156). Bem asked students to rate the items, on a 7-point scale, if they were more socially desirable for one sex than the other. (The questions were formulated like “In American society, how desirable is it for a woman to be sincere?”). The final items were selected if they scored high by both males and females. In other words, if males and females agreed upon what was considered as socially desirable for men and women. An important detail is that the students were asked to rate the items out of what they thought were the general opinion, not from their personal ideas or views. In general, there was a good internal consistency among the participating men and women about what are male and female traits (see also Persson 1999). The final scale is usually used as a self-
reporting measure. The respondents are asked to rate how well each of the 60 items describes themselves, on a 7-point scale.


The BSRI has been criticised by many scholars. Several critical claims are related to changing attitudes towards gender roles and equality among the sexes. What is considered as “a real man” or “a real woman” is not fixed in time or cultural context (e.g. Kerfoot & Knights 1993: 662). There has also been a generational shift since Bem developed the scales. The students that helped Bem to rate the items were, in most cases, born in the 1950s. In general, they grew up with conservative gender roles and low female participation in the labour market. Relatively few women had college education or entered high positions in their work-life (Twenge 1997: 306, 313f). Later generations has witnessed major changes, such as a large increase in mothers working outside the home, which probably has influenced what is perceived as socially desirable for women and men. In a meta-study by Twenge (1997) it is observed that women increasingly describe themselves with masculine-stereotyped personality traits. The rise in the masculinity scale for women has not been accompanied by an equivalent increase in how men describe themselves with feminine-stereotyped characteristics. Some of the items in the BSRI, such as Childlike, Yielding and Gullible, have also been considered as out-dated or not appropriate to characterise feminine or masculine behaviour (Persson 1999: 20). Similar results are found by Harris (1994), who indicates that almost all masculine traits, but fewer (16 of 19) of the feminine traits still meets the criteria’s for inclusion in the BSRI measure.

Other critical claims are relates to the fact that the BSRI often is used as a self-reporting instrument. In many cases there are substantial differences in how people describe their behaviour or personal characteristics – and how they actually behave (Johnson 1981). When people answer the BSRI they might very well be influenced by self-presentation demands (Twenge 1997) or what is socially desirable (Cunningham & Antill 1980). Another question is whether it is reasonable to quantify the “amount” of masculinity/femininity/androgyny the respondents possess (Kerfoot & Knights 1993: 662).

Measures such as the BSRI are also interesting in relation to the general development of gender studies, and gender studies in the fields of organization and management. During the last couple of decades there has been a general shift towards more diversified views on gender, emphasising heterogeneity, hierarchy and different forms of femininity and masculinity (e.g. Alvesson & Due Billing 1992), which, for example, has been expressed by the growing field of masculinity studies (Connell 1996). In these fields local contexts and plurality often are emphasised (Connell 1998). Another major change in gender studies is the increasing focus on the intersection of gender, ethnicity, and class (McCall 2005), which also has been expressed in organisation studies (e.g. Browne & Misra 2003, Collinson & Hearn 1994, 1996). A relevant question then, is if there any use of a universalistic measure such as the BSRI?
The aim of this article is two-fold. First, we will explore the possibilities—and limitations—of using the BSRI-scales as analytic tools in coding and interpreting qualitative narratives, concerning conceptions on leadership. This procedure includes both qualitative (how the respondents talk about gender and leadership) and quantitative (how often they express different views) dimensions of the empirical material. In the second step, we will discuss the relevance of the BSRI-scales, in a Swedish contemporary context.

The empirical material
The empirical material consists of 26 qualitative interviews, with first level managers (20) and their closest executives (6), within two large working organizations in Sweden. The first organization is a manufacturing industry, located in an average sized town. This organization is male homogenous, with 87 percent male employees. The second organization is within the public elder sector, located in an average sized municipality. Contrary to the first organization, this is a female homogenous workplace. 94 percent of the employees are female. The share of male and female first level managers is close to the general division of sexes within in the two organizations. This is also the case with the executive managers in the manufacturing industry, where 11 percent are female. However, in the elder care organization, there is a greater share of male managers, 30 percent.

In this article we will analyse one general theme from the interviews: perspectives on leadership. This includes how the managers talk about their everyday working-situation (tasks, responsibilities, authority etc.) and how they conceptualise ideals about leadership. Another theme from the interviews we will analyse is about respondents conceptions of gender (what they think characterize men and women as first level managers). In the interviews with the executives, the focus remains on the first level managers (their working conditions and the executives’ expectations on the managers). The interviews took place during the spring of 2006. They were taped and later on transcribed. In the coding procedure, the MAXQDA2-program has been used.

The initial qualitative interpretation
In qualitative research it is common to interpret different kind of materials during the whole research process, from early stages of planning to writing up the results. In one way, this is true for our analysis. However, early interpretation, during actual interviews, transcription, and reading through the written material, is often rather unstructured. The first more systematic interpretation took place after the whole written material had been read through a couple of times, in order to get a general impression of the content. With help from the MAXQDA2-program, the interviews were coded in a rather traditional qualitative manner. Passages, sentences and singular word were attached with codes. Some of the codes were generated out of the questions in the interviews (for example, there were questions about self-control in the working situation, out of this, some of the answers were coded self-control), other codes emerged from the content in the narratives and after comparing several of the interviews. Some of these codes were, from our perspective, rather unexpected. For example, many of the respondents expressed resistance or emphasized change (for example when talking about structural changes within the organizations, or their working conditions). Some of the codes are overlapping. One passage can, for example, both be coded as change and self-control.

In this article we have included all codes that are related to perspectives on leadership. In the first steps below, we will analyse the codes where the respondents talk about explicitly about leadership (about their own tasks, responsibilities, power, ideals etc.). Later on, we will also analyse codes that are more implicit expressions about leadership, which in many cases are closely related to the respondent’s conception of gender.

1 The interviews and transcriptions are performed by Britt-Inger Keisu. The interviews are all part of her dissertation project, on conception of leadership, gender, and working conditions among first level managers in Sweden. The interviews consist of several other themes that are not included in this article.
Counting and weighting the codes

In order to make different kinds of patterns more visible in the narratives, we quantified and “weighted” the codes in the second step of analysis. From this we aimed to get rough measures on how often and how detailed the respondents expressed different views and experiences. It is important to notice that this procedure should be seen in relation to the material. The aim is not to use these measures for external quantification or generalisation.

The easy part of this procedure was to count the codes, i.e. how many times the respondents talked about different traits or behaviours (for example, self-control, assertiveness, dominance). The more difficult part was the weighting. Short/not detailed statements were given weight value one, more detailed/elaborated ones got weight value two. Passages, sentences, and specific word have been weighted in this way. For example, one manager told; “A good manager at the first level has to give straight answers.” In this case we coded the sentence as being clear. Sometimes the narratives are expressed in negations, like: “I don’t like managers who don’t say what they really mean”. This example has also been coded as clear. Both these examples got weight value one. Another example is how one of the managers said: “He [the manager] has to be tough, compassionate and determined”. In this example the traits tough, determined, and compassionate all got weight value one.

More elaborated and detailed parts of the narratives were given weight value two. An example of this is when a manager was asked to give example on when she perform leadership in practice. The respondent answered: “In a situation like this [when something fails], one has to get hold [of the situation] and decide, who is going to do what and how we are going to avoid that situation to happen again. Call in the troops, so to say”. This passage was coded Rule and given weight value two, since it was fairly elaborated. The respondent continued in a similar way; “Then you must gather all, get together and get something done.” This was also coded Rule, but was given weight value one. In total, this passage got weight value three.

Sometimes it was difficult to count and weight the narratives, since the respondents used their language in very different ways. Respondents can express very similar messages with few or by many words. Some are clear and specific, while others express themselves in a more complicated way. Sometimes the narratives are contradictory. Because of this it is important to remember that the counting and weighting is not an exact procedure, rather an approximate judgement made by us as researchers. But then, why is counting and weighting the codes a good idea? When compiling personal traits and behaviours, like the BSRI, it is easy to get the impression that they are equally important. In reality this is not true. Some behaviour and traits are obviously stressed and emphasised in the interviews. By counting and giving different values, one can make patterns (for example on gender) more visible. Is the behaviour controlling, among first level managers, more often expressed than understanding and compassionate? This would be a much more interesting result than just stating that both controlling and understanding traits are important.

The comparison with the BSRI-scales

In the third step, we have compared our codes on explicit descriptions of leadership with the BSRI scales (c.f. Ahl 2004). The aim is both to explore if we can use the BSRI as analytic tool, to analyse narratives on leadership, and to make cultural constructions of leadership and gender more visible in our empirical material. The comparisons were initially made for each organization separately, but since the overall pattern turned out to be similar regardless of male/female homogeneity the results are presented together.

In the first column, in Table 1, the BSRI items are presented. In the second and third column our codes and weights appear. In the table, it is both possible to get detailed information about how
many times specific respondents talk about different traits and behaviours and to get an over-all impression about more general themes.

Letter in parenthesis within tables:
E = Elder care
K = Female managers
M = Male managers
MC = Managers closest executives
a–å = Respondents
1, 2, 3- = Sum of weighted codes

Table 1 – Comparison of the BSRI Masculinity Scale and the weighted codes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BSRI Masculinity Scale</th>
<th>Codes</th>
<th>Respondents and weights of codes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Self-reliant</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self control</td>
<td>(KA1)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-assertion</td>
<td>(KA1)(KM1)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Awareness of one self</td>
<td>(KM1)(EKC4)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-reliant</td>
<td>(KN1)(KT2)(EMG3)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selfcontrol</td>
<td>(EMF1)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Defends own beliefs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Convincing</td>
<td>(KA7)(MP2)(MQ2)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assertive</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harsh</td>
<td>(KA1)(KN1)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assertive</td>
<td>(MCV1) (EKD6)(EKZ2)(EKÅ3)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consistent</td>
<td>(EMG1)(EMB2)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strong personality</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integrity</td>
<td>(MU2)(MK2)(KT4)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confidence-inspiring</td>
<td>(KM1)(MP2)(MCV3)(MCX8)(EMB5)(EMH1)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good role-model</td>
<td>(KT1)(MK3)(ML1)(MP7)(MU2)(MCX2)(EKY2)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(EKC3)(EMH6)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enthusiastic</td>
<td>(MO2)(EMCE1)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visionary</td>
<td>(MCV1)(MCX1)(EMB1)(EMCE2)(EMCI2)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Authority</td>
<td>(EKD1)(EKJ1)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reliable</td>
<td>(EMH1)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honest</td>
<td>(EKC2)(EMH2)(EMG1)(EMB2)(EMCE2)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charismatic</td>
<td>(EMCE1)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good cope with stress</td>
<td>(EMCE1)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Forceful</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persevering</td>
<td>(KA7)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Energetic</td>
<td>(KA1)(KM2)(MK1)(EKC5)(EY1)(EY23)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(EMG4)(EMH1)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tough</td>
<td>(KA6)(KM1)(KT10)(MK3)(MOS)(EMB1)(EMG2)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Force through</td>
<td>(KM2)(MK1)(ML1)(MO1)(KA4)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(EKD2)(EYK2)(EMB2)(EMH1)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brave</td>
<td>(KM1)(ML2)(M03)(MP4)(MC54)(EMH1)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(EY1)(EKZ1)(EMG1)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Durable</td>
<td>(EY2)(EY1)(EY2)(EMF5)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Willing to take risks</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategic</td>
<td>(KT1)(ML1)(EMCI1)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Makes decisions easily</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Determined</td>
<td>(KM5)(KT1)(KN1)(MK2)(ML4)(MP4)(MQ1)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(EMF1)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resoluted</td>
<td>(KN1)(MU1)(KM2)(EMG9)(EMB2)(EMF1)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(EK3)(EY5)(EKÅ1)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-sufficient</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dominant</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rule</td>
<td>(MO4)(EMH2)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Controll Clear</td>
<td>Manipulative</td>
<td>Willing to take a stand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------</td>
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<td>------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manulipative</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Willing to take a stand</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Straight-backed</td>
<td>Consistent</td>
<td>Willing to take a stand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Controll Clear</td>
<td>Manipulative</td>
<td>Willing to take a stand</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Our first impression was that it was easy to compare our codes with the BSRI Masculinity Scale. Many of the codes of traits and behaviours resembles with the ones in the Masculinity Scale. Some of them, such as dominant, self-reliant, assertive, independent, aggressive, are the same. A difference is that our codes, in general, are more detailed that the BSRI. For example, the BSRI-item Self-reliant is compared with four codes in our material; self control, self assertion, awareness of oneself and self reliant.

By looking at the weight values of the code different patterns becomes visible. The most frequent expressions, concerning explicit expression on leadership, concern Rules, Control, Achievement-oriented and Present in the department. These codes are compared with Dominant, Competitive, and Ambitious in the BSRI Masculinity Scale. Other frequent topics are managers as Tough, Resolute, Development-oriented in work and Distanced. These traits and behaviours are compared with being Forceful, Makes decisions easily, Ambitious and Independent. It is also quite common among the respondents to talk about being a Good role-model, Confidence-inspiring, Determined, Energetic and Brave. (The item Feminine is treated separatelly in table 3.) The only traits and behaviours that is not possible to get a good fit when comparing with the Masculinity Scale are “Individualistic”, “Self-sufficient” and “Athletic”. (Two of the items in the BSRI masculinity scale, Act as a leader and Has leadership abilities, were excluded in our comparison, since they, because of the topic of the interviews, became tautological.)

In Table 2 we compare the same topic with the BSRI Femininity Scale. Here it emerges that the respondents do not talk a lot about the kind of behaviours and traits that are associated with femininity. Some exceptions are the codes about the managers being Supportive, Sensitive, Compassionate and that they Listen to others. These codes are compared with Sensitive to the needs of others and Compassionate in the Femininity Scale. We also found some codes that resembles to the items Understanding and Loyal. (The item Feminine is treated separately in table 3.)

### Table 2 – Comparison of the BSRI Femininity Scale and the weighted codes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BSRI Femininity Scale</th>
<th>Codes</th>
<th>Respondents and weights of the codes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Affectionate</strong></td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Loyal</strong></td>
<td>Oriented to others (KM3) Show each other respect (MU2)(EMG2) Collaborative (EMG2)(EMCE1)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sympathetic</strong></td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sensitive to the needs of others</strong></td>
<td>Supportive (KM2)(MK1)(MO1)(MP3)(MCS3)(MCV2) (EKC3)(EKD1)(EKY1)(EMF2)(EMCI1) Sensitive (ML1)(MQ1)(KN1)(MCR3)(MCX1)(EKZ4) (EKÅ1)(EMH2) Present in department (KM1)(MP1) Flexible (MCS2) Observant (KA1) Listen to others (EKD2)(EKY1)(EKÅ1)(EMB1)(EMF2)(EMG1) (EMCE2) Loyal to employee (EKD2)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Understanding</strong></td>
<td>Understanding (KM2)(EMB1)(EMG1)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Compassionate</strong></td>
<td>Compassionate (KT1)(MK2)(MCV1)(MCX6)(EMG4)(EMCE2)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Eager to soothe hurt feelings</strong></td>
<td>...</td>
<td>...</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Narratives from both working organizations have close resemblance with the BSRI Masculinity Scale, but only to a limited extent with the Femininity Scale. Just three of the items in the Masculinity Scale (*Self-sufficient, Athletic, Individualistic*) did not come up in our material, which could be an indication of the relevance of the scale. More remarkable is that 15 of the items in the femininity scale are missing. One interpretation could be that traits and behaviours associated with femininity are important to the respondent, neither when it comes to ideals of leadership nor to the descriptions of their own practice. After all, leadership is often associated with stereotypical masculinity. Another interpretation could be that the femininity scale does not capture what is associated with femininity. It could be outdated, or just doesn’t work in the Swedish context. (There were also some of our codes that not were possible to compare with the BSRI. For example, some respondents talked about *Democracy, Communication, and Competence*.)

In order to get a more detailed understanding of how the respondents relate to masculinity and femininity, we have compared how they describe male and female first level managers (see table 3). These descriptions are often made implicitly, when they describe different kind of situations and experiences. In the table below, codes from male and female respondents are presented together.

Male managers are, according to the narratives, often associated with traits that easily can be compared to the BSRI Masculinity scale. Male managers are, for example, described as *clear, straightforward, determined, forceful, dominant, and competitive*. Furthermore, they can *easily make decisions, are willing to stick to decisions, solves problems when they occur and want to make career*. These descriptions can be compared to BSRI items such as *Forceful, Makes decisions easily, Dominant, Willing to take a stand, Competitive*, and *Ambitious* in the Masculinity scale. Even though some of the male characteristics are negative in connotation, such as being *dominant* or to *brag about capabilities*, most of them focus on abilities to act in different kinds of situations. Male managers are in general expected to solve problems, be consistent – and not emotionally involved. In contrast, the descriptions on the female managers often focus on problems, difficulties and lack of expected qualities. For example, female managers are having *difficulties to make decisions, difficulties to take a stand, difficulties to say no and stick to facts, troubles to get decisions accepted by others, discusses far too much before decisions, can’t make up their minds, are complicated and afraid of conflicts*. Many of these characteristics are formulated in contrast to a masculine norm; male managers are expected to be able to act, female managers are not.
The female managers are also associated with several explicit negative characteristics, such as that they slander about other women, talks too much and dwell, feel guilty, have bad conscience and acts like a wimp, are jealous and evil to each other. Some descriptions are more positive in value, such as being sensitive, calm, soft and ask questions in a humble way, having more dialogue and don’t want to dominate other, and work closely to subordinates and focus on relations. A general impression of these, more positive, descriptions is that most of them focus on female leaders as oriented to human relations. Only a few descriptions of the female managers are easy to compare with the BSRI femininity scale, for example that they are sensitive to the needs of others. Another interesting finding is that almost none of the descriptions of male managers are possible to compare with the femininity scale, and none of the descriptions of female managers are possible to compare with the masculinity scale.

Table 3 Respondents conceptions about male and female as first level managers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondents conceptions about male as first level manager</th>
<th>Respondent conceptions about female as first level manager</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wants to control</td>
<td>Sensitive to their surroundings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are clear</td>
<td>Have difficulties to take a stand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are straight forward</td>
<td>Have difficulties to say no and also to stick to facts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Takes a lot of decisions</td>
<td>Are soft - asks questions in a humble way</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Makes decisions easily</td>
<td>Have difficulties to make decisions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have easy to get their decisions accepted</td>
<td>Have trouble getting decisions accepted by others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If there is a group of men it is easier to make decisions</td>
<td>Discusses far too much before making decisions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accept majority decisions</td>
<td>Have easier to accept decisions made by men</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are determined</td>
<td>Slander about other women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sticks to their decisions</td>
<td>Are jealous and evil to each other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are dominant and doesn’t care what the subordinates think</td>
<td>Women have a lot of opinions about other women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solve problems when it occurs</td>
<td>Talks to much and dwell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talks a lot at meetings</td>
<td>Have more dialogue and don’t want to dominant other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can see the good in people regardless of the circumstances</td>
<td>Work closely to subordinates and are relation oriented</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have the same opinions as other men about production</td>
<td>Feel guilty, have bad consciences and acts like a wimp</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talk different compared to women</td>
<td>Strictly following rules and procedures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brag about their capability</td>
<td>Are careful and structured</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Put up boundaries and by doing that they don’t have to be personally or emotionally involved</td>
<td>Are thoughtful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to not be emotionally involved</td>
<td>Can’t relax after work and can’t stop thinking about it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wants to make a carrier</td>
<td>Are afraid of conflicts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thinks that position is important</td>
<td>If there are conflicts among subordinates they back down</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can easily see that everybody don’t love them</td>
<td>Tries to solve different situations by them selves</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thinks different than women and puts their focus on other things</td>
<td>Can’t make their minds up</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are technical</td>
<td>Doesn’t think about carrier but want their work to be simulative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communicate different than women</td>
<td>Are more direct when it comes to their regards of humans and are therefore harsh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Works with structure</td>
<td>Are complicated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Are calm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Are sensitive</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Discussion: discrepancy between conceptions and practice**

In this article we have explored the possibility of using the BSRI-scales as an analytic tool for analyzing narratives on leadership. We have also compared the content of our empirical material with the BSRI-scales, to discuss the relevance of the scales in a Swedish contemporary context. From our results, we would like to argue for two alternative interpretations of the comparison with the BSRI-scales. To simplify, the empirical material discussed in this article can be divided in two different parts. The first part concern how the respondents talk about how they practice leadership and their ideals of leadership. The second part concern the respondents conceptions of gender, what they think characterize men and women as first level managers.

In the first part, we found close resemblance between our codes and the BSRI masculinity scale. However, we also found a striking discrepancy between our material and the femininity scale. Some of the items can, of course, be missing because of the topic of our empirical material. Several studies have shown that leadership and masculinity in fact are closed linked (Billing & Alvesson 2000, Calás & Smircich 1991, Collinson & Hearn 1994, 1996, Kanter 1977, Kerfoot & Knights 1993, Lipman-Blumen 1992, Marshall 1995, Powell et al. 2002, Schein 1973, 1975, Sheppard 1992, Wahl 1996). But the fact that so many of the items are missing, leads us to suspect that some of the items are not relevant, in a Swedish context and/or in the 2000s. What is typically associated with femininity seem to have changed quite dramatically since the 1970s. Comparing our codes with the BSRI scales also makes us also question Bem’s initial selection of items. To what extent are they biased by social class and age?

The second part of our empirical material shows that the respondents hold rather stereotypical conceptions of gender. Male leaders are, for example, expected to be clear, straight forward, determined, and forceful, while female leaders are described in opposite terms. This finding also makes the narratives contradictory. In the first part of the material, when the respondents describe their own acts and ideals, there are very few gender differences. Both women and men are describing leadership in a similar way, which also has close resemblance with the BSRI masculinity scale (in other words, both female and male leaders describe their own acts and ideals with stereotypical masculine traits). But when the respondents talk about gendered leadership, how male and female leaders are and are expected to be, they are described as very different from each
other. The most striking difference is that male leaders are described as sufficient and capable while female leaders are described as problematic and unable to act. Female leaders are also associated with many obviously negative characteristics. How can this be interpreted in relation to the BSRI scales?

First of all, we need to decide how to relate to the BSRI scales. Are the scales reflecting conceptions and expectations on gender? If so, then we can use the results from the second part of the analysis to develop the scales. Since the BSRI femininity scale did not work out in our comparison, we would suggest adding some items that at least seem to be relevant in an organizational context. The original scales were originally developed out of what was considered as socially desirable for men and women, in society, in general. However, many of the conceptions that our respondents express are negative in connotation. Items that could be added to the femininity scale are: Undetermined, Unclear, Difficulties to make decisions, Difficulties to take a stand, Afraid of conflicts, Strictly following rules and Methodological.

Another interpretation of the scales is that they not only should reflect conceptions on gender, since these often reinforce stereotypical ideals, but also include acts and ideals. This could lead to a more drastic interpretation of the relevance of the BSRI scales, since both men and women in our study act as leaders in a way that are described as typical masculine, and has ideals that often are associated with masculinity. In other words, masculinity is not restricted to men, but rather traits and characteristics associated with all the respondents. This raises several questions. Is the content of the femininity scale not updated, or not relevant in the Swedish context? Is it relevant to formulate gendered, and universal, scales at all? Are our results limited to the fields of organization and leadership – or is it possible to find similar results (and maybe changes) in other professions, or in general in society?

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Co-leadership and gender in the performing arts
Kate MacNeill and Ann Tonks

Abstract
Co-leadership has been a dominant form of management within sections of the arts industry for many years. Consisting of the artistic director and the general manager the leadership partnerships within arts organizations, at first glance, might appear classically gendered: an heroic artistic leader and a facilitating general manager. In this research we identify the existence of these demarcations however we also find that the incumbents make no such association of gender specificity. We attribute this outcome to the characteristics of the performing arts industry more broadly and the people that are attracted to working in such an environment.

This paper presents part of a larger research project which is examining leadership models within the major performing arts companies in Australia. These companies include orchestras, dance companies, theatre and opera companies and circus. While these companies were the subject of a major government inquiry in the late 1990s, including questions of board governance, there was little attention given to the internal management structures and dynamics of leadership (Nugent Report 1999).

Through a series of interviews with general managers and artistic directors we are interrogating leadership structures and techniques in a creative context. We make specific reference to the question of whether artistic leadership and managerial leadership require different styles and how these are employed in the day-to-day practice of co-leadership within a performing arts context. In this paper we present that part of the research which examines the dynamics of co-leadership giving particular attention to questions of gender that arise within these partnerships. We have restricted this analysis to those organizations that exhibited clear co-leadership structures, language and processes.

The management context
The literature on leadership in the arts emphasizes the role of creativity and the demands of leading in a creative environment (eg Bilton 2007, Hartley 2005). In Australia, the necessity for creativity and entrepreneurship on the part of the arts leader has been thoroughly documented (Rentschler 2002). Often these studies emphasise the individualistic nature of creative leadership and locate this within the artistic aspects of an arts organisation’s operations. In other words leadership in relation to the management of an arts organisation tends to focus on the artistic product. Lapierre (2001) refers to management as being subordinate to the artistic product and that when art becomes a business enterprise it produces “an inevitable conflict” within the organisation between art and commerce.

These discussions are based on certain assumptions about the nature of management and of leadership. Implicit in much of the management literature is the idea of a dichotomy between creative leadership of an organization and conventional management imperatives. The evolution of arts management as a distinct discipline has resulted from the view that there is something unique about the arts. It also implies that there is a potential tension between the pursuit of artistic practice and that of managing an organization (Royseng, 2008). Separate structures frequently exist to serve the creative aspects of a company’s activities and its administrative responsibilities and external accountabilities (Chong 2002). Chong implies that bifurcated management structures arise from the increasing complexity and diversity of skills required by arts organizations. This inevitably

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produces the separation of the roles of artistic director and general manager. However, as our research demonstrates, the relationship between the artistic goals of the organization and what might be thought of as “management” responsibilities is much more organic – and the prevalence of the co-leadership model may, in fact, be a consequence of this flexibility.

Complementary leadership models are not the sole preserve of the arts industry, and there is an increasing awareness of the way in which complementary leadership models are practiced in corporate settings: a common division is along the lines of responsibility for the external and internal environments (Miles and Watkins 2007). Co-leadership has also been attributed with ensuring that “the whole is much greater than the sum of the parts” (p. 92). Critical factors in determining the success of co-leadership are considered to be communication and shared vision. Miles and Watkins argue that organisations need the four pillars of alignment in successful complementary teams: a common vision, common incentives, communication and trust. Ensley et al (2006) suggest that shared leadership is a particularly efficacious predictor of success in new venture performance, a finding which they considered to be consistent with prior research on shared leadership. They conclude that “shared leadership appears to be particularly important in the development and growth of new ventures. ... [H]igh profile cases of prodigal entrepreneurs, whose individual creativity and charisma have led them to fame and fortune, are more myth than reality (p. 228).”

It is interesting that shared leadership should emerge as a focus of management literature at a time when the very concept of what makes for good management is being reassessed – together with its gender specificity. One particular theme recasts management in way that emphasizes “feminine leadership”, and argues that women in fact bring particular skills and attributes to their roles as managers which in turn produces “more humane, relations-oriented, flexible, participatory and caring institutions” (Billing and Alvesson 2000). As Billing and Alvesson note, there is a tendency in this literature to a essentialise women, suggesting that they adopt different forms of communication, are more corporative, have a view of power that is more relational than individual and are better able to mobilize human resources (pp. 147–149). Some of these “feminine” values have been described as "the prioritizing of feelings ... the importance of the imaginative and creative" (Hines 1992). At the same time, imagination and creativity, together with charismatic leadership might equally be applicable to notion of artistic leadership, reinforced by the growing literature on creativity and innovation (Florida 2003 and 2005 and others).

Lapiere (2001) suggests that artistic and theatre directors behave very differently when meeting with artists than when they deal with the administrative team which implies that management behaviours, be they creative or otherwise, are not inflexible. However, while noting these very different approaches to leadership, he neglects to examine how the key leaders of their respective areas of the organization: artistic leadership and organisational management, negotiate this dynamic. Certainly there is a perception that a tension exists because of the inherent characteristics of an arts company, conveyed through references such as “organisational schizophrenia (between the artistic and administrative sides of the company)” (Fitzgibbon 2002, p. 70). Perhaps because of this, the need for mutual respect between the executive director and the artistic director is emphasised. The interdependence of their fortunes is reflected in Mehta’s observation that “the executive director must respect the music director’s point of view, since it is on his shoulders that the ultimate responsibility for a season’s success rests” (Mehta 2003, p. 5). Likening the dynamics between the executive director and the music director to that of a marriage he notes the complicating factor that while they are forced to live together they do not necessarily do so by their own choosing (p. 5).

Attributing individual characteristics to success in management runs the risk of reinforcing gender stereotyping, a matter that we directly address in our research. There has been little research specifically on women in management in the arts industry, and Foley (2005) noted that this may in
part be because of “most studies seem to have concentrated on women in more clearly defined management roles in, example, manufacturing companies, and do not seem strictly applicable to a creative industry with a less hierarchical career structure” (p. 242). Certainly there has been significant attention given to the gendered nature of certain industries, and arts administration or management is widely regarded as a female dominated occupation.¹

Nonetheless, as Foley notes, sex segmentation does arise within the arts industry, frequently revolving around the artistic director/managing director partnerships and this is borne out in our study of the major performing arts groups. The capacity to impute gender specific requirements to the respective roles of artistic director and managing director is all the greater because of the frequent references that are made to arts organisations as “families” and the role of the two leaders as being the mother and father of the company. However, as our analysis demonstrates, these are far from traditional families and it is therefore not surprising that we find that any preconceived ideas of sex/gender stereotypes were not supported in the research.

The key issues that we address in this paper are whether co-leadership in the arts industries appears to replicate that which is described in the management literature, whether the roles of artistic director and general manager are gendered, and the ways in which sex and gender, love and marriage are manifested in the leadership structures of the organizations studied. Acker’s (1992) framework of “gendered processes” in organizations has proved a useful way of thinking about our own processes and the way in which we are seeking to engage with the interactions between women and men in our small sample and seek to come to some understanding of how these dynamics are both formed by, and play a part in forming, the organizational culture.

**Managing creativity**

Managing in a creative environment is widely understood to be a uniquely challenging role. Once confined to the arts, the notion of the creative workplace has now spread more widely and is indeed becoming a dominant framing of “best practice” management. Goffee and Jones (2005, p. 79) say that to manage clever people:

You need to be a benevolent guardian rather than a traditional boss. You need to create a safe environment for your clever employees; encourage them to experiment and play and even fail; and quietly demonstrate your expertise and authority all the while.

The management style required to enable creative people to work effectively is frequently described in similar terms, as an “almost entirely supportive or facilitative function.” (Davis and Scase, 2000, p. 20). In fact the co-leadership model in the performing arts very much complies with the concept of the servant/leader model, a model in which leadership is subservient to the greater cause – in this case the art (Speers 1995). But in the arts organization the greater cause is personified by the Artistic Director with the General Manager being the quintessential “servant/leader”. The status of the Artistic Director, embodying the essence of the organization’s entire rationale, can take on heroic connotations.

Certainly our interviewees saw the roles of Artistic Director and General Manager as distinctly different – although absolutely interdependent. The most emphatic expression of their respective status was the widespread view that the Artistic Director must, of necessity, be the CEO of the company. Reasons for this lay with the absolute belief that the organisation’s primary role and distinct character derives from its status as an arts organization:

¹ Here, and throughout this paper, we use sex as biological and gender as a “socio-cultural construction of sex differences” consistent with the distinction embraced – but complicated – by Broadbridge and Hearn (2008).
Who’s the person who’s most important to the organization? The Artistic Director and therefore they should be, within broad frameworks and limits and budgets, bigger than the general manager. ... Because the organization only exists because it’s an arts organization. ... If you’re destroying the output of the Artistic Director, therefore you’re undermining your very existence. [GM 4]

Furthermore it was considered necessary to reinforce this aspect in the public’s perception and with external stakeholders:

But I think even on a symbolic level the important thing about the CEO position sitting with the artistic director is that it’s symbolic. It says that at the topmost level of governance, whether it’s speaking outside company or within the Board, it’s saying this is what the company’s here for. This is the primary impulse. [GM 2]

The primacy of the art and hence the artistic direction is reinforced by the acknowledgement by many of the participants that the Artistic Director should have their choice of General Manager:

It's absolutely crucial that the Board ensures that each new artistic director has their own general manager. ... I would recommend to any Board of any organization that the most important thing that a theatre company does is to employ an artistic director. So it's absolutely crucial that they have in mind that the artistic director will pair themselves with a person that they want to work with. [AD 2]

It is clear that while we write of a model of co-leadership – the bottom line is that a hierarchy does exist, even if it is never referred to or utilized other than at this moment of the arrival of the Artistic Director and again at the time of their departure:

But I had my resignation on the table to the Board so that they could feel free to pick whoever they wanted to pick, who could then say and I want to bring x with me. So of the shortlist of candidates eventually I knew there was at least one person who had someone they would want to work with as General Manager. [GM 4]

The concept of leadership from behind was mentioned by one interviewee – indicating the ability to create space and to be:

willing to let somebody else get the obvious rewards of doing things in terms of both the art and the company, [while you are] doing all the sort of hard edged, analytical, financial, right brain stuff”. [GM 4]

In other words the role of General Manager is viewed as facilitative, one that enables the company or the creatives to get on with their primary role of creating – serving the art:

Really the fundamental job of the general manager is to enable the art to be made. [AD 2]

....the primary job of management is actually to facilitate artistic vision. [GM 2]

The necessity of the General Manager role and the dependence on that person by the Artistic Director was reinforced when Artistic Director’s described themselves as lacking in certain skills:

the company wouldn’t run with just me as the CEO – it would be – fall apart into a chaotic shemozzle fairly quickly. ... [AD 6]

Similarly General Managers were very clear about their specific skill set and contribution:
[The Artistic Director]’s just not interested in budgets and dealing with sponsors and strategy and policy development and all those sorts of areas. ...I get excited about trends and looking back at the information and churning figures through to see where we might be heading. [GM 7]

At the same time there was a notion that the Artistic Director role was an intuitive role, one of necessity unmediated:

it’s just arts coming out of my head whereas the general manager’s role is much more complex [AD 6]

He’s the left and I’m the right side so it just balances each other out. (sic – sides reversed from the “theory” but point stands) So in terms of the artistic vision and what the company can create, that very much comes from [the AD] and his knowledge of all things theatrical. Mine is about the pragmatic, how do actually get there, what do have to do to get there? [GM 8]

These descriptions of the respective roles of Artistic Director and General Manager suggest that different skills are required for carrying out the function attached to each position, and that, by implication, these positions might be gendered. At first reading, the Artistic Director role is emphatically that of a leader – one that might be characterized within, the now somewhat outdated, notions of leadership as the "single, heroic leader" whose influence is “uni-directional”, that is starting from the appointment of the general manager, the artistic director is firmly in charge and influences the entire operations of the organization (Yukl 2002, p. 431)

In contrast, the general manager is there to serve, to serve the art and to serve the artistic leader. Their role is to keep the machinery of the organization functioning so as to enable the artist to maintain a single vision, without being distracted by the day-to-day matters of “housekeeping”. The General Manager, bringing skills from home, carries out the roles of: “listening, collaborating, nurturing and behind-the-scenes peacemaking” (Meyerson and Ely 2003) as well as organising and book-keeping. In other words, it is possible to conceive of this job demarcation between artistic director and general manager as being gendered: the artistic director’s role requiring skills and behaviors that we might deem “masculine” and the general manager of performing functions and roles that we might consider “feminine”. The popular framing of co-leadership as a type of marriage further encourages one to regard the respective roles and competencies of each partner as being complementary and hence different – an assumption that we address in the following section.

Co-partnership as marriage
Miles and Watkins’ attributes of successful complementary teams, namely common vision, common incentives, communication and trust are apparent in the way in which our interviewees describe the nature of their relationship with their co-leader and with the organization. The common vision is implicit in the way in which the general manager interviewees prioritize the needs of the artistic director, and in the ways in which the artistic directors speak of their commitment to the art as their driving motivation.

While Billing and Alverson (2000, p 144) and others, have referred to the way in which leadership is frequently constructed in masculine terms, a framework which renders more intimate and familial interactions to the margins of management behaviors, the language of our interviewees was dominated by the emotions of “passion” and “love”. This is consistent with the observation made

2 We should emphasize that we use the terms of “masculine” and “feminine” not to attribute these to a particular sex but with reference to the literature which demonstrates the way in which characteristics behaviors and job functions are frequently described in terms of gender. (source)
by Fitzgibbon (2001, p.32) that work relationships within the arts management literature: “[call] on the concept of family or friendship or even love, dimensions on which the bulk of management literature is silent.”

The notion that working in the arts is a labour of love is not unproblematic – but is nonetheless pervasive. Royseng’s case study of the financial rescue of a Norwegian theatre company, emphasized the need to balance the purely business approach to solving the company’s problems with ensuring the primacy of its artistic activities, the new manager stating that she believed that it was important for her to “love theatre” as well be an effective business economist and to do otherwise would have “damaged the whole theatre” (Royseng, 2008, p.44). Far from being at the boundaries of management practice, in these particular co-leadership relationships and within the arts workplace more generally, what might be considered to be more “feminine” values are at the center of workplace dynamics.

You’re working for love basically, so you actually have to enjoy what you doing. [GM7]

I think the motivating force is a general love of [name of organisation] [GM6]

The passion that one has for the form spills over into the dynamics between the employees:

I can’t work with anyone I don’t love in this business. If I’m not in love with my Artistic Director I can’t do it. And so there is automatically a relationship that is deeply personal and deeply respectful. [GM 5]

Beyond this common vision interviewees would, without prompting, emphasize their absolute trust in the other. Equally strong is the way in which communication between the co-leaders is described as being almost intuitive. In this way, we might see successful co-leadership as avoiding the problem that Bennis (1997) suggests is inherent in structures that rely on two or three part leadership or “distributed leadership”, namely that it leads to increasingly bureaucratic processes. In fact, in the relationships that we explore, there appears to be a minimum degree of bureaucracy in the dynamic between the current leaders, a situation that arises from an implicit understanding of each other. The arts organizations are unlikely to develop a bureaucratic structure. This is principally because of the way in which the organization will inevitably change as the artistic leadership changes hands and, along with it, the general manager. The notion that the arts industry consists of flexible modes organisation is borne out by the dynamics described between partners in each of the co-leadership examples studied. The negotiation of relationships is a fundamental element of the arts industry:

each one of the productions is an organism and there is a new set of interesting personalities that arise within an organism and so the relationship of the senior executives to each of the groups of playmakers is different every time [GM 1]

There appears to be a heightened awareness of the importance of communication and interpersonal dynamics so much so that, in a number of circumstances, the co-leaders offered information as to what personality type they are [Myer Briggs], and appear to have a sophisticated analysis of the way in which their communication operates.

This flexibility and informality is also evident in the type of communication that happens between the two leaders and there was a very strong emphasis on informal communication. This would, in some cases, contrast to the way in which they communicated with other workers within the organization.

It’s informal simply because a structure wouldn’t ever work. [GM 4, p. 8]
Most of that communication just takes place about making meetings he might say what you doing for lunch, let's have a coffee and we'll talk about a few things." [AD 3, p. 6]

We have a lot of coffees -- which sounds big wanky but it's actually good to get out of an office environment and discuss particular issues” [GM 8, p. 8]

He rings me every lunchtime. ... and then maybe once a week we'll see each other in evening. Or half a day on the weekend. ... Because we discuss everything. [GM 5, p. 9]

While it is tempting to pursue the metaphor of marriage, to do so would bring on a debate about traditional roles and traditional values. For while the image of marriage came up time and time again, it was to a thoroughly reconstructed model of marriage that the interviewees referred:

I don't think that gender really plays a part in it – it might provide a convenient psychological paradigm for the rest of the company who might like to refer to “mum and dad”, but in the theatre of course one could have same-sex parents and it wouldn't be that surprising. [GM 2]

We know each other. We know each other's nuances. We also know which buttons to ... it's a very respectful relationship because we know how to take each other and what buttons not to push. And that's not about being all sweetness and light but it's about understanding each other and the commonality of goals.” [GM 8]

References to marriage were in terms of identifying the qualities of a successful relationship, rather than to a gendered heteronormative model of partnering.

We respected each other and I think you have a responsibility to be quite careful with each other but that's just being grown up – like being married. [AD 3]

So clearly I think the analogy is more in terms of the successful negotiation between two human beings, marriage is a reflection of the sort of intensity of the kind of relationship that arises in these jobs... [GM 2]

Although the mum/dad metaphor might help explain the co-partnership model, it's a very modern marriage with a rupturing of “feminine” and “masculine” roles and functions from the biological sex of the person in the specific position. Nevertheless, the Artistic Director is often away from the office on a regular basis (in rehearsals) and not around for the day-to-day discussions, problem-solving and the General Manager stays at home.

....you end up being Mum and Dad in an organisation and I'm possibly the more nurturing, encouraging, more access to, ... and AD's much less effusive with his praise but when it comes, it's more important and meaningful. [GM 7]

Our discussion has highlighted the distinctive characteristics of the respective roles of general manager and artistic director. It has not been our intention to test the validity of sex stereotypes in our research, and we have certainly not set out to reinforce them. In fact, while the metaphor of family, mother and father is pervasive within the language of the interviewees there is often a very self-aware approach to the fact that the terms are not intended in any essentialising manner. Indeed many of our interviewees actively sought to disassociate themselves from any sex-based stereotypes.

Girly girls and blokey blokes: blokey/girly people
The arts industry itself has a healthy balance of male and female employees – with some exceptions the industry overall has a 50:50 ratio of male to female employees. This is in contrast to those areas of employment which are predominantly female or predominantly male. It is possible that the presence of strong female role models and non-stereotyped male role models may also discourage a sense of gender specific skills and attributes. Two of the men that we interviewed offered examples of having had significant experience of working with women as peers, an experience that may be enriched and reinforced by the very flat structures of arts organisations:

I was also infinitely fortunate to have [a woman] as my first Artistic Director. She had basically been given the job of putting the company back on its feet. [GM 5, p.1]

In contemporary [art form], particularly in Australia there’s this whole range of really strong women who had set the thing up and there was this really strong struggle for gender balance. And we still have gender balance in the show. [AD 6, p. 7]

As Pringle (year) has suggested much of the literature on gender and the workplace is actually heterogendered – it imposes a model of gender drawn from a heteronormative framework. We may have set out with a similarly heteronormative framework, encouraged by the descriptions of theatre companies as “families” and sought to find a distinct division of tasks along a male and female divide, often associated with the transference of domestic divisions into the workplace.

As evidenced by the quote above, which reminded us that families are not restricted to the male and female mum and dad, many of our interviewees rejected gender stereotypes. While the terms “mum and dad” or “parents” were used, women did not necessarily consider themselves to be the “mother”, or even the “mothering” type – in contradiction with a gendered approach to the role of general manager as being the organising, administrating, facilitating and relationship builder.

"I don't think that [...] is a really blokey bloke or that I'm a really girly girl" [GM 7]

The intelligent, well-educated women under discussion may choose to work in arts organisations because of the nature of the people they are likely to work with, as well as having a passion for the output. Men who choose to work in arts organisations aren’t necessarily people who are chasing power or money, and the men that women get to work with are more likely to be collegial rather than competitive:

I guess you’d say that they’re fairly ideologically sound men or politically reconstructed men or feminist men or what have you. [GM6]

Many of the men whom we’ve interviewed to date either describe themselves, or are described, in words that imply that they are pro-feminist. For example:

I consider myself to be a fairly reconstructed man. [GM 1]

He’s calm and collaborative and he likes everyone to be happy. [AD 2]

Marshall has used the following terms to describe male leadership: values self-assertion; separation; independence, control, competition, focused perception, rationality, analysis (Marshall, 1993). While some of these could be considered values of performing artists (self-assertion, focused perception); and others the necessary requirements of management (rationality, analysis), it also appeared that a number of the values aren’t so important or don’t carry as much weight within a performing arts organisation. Male artistic directors would consistently acknowledge the analytical skill set of female general managers but did not classify these skills as masculine. In fact, they are more likely to see the range of skills required by a general manager to be generalist and therefore
perhaps “feminine” compared to the single mindedness of the artist. But even the artist’s single-mindedness must be tempered by the reality of functioning in a sector which is financially stretched. While artistic directors were happy for the general manager to carry the burden of this, they were nonetheless resigned to the fact that they were not pursuing unconstrained creativity.

**Conclusion**

The initial descriptions of the activities and functions of the artistic director and general manager appear to be very different. While each position has a very different focus the primacy of the artistic vision and the subservience of the organization to it, suggests that the binaries of masculine and feminine qualities are absent in these co-leadership arrangements. Billing and Alverson (2000, p.148) note that there is a wealth of literature that supports the view that at heart there is little difference in management style between men and women, with both sharing similar aspirations, values, personality traits and behaviours. However this literature also notes that in leadership positions the attributes, skills and behavior that both men and women exhibit remain “masculine” and a number of our interviewees described their management strengths with words that fit within a more masculine management set.

Equally there are characteristics of the way in which artistic activity takes place that mitigates against the singular heroic vision. The companies that we examined are performing arts companies in which team work is more important than separation or competition. Control is balanced equally by the requirement to be free for creativity to flourish. Even when competing for government grants or corporate sponsorship or donors or audiences, performing arts organisations are more likely to cooperate and share information and resources. Perhaps the nature of the non-profit performing arts industry requires a less gendered set of underlying leadership values if good art is to be created.

**References**


WOMEN AND SUSTAINABILITY: CULTURAL ALTERNATIVES

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Abstract
The emerging new leadership in the West is acknowledging the breath, depth and significance of the sustainability agenda largely triggered by the increased new scientific evidence of the destruction of the natural environment. This is now acting as a wake-up call but history also shows that the male dominated global community of decision makers has done very little to address the other major sustainability aspect, namely social injustice, despite long existing evidences of its destructive power. Sustainability requires new cultural values and moral ethics. The paper uses Australia (one of the largest on a per capita basis contributors to the current environmental problems) and Bangladesh (one of the smallest) as examples of two cultural models which position women within society differently and argues that the survival knowledge, skills and moral values that women possess in many ways hold the key to a change towards a better future on the planet where the balance between economic prosperity, ecological health and social fairness can be redressed.

Key words: Bangladesh, Baul, engendering, feminist values, leadership

INTRODUCTION
It is difficult to argue which sex plays a dominant role for the long-term sustainability of any particular plant, insect or animal group in nature. What humans perceive as roles and responsibilities are often clearly defined activities but the overall survival of the species has always been a joint and shared task. In the human world however one sex has been openly dominant in shaping what we call economic development and progress, and consequently their impact on the planet Earth.

The current climate change concerns publicised through the broad media (e.g. Al Gore’s movie An Inconvenient Truth) as well as the reports produced by respectable and reliable sources (such as the IPCC, 2007; Stern Review, 2006 and Garnaut Climate Change Review, 2008) have raised the awareness about the impact of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and the prospects of a grim future if the current trends continue\(^1\). These warnings come at a time when China and India are experiencing tremendous economic growth\(^1\)which the West is somehow reluctant to accept because of its potential to further harm the ecological fragility of the planet.

This paper draws on a labour force analysis to make an observation that one of the two sexes has a much bigger contribution to the current environmental problems in Australia and links this to the overall weaker positioning of women in western culture, and consequently lesser impact in any related decision-making. It then explores the cultural alternative of Bangladesh, a country which is

\(^1\) In the first years of the 21\(^{st}\) century, China has been growing at a rate of 10 to 12% and India of 8 to 9% (Garnaut Climate Change Review, 2008) compared to the 2.5% growth of OECD for the 1991-2004 period (OECD, 2007).
one of the smallest contributors to global greenhouse gas emissions but is also severely exposed to the threats of climate change. The positioning of women in the centre of the Bangladeshi culture has contributed to the country’s lifestyle, modest consumption patterns, small ecological footprint and the happiness of its people.

The two cultural alternatives provide some insights as to how things have been working and what the future can potentially hold.

**WOMEN AND SUSTAINABILITY: AUSTRALIA**

The sustainability concept argues for a holistic and balanced approach to life where economic prosperity, nature conservation and social justice are given equal weight in any long-term strategies of development (see, for example, Government of Western Australia, 2003). Australia has been quite successful in achieving relatively good economic quality of life as well as a society that provides sound social networks and support for the majority of its members. What Australia has failed to achieve is a fair, i.e. on a per capita basis (e.g. Garnaut Climate Change Review, 2008), contribution to the global deterioration of the natural environment. Australia’s ecological footprint is 8.49 ha/person compared to a world average of 3.5 ha/person (and estimated only 1.8 ha/person available without exceeding the Earth’s capacity for ecological services)\(^2\). This country also has one of the highest GHG emissions per person in the world; in fact it ranks third after USA and Canada in the developed world (Garnaut Climate Change Review, 2008) and fourth overall\(^3\). However, a thorough examination of the link between employment sectors and the generation of GHG emissions reveals a striking difference between the contributions of the two sexes.

We are using here Australia as an example of western development but similar patterns hold for any other OECD (or developed) country. The largest contributors to Australia’s GHG emissions in 2005 were the energy sector, agriculture, transport and industry with respectively 279.4, 87.9, 80.4 and 29.5 MtCO\(_2\) equivalent (ABS 2007a). Interestingly enough these same sectors provide by far larger employment for men than for women; only around 20% of their employees were women in 2006 (2 million men compared to 564,000 women according to ABS 2007b). On the other hand, the sectors where women outnumber men are the least polluting, such as healthcare and social assistance (where there are 3.7 times more women than men), education and training (2.3 times), retail trade, accommodation and food services (1.3 times), financial and insurance services (1.2 times) and administrative and support services (1.1 times) (ABS 2007b). If we roughly\(^4\) separate the major polluting sectors (as listed above) from the rest, we can easily estimate a polluting ratio between the two sexes. For Australia in 2006, it was 2.3, namely men in employment contributed 2.3 times more to GHG emissions than employed women (based on their industry sector, on average men’s contribution was 83 tCO\(_2\)-e per person compared to 36 tCO\(_2\)-e per woman). For the top polluting sectors, the total male contribution was 372 MtCO\(_2\)-e while the female contribution was only 41 MtCO\(_2\)-e.

The above statistics do not represent another important fact related to the top polluting sectors, namely that the decision-making in them is highly governed by male employees. In fact, any women


\(^3\)The World Resources Institute estimates Malaysia to be the highest contributor of CO\(_2\)-equivalent based on fossil fuel emissions for 2004 and land-use change emissions for 2000.

\(^4\)Due to data unavailability, the estimation approach taken here is based on the production side of the production and consumption economic cycle. This is a rough estimate because of the following two reasons: (1) it assumes that only employed people are responsible for the generation of CO\(_2\) and other GHG emissions. This is obviously incorrect as, for example, anybody who drives a car or uses cooling/heating, irrespectively as to whether s/he is employed, generates GHG emissions. (2) Many products that are consumed in Australia are produced overseas. Similarly, many Australian products are exported for consumption overseas. Irrespectively of its roughness, the approach is quite useful to convey the main idea of this section, namely that men in employment are contributing disproportionately higher to the GHG emissions polluting the Earth’s atmosphere.
in leadership positions in these sectors are often described as “the third sex” (Pini, 2005) stressing that positioning a person as a woman and a leader is difficult when “normative notions of femininity and leadership are radically conflicting” (Pini, 2005, p. 73). The 2003 Australian Census of Women in Leadership, which covers the nation’s top 200 companies, found that only a quarter (or 25%) of all managers and administrators were women (Office for Women, 2004). The 2008 study shows that only 12% of the executive managers of these same companies are female (Piterman, 2008). It is not unjustifiable then to claim that one reason for the current palpable ecological and social problems is the fact that development and progress have been largely determined by masculine behaviour and masculine values.

Such a position is shared by more and more voices coming predominantly from NGOs and other community organisations at a national (e.g. Women for Sustainable Development in India) and international level (e.g. The Commons’ Open Society Sustainability Initiative or For The Common Good). Some argue that if the balance in leadership were redressed to 50:50, the world would witness fundamental changes not only in the approach to the sustainability problem but also in the type of pursued actions and solutions (The Commons, 2008). On the other hand, many feminists warn that if the global community continues with male dominated strategies to climate change, women, children and the weak are likely to continue to bear the burden (Masika, 2002).

The emerging new leadership in the West is acknowledging the breath, depth and significance of the sustainability agenda largely triggered by the increased new scientific evidence of the destruction of the natural environment (IPCC, 2007). This is now acting as a wake-up call but history also shows that the male dominated global community of decision makers has done very little to address the other major sustainability aspect, namely social injustice, despite long existing evidences of its destructive power. Sustainability requires new cultural values and moral ethics (White 2006).

The following section of the paper explores a cultural alternative to the positioning of women within society drawing on the example of Bangladesh, a country which is still living within the biocapacity of its natural environment, has a sustainable ecological footprint of 0.60 ha/person and less social disparities. It argues that Bangladesh is offering a cultural alternative to the western model by positioning women in the centre of sustainable development.

WOMEN AND SUSTAINABILITY: BANGLADESH

With a population of over 153 million, Bangladesh is the third largest Muslim country on the globe. The Bangladeshi culture however is largely dominated by the Baul philosophers – a cross-cultural tradition that was engendered with the admixture of Islamic Sufi culture of the medieval period and native Hindu-Buddhist cultures of the time (Hossain, 1995). The Bauls, both male and female, are the mendicants who roam from one shrine to another in Bangladeshi villages and cities along with a spouse associate. They are seen as being at the root of Bengali culture. While mostly unlettered, simple, natural and unembellished, they show a full measure of poetic, musical, and philosophical talents. Bauls come from both Muslim and Hindu backgrounds. Their songs are of great relevance for a holistic view of life and hence have a crucial importance for sustainability.

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5 www.footprintnetwork.org/gfn_sub.php?content=global_footprint
6 www.nationmaster.com/graph/env_eco_foo-environment-ecological-footprint; in fact Bangladesh is ranked last (out of 141 countries) according to the size of its ecological footprint.
7 Indonesia and Pakistan are the only two other Muslim countries larger than Bangladesh (with respective populations of 238 and 173 million, 2008 data from http://www.census.gov/ipc/www/idb/summaries.html).
The Baul tradition is unique in the world and famous for socio-religious syncretisation. The synergies between the cultural alternatives have resulted in a node that has positioned Bangladeshi women at the core of life. Women are not only seen as the Sakti (vital energy) for men, they are also overwhelmingly valued with due respect at family, social and ecological levels (Hossain et al., 2007). An example of this is the song of the 70-year old Harun Baul (who lives in Choraikole, Kushtia in Bangladesh):

For men to be happy, increase the rope of longevity by valuing, respecting and obeying to femininity.

The rope of family and social longevity is the principal symbol of sustainability. Other aspects of sustainability (economic, political, ecological, technological etc.) build on these social foundations.

The Bangladeshi culture acknowledges female contributions to individual, social, market and non-market economic, and ecological sustainability improvement more than their male counterparts; for women have, as Shiva (1989) observes, holistic knowledge about conserving natural resources and using them for long-term survival. The women of Third World countries have maintained ecological thought and action which make survival, justice and peace possible (Shiva, 1989). Women’s leading participation in all activities allows Bangladesh to maintain a relatively sustainable way of living amidst many prevailing unsustainable factors such as population boom, poverty, political unrest, corruption, floods, droughts and cyclones.

Shiva (1994, p. 1) also stresses that women from Third World societies are often able to offer ecological insights that are deeper and richer than the technocratic recipes of international experts or the responses of men in their own societies. Firstly, these insights come from cultures in which maintenance of life has been the civilising force; secondly, the gender division of labour, introduced or aggravated by the development processes, has increasingly pushed women to work for the production of sustenance, while men have been drawn into military and profit-seeking activities. As also shown in the case of Australia, the gender division of labour has made some sectors of society male dominated resulting in higher negative impacts on the natural environment.

Ruether (1996, p. 106) argues for women’s roles in managing ecological sustainability from a spiritual perspective. Women’s spirituality is basically earth based. The relationship between women and the earth is a reciprocal one – women take care of the earth while the earth in return provides for the needs of women. Shiva (1989, p. 5) points out that productivity is a measure of producing life and sustenance and although this kind of productivity has been rendered invisible through accounting systems such as GDP, it does not reduce its centrality to survival. In Indian cosmology (that Baul philosophers share) person and nature (purusha-Prakriti) are a duality in unity. They are inseparable complements of one another. Women’s knowledge is ecological and pluralistic, reflecting both the diversity of natural ecosystems and the diversity in cultures that nature-based ecological living gives rise to (Shiva, 1989, p. 40-41).

Gnanadason (2005, pp. 6-7) observes that women have played a central role in the traditions of prudence in India and elsewhere in the world: Latin America, the Philippines, Guatemala, Kenya, Southern Africa – all offer experiences of women healing earth. Exploring the resistance movements of Indigenous women in the Utharkhand region off the Himalayas, Shiva (1989) concludes that the intellectual heritage of ecological survival lies with those who are experts in survival. They have the knowledge and experience to extricate us from the ecological cul-de-sac that the western

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8 On the flood plains of Bangladesh, village women cannot imagine the preparation of food for their family members or the raising of livestock without the leafy greens, grasses, roots and tubers, leaves of trees, fruits, small fish, mollusks and other items collected from the borders between fields, along roadsides, in small patches of forest or fallow lands, in ponds and other water bodies as well as in the cultivated fields and homesteads – all free of cost (Mazhar et al., 2007).
masculinist mind has maneuvered us into.

While the role of women has been minimised, trivialised and made invisible in many parts of the rapidly changing and globalising world (e.g. Chittister, 1998; Saunders, 2002), the age-long culture of seeing women at the heart of recurrent sustainability management is a reality in Bangladesh. Women are highly regarded by the general mass (there have been female heads of state in Bangladesh and other neighbouring countries sharing a similar culture), however by applying cultural lenses westerners often consider women to be highly discriminated against in Bangladesh. While Third World women have privileged access to survival expertise, the knowledge is inclusive, not exclusive. The ecological categories with which they think and act can become the categories of liberation for all, men and women, for the West as well as for the non-West, for the human as well as for the non-human elements of the earth (Shiva, 1989, p. 224).

Maak and Pless (2006, p.188) point out that leaders need to be good communicators, storytellers, networkers and relationship managers, aligning the energies of others behind common, collective endeavours. In this sense, leaders are also builders of community; they are part of the collective human capacity to be intentional in changing our life circumstances and many Bangladeshi women achieve this diligently. Maak and Pless (2006) also describe leadership as a changing social construction that reflects the values at a particular time and place. The Baul female activist Laily Shah Baul Fakirani of Bangladesh pleads that the 21st century must see leadership from a sustainability point of view. There are two views about leadership (Starratt, 2004): “a leader can influence the community to follow his or her vision, or a leader can influence a community to face its problems” (p. 64). The second form of leadership when people are being enthused, inspired and mobilising to address hard but vital problems – is the leadership most consistent with what is urgently needed today for the sustainability challenge. The example of Bangladesh is powerful in terms of the importance and recognition of feminist values within society. Despite the fact that the country faces serious economic challenges, any erosion of the role of women along the models of the West is likely to contribute to global unsustainability and loss of the holistic and balanced approach to life that people in this part of the world still have. Laily Shah Baul Fakirani asserts that women’s spiritual influence has enormous impact in shaping the Bangladeshi culture and its future.

CONCLUSION
This paper is an attempt to make a parallel between the power of women in society and its long-term sustainability from an ecological and social point of view. A similar concept is shared by a range of ecofeminists (e.g. Hallen, 1988; Merchant, 2005; Warren, 2000) who argue that there are similarities between the subordinated place of women within society and exploitation of nature. However, the perspective that we have taken here is one of optimism by providing an example of synergies and positive lessons from a culture distinctively different from that in the West. The example of Bangladesh is powerful in terms of the importance and recognition of feminist values (e.g. Gatens, 1998) within society. Although the status of women in Muslim societies is a hotly debated topic in the West (e.g. Bayes and Tohidi, 2001), the Bangladeshi culture treats them with dignity. The survival knowledge, skills and moral values that women possess in many ways hold the key to a change towards a better future on the planet where the balance between economic prosperity, ecological health and social fairness is redressed.

We do not necessarily argue that the Bangladeshi culture is a model for the West to follow. However it also appears that the adoption of western values in a country like Bangladesh can potentially cause further ecological and social misbalance for its people and environment as well as from a global perspective. The balance between males and females in shaping the value system within the Bangladeshi society is encouraging a lifestyle that is simple, self-reliant and does not encourage over-consumption (Marinova and Hossain, 2008). The importance of different cultural perspectives on sustainability leadership is that the current problems can only be resolved with an approach that allows open participation of both men and women.
Men and women constitute around 50:50 in world population. This ratio also more or less prevails in our world of combined shared activities for survival. This is not the case in global and western leadership – the key to controlling lives and resources of the world; women’s presence remains far from matching this population ratio. Exceptions to this norm are noticed in places with cultural alternatives. The inclusivistic socio-religious culture of some Third World countries such as Bangladesh, though often debated (Samovar and Porter, 2003), appear as a paradigm. Here, women are seen at the focal point of men’s spirituality, household activities, national spirit and holistic sustainability management. This is also reflected in Bangladeshi politics where the head of state is frequently a woman.

As Rosenbach and Taylor (2006, p. 3) argue, women are naturally qualified with transforming leadership against men’s transactional leadership norms where roles are clarified for others to follow. This is because “under the injunctive norms of gender roles, women demonstrate wider concern with the welfare of other people, for they are more affectionate, helpful, kind, sympathetic, interpersonally sensitive, nurturant and gentle” (Price, 2006, p. 144). By dint of their transformational or transforming leadership, women can motivate people “to perform beyond expectations by creating an awareness of the importance of mission and the vision in such a way that followers share beliefs and values and are able to transcend self-interests and tie the vision to the higher-order needs of self-esteem and self-actualisation” (Rosenbach and Taylor, 2006, p. 3).

This is the type of leadership required to address the sustainability challenge societies all over the globe face today.

References
The Australian Government’s Young Women’s Leadership and Mentoring Programme

Office for Women
Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA)

Abstract
This paper discusses the key outcomes and impacts of the Young Women’s Leadership and Mentoring Programme (YWLMP), which was piloted in 2007 by the Australian Government Office for Women. The cornerstone of the YWLMP was its three pronged approach to developing leadership skills, using a combination of training, networking and mentoring to help young women in rural areas with leadership ambitions. The key text for this paper is the program’s evaluation and longitudinal study, which examines the short- and long-term outcomes and impacts on both the participants and the community. The evaluation and longitudinal study have found that the program was successful in giving young women confidence to pursue their leadership goals.

Introduction
In 2007 the Australian Government Office for Women piloted the Young Women’s Leadership and Mentoring Programme (YWLMP) at three sites across rural and regional Australia. The cornerstone of the YWLMP was its three pronged approach to developing leadership skills, using a combination of training, networking and mentoring to help young women in rural areas with leadership ambitions. While the philosophy underpinning the program was consistent across the pilot areas, each site had its own challenges, outcomes and success stories.

This paper will discuss the key features of the program and the policy context in which it was conceived as well as draw on the experiences of those who participated in the program.

The anticipated outcomes of this program were to

- develop the general and leadership capacity of young women;
- increase the governance and goal setting skills of young women;
- increase participation of young women in decision making positions, including local government and non-government organisations, community boards, local industries and business;
- increase confidence, skills and knowledge of young women to participate in a leadership capacity in their communities;
- increase the mentoring and coaching skills of mentors; and
- foster networking opportunities for young women.

Urbis evaluated YWLMP at the conclusion of the pilots and examined the short and long-term outcomes and impacts of this program on participants and the wider community. Urbis is also in the process of conducting a longitudinal study with the assistance of participants, to further measure the ongoing effects of YWLMP at both the individual and community level.

Urbis found that the program was very well received by both the young women and the mentors, and considered to be a much needed and valued initiative in rural and regional Australia. A wide range of immediate benefits and outcomes were identified for mentees, mentors and their communities. The evaluation found that for most women the program was instrumental in building the necessary foundations for leadership (e.g. skills and confidence). For some, it was also a catalyst for actively pursuing (and in some cases securing) leadership roles.
Program Rationale

In the lead up to the 2004 election the Australian Government committed to implement a Young Women’s Leadership and Mentoring Programme to increase the access of young women in rural and remote areas to leadership training and role models by linking young women with a high achieving woman in their community.

The Young Women’s Leadership and Mentoring Programme was developed partly as a response to the findings from the *At The Table* Report, issued by the former Department of Transport and Regional Services. The report identified a need for programs aimed at empowering rural and regional women to take on leadership roles, and to increase the numbers of women in decision making roles in rural Australia.

The *At the Table* Report found that ‘regional and rural women are heavily involved small businesses, agriculture, environmental management, their communities and their families. Many are well educated, broadly experienced and deeply committed, and would make a valuable contribution to any board, advisory body or local government authority.’ (DOTARS 2006, p.v) It highlighted that there has been little improvement in the number of women on industry boards and government-appointed bodies in rural and regional Australia in the past decade.

Some of the factors contributing to this are the structural and cultural barriers faced by women pursuing leadership roles in rural industries and communities. The *At the Table* Report also found that in addition to previously identified barriers to women in leadership positions such as ‘organisational structures and cultures that exclude women; the lack of women in top management; inadequate signposting of entry points or lack of know-how; traditional expectations of women’s public and family roles; and the lack of women’s confidence’ (Ibid, p.8) there were additional constraints uniquely experienced by women in rural and regional Australia. Specifically, that there is a ‘lack of employment opportunities with career paths; the financial and other costs of participation; and cultural attitudes’(Ibid).

The Office for Women (OfW), as the key policy area for women’s issues within the Australian Government, was chosen to pilot this program. OfW falls under responsibility of the Minister for the Status of Women and is located in the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs.

The Office for Women works to promote women’s safety, economic security and participation. This is achieved through the provision of evidence based research, analysis, policy advice and evaluation, and program delivery in accordance with the Office for Women’s policy frameworks. The Office for Women also influences whole of government policy and program development by advising on women’s perspectives and promoting the use of a gender-analysis.

When developing the YWLMP model, the most effective approach needed to be considered. Leadership training programs for women exist across Australia in a number of different formats and operate across both the private and public sectors. Primarily, these programs have been implemented in response to evidence of women’s low participation in formal leadership positions within government, business and the community in general. In this context, leadership programs for young women could be considered as social change programs. They seek to change historical patterns with regards to the participation of women through developing the skills and confidence of women, and changing the culture of workplaces and communities (Trigg, 2006, pp 22-27).

Leadership is often conceptualised as a skill set incorporating targeted knowledge based training, with mentoring often seen as a separate capacity building intervention. Research acknowledges that for leadership development, knowledge based training and/or mentoring is only part of the equation for success. Mentoring is a strategy being used more and more frequently as part of leadership training programs within business and industry, as well as in programs for disadvantaged groups (particularly young people). It has the benefit of one-on-one pastoral care and role modelling (Tobin, 2000).

Mentoring is important tool for women because it helps to:
• increase confidence and self-esteem;
• support personal growth and achievement of goals;
• advance knowledge, networking and communication skills;
• increase clarity in personal direction & development of ideas;
• develop skills to enable better career prospects and choices;
• gather ideas and techniques for balancing work, life and family; and
• provide a learning opportunity which will provide exposure to new ideas and ways of thinking (Women’s Mentoring).

Taking all this into account, a model incorporating three aspects of leadership development, training, mentoring and networking was considered the best approach towards the building of successful leadership and decision making pathways for women.

The program was designed to increase the skills of individual women and the sense of social connectedness among women in rural and regional communities with the aim of increasing the social capital of the areas where the pilots were held. It also targeted specific skills such as personal development, goal setting and governance.

Program Implementation
OFW chose three sites at which to run the pilots for the YWLMP. These were the Gippsland Region in Victoria, the Wide Bay-Burnett Region in Queensland and the Wheatbelt in Western Australia. Each pilot was auspiced by specific organisations which were the Baw-Baw Shire Council, the Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation and the Wheatbelt Area Consultative Committee, respectively.

The pilots began between February and March 2007 and all three concluded in October of that year. A total of 93 young women participated for the duration of the program. This total included 28 women in the Gippsland region, 29 women in the Wide Bay – Burnett region and 36 in the Wheatbelt. In the Wide Bay Burnett region, the program was run in two phases, with the 29 current participants asked to invite a friend to join the program. This brought the total number of young women graduating from the YWLMP to 122.

There were an additional five women in Gippsland and three in the Wheatbelt who began the program, but did not complete, primarily because family responsibilities and scheduling conflicts.

Across the three sites 100 women were chosen to act as mentors: 33 in Gippsland, 30 in Wide Bay-Burnett and 37 in the Wheatbelt. There were a very small number of mentors who were not able to complete the program.

There was a great diversity in the age and background of participants. Mentees ranged in age from 17-51 years, with educational qualifications ranging from school leavers to university students. They were working in wide array of occupations including teaching, law, natural resource management and farming.

Mentors were similarly diverse in background and occupation. Women were chosen to act as mentors from fields including community development, journalism, finance, tourism, law enforcement and education, and ranged in age from 33 to 64 years.

The selection processes for both mentors and mentees differed across the pilot sites. In the Gippsland pilot mentors and mentees were required to submit applications and undergo an interview process, run by a community panel, before being selected, whereas participants in the Wheatbelt were chosen purely on the basis of a written application.

In Queensland, the auspicing organisation, the Rural Industries Research and Development Organisation, used its Rural Women of the Year Award network to identify women who may benefit from participation in the program. This meant that as well as submitting an expression of interest,
potential participants were targeted by the Facilitator and Co-ordinator and invited to submit an application for either a mentees or mentors.

When asked their reasons for participating in the program mentees often listed more than one reason for choosing to take part. The most common reason was to develop new skills, but mentees also reported hoping to build networks and meet other young women, build self confidence, gain clarity in relation to their career path, identify ways to contribute to the community, and have a female role model who could provide advice, support and guidance (Urbis 2007, p. 23).

The three key elements of the leadership development model adopted by YWLMP were integrated in the following ways:

- **Training**: each site conducted a series of group training sessions. The content of these training sessions was determined by the program co-ordinator in each location.
- **Mentoring**: each young woman was matched with a local female mentor
- **Networking**: mentees were linked into relevant networks in their community through the mentor, the program coordinators and other mentees.

Incorporating these three elements, each participating pilot organisation implemented a program of activities that

- had a community focus, rather than a business, industry or educational focus;
- established and supported mentoring relationships with high-achieving women in the community for young women aged between 18 and 35 years;
- provided training and support for mentors;
- provided training for mentees in the areas of governance, goal setting, and personal development; and
- linked the young women with established and recognised pathways to leadership development.

At the Gippsland site, mentees all undertook a community project as part of their networking and training. Mentees were asked to “identify a community issue that was of interest to them...In developing their projects, mentees were required to identify personal goals and goals for the community, desired project outcomes, the target community, key project milestones, resources and support required to undertake the project”(Urbis, 2007, p.27). The aim of this was to provide an opportunity for mentees to apply the skills and knowledge they have learned through the course of the program in a practical way. It was also expected that mentees would draw on the experiences of their mentors in developing and implementing the project.

Examples of community projects include ‘the creation of a website as a resource for young women who were looking for advice in relation to starting a family while pursuing their career [and] organising an autism awareness night’ (Urbis, 2007, p.35).

The community project was a significant personal development exercise for many Gippsland participants. In the case of the young woman who organised the autism awareness night, she overcame some significant personal fears, and was able to use the program as a way of furthering her involvement in an issue about which she was passionate.

In the Wheatbelt, participants worked together to organise a Gala Lunch to celebrate their completion of the program. While some participants found this process challenging due to the number of people involved, the majority found it a valuable learning experience in working with others to achieve a specific goal. It was also a good opportunity to get to know their fellow participants and take advantage of the strengths of their mentors.

In the Wide-Bay Burnett region, the holistic approach of the program was seen to be its greatest strength. This pilot was the only one of the three to have an identifiable theoretical approach, which was Steven Covey’s “Maturity Continuum – Dependence to Interdependence Model”, as articulated
in his book *Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*. Using this approach, the pilot followed the theory that by nurturing participants’ personal needs and encouraging self esteem and self effectiveness, young women will be better equipped to make a contribution to the collective needs of their community. This was described by one staff member in the evaluation as needing ‘to look after the private side to graduate to the public side…it is about facilitating the move from dependent to independent to interdependent’ (Urbis, 2007, p.44).

Program Outcomes
The program had positive outcomes for both mentees and mentors, providing the latter group with the opportunity to increase their mentoring and coaching skills. Two of the pilot sites ran induction programs for the mentors as well as the mentees which were based on the belief that mentoring is a skill that needs to be taught and developed, rather than being an innate ability.

In order to measure the success of the program all participants were asked to take part in a longitudinal study, also conducted by Urbis. The longitudinal study is designed to measure the long-term impact that YWLMP has on mentees and mentors (individual impacts) and the outcomes and benefits for the wider community (social impacts).

At an individual level outcomes and benefits included:

- learning and motivation outcomes
- critical skills and knowledge
- improved organisation and communication skills;
- positive attitudinal change in self beliefs;
- increased awareness and utilisation of community networks; and
- pathways to community engagement

Outcomes and benefits at a social level included:

- enhanced community connectiveness of organisations
- increased community and leadership activity
- new skills and enhanced networks;
- increased social capital; and
- Enhanced community capacity.

One of the most significant challenges faced during the program was physical distance. For example, participants in the Wheatbelt pilot were spread across an area that is twice the size of Tasmania. This meant that some participants were often not able to meet with their mentors face-to-face, and in some cases mentees did not meet their mentor throughout the duration of the pilot. However, most mentees still benefited greatly from the mentoring relationship, with many feeling as if they had gained an important role model. Others in the pilot felt that their fellow young women also were crucial to the mentoring process, with the training weekends acting as an opportunity for them to come together and share experiences.

The tyranny of distance also had significant impact on delivery the training component, as it affected the choice of location, trainers and facilitators. Even then mentees often had to travel long distances to the training sites.

Despite this, or perhaps because of this, a strong feature across all three pilots was that the training sessions became one of the prime networking opportunities for participants. According to the evaluation ‘in a rural and regional context, having the opportunity to come together has proved to be a critical success factor…Many women often found that the informal interaction that occurred during breaks between sessions to be one of the most valuable experiences of the programme’ (Urbis, 2007, p.9).
Another important outcome of the YWLMP was that the program increased the young women’s sense of connectedness with their community. One of the notable aspects of the longitudinal study was that this sense of connectedness has decreased over time. This is reflected in the fact that the number of participants who believe they will continue to reside in a rural area dropped from 76% in the first round of the evaluation to 63% in the second round (Urbis, 2008, p.7).

As well as providing a positive experience for the mentees, women who volunteered to become mentors also gained valuable experiences and insights. Many stated that the experience of ‘making a positive contribution to the development of a young woman and being able to observe this growth’ was especially rewarding (Urbis, 2008, p.7).

Extending the positive impact of the program, many women have elected to stay in contact with their mentors following the conclusion of the program. For some, this has been an important part of further developing their leadership skills (Urbis, 2008, p.12). Having been inspired by their participation in the YWLMP several mentees have also taken it upon themselves to mentor others in their community.

The suitable matching of young woman to mentors was key to the success of the relationship. The National Youth Mentoring Benchmarks define the key elements of matching mentor and mentees to be:

- well defined criteria for matching, linking the program’s statement of purpose and eligibility;
- personal profiles of both mentors and mentees to inform the match;
- clearly articulated and defined matching processes; and
- an understanding and agreement by all stakeholders (mentors, mentees, parents/caregivers) of the terms and conditions of program participation (Mentoring Australia, 2007, p11).

In the Wheatbelt area, the mentoring component made up a smaller part of the participants overall experience of the program, which could be a result of the great physical distances between mentees and mentors, resulting in them having less contact than in the other two pilot sites.

Rural and regional areas tend to perform highly on most measurable indicators of social capital, which is the values and understandings that facilitate cooperation within or among groups. The major barrier to achieving high social capital in rural tends to be the distance between town centres and the lack of networking opportunities, and it was these barriers that the YWLMP was aimed at overcoming.

Even though distance was the primary obstacle the pilots had to overcome, both in a logistic and aspirational sense, delivering the program to such a large area had significant benefits. By extending the program beyond local boundaries, the outcomes are spread among a diverse range of communities, and mentees were drawn into contact with women that they can then build networks with. “There are a broader range of stakeholders to draw support from and build linkages with, particularly across smaller communities. Often women are experiencing similar issues and challenges, and other communities can share knowledge or experience in overcoming these” (Urbis, 2008, p.9). All three components – networking, training and mentoring – helped to overcome this obstacle by extending the lines of communication between women over large geographical areas.

Individual communities involved in the YWLMP have benefited from increased social capital following the pilots. The positive outcomes include:

- having a group of motivated, confident and inspired women return to the community after participating in the pilot;
- increased social connectedness through the networking component of the YWLMP;
• participants encouraged to pursue personal and professional development within their communities, and to the benefit of their communities; and
• greater interaction between Indigenous and non-Indigenous participants (Urbis, 2007, pp. 8-9).

As is appropriate for a program that aims to affect lasting change to individuals and communities, a longitudinal study of YWLMP participants is being conducted. This longitudinal study canvasses mentors, mentees and stakeholders in the program.

The methodology for the evaluation consisted of in-depth interviews with project management and staff, young women participating in the programme (mentees), their mentors, the conduct of the first wave of a three year longitudinal study of the mentees, and a review of key literature and documentation. Consultations were conducted from August to October 2007, involving field visits (primarily in group discussions) and telephone interviews. A total of 48 mentees, 18 mentors, 7 pilot management/staff and 3 stakeholders were consulted across the programme. The longitudinal study involves four waves of an on-line survey and follow up interviews with participants over a two year period.

To date, the first two rounds of the longitudinal evaluation have taken place, with the next round of the study to be undertaken in September/October of this year. The concluding round of interviews will be done in September/October 2009, with the final verdict on the impact of the YWLMP being delivered by the end of that year.

So far the key findings of the longitudinal study have been

• The greatest learning and motivational impacts have occurred immediately after the programme: Positive changes were recorded in round two, but they were of lesser impact those recorded in the first wave of the study. However, the data does suggest that the momentum generated by the programme has been largely sustained.
• Leadership activity has increased: More participants are recording positive changes in the activities in which they are currently involved and hope to be involved in in the future.
• Women are at different stages in the leadership path: All women are involved in activities, either on a personal or collective level, which could be seen as part of the leadership path.
• Women need support to achieve their goals: Sustaining meaningful participation relies on a number of factors including the support women have from their family, friends, colleagues and employers (Urbis, 2008, p.15).

The Office for Women hopes that those who participated in the program continue to benefit from the training and opportunities that the Young Women’s Leadership and Mentoring Program provided them. The success of the program in allowing the participants to move further along their leadership path indicates that a holistic approach to leadership development, incorporating networking, training and mentoring components, benefits not only the participants, but also their mentors and the wider community. For women in rural and regional areas, this could be crucial to ensuring the sustainability of their communities.

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I. Introduction

Sexual Difference and Dismantling Hierarchy and Patriarchy: The theoretical background to understanding the struggle to create the egalitarian workplace in five worker cooperatives in Buenos Aires

It’s impossible to understand how to organize cooperatively without focusing on ‘sexual difference’, the French philosopher Luce Irigaray’s category for what has not yet been thought within our ostensibly sexually indifferent symbolic structures, but which we must think if we are to confront how patriarchy and hierarchy mutually reinforce each other. In our present day symbolic structures, or the words, stories, philosophies, myths, religions we use to make sense of our world, women lack the place of the subject; they are object. Men remain the fulcrum, the norm, the phallus, the hinge of the logos of Lacan on which all meaning depends, a dance where women must follow the dancer who composed the music, a dancer who is always male. For the male subject to maintain its coherence, woman is consigned to the place of the object, the body, emotion, all of the rejected aspects of the male subject which are then projected onto the place held by woman. As object, women are not differentiated; they all remain the same as each other—‘all dolls are the same’ to quote Sky Masterson in Guys and Dolls—and as object to the male subject they are both different from the male subject and lesser. The meaning of these terms of subject and object, like all terms, depends on both exclusion and suppression of that exclusion for its coherence; meaning is always both dualistic and hierarchical, where what is ‘good’ [like mind, male, leader] is defined by what is ‘not good’ [or body, woman, subordinate]. These relations of domination and subordination circulate in our symbolic structures, working always to reconstitute the ‘different from the same’ as lesser.

Irigaray’s further point is that this relationship of the different as always lesser than the same is obscured by the supposedly liberating gesture of sexual indifference, that after all, we are all just individuals, that our sex does not matter, that you are an individual just like me. She argues that this gesture of sexual indifference—of assigning the status of the male subject to woman—does not confer equality on women who lack a place as subjects in our symbolic structures. Instead, it reinforces woman’s subordination to man in the guise of the masculine neutral. Irigaray maintains that it is only with the creation of the female subject through the actions of women and then in our definitions of those actions, will our differentness from each other as women be able to represented. And only then, by creating a place for the female subject who does not extrapolate from the male subject how to be in the world, will we be able to create a space among and between women who are different from each other, will we be able to solve conflict among and between

1 These are Sky Masterson’s famous words in ‘Guys and Dolls’, whose name itself exemplifies Irigaray’s analysis. For more on Irigaray’s analysis of the sexually indifferent symbolic structures and the necessity of creating a space for sexual difference and the female subject, see in particular Speculum of the Other Woman (1985), also 1994, 2000.
women, will we be able to create a ‘utopian horizon’ which we struggle towards, acting on a world which we define as female subjects. And by extension, only then will differentness be able to be expressed organizationally without being confined to the position of the lesser.

To follow Irigaray’s argument, then, is to emphasize that workers and bosses come in two sexes: the individual without a sex does not exist, and to use the sexless individual as an analytical category simply obscures who has power and who does not. An absence of attention to sexual difference in favour of a belief that both women and men can occupy the place of the sexually indifferent individual despite the presence of patriarchy, a belief which maintains that symbolically women are the same as men and experience the processes of organizing in exactly the same way, obscures rather than clarifies how we as women and men might organize in fully participatory, contiguous or non-hierarchical ways to get things done. Without confronting the rhetoric of the individual without a sex—the individual who in reality is male—without ensuring that cooperation means the contiguous organizing of sexual difference next to sexual difference, the female subject next to the male subject who equally act on and define the world, hierarchy inevitably reasserts itself, and cooperation, with its emphasis on the full participation of equals and the equal involvement of all, is subverted.

Understanding the struggle to create the egalitarian workplace in five worker cooperatives in Buenos Aires

Given my focus on these symbolic categories of [sexually indifferent] sameness and [sexual] difference as they underlie our assumptions about how we can achieve the egalitarian workplace, what interested me in my study of five worker cooperatives in Buenos Aires’ were two inextricably intertwined questions concerning how organizing cooperatively could be achieved in the face of hierarchy and patriarchy.

First, how comprehensively did the men and women workers think about hierarchy in all its manifestations? What did they mean organizationally when they talked about equality and workers as equals, as ‘more than workers, less than bosses’ to paraphrase Raimbeau (2005, p. 11)? Equality as sameness is what Irigaray has called the great dream of symmetry, which allows the powerful to escape their own complicity in the maintenance of hierarchy, by asserting the two [the sexually different next to the sexually different] are One [the unacknowledged male One standing in for the two, male subject and female subject]. How did the women and men working in these cooperatives struggle to embody in their organizing processes and strategies the ethos of cooperation—learned as they said ‘in the tent’—among and between equals who were not the same, who were different, and who experienced the processes of organizing differently? As the workers often proudly informed me, these were worker coops where all decision makers were elected and everyone was paid the same. And it wasn’t only the ‘one member, one vote’ enshrined in the general assemblies and in the elections of coordinators. It was also that ‘we are all members of the cooperative’: all jobs were equally necessary, all were equally valuable, and therefore all were worthy of being paid the same. But elected general assemblies and coordinators and equal pay for all jobs were only part

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2 At the turn of the last century, Argentina was richer than Canada (Martin, 1999-2000). However, by 2004, GDP per person in terms of purchasing power parity, Argentina ranked just below Poland, at about $12,500 per year, and above Chile at just over $10,000 and Mexico, at just less than $10,000 (The Economist, April 29, 2006, page 102). In another comparison of Argentina to Spain and to South Korea, and “[m]easured in terms of per capita income and debt, Argentina has gone from being the richest of the three to the poorest in the last 20 years, and its position relative to Spain and south Korea is deteriorating”(Schaeffer, 2003, p. 854-856). For more information on the worker cooperatives see the CBC documentary The Take, (2004), directed by Avi Lewis on the worker cooperatives in Buenos Aires; also Allbert, 2005; Balch, 2005; Guillen, 2001; Huff-Hannon, 2004; The Economist, 2002; Valente, 2004.
of how worker cooperatives struggled to interpret what equality and cooperation meant in practice.

Secondly, how did the workers confront how patriarchy circulates in these ostensibly egalitarian ways of organizing, where all work was treated as equally valuable, everyone could be elected to positions of authority, everyone was paid the same? More specifically, how did the worker coops deal with [sexual] difference, the argument, following Irigaray, that women and men are not substitutable—that women and men are equals who are different, who occupy different places in terms of who has power and who doesn’t, and who experience differently the processes of organizing, in particular the processes of decision making which undergird all organizing: of deciding what to do, how and by whom to do it, and then what to do next? How did the worker coops deal with this unacknowledged maleness of the supposedly sexually neutral or sexually indifferent individual which must be confronted if cooperative organizing, with its emphasis on full and equal participation, full and equal involvement, is to succeed? How did the women and men challenge not only the hierarchy which cooperative organizing seeks to dismantle, but the patriarchal privilege that circulates simultaneously in our organizing processes, and which, unless confronted, inevitably reconstitutes hierarchical modes of organizing? Did no more deference to bosses by workers also mean no more deference to men by women?

II. We were all ‘in the tent’ together: The development of shared politicized consciousness and its relationship to equality as sameness or difference

In the next part of this paper, I want to examine how hierarchy and patriarchy—shorthand for sexual hierarchy—intersect to subvert egalitarian organizing processes. More specifically, I want to examine the ways the workers, women and men, attempted to confront those mutually reinforcing hierarchical and patriarchal processes in how they organized together to get work done. I want to begin by examining how the workers developed an ethos of cooperation, or how their shared experience of revolt ‘in the tent’ together led to a sense of politicized consciousness or awareness of their situation. Did their shared experiences ‘in the tent’ lead to their commitment to egalitarian ways of organizing as they struggled to confront the workings of hierarchy in all its forms: not only between workers and bosses, but also between men and women?

The workers’ conceptualization of equality: Do you have to be just like me to be equal to me? Or can we be different from each other and still be equal? Rethinking the male norm.

The answers to these questions rest on how the workers conceptualized equality. Did the workers think that these egalitarian ways of organizing could be achieved through emphasizing that everyone be the same, the women just like the men? By extension, then, did they think that if the women workers were different than the men, they must be lesser, and equality could be achieved only if everyone is the same as everyone else? Did they think that women had to be just the same as men in order for the women to be equal to the men? Or did they attempt to reconcile equality with difference in how they organized, so that being different did not mean being left out or pushed out by the same, however the same defined themselves? Did the workers, both women and men, confront how patriarchy—or sexual hierarchy—circulated within the ostensibly egalitarian organizing processes they put in place, and if they did, what did they do? What did ‘in the tent’ mean for their understanding of what equality meant for how they organized?

The workers agreed on the process, but not on the outcome: they all pointed to how important their shared experience was for all of them, but only the women analysed this shared experience as

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3To Mutterburgh: “coop success depends not upon getting incentive structures right, but on successfully negotiating the social milieu which coops are embedded” (2002, p. 771).
meaning that they were the men’s equals. The men never mentioned this, any reference to any understanding that the women were their equals; they never talked about this at all.

What they did talk about together was that they all had undergone consciousness raising or demystification before they “recovered their factories”, after “the owners ceased production, stopped paying wages, and went bankrupt”, and before the workers took over the factories and made them produce “without a boss or owner”\(^4\). However, they used a much more concrete term: the workers called this the experience of the tent, where they were all together before they recovered their factories, and where they learned they were far stronger than they thought, far more capable than they believed. They told me that this experience of the tent produced their commitment to democratic, egalitarian forms of organizing—‘we were all like ants together’ said one woman—just as it shaped them, demystified for them what they thought was going on, allowed them, in the company of their compatriots, to think again what was actually happening, and prepared them for deciding what they wanted to do about their present situation. In the tent they shared the opportunity for “discussion, feedback and comparison”, a process of inclusion and consensus that allowed views to be shared and “competing truths and mystifications of the human condition” dissected (Young, 1993, p. 143-144; cf. Lewis and Barnsley, 1992; Guitj & Shah, 1998). At the same time this shared experience of revolt was a process of politicized consciousness-raising (Raimbeau, 2005, cf. Brown, 1992) that enabled the workers in the tent “to gain a greater sense of self-worth, agency and common purpose” (Young, 1997, p. 370). What the workers—and most had been workers; only 20% of those who joined the recovered factory movement had been managers (Trigona, 2006)—had to unlearn was deference and passivity, the result of a hierarchical way of working divided between bosses and workers that Morgan (2006) argues creates passivity, dependence, competitiveness and deference\(^5\). What they had to learn was the opposite. They had to learn to be subjects acting on the world and shaping it in a way that suited them, to learn contiguity in all its aspects, to learn how to confront the mutually sustaining operations of hierarchy and patriarchy as they circulated in the processes of ostensibly egalitarian forms of organizing. To confront the hierarchy between bosses and workers also meant to confront the hierarchy between men and women.

**Activism and Hierarchy Antithetical**

What their shared experiences in the tent taught the workers was that activism and hierarchy were antithetical. If the recovered factories were to succeed as worker cooperatives, hierarchical relations had to be dismantled, and egalitarian relations among and between workers who were capable, and because of their capabilities, powerful, had to be constructed if they were going to be able to accomplish their goals. If they didn’t construct ways of working together in egalitarian ways, they would revert to the bosses/worker hierarchy, so they had to figure out some way to displace that hierarchy in favour of contiguous relations among and between the workers. For these workers there was a explicit link between the experience of revolt and the development of a democratic consciousness, between how they understood and what they decided to do, or between learning how to think though their own relationship to a problem and not just simply leaving it to others. In making these links they recognized that they were knowers, that through the experience of the tent, they had become ‘political subjects’, to use Raimbeau’s term. By putting themselves in the picture,

\(^4\) Trigona states that “In almost all cases workers took over businesses that had been abandoned or closed by their owners in the midst of Argentina’s financial meltdown in 2001. The owners usually ceased production, stopped paying wages, and went bankrupt. The workers’ decision to take over their plant was a decision made out of necessity—not necessarily out of ideology. The clear worry of how to safeguard workers’ jobs motivated the act of taking over a factory and making it produce without a boss or owner[ unpaged, 2006]. This process was called ‘recovering’ the factories.

\(^5\) Morgan, 2006, is one of many organizational theorists who have critiqued hierarchy for its necessary emphasis on control and on narrow, top down forms of decision making. See also Iannello, 1992; Jones & Svejnar, 1985; Lennie, 1999; Newman, 1980; Oseen, 1997a, b, 1999, 2001, 2004, 2005; Semler, 1993; Suroweicki, 2005.
or grounding the issue in what they knew and had experienced (cf. Lewis and Barnsley, 1992), they took upon themselves the power to make decisions, to decide what is going on, and then what to do about it, structuring into this process both action and responsibility for those actions. They learned in the tent not to leave the thinking to others; they demystified the position of the knower as a position held by someone else that could never be held by them because they could never know enough, to a position that could be held by them, that they too could know the world and act on it. They took to themselves the position of the knower who does, or the subject who acts on the world, and rejected the position of the object that is always acted on. Formulating the position of the knower in a way that was understandable to everyone then, made finding a metaphor that could communicate that common understanding important. That led to the common use of the metaphor of the family to explain how to run an organization—but as we all know, that metaphor has quite different implications, and means quite different things, for women and men. I will return to this later.

“We worked together like ants, you couldn’t tell who was the man and who the woman”

What the tent equally taught the workers was how valuable each of them was for each other, how much they needed each other, how differences which had previously mattered, were no longer important: “we worked together like ants, you couldn’t tell who was the man and who the woman” said one woman to me. When the women talked about being ants together, they meant that everyone was together, women and men. The women didn’t mean that they were the same as the men or each other, but that there were no hierarchies, including sexual hierarchies. There were reasons, then, why the workers kept emphasizing to me that “we are a co-op”: we pay everyone the same, if we defer to others, we will not be able to work together fully and completely.

However, were we equal to each other? To the women, yes; maybe not to the men.

The experience of ‘the tent’, however, seemed to have much greater implications for the women than for the men in terms of their sense of equal worth: the women felt equal to the men, and it was the women who emphasized their equality with men. In the women’s accounts to me when we were apart from the men, they emphasized the shared experience of the tent as eliminating not only hierarchical work relations, but also the patriarchal relations or sexual hierarchies between men and women that worked to subvert the egalitarian ways of working together which the shared experience of the tent inspired. The converse didn’t seem to be true: the men never mentioned feeling equal to the women. The women felt equal to the men, but this equality between the two sexes that the women perceived ‘in the tent’, remained invisible to the men⁶. What exactly, then, did ‘we worked together like ants’ mean for the women and for the men? How were sameness, difference, and equality interpreted in how they organized to get work done together in cooperative ways? This difference between the two sexes informs the next part of the paper.

III. No head of the household, but sisterhood; workers, but not brotherhood:
Reconstructing the patriarchal family in rethinking democratic decision-making and the role of the coordinators

To describe how people related to each other to get work done both women and men used the metaphor of ‘the family’. But like ‘the tent’, ‘the family’ was perceived in different ways. In a patriarchal society the metaphor of ‘the family’, ‘the head of the household’, or ‘parents’, or ‘sisterhood’ or ‘brotherhood’ has quite different implications for women than for men. What did these metaphors of ‘the family’ mean, then, for the construction of an egalitarian, contiguous

⁶ This is the point that Elizabeth Sundin (2000) has made in her analyses of the workplace: that women want to do men’s jobs, but men do not want to do women’s jobs, and will leave rather than do jobs that women now do.
workplace for the two sexes? How did they deal with power as it circulated in their organizing processes, in all the little ways\textsuperscript{7} which reveal who has power and who doesn’t, if we accept that power circulates in our acts of organizing and in the names we give those acts, in the process either confirming or subverting the circulation of hierarchy and patriarchy within those symbolic structures? In particular, how did the workers dealt with the fact that they were not sexless individuals but men and women who experienced the processes of organizing differently, who occupied different positions in a patriarchal society and who acted and then defined those actions within a hierarchical symbolic structure? What are the answers to these questions in terms of the key aspects of non-hierarchical, contiguous, participatory organizing, and how are they embodied in the organizing processes of women and men? What did it mean to figure out what the coordinator did, what aspect of ‘the family’ the coordinator embodied, and in particular, what that meant for women and for men working together?

Democratic organizing practices: confronting hierarchy but not patriarchy

To address this question I will draw on Rothschild’s (2000) analysis of how cooperative, non-hierarchical organizing works, as well as a study of the worker coops of Buenos Aires by Raimbeau (2005, 2006). Although neither study directly addresses how democratic and non-hierarchical principles are subverted by patriarchal practices, what they have done is to provide signposts about what is important in figuring out how to work together collectively and non-hierarchically. Both studies concurred on the key aspects of the non-hierarchical workplace. Raimbeau asserted that there is a direct link between the consciousness-raising of the tent and the workers’ commitment to democratic forms of organizing that are the outcome of that shared experience. She identified the following elements as crucial: “the assembly, where every worker has a voice”, the election of non-permanent coordinators who are rotated in and out of their positions, equal pay, and “mechanisms to guarantee transparent accounting”\textsuperscript{(2005, p. 11)}. Rothschild’s (2000) analysis replicates Raimbeau’s, pointing out that this mode of organizing is comprised of four essential elements: worker self-management, a non-instrumental way of dealing with each other as workers, democratic decision-making with provision for dissent, and worker ownership, which guarantees the democratic process (cf. Blasi and Kruse, 2003)\textsuperscript{8}. It’s not enough to ensure worker participation, Rothschild argues. Workers must benefit through ownership of their work; they must be in control of their work, and the split between the owners, managers, and workers must be erased through the position of the elected coordinator\textsuperscript{9}.

The role of the coordinator, or the bridge in the phrase ‘more than workers’ to ‘less than bosses’

When I asked about the role of the elected coordinators—the workers never used the term ‘manager’—how they were chosen, and what they do, a male worker explained it to me like this: “The workers know when it begins and ends. Those who knew, they were the ones who became coordinators. The qualified officer knows how to do everything, but she still works on the machine because she’s so fast”. There is no hesitation about informing me that the coordinators are elected, and serve, through the will of the general assembly: One worker told me that: “Some coordinators

\textsuperscript{7} These little ways are sometimes referred to as ‘micro-inequities’, first coined by Rowe [1995], and later used by Fletcher and Meyerson (2000).

\textsuperscript{8} Rothschild points out that in the TQM [total quality management] literature, the nearest to the study of cooperative organizing in mainstream organizational analysis, the focus is on “how the people in the organization feel”. In contrast, in the democratic cooperative literature it is on how “actual ownership and control that is extended. It is the ownership that provides the legal foundation to ensure that democratic control will continue” (p. 200).

\textsuperscript{9} Like Rothschild, Blasi and Kruse stress that “employee participation isn’t enough. The tangible rewards of employee ownership or some form of sharing the fruits of ownership must go hand in hand with work practices that give workers greater decision-making” (Blasi and Kruse, cited in Surowiecki, 2004, p. 210).
are from the beginning of 2002 and we will vote them out when they’re too old, or too lazy”. Most of the elected coordinators seemed to meet roughly once a week, and as one worker put it, decide on everything. As the worker went on to explain: “They make a diagram about what we have to buy. Almost once a week they meet, and see what is lacking in each sector, what’s needed in each sector: missing staff, cleanliness, the kitchen: everything must come up”. That meant areas of contention which the coordinators had to deal with, and when I asked how they dealt with this, they used the metaphor of the family: “When there’s a problem in the house, the parents get together. We try not to cut heads off, to scold”. When I asked in another coop how long the meetings were, they told me that they were one to two hours, and they talked about “how are the deposits going, how are the floors, the washroom cleaning, reception, the bar. The music [which they were not allowed to have before] makes it easier to work; it’s easier to talk to the suppliers. It’s different affinities, like any family”.

Women workers in a workplace dominated by men, however, had a different approach to the duties of the coordinator. The other workplaces had told me about what the coordinator in very matter of fact tones, but they never questioned why there needed to be a coordinator in the first place: the family metaphor they used indicated that the position of a coordinator was necessary, like a parent or the head of a household. However, this group of women workers did. Unlike in other coops where it was more evenly split between women and men, or where women dominated, this group of women spoke the most specifically to me about what it was like to work in a male dominated coop, and how that extended to how they saw their coordinator, and what terms they used to describe what the coordinator did.

When I asked how the women organized among themselves, one woman first pointed out their fundamental equality with each other, that: “Yes: from the beginning we are a coop”. Although they had been working together, they told me, since 1985 for some, 1983, 1984 for others, some daughters, and granddaughters now working with the original workers, the coop was different from what was before. When I asked how?, they told me: “We don’t have bosses. Before we were told. Now we work, we do it for us, it’s more of a sisterhood. We have a salary. It’s ours, we do more, we’re more careful, because it’s ours. We’re more conscious”. When I asked how that had affected their lives?, they told me:

You wake up with more energy. You know you are working for yourself. Sometimes we wake up with such energy we come an hour late [and they all laughed]. “But we always try to be on time but before….It looks like others have never been late [and they all laugh]. We cover ourselves, [we use] the cell phone. We cover here when it happens with someone. We are alone, we’re single mothers with young children. We continue to work after [we finish here], we’re up at midnight still working, and up at four am. We have to do two jobs. It’s more flexible, we still have responsibilities, we talk among our companions.

The women also complained to me how busy they were, how they had to do everything, despite having less time than the men, who did not have their double day. “Here, to kick out an associate [their term for another worker] there has to be previous sanctions, you can’t be irresponsible. We are more responsible than men, but we have to do everything, because men have more time”. What hampered them was that they had to be fully contributing workers who took on to themselves all the responsibilities of being fully participatory workers, but because they were single mothers, they told me, they had all the extra responsibilities of their families which the men simply did not have, and that made it harder for them to do all that they needed to do.

When I asked what the coordinator did, the women didn’t speak of any involvement by the coordinator in deciding what to do and how to do it. Instead they stressed that the coordinator fulfilled the role of information transmitter between the various departments because the coordinator “knows the orders and priorities with the warehouse, the warehouse coordinator tells
the needs of packaging”. It was they who decided what to do and how to do it, not him: “One day we each take turns, to switch the job so it’s not so routine and that way we learn everything”. When I asked why they did that, they replied that it was necessary “to learn other things to help each other so we can cover for each other”. They also told me that they didn’t really need a coordinator, since they made all the decisions themselves, including the rotation of tasks in order to cover for each other, and that they kept the coordinator only because he needed the job, he was old, and they didn’t want to hurt his feelings. They kept him on, but they decided among themselves what a coordinator usually decided: who did what, and when. They ensured that the flexibility they required as single parents, on their own, with unpredictable demands, was there. They knew how to do each other’s jobs—that way they could cover for each other. And they figured out among themselves who could cover. They told me that:

We don’t have a female coordinator but we don’t need either a male or a female coordinator. Among us we could rotate the job of coordinator. Every business has to have a coordinator who meets with the administrative council [elected in the general assembly]. Supposedly the coordinator is voted in, but here the coordinator was chosen because he had the experience—twenty-five years. But he doesn’t have to be there always—he could be taken out. There could be a coordinator, but we love him, we fight with him, he’s been here so long we don’t want to push him out.

But they were quite adamant to me that a coordinator, another layer in the hierarchy, was someone they didn’t need, in the same way they didn’t need husbands. Just as they were able to cope with unemployment first, and then later the work of recovering the factory without the help of husbands—most of them were single parents, with responsibilities to children and parents—they couldn’t see why they needed a coordinator to tell them what to do. Instead they told me that they just figured out how to get everything done between themselves so the line was never held up. They told me that they didn’t need a ‘head of the household’, a term they reserved for married men. They never called themselves heads, although they had responsibilities for others younger and older than themselves; it was as if there was no word for their position for what they needed to accomplish. Just as they refused to use the term ‘head of the household’ because they felt it was not applicable to what they did, or needed to do, neither was a coordinator necessary. They didn’t need anybody to tell them what to do, either at home, or at work, in order for things to go smoothly. Instead their solution to how they organized—which explicitly rejected any form of hierarchy—was not father, not mother, not ‘head of household, nor even parent, but sister or sisterhood.

IV. Conclusion: The metaphor of the family and challenging a patriarchal hierarchy

To emphasize the common experience, to reiterate that everyone can do this, because everyone already knows how to do this, the constant, reoccurring metaphor used by the workers was the family, parents, the household, the home, sisterhood—but not brotherhood. Interestingly, I never heard the men use the term ‘brotherhood’; it was only the women who would refer to each other as sisters, or as a sisterhood. The only term I heard the men use was ‘family’ as in ‘we are a family’. ‘Sisterhood’ indicated the strong bond between those who are different from the dominant majority; ‘family’ was a much more ambiguous term, and prefigured in both senses the different ways the men and the women described the role of the coordinator, or the bridge in the phrase ‘more than workers’ to ‘less than bosses’.

The workers used these metaphors to talk about how to become more than a worker, but not a boss, they used these metaphors in terms of deciding what to do and how to do it, or how to organize as equals, since they were all paid the same. They used the metaphor to describe how to budget, how to deal with those who didn’t know how to do the work well, how to deal with disagreements over how much money to take home and how much money to spend on capital
improvements, how to establish rules about what to do and who was to do them and how they were to be done.

The women in one of the factories were the most notable in how they used the family metaphor to frame what they were doing at work. They never used the term ‘the head of the household’, which they reserved for married men although they talked about their responsibilities as more onerous than those facing married men (they emphasized they worked 20 hours a day in order to meet all their responsibilities). Instead, they talked about their responsibilities as single mothers to their children and to their parents without ever defining that as ‘the head of the household’, which extended to how they saw their relations at work. They spoke of the coordinator as unnecessary for what they wanted to accomplish, just as they saw using the term the head of the family as unnecessary for what they wanted to accomplish in terms of meeting their responsibilities to their dependent others. In both their analyses of their place at home and at work, they did not use the hierarchical terms available to them to designate their place; they talked in other ways about their responsibilities at work and at home. Just as they never saw themselves as heads of families despite stating that they had more responsibilities than the married men they called ‘heads of families’ since their wives did the work in the home which they were responsible for, neither did they see how they got work done together as hierarchical. Instead they used the term ‘sisterhood’, stating that they didn’t need a coordinator in order to get things done at work. In refusing to use the term the head of the household, they also refused to use any form of hierarchical address at work, while they continued to deal with the myriad responsibilities of both being income earners for others and income earners in their workplace.

Confronting Patriarchal Privilege in the Democratic Non-Hierarchical Workplace through Difference as Contiguous rather than as lesser

If our goal is the democratic, egalitarian workplace, we have to focus on the relations between women and men. If we want democracy, and some version of a non-hierarchical workplace where people participate, we have to analyse people in terms of who has power and who doesn’t, men and women who have different positions within the societal structure, where men are dominant and women are subordinate, maintained by patriarchy and reinforced by hierarchical ways of organizing that are not necessarily confronted in a democracy. Without an analysis of sexual difference there is no means of figuring out how women and men experience the processes of organizing differently. As we know, our Canadian democracy does not have proportional representation of women: men represent women and speak on their behalf, and it’s certainly been argued that men legislate for themselves, not for women. This underlies what happens in our legislatures carries over to our organizations, as Rothschild notes: “rights in the political arena cannot be insulated from rights in the workplace”(2000, p. 195). Rothschild’s real question is whether the team based approach so emphasized recently in the US as the way to do things is a preliminary to a “much more deeply democratic forms of control”(p. 196) whereas I maintain that democratic control is only possible when men and women confront patriarchy, that dismantling hierarchy, the control by a few of the many, means nothing if women are ignored in this equation. Ultimately, if we take difference seriously as difference next to difference rather than difference as lesser than the same, the compulsion of Canadian federalism which continuously struggles to figure out politically the non-substitutable next to the non-substitutable rather than the sameness of individuals, which only obscures who has power and who doesn’t10, we have to dismantle hierarchy and patriarchy simultaneously. Hierarchy and patriarchy work to reinforce each other, and neither is possible without the other, Irigaray’s argument. Only dismantling our hierarchical and patriarchal

10 See for some recent writings on the different next to the different in Canadian federalism, see Atwood & V-L. Beaulieu, 1998; Welsh, 2004.
symbolic structures through contiguous practices which are then defined will women be free from symbolic structures that constantly work to reaffirm women’s subordinate status.

We need to be able to create a word to describe how we work together contiguously, not just leaving that space blank, the way we do now, when we refer to men as heads of families and by extension heads of organization, reserving for women only an unfilled space in the symbolic structure because the word to define contiguous organizing has not yet been created. Only then will women no longer be admitted into the public sphere only as honourary men in the guise of the [masculine] neutral, which hides what it cannot admit, that the world of the public remains resolutely masculine and male, and women continue to be admitted into this masculine sphere of the public and the workplace only as honourary men. Only by struggling with patriarchy can cooperative organizing be created, since the family, the household, sisterhood, were recurring motifs in the interviews, dominant metaphors used to explain how to organize democratically.

What we need, finally, are new ways of understanding the family metaphor as contiguous, with a female subject and male subject, rather than patriarchal and hierarchical, with a male subject and a female object, the head of the household as the unacknowledged unanalyzed right of the male to rule, and the erased woman, never even referred to. What the women of the coop were searching for, a word in Spanish translatable into English that would capture their egalitarian, contiguous way of working, still awaits us. Democracy in the workplace that does not confront the covert practices of patriarchal privilege ultimately subverts that democracy. Egalitarianism can only succeed when sexual difference is both confronted and created as contiguous, as women and men next to the next, side by side, working together in the factory coops of Buenos Aires.

References


Interviews: April 27-May 6, 2006

Print Shop, Glass, Balloon, Clothing Factory Interviews, Hotel Interview
Leading Gender Equality in Public Services - The Politics of Relational Practice

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Introduction

This paper explores the nature of leadership of gender equalities initiatives in a context of significant change in the UK public services sector. It is informed by discussions with local authority equality advisors, public service managers and colleagues associated with a post graduate management education programme at Bristol Business School\(^1\), and a locally based women’s organisation.

It has been argued that we are at a pivotal moment in terms of legislative change (EOC, 2007). However while changes in legislation are vital in setting the frame for promoting equality, how individuals and institutions engage with them is complex and indeterminate (Acker, 2006). This paper draws from feminist post structural research to consider the relational qualities of leadership of gender equality in this complex political environment (Fletcher, 2003) and what the role of the researcher might be in contributing to leadership that is emerging (Meyerson and Kolb, 2000).

The paper is interdisciplinary in approach, attempting to draw together concepts that have resonance from a research literature that is eclectic and in which parallel developments appear to have taken place. Leadership of gender equality in UK public services is considered in the context of changing gender equality policy, and its changing institutional forms. These changes in turn are situated in changes introduced by the modernisation project in the nature of public services and the relationship between government and public (Newman, 2005). The policy process is conceptualised as interpretive and agentic, subject to irrational and complex processes in contrast to more rationalist and linear approaches that have been developed (Bevir and Rhodes, 2003; Newman, 2002). It draws from reviews of changing gender legislation, implementation strategies and their underpinning gender equality frameworks (MCLoughlin, 2007; Rees, 1998, 2005; Squires, 2005).

The paper begins with a brief discussion of how the new managerialism has changed the shape of gender equality work in UK public services, and maps recent and current changes in legislation and institutional mechanisms. It then examines the discourses of gender equality and of leadership that are in play in this context, in order to review the nature of the work of researching and of leading gender equality now.

In previous research I have demonstrated that leadership of gender equality initiatives has been shown to require sophisticated relational, political and sense making skills (Page, 2001). In this paper I argue that researchers can offer a valuable resource for creating conditions for leadership of gender equality initiatives to emerge at a time where it is becoming increasingly difficult to prioritise gender equality in public services. This resource should aim to offer spaces where actors might come together to revitalise their passion for social justice and to develop strategies for enacting and

\(^1\) MSc in Leadership and Organisation of Public Services. Students are mid career managers in commissioning, service provider and regulatory roles in predominantly local government and health services in the SW of England.
promoting gender equality in a context of increasing complexity, inequality, and competing priorities.

Modernisation, and Mainstreaming - the changing shape of gender equality work in public services

In April 2007 the ‘Gender Equality Duty’ (GED) came into force, a positive duty for public services in Great Britain to take proactive action to redress patterns of disadvantage in their policies and practices. Introduced by the Equalities Act (2006), on the basis of a Labour Party manifesto commitment to review and strengthen equalities legislation, the GED followed legislation introducing positive duties relating to race and disability. It was hailed by the Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC) as the biggest advance in sex equality legislation in thirty years (EOC, 2006). However the legislation was barely introduced when plans were announced to introduce a new single positive duty to promote equality across all areas, with the aim of streamlining legislation across all equalities constituencies. Consultation on these proposals has taken place and a Single Equalities Bill (SEB) is imminent. New institutional arrangements have already replaced separate commissions responsible for gender, race and disability with a single Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) responsible for six equalities areas.

While there is a broad consensus that this move towards a single positive equality duty is desirable, there is also considerable apprehension that it may contribute to further marginalisation of gender equality (Squires, 2007). Furthermore, responses to the Discrimination Law Review (DLR) consultation revealed significant differences in how equality and inequality should be understood, implemented, measured and enforced (DLR, 2007; EOC, 2006; GLA, 2007; Fredman and Spencer, 2006). Indeed it has been said that we are at a pivotal moment in equalities legislation, where impending legislation could either strengthen the positive duty for organisations to promote equality, or dilute the duties now on the statute book and locate responsibility in individuals to take up their equal opportunities (Spencer, 2008).

These changes in equality legislation comes at a time of increasing complexity, turbulence and change in the nature of UK public services and how they relate to government on the one hand, and the public on the other (Newman, 2001).

In the 1980’s modernization of UK public services introduced changes in administration that were driven by a critique of the public sector, and based on importing of private sector concepts and techniques into the public sector (Griffiths, 1988). These reforms are widely referred to as the New Public Management (NPM). Under the rubric of ‘rolling back the state’ a mixed economy of welfare was ushered in. Specific elements included downsizing of state bureaucracies, transfer of services to public and voluntary sectors, and encouragement of competition within and between public and private sectors. In this new scenario co ordination and regulation of increasingly fragmented services has become a key issue. Regulation has been introduced through measures and standards of performance, audits of quality of delivery, and the primacy of management emphasised above all skills.

From the 1990’s, reaction against ‘mechanistic’ public management developed and stronger public leadership and partnership working have been promoted by government as the means of enacting the change agenda for public services (OECD, 2001). The discourse of transformational leadership in public services became important in the 1990’s and 2000’s, and leadership academies began to proliferate in public services. Leaders are increasingly promoted in UK policy documents as those who are able to turn around failing services, embodying Labour’s espoused values and social as well as economic goals (Newman, 2005, p. 720).
Both the specific changes in equality legislation and the wider changes in governance of public services have profound implications for how we might understand leadership of gender equality in public services. One such change relates to the construction of leadership in the discourses of public service modernisation. The governmental policy of ‘modernisation’ has, Newman suggests, discursively positioned public service managers as ‘transformational leaders’, on the one hand empowered as proactive agents of the modernization project, and on other subject to control through the specificity of governmental policy agendas (Newman, 2005). Newman suggests that empirical research is needed to explore how public service managers are negotiating this double process of power and control (Newman, 2005, p. 725). She advocates an approach that studies how actors construct their world, their understanding of the dilemmas they face, and the ways they seek to resolve them – how public service managers exercise agency in what is now a dispersed and fragmented field of governance (ibid, p. 730).

Debates relating to The Equalities Act (2006) and the impending Single Equality Bill bring into relief both a wish for stronger coercive powers to implement gender equality, and general disillusionment with the effectiveness of centrally set government targets exercised through managerial regimes. The invitation to believe in the individual’s capacity to be transformational can be a powerful and seductive force, with creative and destructive potential (Sinclair, 1998). Traces of the tension between the wish for transformational leaders to exercise coercive power to implement gender equality, and frustration at their apparent inability or unwillingness to do so are evident in current debates among activists about how to progress gender equality, and in the consultation on new legislation (Discrimination Law Review, 2007; Equalities Review, 2006).

From the first perspective, the feminist project is to achieve stronger sanctions for compliance, to make managers and politicians with position power exercise it to achieve change. Change is conceived of as a linear process, beginning with legislation and ending with implementation. However a concept of change as a more complex, less predictable process might lead to a different perspective. From this perspective the priority might be to energise agency of a diverse set of actors, each with their own reading of equality and inequality. The role of leadership in this instance would be to open up discursive spaces to creatively reinterpret regulations on the basis of negotiation and debate. I will argue that both sets of expectations are reflected with different emphases in the changing forms of gender equality work briefly described below.

Changes in forms of governance and government are reflected in the changes in institutional arrangements for implementing gender equality in UK public services in the ‘80’s and ‘90’s. Gender equality initiatives in UK public services have not been extensively researched and accounts that draw from practitioner experience demonstrate both local positive results and a failure to impact on inequalities at macro level (Breitenbach, Brown, Mackay, and Webb, 2002; Itzin and Newman, 1995). A brief review of changes in institutional arrangements for this work demonstrates features of the different governance regimes described above.

In the ‘80’s, progressive labour administrations had separate equality advisors for each equality constituency. Women’s equality advisors were usually situated centrally, with an advisory function to corporate management teams, and a link to directorate women’s equality advisors (Riley, 2001; Scott, 2002; Webb, 1997). They were responsible for advising managers and policy officers on the service and employment needs of women, on the basis of consultation and commissioned research. They worked alongside advisors for race, disability and sometimes lesbian and gay communities, and were accountable to a political Equalities or Women’s Equality committee These committees often included community representatives, and equalities advisors established close links with independent community based women’s organisations. Independent organisations and projects were funded through budgets administered by the equalities units. Relationships between advisors in equalities constituencies were often conflictual; they were in competition for scarce resources and political tensions were often rife. There were wide variations in results achieved, relating to
local political priorities, and the level of self organisation in local communities. Leadership in this context was essentially about insider/outside alliances, between women and men in different roles within political, management and independent communities (Maddock, 1999; Page and Lorandi, 1992).

In the ‘90’s and current decade the introduction of gender mainstreaming has coincided with the introduction of audit regimes, central government targets and standards that characterise the new public management. Equalities advisors now tend to be generic, working across two or more equality areas. They are likely to be situated in units that are not specific to equality, but may be ‘social inclusion’, ‘policy and partnership’ or more latterly ‘community cohesion’. Situated centrally, they work through performance management controls, commissioning researchers and consultants to do specific project work and providing direct advice to managers only occasionally. They are responsible for ensuring managers consult local communities and draw up gender equalities action plans, in order to demonstrate they benchmark favourably with other public bodies through the national set Equalities Standard, and meet legislative requirements. Compliance and excellence are the bases for successful bids for funding services, and are monitored by a nationally administered audit regime.

In this scenario of smaller, leaner equalities resources the move towards integrated equalities frameworks is a logical progression. Reducing the number of performance targets and measures and introducing consistency within a single integrated equalities framework makes sense to managers who have been bombarded with successions of changing and centrally set targets. However how managers will address the complexity of intersectionality, or set priorities between equalities areas, remains to be seen. Integrated equalities framework agreements have already been introduced in some local authorities, and the national Equalities Standard is also being reviewed and streamlined (IdEA, 2008). Local managers work with an imposed agenda set centrally, but alongside this negotiate their own strategies for addressing local needs and priorities. They are currently required by the Gender Equality Duty to draw up and publicise a three year gender equality scheme, but the outcomes achieved will be determined by complex negotiations within local partnerships, within the new integrated equalities frameworks set by proposed new legislation and codes of guidance. It is unclear what room there will be for local interpretation when outcomes are measured by audit regimes, resource allocation is dependent on results, and key performance indicators are often accompanied by increasingly detailed codes of guidance (Pederson and Hartley, 2008).

Discussions with local service and human resource managers, equality advisors and independent women’s equality advocates suggests a strong contrast between the apparent rationality and clarity of legislation, targets and codes of guidance, and the random, partial and irrational responses of some individual managers. In a teaching session, students who were public service managers and commissioners were asked to map equalities targets and drivers relating to their service area. They revealed varying levels of understanding and awareness of legal requirements, variable commitment to some of the goals of equality, and some outright disagreement. Alongside this they expressed cynicism and disillusionment with the operational mechanisms for implementing equality. They referred to lip service, technocratic use of performance indicators such as a requirement to identify the sexuality of elderly home care clients. In separate discussions with equalities advisors in five local authorities, some expressed frustration while others spoke more

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2 The Improvement and Development Agency for Local Government administers award schemes for good practice, and a variety to schemes for supporting and developing practice in specific areas. It administers the Equalities Standard, which benchmarks equalities practice (gender, race and disability). The Standard has no statutory power but is a performance indicator for auditing and funding purposes. The Equality Standard for local government was launched in 2001. Ninety per cent of all local authorities have now adopted it. It enables them to mainstream age, disability, gender, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation into council policy and practice. It is a voluntary best value performance indicator.
optimistically about their work with service departments on developing integrated equalities plans. Discussions with independent women’s organisations reveal similar tensions between frustration at the apparent ineptitude of managers, and failure to act on the results of consultation and successful initiative.

The requirement to consult local communities is at the heart of the governance agenda, and a requirement of current equalities legislation. This offers opportunities for influence, but successful engagement requires time, resources and capacity. Moreover, how local gender equality advocates engage with these opportunities is determined by their constructs of gender equality, of leadership and change processes, and their commitment to address intersectionality and to work alongside advocates of other equalities.

In this changing scenario, more research is needed to discover how leadership of gender equality is being taken up by different actors in local contexts. Such research might investigate; how leadership between centre and local sites is being exercised; what alliances are developing within networks of activists and advocates positioned in the policy process, in public services, government and independent organisations. How is this leadership engaging with intersectionality between gender, race, and other inequalities? What forms of leadership are emerging?

**Shifting discourses of gender equality: Dilution or devolvement?**

While a detailed investigation is beyond the scope of this paper, it is important to understand how the changes in equality discourses and practices are intertwined with wider changes in how state power is exercised, and the changing shape of public services. The Equalities Act (2006) introduced new and innovative measures to tackle institutional discrimination in public bodies (Conley, Page, Grisoni and Jarvis, 2008). It replaced equality of opportunity by equality of outcome. It requires all public service bodies to have ‘due regard’ when carrying out their functions to eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment, to promote equality of opportunity between men and women. More specifically it requires them to prepare and publish a ‘gender equality scheme’ showing how they will meet their general and specific duties, and setting out their objectives; to consider the need to address the causes of equal pay gaps; to gather information on how policies and practices affect gender equality in the workforce and in delivery of services; to consult stakeholders; to implement the actions set out in its scheme in three years; to report on the scheme annually and review it every three years.

However while the GED has been hailed by some as a breakthrough, the ‘positive duties’ have been powerfully critiqued by others for their limited capacity to deliver substantive outcomes (McLoughlin, 2007; Spencer and Fredman, 2006):

The detailed requirements of the current positive duties differ but the core duty is that a public body must pay due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination and promote equality of opportunity. The goal, therefore, is equality of opportunity, and the duty is to ‘pay due regard’. We shall argue that both the goal and the duty are problematic. ‘Equal opportunity’ is too vague and too limited to function as a workable target. The duty to pay ‘due regard’ merely requires a body to consider the need to promote equality, not to take any action. We thus propose that the new duty should (i) specify the equality goals, moving beyond equality of opportunity, and (ii) specify a clearer duty, moving beyond ‘due regard’. The duty we propose is goal oriented, action based and progressive over time. (Spencer and Fredman, 2006),

The EOC submission to the DLR draws heavily from this analysis:
At the heart of the debate we need to have is an argument about responsibilities. Who should be taking action to achieve equality and how? The EOC’s view is that we need a shift in the balance of responsibilities, which currently lie too heavily with individuals who face discrimination... The duty should not be confined to compensating identified victims. It should extend to the restructuring of institutions. Integral to the new vision therefore is the positive duty to promote equality, through such strategies as mainstreaming and positive action’. (EOC, 2006, Paragraph 2.3, citing Fredman, 2002).

Thus while the single equalities framework proposed by the DLR is widely supported as a means of removing the fragmentation and inconsistencies in existing legislation, many who submitted responses to the DLR consultation expressed concern that proposals do not address the shortcomings of existing legislation, but rather weaken it in significant areas. Among the many shortcomings identified are the replacement of the requirement to ‘have due regard’ with ‘guiding principles’; the introduction of more autonomy for local authorities to set priorities between equalities areas, and its failure to extend requirements for compliance to the private sector, or to procurement (GLA, 2007).

The last decade has witnessed some important advances in equality legislation – for example, protection against sexual orientation, age and religious discrimination (albeit not comprehensive) and, most notably the public sector positive equality duties. ....Although the Discrimination Law Review is an opportunity to deliver law that can more effectively uphold and promote equality, it has been surrounded by a confused debate on the future of equality (GLA, 2007, p. 3).

Indeed both the DLR itself and the Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC) submission to the consultation are prefaced with statements of the need to redefine the purpose and scope of equality law. As the EOC put it in their submission to the DLR:

Should equality law concentrate on what people and organizations must not do or on what they should positively achieve? (EOC, 2006: p.4)

In the Equalities Review commissioned by the new Commission for Equality and Human Rights a vision for the future of equalities work is set out:

‘The old approach of a top down state which pulls levers to improve outcomes for particular groups is no longer appropriate or effective. We must take account of the way an enabling state operates in the 21st century and ensure we focus on ends and not means.’ (Cabinet Office, 2007, p.3)

In contrast the report argues, the new approach must empower people in local communities to promote equality in ways most suited to their needs, and be based on shared rights and responsibilities for government, employers and public services and citizens (ibid, p.3). The Review makes a case for a programme of action that would aim to achieve shared understanding of what is meant by equality, a common framework of measurement, leaders taking direct and personal responsibility for promoting greater equality, and promoting and tackling entrenched inequality embedded in the way the public institutions carry out their business. To achieve this it recommends a new more holistic approach and framework for measuring and working towards equality across communities and constituencies that can engage with the changing nature of inequality, and the changing role of the state.

Thus, while UK legislation offers powerful legitimising tools for promoting equality and tackling discrimination, significant differences in how it should be developed and interpreted continue to exist. One key difference is between those who advocate a liberal egalitarian model of ‘fairness’ and
those who advocate measures to tackle the structural roots of inequality (Cockburn, 1991; Rees, 1998; Squires, 2007). Researchers concerned with the practice of equality work distinguish between results achieved within ‘long and short agendas for change’ (Cockburn, 1991) or ‘tinkering, tailoring and transforming’ (Rees, 1998). The Gender Equality Duty was preceded by twenty years of equalities practice in public services in the 1980’s and 90’s. Researchers have recorded its achievements, and problematised its limited impact on both operational grounds, and on the basis of the model of equality on which it is based. (Coyle, 1989; Itzin and Newman, 1985; Breitenbach et al, 2002; Webb, 1997). They conclude that, based on liberal notions of equality and fairness, equal opportunities policies do not address institutionalised male power, resistance and outright opposition to the gender equality agenda. Moreover their findings demonstrate that while there have been considerable achievements at local level they have made no significant or sustainable dent on overall patterns of inequality between men and women.

Gender mainstreaming was designed to address these limitations, and appears to offer a different paradigm. Rees, one of the architects of gender mainstreaming as it was introduced within the European Commission, defines it thus:

‘Gender mainstreaming is the promotion of gender equality through its systematic integration into all systems and structures, into all policies, processes and procedures, into the organisation and its culture, into ways of seeing and doing’ (Rees, 2005, p. 560)

Gender mainstreaming attempts to deal with the genderedness of organisations and organisational processes, and in this sense appears to offers potential for development of transformative agendas (Benschop and Verloo, 2006). Introduced by the European Commission within its structural funding programmes and promoted by the Equal Opportunities Commission within Great Britain, there is a considerable body of implementation practice from which to draw. The research demonstrates that while gender mainstreaming offers a useful approach for promoting gender equality, interpretations of legislation will inevitably vary within the specific temporal and political contexts in which they are situated (Rees, 2005; Walby, 2005). Further research suggests that mainstreaming can be interpreted in ways that are technocratic, empty of substantive content, that they offer transformative potential when taken up a means of pursuing complex equality via ‘inclusive deliberations’ (Squires, 2005, p, 384).

However deliberative democracy in relation to gender equality offers its own challenges. Research on public opinion in Great Britain suggests women’s equality is widely viewed in terms of individual choice, and structural disadvantage discounted despite evidence to the contrary (Howard and Tibbles, 2003: 42 cited by Squires, 1995 p.3). As Squires suggests, this is consistent with the liberal egalitarian agenda for change, in which equality is seen as equality of opportunity, sex inequality is not seen as a priority, and inequality is considered in relation to individual acts and not to institutional arrangements.

The tension between the liberal egalitarian view of change represented in the legislation and the structural analysis of inequality presents specific challenges to those responsible for interpretation, implementation and leading change in organisations. As I have shown there is a further dimension to these debates about equality, and this concerns the changing forms of government, transition in the relationship between public services and individuals, state and individual citizens (Newman, 2001, 2008). We are living in a context where a social justice agenda exercised through levers of power by a redistributive state can no longer be assumed; and where public authorities deliver and commission services through complex contractual arrangements and multi sectoral partnerships with private and voluntary sector organisations, as well as with other public authorities. Gender equality initiatives are more likely to achieve results where there is evidence of a vibrant civil society able to engage with managers and politicians in public services (Acker, 2006; Squires, 2005). Yet despite its rhetoric of citizen participation the relationship of citizens to public services is being
configured as personal and individual, through increasing introduction of the personal choice agenda for accessing public services. Debates around proposed new legislation demonstrate that discourses of gender, equality and of change are fluid, controversial and widely contested. Moreover that these changes in equality discourse and practices are intertwined with wider changes in how state power is exercised, and the changing shape of public services.

What might this mean for how in this context we might conceptualise and further investigate leadership of gender equality?

What is the work of leading gender equality change?

Any consideration of leadership of equality in public services must begin by acknowledging its political dimension. Public service managers are key actors in the governance of public service, and in the shaping of the new equality agenda. Leadership of equality in public services is located both locally and nationally; At national level, it is exercised in setting standards, performance measures and new legislation that must be locally interpreted; At local level these frameworks must be interpreted and translated into action plans in consultation with communities and in multi sectoral partnerships. At both national and local level, leadership necessarily requires sophisticated relational and political skills.

In her research Newman traces a double process of change in the politics of public service: on one hand, the growth of networked governance, linked especially to New Labour’s emphasis on delivering policy outcomes through partnerships, and on the other the discourse of transformational leadership in the UK’s modernisation project (Newman, 2005). The meaning of this double process is that actors were discursively positioned as agents as well as the objects of cultural change:

‘The transformative discourses of leadership and modernisation provided an enlarged space that allows actors to self author, and to evoke new identities that draw on a wide range of socially available discourses, within but also beyond the lexicon of New Labour. It is these small everyday actions of generating meanings, appropriating and reworking governmental discourse and selectively coupling them with other frameworks of meaning that illumine the micro politics of modernisation’ (ibid, p. 730).

Newman’s research suggests that the public managers who took part in her research were deploying and partly reworking Labours’ own narrative through a process of discursive articulation, taking concepts for New Labour and inserting them into alternative frameworks of meaning, and that struggle and resistance took place as alternate meanings were contested (ibid, p. 731). From this perspective, managers are active and creative subjects, not simply enacting or reproducing a particular government project, but creatively interpreting or translating it in their own contexts. Newman and Clarke suggest that leadership is enacted in different dimensions, relating to four different modes of governance: hierarchical governance, managerialism and markets, networks and partnership and self governing, responsible citizens or communities. Each mode of governance brings contradictory assumptions about the nature of power and authority and the relationship between government and governed, the public and public services (Newman and Clarke, 2008).

These different dimensions of leadership offer a useful way of thinking about conflicting expectations of how leadership of gender equality might be enacted, relating for example to the tension between use of coercive power to achieve compliance, and enabling priorities to negotiated within networks by local actors. Within Newman’s framework, modes of governance may be at odds with each other, they are regimes that give rise to different expectations of leadership. However each relies on the others for any one of them to work. Within governance arrangements for public services decisions are made and enacted in inter organisational and inter sectoral partnerships.
Hierarchical power may be used within organisations, and managerial controls within organisations and partnerships. Networks and insider / outsider alliances are vital to put and to keep it gender equality on the agenda. Entrepreneurial skills are necessary to take initiatives and to establish independent organisations from which to make alliances. Each quadrant of the matrix is effective in achieving change only in relation to the other three. In the words of a local authority equalities policy advisor manager:

*Champions are not enough, and neither are requirements and procedures. What is needed is a manager in a position of authority who understands the issues and is committed to implementation; robust procedures systems of accountability and sanctions for managers; and an informed local community who will raise hell if the community plan does not address their issues.*


Leadership then of gender equality initiatives must be thought of as leadership exercised within and across each of these dimensions. It involves processes of interpretation and of translation, by active and creative subjects, creatively interpreting and translating legislative requirements, standards and measures in their own contexts.

Research developed at the Centre for Gender in Organizations\(^3\) identifies four frames for understanding gender equality in organizations, each linked to specific organisational interventions and approaches (Ely and Meyerson, 2000: 560-3). Broadly speaking, they correspond to the long and the short agendas for change described in research on the impact of equal opportunities legislation. The first two frameworks, ‘equip the woman, or liberal individualism’, and ‘create equal opportunity, or liberal structuralism’, consider unequal access to opportunities to be the cause of women’s inequality to men. From these perspectives women’s inequality is either due to differences in socialisation leading to women’s skill deficit or to bias leading to gender segregation and blocking women’s advancement. Interventions associated with the first framework aim to equip women with skills and in the second to remove discriminatory institutional barriers. The third frame, ‘value difference, or women’s standpoint/advantage’, aims to celebrate gender differences rather than to eliminate them. In this frame gender difference is conceptualised as embedded in masculine and feminine identities; women are disadvantaged because their skills and attributes are devalued relative to the skills and attributes associated with men and traditional forms of masculinity. Interventions aim to assert the value of diversity to the organisation and empower women and men to challenge cultures and practices that devalue their ways of leading and managing.

The researchers suggest that while each of these three frames has achieved results, none have addressed the organisational processes and practices through which gender is constructed in day to day organisational life, or the institutional mechanisms through which gender differences are reproduced. They propose a fourth frame, ‘resisting and re-visiting the dominant discourse’, in which gender is an axis of power, not located in identity or in discriminatory practices but an organising principle that shapes apparently gender neutral organisational practice (ibid, 563). This fourth framework is not intended to replace or reject the previous three, but rather to offer a perspective from which to undertake the kinds of interventions they suggest.

This ‘fourth frame’ offers a methodology for engaging directly with the discourses of gender equality that are enacted and reproduced in its day to day practices. As such offers a valuable resource for those who are attempting to ‘lead’ gender equality initiatives in the current legislative and policy context. Used alongside Newman’s regimes of intervention (introduced above), the fourth framework offers potential for examining how leadership of gender equality is exercised

\(^3\) Centre for Gender in Organizations, School of Management, Boston, MA, USA
within different regimes of governance and power, and how it engages with the narratives associated with each of these four frames of power.

It is to the discursive spaces within which actors in organisations sustain their leadership and collectively enact their engagement with gender equality change that I now turn. In the following I offer two illustrations of engagement with different dimensions of leadership and narratives of equality.

**The Revitalising the Gender Equality Agenda Workshop**

This workshop was planned and jointly sponsored by academic researchers in a university business school and a local city council equalities team leader. The purpose from the perspective of the equalities team leader was to ‘revitalise’ the gender equalities agenda, refresh tired equalities actors, and inspire managers to take a stronger lead on implementation. Our purpose as academic researchers was to create a discursive space, in which participants could explore the meanings they brought to the gender agenda and creatively explore how to act.

We designed a day that addressed the needs of both sponsoring organisations to demonstrate value. About forty people took part, including members of community organisations, equalities advisors, managers, and the lead equalities politician. During the day, we began with an exercise that invited participants to individually explore and then to share their responses to the new legislation, and then offered a collaborative process for action planning.

In the workshop one of the women participants kept repeating ‘men are the problem’. This made it difficult to develop discussion and participants and facilitators found this constant interruption extremely irritating! Yet her irritating repetition seemed to be holding on to an important dimension of the context.

The early part of the workshop was characterised by a sense of rage and of loss. The new legislation was felt to offer losses as well as potential gains. The positive duty for public service organisations to promote gender equality was balanced against the replacement of ‘women’s equality with gender equality’. In a context where ‘fathers’ groups had succeeded in building public profile and credibility this was felt to introduce a real threat of further undermining women’s equality initiatives. Beyond this the requirement to adopt more integrated frameworks for implementing equality across six areas introduced further vulnerability to loss of priority.

In the afternoon discussion moved to how performance targets and standards could be mobilised to promote equality in the priority areas identified. It was noticeable that at this point managerial, dispassionate discourse predominated. Researcher analysis after the event demonstrated a process through which passion and vitality progressively ‘disappeared’ as we moved from poetic expression to action planning. Participants nevertheless at the end of the day stated that they felt renewed sense of purpose and energised by the process.

In the workshop it seemed abundantly clear that conflicting narratives of gender equality were at stake, liberal and radical feminist analyses of inequality offering different strategies and possibly requiring different leadership qualities. Contrast was evident between the emotional content and personal meanings associated with gender equalities work expressed by participants when asked to
engage with individual, poetic methods for expression and exploration in the morning, and the instrumental and dispassionate words used in their collaborative action planning. It was as if the vitality and passion brought by individuals to their work could not easily be shared or expressed in the public arena. This was evident in the shift to dispassionate performance management narratives in the afternoon. The poetic affective expression of the morning ‘interrupted’ and was interrupted by the managerial discourse of the afternoon, but also brought vitality to what might otherwise have remained empty of meaning and technocratic. In feedback on the day participants spoke of feeling ‘revitalised’ in their engagement with the gender equality work through the mix of working methods used, and expressed a desire for more opportunities for working with researchers to sustain their work (Page, Grisoni, Jarvis, 2007).

In a further illustration, a local women’s organisation emails a manager responsible for consultation on an area equalities strategy. In her email she disrupts through their intervention the dominant economic discourse of equality, and asserts a different set of priorities based on a different reading of inequality:

Dear Jane,

I have just discovered (through the local voluntary sector forum that the regional Equality Forum is facilitating an event to consult on the draft action plan to implement the Equality and Diversity Strategy for the Region, on 19th February.

I am an advisor to the local authority Women’s Forum as well as co-ordinator for an independent women’s organisation, and I had not been aware of the consultation process for this strategy nor the event. I see that for example the Disability Equality Forum was consulted - but not the Women’s Forum - and I’m not sure why this would be the case. It may be that there are no funded generic women’s equalities organisations in the region, which has meant that gender equality issues have been overlooked - but this then should be a strategic issue for the regional Equality Forum to be tackling!

Because the consultation event will be taking place during school half term, there is no way that I will be able to attend. But I was dismayed to read that under "Gender" the following is the only entry:

The wage differential between male and female workers still remains. Female median full time wages, regionally and nationally, are less than two thirds of the median full time wage. For example, women in Swindon earn, on average, £10.80 per hour compared to a man’s wage of £15.87 a gap of 31.95 per cent

The gender pay gap is indeed of enormous importance but this is far from the only gender equality issue that should be tackled. One in five women can expect to be raped or sexually assaulted in her adult lifetime, yet 3 out of 4 local authorities provide no support to women who have been raped or sexually assaulted. Meanwhile the conviction rate for rape is below 6%. There has been little shift in educational subject choice for a number of decades, so that boys and girls still choose to study subjects that are gendered and which perpetuate the pay gap in the long term. Women are under-represented in public life, as Members of Parliament and local Councillors, as well as in senior positions in the private and public sector. This power gap is particularly large for Black and Minority Ethnic women. The use of prison sentences for women offenders is over-used, damaging and ineffective. There are concerns that women are being trafficked into the south west to work or into forced marriage yet very little research is being carried out into this hidden problem. I hope that some of these facts will be assimilated into the draft strategy. Sincerely

Chair, Independent local women’s organisation

The email offers one of many possible examples that demonstrate how local advocates of women’s equality are effectively asserting their own narratives of gender equality as they engage with...
management strategies to achieve change. Their engagement moves between the hierarchical, managerial, networking and entrepreneurial regimes of governance identified by Newman. Thus in their work on sexual violence this group successfully lobbied for their local authority to include support for victims of serious sexual offences in their Local Agreement indicator targets. Then, with support from the National Rape Crisis office, they secured local authority funding for a local rape crisis centre, and with the equalities advisors, are developing terms of reference for a management committee. Alongside this, they are represented in discussions with policy and local authority in setting up a Sexual Assault Referral Centre, alongside complex and time consuming ongoing consultations on gender equality policy in local schools and many other areas.

Newman’s research sets out to explore how managers are engaging with the shifting policy landscape, and regimes of power associated with different forms of governance. Discussion with local managers and a local women’s organisation demonstrate uneven levels of awareness of what gender inequality means and variable interpretations of requirements to address gender equality. Moreover while women’s organisations are receiving increasingly frequent invitations to comment, their capacity to respond and engage is inevitably also variable. While focussed interventions have achieved positive results, political differences within and between groups, issues of accountability, representation and access to participation are not easily addressed.

My illustrations offer a taste of how advocates of gender equality are engaging with the shifting gender equality agenda. It suggests that managers, equalities advisors and advocates of women’s equality inhabit and are taking up leadership roles across different dimensions, and are drawing from a range of different discourse and narratives of gender equality. Moreover that movement between managerial regimes that predominate in public service organisations, and individually and collectively held passions for equality is essential to sustain momentum and agency.

Engendered leadership of gender equality - the politics of relational practice

In previous research, I explored the relational dimensions and qualities of the work required to support leadership of gender mainstreaming in the context of inter organisational partnership projects (Page, 2003). The research found that women who were leading gender equality mainstreaming initiatives experienced a strong contrast between the instrumental values and practices predominant in their organisations, and the more interactive, social and inquiring modes of engagement developed within the partnership project. They experienced difficulty in ‘translating’ the new knowledge and practices developed through their social interactions within the project into the instrumental discourses and predominant in organisational environments. It was in the words of one project member as if the partnership had created a ‘world’ within which participants engaged with each other, inspired and encouraged each other to develop new knowledge, and ways of interpreting and making use of this in ways that made sense and were appropriate to their locally defined roles and contexts. This work involved crossing a threshold, travelling between the ‘worlds’ of the partnership project and their own organisations. Individual participants struggled to assert the value of their work in these environments, and to hold onto a sense of valuing the work themselves. At times the low value of gender equality work added to the experience of being devalued as was enacted externally in struggles for recognition and reward. Thus ‘threshold work’ was not only difficult for individuals to negotiate, but also sometimes threatened to undermine the collaborative work within the partnership.

Partners who contributed to this research exercised political and relational skills in order to sustain and maintain their collaborative practice, alongside their need to assert results in a form that would be recognised and valued by key players within their organisations. This was helped by the role of the consultant/ researcher, who provided spaces and an action research based methodology for talking through and making sense of the emotion work associated with leadership of the project (Page, 2003).
In this illustration leadership of different kinds was exercised within and outside the partnership. Within the partnership individual members of partner organisations came together to develop methods for ‘gender mainstreaming’. They engaged in collaborative practice to discover and to develop their capacity for creative interpretation of leading ‘gender mainstreaming’ in their different organisational and national contexts. Externally each of these actors adopted the action inquiry based methods for learning developed within the partnership project and adapted them for use within their local networks (Page, 2003). Research conversations with individual participants offered an additional space for making sense of and working through the emotion generated by the conflict between collaborative and more competitive dynamics. Thus in this case processes of collective sense making, creative interpretation, and sense giving were key dimension for engendered leadership of gender equality in public services.

Sense making has been conceptualised by organisational researchers as a core dimension of leadership (Pye, 2005, p.41; Weick, 1995). From this perspective leadership is conceived not as a process of imposed meaning, but as a shared process of shaping meaning and developing ‘common sense-making’ (Pye, p. 43). This is ‘sense making in action’, a social and ongoing process, which occurs between people as they enact their environment (Weick, 1995, p. 39, cited by Pye, 2005, p. 45). Shaw and Stacey offer a similar approach from the perspective of complexity science (Shaw, 2005; Stacey, 2001). For example Shaw offers a case study in which she engages individuals in conversations in networks and spaces outside formal management structures, in effect, creating the conditions from which change leadership would emerge by encouraging ‘connectivity’ (Shaw, 2005). Ely and Meyerson’s ‘frame four’ approach also advocates interventions that engage with sense making processes, interrupting and disrupting predominant narratives (Ely and Meyerson, 2000). Newman’s research findings demonstrate that public service managers are engaged in processes of interpretation and translation, weaving their own values into enactments of government policy imperatives (Newman, 2005).

Drawing from this research we might think of the work of leading gender equality as leading a social and ongoing process of sense making and sense giving, engaging with the narratives of gender and of change in order to surface the different meanings brought and enacted by key actors in the change process, in order to achieve tangible and practical equality outcomes.

Yet there is a danger here of speaking of sense making and sense giving as if they took place in disembodied, propositional form. What of the political, relational and emotion work associated with co leadership? For as previously suggested, leadership of gender quality is not an individual but a collective project, enacted in a field of shifting alliances, complex inter organisational and inter sectional alliances and partnerships, at local, national and increasingly international levels. At the core of these partnerships there is inevitably a gulf of understanding and commitment between advocates for women’s and gender equality and those who do not prioritise or hold a gender
perspective - yet who are expected to set the priorities for enacting legislation. Different levels of commitment will be overlaid by tensions between liberal and post structural understanding of gendered power in organisations. Leadership will be taken up - or not- by actors in general management and specialist equalities roles, in a landscape of shifting organisational drivers and competing priorities within complex inter organisational partnership arrangements.

As Fletcher suggests, being a post heroic leader requires not just a set of skills, but a set of beliefs and principles, a different mental model of how to exercise power and achieve results (Fletcher, 2003). When this alternative is dropped, the essence of post heroic leadership is in danger, and the new paradigm is incorporated into the old. The result is another idealised image of heroic leadership, post heroic heroes (209). Newman’s research, discussed above, has found evidence of ‘networked leadership’ exercised in new and creative ways, to promote social values. This leadership is not replacing, but being exercised alongside the old paradigm. As Ely and Meyerson suggested, new narratives and practices associated with equality are not designed to replace, but rather to work alongside the old narratives (Ely and Meyerson, 2000).

It would seem then that we cannot afford to throw out the old paradigms of leadership, if we want to keep the project of gender equality alive. Rather, we need to consider how hierarchical and managerial leadership might be enacted alongside the ‘networked’ and ‘relational’ leadership required in the complex inter organisational partnerships and networks in which public services are now managed and led. Here we return to the challenges signalled by the ‘difficult woman’. Research on collaborations between women promoting equality demonstrates that leaders of and actors within gender equality initiatives face an additional dimension, beyond the gendered attributes of their leadership practices (Page, 2001). There is a toxicity of association with leading gender equality initiatives in organisational cultures and discourses that insist on the gender neutrality of their practices, and in which attempts to promote gender equality may carry a risk of marginalisation as a manager. In this context, alliances between women leading equalities initiatives in political and independent organisations with senior managers are bound to be fragile (Page, 2006). The refusal of the ‘difficult woman’ to be dislodged from her insistence that ‘men are the problem’ may be construed as a useful cautionary note against seeking comfortable alliances that avoid conflicts of interest and competition for scarce resources.

**Final reflections - the contribution of researchers**

This paper has attempted to locate and to trace the changing forms of gender equality work in the context of transition from government to governance. It has argued, following Newman that leadership of gender equality in public services is taken up by public service managers within a variety of different regimes of governance. These regimes are associated with hierarchical bureaucracies and state power, the managerial controls associated with the New Public Management, and more latterly with networks and entrepreneurial regimes. Drawing from my own research, I suggest that momentum and vitality in gender equality work is sustained in the discursive spaces that are created by actors who move between these different regimes. Moreover theses spaces are necessary to mediate the tensions created by the demands of new public management and the indeterminacy of equalities legislation. As Ely and Meyerson have suggested, frame four leadership cannot replace liberal strategies or ways of conceptualising gender equality. Rather, it must be exercised alongside leadership in other regimes of practice. Legislation and managerial controls are useful when and if they are designed to promote and support initiatives for achieving gender equality, and are necessary to legitimise change leadership for gender equality. However considered as an end in themselves they become straightjackets that kill initiative and agency.
Rationalist linear notions of change and transactional leadership no longer serve and may even hamper our change efforts. Yet they exercise a powerful and seductive pull and continue to predominate in management and political regimes, and in organisations advocating equality. An understanding of complexity, the irrational and emergent qualities of change would help us to recognise the changes that have been achieved through gender and women’s equality initiatives and to affirm the social processes that enable leadership to emerge. Moreover it would encourage focusing away from the state as sole or even main enactor of change and towards building networks and alliances of actors.

The expectation that powerful senior managers and political leaders would exercise top down levers of state power to enforce institutional compliance with equality legislation and individual behavioural change is an increasingly distant dream. In order to achieve results - improved services and employment for women – I have argued that legislation and managerial controls must be accompanied by skills of improvisation, sense giving and sense making. Participants in gender equality change initiatives must engage with the colliding discourses of equality and of leadership and change that come into play. Furthermore, I have shown that sophisticated relational and political skills are exercised to make and sustain purposeful alliances and networks (Page, 2005, 2008).

Researchers can offer a language for naming the complex regimes of power and of leadership that actors need to engage with in order to enact gender equality in the context of public services. Moreover research processes can offer spaces for inquiry to take place, and to legitimate it in contexts where little time is ordinarily allowed for reflection (Page, Grisoni, Jarvis, 2007). In this sense there is a case for researchers to consider the role that they might play in creating the conditions which encourage and support the emergence of new forms of leadership of gender equality, in the context of integrated equalities frameworks. Research of this kind might enable participants to surface and critically engage with assumptions about the changing and variable meaning of gender equality and its intersections with other inequalities in changing social and economic contexts. In making the case for researchers to investigate how actors are interpreting gender equality, we offer an invitation and a means to engage in social processes that engage diverse actors in the challenge of progressing gender equality across increasingly fragmented regimes of governance and power.

**References**


MSc in Leadership and Organisation of Public Services. Students are mid career managers in commissioning, service provider and regulatory roles in predominantly local government and health services in the SW of England.

The Improvement and Development Agency for Local Government administers award schemes for good practice, and a variety to schemes for supporting and developing practice in specific areas. It administers the Equalities Standard, which benchmarks equalities practice (gender, race and disability). The Standard has no statutory power but is a performance indicator for auditing and funding purposes. The Equality Standard for local government was launched in 2001. Ninety per cent of all local authorities have now adopted it. It enables them to mainstream age, disability, gender, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation into council policy and practice. It is a voluntary best value performance indicator.

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The event is more fully described in *Page, Grisoni, and Jarvis, 2007*. 
LEADERSHIP (OR THE LACK THEREOF): PERPETUATING LOW PAY IN AGED CARE

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This paper examines the ways in which employers in the Australian aged care sector justify and sustain low pay for work which is both highly skilled and in high demand. It builds on a large body of feminist research analysing why care work is devalued by examining some of the specific mechanisms that sustain that devaluing at the level of the organisation. We show that aged care employers actively reproduce the familial logic of care to represent paid aged care work as unskilled and therefore not deserving of higher pay, whilst upholding the notion that they provide both quality employment opportunities for care workers and quality of care for care recipients. The paper extends Trudie Knijn’s ideal-typical framework (2000; 2006; Knijn & Verhagen 2007) and contributes to recent writing by feminist theorists such as Nancy Folbre, Julie Nelson and Paula England, which revisits early feminist debates about whether care work is or should be performed ‘for love or money’. It concludes by examining the idea that organisational leadership entails the making of meaning and raises questions about the sustainability of low paid, quality work in aged care.¹

Keywords: low pay, aged care work, familial care logic, skill, employer strategy, managing meaning

This paper examines the ways in which employers in the Australian aged care sector justify and sustain low pay for work which is both highly skilled and in high demand. Like most industrialised nations with an ageing population, Australia is experiencing both a massive growth in demand for aged care and a drastic undersupply of aged care workers. Low pay has been identified as a major contributing factor to the undersupply, but despite great need for aged care it is persistently undervalued and low wages prevail.

A substantial body of research has examined the undervaluing of care – caring for children, the aged, people who have illness or disability – both as unpaid work performed in the home and as paid work in care provider organisations. Feminist theory has been particularly interested in the undervaluing of care because the overwhelming majority of care work is performed by women. The various explanations that have been provided for the undervaluing of care provide a useful theoretical framework for understanding why care is devalued, but there is little research examining the specific mechanisms for how that devaluing is sustained.

Acker (1998) reminds us that most of the practices and processes that produce occupations such as aged care as low paid and highly feminised occur in work organisations. Drawing on a study which used in-depth interviews to explore employer responses to shortages of direct care workers in the Western Australian aged care sector, this paper examines the particular, gendered practices through which aged care provider organisations shape aged care work as appropriately low paid. We show that aged care employers are not passive beneficiaries of this result but instead actively reproduce the familial logic to represent aged care work as unskilled and therefore not deserving of higher pay, whilst upholding the notion that they provide both quality employment opportunities for care workers and quality of care for care recipients. If one takes a sanguine rather than a critical perspective on leadership, which situates the traditional organisational leader as a manager of meaning (Smirich and Morgan 1982) then these employers could be seen as leaders. Drawing on feminist critiques of leadership we address that question of leadership at the conclusion of the paper.

¹ This paper was produced with the assistance of the UWA Business School through the provision of an Honours Research Write-Up Scholarship.
The paper extends Trudie Knijn’s ideal-typical framework, the *Struggling Logics of Care* (2000; further developed in 2006; Knijn & Verhagen 2007), which provides a structural account of caring regimes. Knijn proposes that the familial ‘logic’ of care underpins care provided in the context of private relations such as family. We show how rather than being restricted to the domestic sphere, the familial logic plays a significant role in defining complex relationships between skill, quality and monetary reward in paid aged care work that produce the work as low paid. Further, this paper contributes to recent writing by feminist theorists such as Nancy Folbre, Julie Nelson and Paula England, which revisits early feminist debates about whether care work is or should be performed ‘for love or money’. We add to this literature by documenting the ways in which aged care employers actively engage in the process of symbolically shaping the idea that quality care work is done for love rather than for money.

**Low Pay in Aged Care**

A national review of health workforce planning conducted in 2004 by the Australian Health Workforce Advisory Council identified a definite research consensus that the health sector, and aged care in particular, is experiencing an acute and growing labour shortage. Aged care is labour-intensive and changes expected in the population age structure are predicted to squeeze the aged care workforce in terms of both supply and demand (Hugo 2007; Shah & Burke 2001). Demand is perceived as ‘insatiable, growing and becoming more complex’ (Buchanan, Evesson & Silos, n.d.) and supply is shrinking due to an ageing workforce (House of Representatives Standing Committee on Health and Ageing (HRSCHA) 2005). The view that current staffing levels are inadequate is widely supported and the situation is considered ‘unlikely to be easily turned around’ (McDonald 2001, p. 18).

Aged care work is in high demand but is lowly paid. Virtually every workforce planning document identifies poor wages, in particular a lack of parity with the broader health sector, as a primary problem for attraction. The *National Aged Care Workforce Census and Survey* named pay as a significant source of job dissatisfaction (Moskos & Martin 2005). Aged care workers are dramatically more dissatisfied with pay than is the average Australian female worker (Martin 2007; Healy & Moskos 2005). Quantitative studies and review articles in Australia and internationally have documented the ‘care penalty’, whereby care work pays less than other occupations after controlling for individual, occupation and industry characteristics (Meagher & Healy 2006; England, Budig & Folbre 2002; England & Folbre 1999). Growing demand for aged care work has not produced higher wages.

Responsibility for inadequate pay rates in Australian aged care is contested. Government contends that it has no jurisdiction to set wages; it provides a fixed amount of funding to providers determined to be enough to address wage disparity (De Bellis 2006). Some government and union publications claim that employers are unwilling to offer competitive pay or deliberately compress wages to attract more funding (Beadnell 2006; HRSCHA 2005). More common is the argument that government funding is inadequate to sustain higher pay rates (Hogan 2004). The problem of pay is variously represented as either government responsibility or an issue for the employment relationship (De Bellis 2006). We therefore found it necessary to turn to the theoretical literature for more detailed explanations of the care penalty in aged care work.

Neoclassical economic theory offers a number of possible explanations for the care penalty. Care work is a form of service work and therefore inherently labour-intensive and less amenable to productivity gains that could offset wage increases (Buchanan, Evesson & Silos n.d; Donath 2000; England, Budig & Folbre 2002). The affordability of care is based on the difference between the wages of the purchaser and the caregiver (with the provider taking their cut too) (Donath 2000). Tension between prices and wages puts upward pressure on prices, but ‘people need care most when they are least able to earn money to pay for care’ (England, Budig & Folbre 2002, p. 456; England & Folbre 1999). Care is therefore typically paid for by a third party – usually the State – and
thus critically dependent on political will (England, Budig & Folbre 2002; England & Folbre 1999). Neoclassical economic theory classifies care as a ‘public good’; care provides diffuse benefits, in the form of human and social capital, that are difficult to price because nonpayers cannot be excluded from enjoying them (England 2005; England & Folbre 1999). There is no market mechanism for care workers to charge a price that reflects the value of their contribution (England & Folbre 1999).

Why then does anyone work in aged care? Neoclassical economics offers the theory of compensating wage differentials, whereby employers can hire for less in jobs with nonpecuniary amenities such as the intrinsic reward one might gain through care work from fulfilling altruistic desires (England, Budig & Folbre 2002; England & Folbre 1999; Nelson 1999). Care workers are thus fully compensated, they just ‘choose to take a portion of their pay in warm feelings instead of cash’ (Nelson 1999, p. 44).

Feminist economists have taken issue with this proposition. Nelson (1999, p.48) argues that the theory fails to account for opportunity costs and the fact that ‘real people have real [financial] needs’. Further, the focus on individual ‘choice’ in neoclassical economics fails to provide any analysis of the gendered power relations which socialise women into feeling that caring is something that should be done altruistically. While care workers do often report intrinsic motivation (England 2005), every job self-selects disproportionately workers who find the work attractive:

The simple fact that one can point to one set of preferences (altruism) that favor choosing caring does not mean that any or all of the pay penalty ... is explained by these preferences. (England, Budig & Folbre 2002, p. 459)

England, Budig and Folbre (2002) suggest that the tendency to evoke this argument around care work stems from the gendering of the work. It is to this proposition that we now turn.

**Women, Love, Care and Work**

Care is one of the ‘original feminist concepts’ (Daly 2002, p. 252). Care work has traditionally been – and continues to be – predominantly performed by women within the family out of love and/or obligation. The way we think about this work is therefore strongly affected by gendered cultural schemas associated with women’s unpaid caring role. Caring straddles deep cultural schisms between home and work, emotion and rationality, feeling and activity, affection and skill. These interconnected hierarchical binaries structure discourse on paid care work.

**Love and labour**

The word ‘care’ has a dual meaning: caring *feelings* (to care about) and caring *activities* (to care for) (Folbre & Nelson 2000, p. 129; Graham 1983). Caring involves both affective and instrumental modes of behaviour and as such care workers are expected to provide both *love* and *labour* (Cancian & Oliker 2000, p. 2, cited in England 2005, p. 389). Discourse on skill in paid care work tends to treat skill as belonging solely to the latter. MacDonald and Merrill (2002) found that care workers make claims for social or financial recognition of their worth, using a ‘vocabulary of virtue’ or a ‘vocabulary of skill’. The vocabulary of virtue requires care workers to be self-sacrificing as evidence of their status as good caregivers. Skill becomes invisible and thus not eligible for financial recognition. In contrast, the vocabulary of skill requires an acceptance of the dominant definition of skill, which emphasises care’s instrumental aspects and fails to acknowledge the emotional labour critical to good care, let alone the particular kind of skills required for such labour.


Love and money

The word ‘care’ is also sometimes used to describe a motive or moral imperative (England 2005, p. 389). As we suggested earlier, the social construction of gender mediates our thinking about the motivation of the economic actor (Aslaksen 2002). In contrast to men’s identities, which have traditionally been culturally defined in terms of autonomy and separation, women are defined in relation to other people, to the point of self-effacement and ‘engulfment’ (Aslaksen 2002; Nelson 1999; 1996). In this hierarchical structure of gender difference, the female symbolises dependence, connection and irrationality against the privileged male identity of autonomy, separation and rationality (Aslaksen 2002; Nelson 1999; 1996). Nelson (1999, p. 44) is concerned that the romanticisation of altruistic motivation in paid care work carries overtones of these ‘old sexist ideologies’. In this gendered framework, workers motivated by caring feelings are simultaneously valorised for their self-sacrifice and blamed and penalised for their good will in low pay (Harrington Meyer 2000, p. 6).

Importantly, motivation for performing care work is conceptually linked with the quality of care provided. The question of whether pay threatens quality of care underpins the now well-traversed ‘for love or money’ debate. In 1999 (p. 44), feminist economist Julie Nelson wrote, ‘no one, of course, explicitly advocates that care should be low paying, but these worries lurk just below the surface’ of discourse on paid care work. Six years later, economist Anthony Heyes published his article, ‘The economics of vocation: Or why a badly paid nurse is a good nurse’ (2005). Heyes argued that a lowly paid nurse is more likely to have a vocation for caring and thus over-perform; therefore paying more to attract more nurses carries a productivity cost in terms of the type of nurse attracted. In response to Heyes, Nelson and Folbre (2006) pointed out that many caring, quality workers may be excluded from the market for caring labour because the opportunity cost in accepting such low pay is too high for their financial needs. To turn down a low paid job need not imply that one is selfish and materialistic (Folbre & Nelson 2000). A male breadwinner, for example, is commended for working to support his family. The ‘rhetoric of luxury and selfishness is reserved for women’ (Folbre & Nelson 2000, p. 132).

In summary, caring feelings are assumed to provide a motivation for doing caring activities and a guarantee that those activities will be done well (Folbre & Nelson 2000). Fear that financial incentive will lead to a loss of ‘truly caring motivations’ (England 2005, p. 389) pervades thinking about paid care work. ‘The concern here is that motivation by money may lead to caring activities being performed to minimum standards, mechanically and impersonally’, as opposed to the tender, loving care of the family (Folbre & Nelson 2000, p. 130). MacDonald and Merrill (2002) found that care workers themselves often believe that love and money are mutually exclusive and will therefore only mobilise around issues of quality of care, not pay issues, because good care work is defined as selflessness.

The Familial Logic of Care

It can be seen in the above discussion that our understandings of paid care work are framed by a series of dichotomies, including, importantly, love versus skill and love versus money. Trudie Knijn’s Struggling Logics of Care framework (2000; 2006; Knijn & Verhagen 2007) can help to provide a structural context for this discursive framing around paid care work. Knijn’s framework is located in a theoretical tradition of feminist welfare state analysis achieved via a focus on the social organisation of care or ‘caring regime’ inherent in any welfare state system (for example, Theobold 2003; Sainsbury 1994; Knijn & Kremer 1997; Waerness 1984).

Knijn identifies the State, the Market, the Family and the Profession as the four social institutions involved in the provision of care. According to Knijn’s framework, these institutions are underpinned by distinct sets of norms and values, or ‘logics’. The four care logics, namely bureaucratic, market,
familial and professional, provide competing frameworks for understanding the problem of social care and generate conflicting constructions of care and care work.

The key components of the logics are as follows (a summary is provided at Appendix A). In the bureaucratic logic of care, care is provided as a public service by the state. The care recipient is identified as the citizen/taxpayer. Fairness and equality are key principles underpinning the bureaucratic ideology, realised through government regulation. The market logic conceives of the care recipient as a consumer, with care provided by business entrepreneurs in the commercial market. Demand and supply, competition and efficiency, managerialism and the profit motive are the principal mechanisms through which the market ideology is enacted. The profession utilises specialist expertise and discretionary power to provide clients with individualised treatment according to professional ethics and standards. The bureaucratic, market and professional logics all operate within the public sphere.

Knijn uses the familial logic to characterise care provided in the context of private relations such as family. In the familial logic, care is provided on an unpaid basis as an act of loving selflessness. Familial care provision is based upon the normative criteria of the family or community. It is enacted through moral claims and social bonding assumed to ensure quality care. The moral or social bases upon which familial care is claimed are strongly gendered. In light of the ‘love or labour’ and ‘love or money’ perspectives, and in view of our data, we suggest that by restricting her analysis of the familial care logic to the private sphere Knijn’s account is too limited.

The contradictory position of social care between paid and unpaid work and the frequently renegotiated borders ... create a structural barrier to the professionalisation of care work. The motivation of a specific competence for doing certain tasks is repeatedly called into question. (Theobold 2003, p. 167)

Care in the familial logic is not signified as a skilful activity or ‘work’ but is instead produced as selfless devotion. Davies (1995, p. 20) describes care work as suffering from a ‘blindness to the skill base’, as evidenced by low status, low reward and a lack of formal training. The skill base is not codified, rather, because of its close relationship with women’s traditional role providing unpaid care in the home, caring it tends to be seen as something which comes naturally to women (Davies 1995; also, for example: England, Budig & Folbre 2002; England & Folbre 1999; MacDonald & Merrill 2002; Walsh & James 2000). The love or money debate provides further evidence for the way in which the logic of familial care extends beyond boundaries of the home to permeate our cultural discourse on paid care work. In contrast to the rational world of work and money, caring feelings are seen as an exclusive feature of the familial (James 1992). It is this ‘romanticised assumption of family care’ (James 1992) that underpins anxieties around the commodification of care.

Our study set out to ascertain the relationship between the familial care logic and employers in the aged care sector. Following a section on method we analyse our findings.

Method
The data for this paper is drawn from a larger study, which examines employer responses to shortages of direct care workers in the Western Australian residential and community aged care sector. The methodological design of the study is qualitative, producing data from in-depth interviews. There were two components to the study sample: ‘big-picture’ respondents and employer respondents. The big-picture sample constituted key stakeholder representatives from government, unions and peak aged care provider associations. The employer sample constituted 15 senior managers, including six Chief Executive Officers (CEO) and five Human Resource (HR) Managers, from a total of 11 residential and community aged care organisations. This paper draws
its data from this latter interview set, with pseudonyms used throughout. We used referral networks, a non-probability sampling procedure. An initial list of potential respondents was compiled using references from our professional contacts in the aged care industry and each of the respondents was similarly asked to provide references.

Background information was gathered prior to the employer interviews using interviews with the big-picture respondents and a preliminary email questionnaire sent to each employer about its organisation and its direct care workforce. The purpose of the initial questionnaire was to gather basic contextual information to classify the organisation, inform the interview guides and assist in interpretation of the interview data. Data was produced through in-depth, semi-structured interviews that took between half an hour and one and a half hours each. We used a ‘conversational agenda’ (Holstein & Gubrium 1995, p. 76), rather than a prescriptive set of questions, derived from key themes identified in the literature and in the big-picture interviews. The interview guides were tailored according to the organisational information provided in the preliminary questionnaire and were amended throughout the data collection phase to reflect the main issues being raised by respondents. Similar areas of focus were maintained in each interview to enable comparative analysis of the data around key themes.

The data collection and analysis stages were not clearly separated; analysis was ongoing and iterative. Post-data collection analysis entailed organising the textual data into significant categories to conduct discourse analysis of the responses, with particular attention paid to the ‘language, concepts and categories employed to frame an issue’ (Bacchi 1999, p. 2). But we also sought to examine the practices which linguistically bring those concepts and categories into being. Informing this focus on practice is the ‘turn to practice’ (Poggio 2006) which has become popular in organisational analysis, particularly through gender studies. Specifically this practice-turn challenges the fixity of categories and draws attention to the ways in which those categories are made to appear immutable and fixed. With this focus on practice, interpretation of the data was derived through a cyclical ‘goading’ and coding practice, as set out in Richards (2005), in which we mapped common patterns of employer practice and reflected on their importance with regard to the literature and theory framing the project (Richards 2005, p. 170).

**Employers and the logic of familial care**

Knijn’s familial care logic reminds us that care is predominantly executed in the home as unpaid work performed by women out of love or moral and social obligation. In this logic, women’s labour market participation is secondary to their role of providing familial care in the home. Knijn confines this logic to care provided by family and friends, but our study shows that employers draw on this logic to shape institutionalised aged care labour as appropriately low-paid.

Employers engage eagerly in the discourse of the familial care logic. In contrast to the typical image of the worker as an autonomous individual, desirable lower-paid care workers are represented as embedded within a family. In the words of the CEO of a private care provider:

> I think it makes sense to target people that have had children ... especially if they don’t have a baseline skill because they’ll have those life skills in caring for children and the like so it makes sense that it’s targeted towards that demographic ... I think that the return-to-work mums is a good workforce.
>  
> (John, CEO)

In addition to having these ‘life skills’, these women are also assumed to be financially supported and therefore less likely to chase higher pay:
If it was a predominantly male workforce I’m sure there’d be a lot more industrial agitation in terms of trying to improve their lot, but because it’s female predominantly they’re the second breadwinner in the family … I think [that is] why they don’t agitate more.
(Ruth, Site Manager)

While the literature does not support this assertion that the majority of aged care workers are second income earners (Meagher & Healy 2006), this stereotype of women as male-supported shapes the ways employers frame the topic of pay for such workers.

Several employers we interviewed explicitly recognised that their employees worked for monetary reward. Nonetheless, among all employers these ‘needs’ were usually considered superfluous to regular family income (for example, that women were working to provide family holidays) or were equated with the employee’s maternal role and her children’s needs, such as providing for school fees. In contrast, the union representatives we interviewed discussed pay in terms of the rising costs of living and housing.

Employers conceptualise the ideal aged care worker as family-embedded. Family-embedded women are less likely to contest higher pay, because they have less financial need (are financially supported) or because they need not for themselves but for others (are working to support their children). Further, family-embedded women have familial care experience that they bring with them to the workplace.

The politics of skill, care quality and rewards
A primary finding of the study is that aged care employers are engaging in a process of deprofessionalisation, whereby Registered Nurse work is shifted to Enrolled Nurses and in turn passed down to Nursing and Personal Care Assistants (PCA) (a description of the skill hierarchy is provided at Appendix B). Drawing on the familial care logic and its privileging of women’s maternal role, the employer shapes the cheaper, less skilled PCA as an acceptable substitute for a formally skilled workforce. That is a considerable shift in values and it demands considerable discursive effort. Pausing to reflect on that shift begs the question of how and why it is rationalised and accepted by a society with an ageing population. There is no doubt that applying the familial care logic to aged care provision carries two benefits for aged care employers: a) it justifies and relies on the notion that aged care work needs little or no professional nursing skills; b) it shapes the assumption that quality aged care work is done for emotional rewards rather than for pay, which in turn is used to defend low pay rates. As we show in what follows, the deprofessionalisation of aged care is rendered more broadly acceptable by the notion that professional expertise is being replaced by something equally valuable – the element of selfless loving care deemed to characterise care work in the familial sphere. In order to facilitate such a discursive outcome employers must rehearse and shape their arguments within an intricate web of intersecting notions of skill, quality care and work rewards.

The first step in the process is to identify the PCA as a woman who not only has familial care responsibilities through which she has learned how to care, but who lacks workplace skills because she has been busy providing care in the home. Consider the emphasis, language and concepts used in the comment below from Bev (HR Manager) as she describes the recruitment practices of her organisation:

We’ve also got to promote to even the person who has been out of the workforce for some time. Typically a female, typically a mum, who thinks, “I don’t have any skills to enter the workforce,” or, “What am I going to do?” We can provide that entry.
As we have intimated, there is a simultaneous popular suggestion that such women carry a certain ‘unmeasurable’ quality that substitutes for professional skill. An important element of this discourse includes deeming such professional skill as unnecessary:

I think that predominantly it’s not skilled work. I think a carer’s job is an important one but a lot of the skills are time management and the really unmeasurable things of care and things like that and I don’t think you learn those skills in a university degree or trained course. We have carers that have been here for a long time and aren’t any worse than a carer that has done a Certificate III in Aged Care.

(John, CEO)

So, despite this recognition that ‘the really unmeasurable things of care’ are actually a set of accomplished skills, the work is judged ‘not skilled’. In effect, the non-professional care worker is then deemed to lack skill per se.

As Knijn (2000) indicates, the professional care logic emphasises that aged care work is not just caring but also requires formalised skill and expertise. In contrast, care work defined within the familial logic is not skilled even though it requires a level of caring that is simultaneously seen as an acquired skill. Despite this assertion that professional skills or training are unnecessary and the work is unskilled, the emphasis of the professional logic on certification still has symbolic currency in aged care. As Bev (HR Manager) explains, ‘In this industry there is a preference for people to have a bit of paper to show that they’ve achieved something’. Yet for PCAs that ‘bit of paper’ is certainly neither sufficient nor necessary:

I mean you really have to want to, you really have to have it in you to care for people. We can’t really teach people to care. I think that comes from within. You really need to have that core interest for you to be attracted to this type of industry.

(Sandra, HR Manager)

It seems that the professional logic is used particularly to devalue the work of those care workers who do not have professional certification, while at the same time the familial logic facilitates the industry’s denial of the need for such professional skill in the work that aged care workers do.

The following quotation from Lisa (Senior Union Official) about the shortage of aged care workers further demonstrates the slipperiness of the notion of ‘skill’ in relation to care work:

You can’t just have anyone. It’s not just about finding any person off the street, you’ve actually got to have it in you to be a carer … but on top of that there are skills that you can learn … because people can learn to be carers and it requires lots of training and development … and so I think that it’s absolutely a skills shortage, for both the measurable skills and the kind of personal skills that it takes.

So the ‘skills shortage’ applies to both measurable (certificated, professional) skills and the personal (unmeasurable) skills that quality care workers need.

One way in which employers have traditionally kept labour cheap is to assert that it is unskilled. As we have shown above, employers find ways to do that in aged care. Much effort is involved in disguising the fact that cheaper care workers are often performing the skilled work of the more qualified occupational (nursing) group that they have replaced. This fact goes unnoticed because of the gendered construction of care work offered by the familial logic. The work performed by PCAs is represented by employers as unskilled in that the skills are not gained through formal education and training. They are instead derived from intangible, personal qualities and familial care experience.
Employers find themselves walking a three-strand tightrope between making aged care work attractive to the right person, maintaining the notion that they are providing quality care at affordable rates and keeping pay rates low. To represent aged care work as purely unskilled is not sufficient when ‘unskilled’ is equated with low quality. The way around this dilemma is to offer or to organise training for PCAs. A majority of our employer interviewees were keen on this idea. They frequently represented the restructuring of the skill hierarchy away from university-educated nursing staff towards lower-skilled, low-paid workers as providing new opportunities for these workers to build a career path:

There are lots of opportunities ... and I think an absolute need for care workers and Enrolled Nurses to really work at their competency levels *rather than just being people that do personal care*, to gain their qualifications and their additional competencies and be very proud of it.

(Eleanor, CEO, emphasis added)

According to the employers we spoke with, the benefits were not so much about adding to the skill levels of aged care provision. The offer of training or upskilling was one of their major attraction and retention strategies.

At this point one would expect that upgraded skills would provide employers with the old dilemma – that formal skill has traditionally provided the basis of claims for higher pay. Yet we found little evidence that these ‘additional competencies’ are recognised with higher pay or enhance professional prestige. Only four of the employers we interviewed recognise upskilling in their pay structure and that was on the basis of increased responsibilities, not qualifications. None of the employers in our sample attach pay increases to training, even where they emphasise training as important.

Employers can keep wage rates low while welcoming the upskilling of PCAs because they represent the training as providing something less tangible and less measurable than professional skills. The purpose of ‘training’ is to build the confidence of the ‘unskilled’ mother re-entering the workforce. As Grace (Care Services Manager) explains, ‘It gives a sense of improvement and well-being: “I can do the medication, I’ve got a certificate and I’m confident”’ . In the quotation from Bev cited earlier, where she explained the strategy of promoting aged care work to ‘the mum who thinks, “I don’t have any skills to enter the workforce”’, Bev drew on an image which is frequently represented in the aged care sector: the unskilled mother entering the paid workforce via aged care. In the words of Luke (CEO):

Lack of esteem is a big, big issue in managing women in disability services, aged care, child care. They come to the workplace with a whole set of life experiences that often are unhappy: divorce, marital issues, financial issues, dealing with children; the stress of society ... If you can take these women and say, “We embrace you, we care for you, we’ll train you ... we understand your separation, we understand that you may have some medical issues, we understand that you don’t feel confident, but we’ll try to build that through education opportunities.

Luke represents the employer, and the paid work that they offer, as the saviour of these women. Such a representation evokes the patriarchal structure of the family, setting up a paternalistic employment relationship. The unspoken, underpinning assumption, which we found in several employer interviews, is that the unskilled care worker will express her gratitude for the opportunities and caring that the employer affords her by providing in turn quality, cheap and compliant labour.

So while our interviews with unions showed that what is to be called ‘skill’ and what ‘skills’ are needed for the job are highly contested, we also found that employers manage to acquire PCA
labour cheaply. We show above that one of the ways employers achieve this is to represent themselves as responding well to the needs of their ‘unskilled’ workers by providing entry into the labour market, including training and support.

We found also that this argument was embellished sometimes by the way in which employers tend to portray themselves as good employers who respond to the needs of their employees to juggle work and family by allowing compensation to come from sources other than pay. When discussing their approach to pay rates, employers stress that pay is only one part of an overall package of rewards that they offer:

Employers need to get more innovative and look at other ways of attracting staff and retaining staff. We need to invest in our staff in different ways and look at incentives that staff want ... Everybody would like more money ... but we can target other things. So, with a new facility we look at building a child care centre adjoining.

(Grace, Care Services Manager)

The second step in keeping pay low is therefore to link the idea that the PCA is a woman who has familial care responsibilities to a search for alternative rewards, based on the assumption that family-friendly work arrangements are more important to the working lives of PCAs than a well-paid job. In such circumstances, the work is not really lowly paid because it has various add-ons:

There’s a perception that aged care is low-paid, you know, similar to child care centres – but I think when you get in there and have a look at their conditions and their agreements, they might not be as low as people anticipate ... we have things like long service leave ... and hours are flexible.

(Sandra, HR Manager)

The notion that compensation for aged care work is sufficient because the industry is family-friendly takes its legitimacy from the familial care logic, whereby care workers are defined in relation to the needs of others (i.e. their children) and therefore their children’s needs are more important than their own.

As noted, a quality care worker needs personal qualities beyond instrumental skills. The quality stressed by the familial logic is this maternal capacity for selfless devotion to others. A discourse emerges and expands in which ‘care is primarily a disposition towards others ... not an occupational specialization but rather a moral orientation’ (Fine 2007, p. 140). As one interviewee noted:

All of those soft qualities – the caring attitude, the desire to help other people – are really important, critical, if you’re actually going to be helping someone on a day-to-day basis. So it’s definitely someone that can’t be motivated by money because you can earn more somewhere else.

(John, CEO)

The skills underpinning such devotion are characterised as ‘soft’, which means they require little pay. The notion that quality care is motivated by love, not by money, carries appeal for aged care employers, patients and their families alike. We would not argue that quality care is something that can be acquired simply through good remuneration. What our findings do show is that the construction of care as a feeling rather than a work activity renders invisible the skill involved while also justifying the levels of low pay through a particular discourse on quality that we further explain below.
For Love, not Money

The familial care logic draws its legitimacy from its status as the ‘cultural ideal of care’ (Kremer 2005, p. 9). As we show above, when the familial logic is applied to aged care it produces an assumption that an effective, committed and quality care worker must be emotionally and selflessly motivated. To what extent does this familial logic of care, in which quality is assumed to be assured by emotional or moral commitment, carry currency in publicly provided care?

We found the image of the quality aged care worker who chooses a sense of emotional fulfilment over money in almost all of our interviews with employers. It was also possible to see the degree to which employers discursively manufactured this quality worker via an appeal to emotions taking precedence over pay rates:

We need to just probably target people that have an interest in what we do, you know, to make a difference in the community. And tug at the heart strings, the emotional side of it versus the technical side of it. They’ll come and work with us versus working in a mine or, you know.
(Bev, HR Manager)

We can never match the mining industry but people choose to work in human service areas not because of the money.
(Kevin, CEO)

Clearly, the familial logic shapes the value of care work in gendered ways. Employers invariably referred to their workers as women. It was clear that their targets were indeed women of a certain type and that they included very few males in that gendered type-casting. At the core of this gendering process is the notion that caring labour is most valuable (is of the best quality) when freely given. In reality the activities of few men fit that ideal, although there was talk of using welfare-to-work candidates and newly arrived migrants (women and men) who were unable to gain other work. The males mentioned in these categories were described as ‘desperate appointments’ and invariably seen as short-term and not very effective carers, who would soon move on to other duties and work.

When it comes to retaining long-term workers, employers draw on the familial care logic to privilege the emotional rewards of care work over other ways of valuing work effort, such as professional prestige or market-based reward in the form of higher pay:

They are prepared to do the hard work that other people wouldn’t touch because the rewards they get are actually very special … and they know the rest of the world doesn’t see it … It’s sort of like a sacrifice in that sense and it’s good, it’s a good thing to do because some people in this world are slaves to money and status.
(Eleanor, CEO)

A person who wants to make a difference and contribute to the community finds the work more meaningful, so it depends on who. We get the [worker] who’s more emotive about caring, rather than the one that’s shopping for the dollar.
(Bev, HR Manager)

When employers describe the value of aged care work, they emphasise and romanticise the emotional reward gained from love, care and self-sacrifice. Employers place ‘shopping for the dollar’ and seeking higher pay as the antithesis of being caring; to be caring is to put other’s needs above your own needs or desires. Improving pay is therefore assumed to be irrelevant because quality aged care workers will choose lower pay in favour of emotional reward.
What follows is the assumption that the only way an aged care provider can be sure a care worker’s motivation is pure is to keep pay low. For example, when discussing a pizza delivery driver being paid significantly more than an aged care worker, Gail (Site Manager) expressed horror that anyone would compare the two types of work in any practical sense:

The type of person that might do pizza driving is quite different to the person that would do caring ... You don’t get any commitment from somebody who’s gonna work delivering cheese and tomato pizza ... People come into aged care because they have a passion to help old people and to give something back to the community ... not because they think they’re going to make money ... They are more driven by compassion and care, all of those things.

Here, Gail uses the demarcation between the market and familial logics to produce a comfortable fit between quality aged care and low remuneration. She locates the pizza driver in the market logic of care and the PCA in the familial. Using the familial logic allows employers to represent the relationship between quality and reward as a zero-sum equation in which increased reward may even attract lower-quality labour.

Employers can also utilise the market logic in ways that represent the emotional commitment of PCAs as irrational. Incorporating the familial logic of care into aged care work relies on representing PCAs as working for love more than for money. In the market logic, this motivation situates such workers as not only more selfless than other workers but also less judicious and rational. According to employers, a key difficulty in attracting people to aged care work is not the low pay but the fact that the work is inherently unattractive. Many employers described care work as physically hard, dirty work that they would not do themselves. Moreover, they argued that those who do the work would continue to value emotional satisfaction above money no matter how hard or offensive the tasks:

If you don’t have the desire to do the job then you’re not going to do it for an extra 50 cents an hour are you? You’ve got to be attracted to the work. I couldn’t do it. I wouldn’t want to assist them if they’ve been incontinent. You have to be a particular type of person to swallow that sort of stuff ... It’s not all about giving somebody a cup of tea. There are some fabulous things because it’s a social, relationship-forming world, but if you don’t like vomit and you don’t like shit, don’t do it.

(Gail, HR Manager)

Employers use such colourful language to represent the work as unattractive to normal workers (like the employers themselves) and to reinforce the idea that only a special person – a caring, selfless person – would take it on.

The explanation that this is a case of feminised desire draws on both a ‘love not money’ framework as well as the familial logic of care. Employers create an image of an irrational or even masochistic aged care worker, who chooses to perform literally ‘shit’ work that the normal majority would not be prepared to do. Through such a representation the reason for the low pay is finally explained in a way that in their terms put to rest any claims for better rewards. To choose work which is inherently unattractive and provides low financial returns is marked as irrational feminised desire. Thus responsibility for poor pay and shitty work is discursively transferred to the workers who choose to accept low pay rates while providing high quality work.

**Discussion**

What we have been showing in our analysis is that employers are not simply passive recipients of the benefits that they gain from the familial care logic, but also active producers of it. The labour market in aged care is tightening and employers are responding by deprofessionalising their workforce. At the same time they need to show that in employing cheaper labour they are not allowing quality standards to drop. Therefore the claim of ‘unskilled work’ established by employers
in aged care to justify and sustain low pay becomes increasingly difficult to maintain. Their way around this dilemma is to engage in shaping a relationship between skill, quality and reward, informed by the familial care logic, which supports the notion that true quality of care comes from selfless devotion rather than from professionally accredited skill.

The benefit that employers gain from their active participation in transferring the familial logic of care to institutionalised care is threefold: employers access a cheaper labour pool (that is, less qualified and less militant workers) whilst maintaining their image as: a) an attractive employer and b) a provider of quality care. A cheaper, less skilled worker is an acceptable substitute because the familial logic facilitates a representation of aged care work as not requiring professional skills; ‘life skills’ are sufficient, provided that the employee has the right motivation and personal qualities.

Employers describe the ideal aged care worker as a woman with familial care experience who lacks workplace skills. Such a woman is accomplished in care provision and is assumed to be less likely to contest higher pay, either because she is financially supported and thus does not need the money, or because she is selflessly devoted to her familial care responsibilities and therefore will accept lower pay in favour of family-friendly work arrangements and the emotional reward gained from self-sacrifice.

Further, the unskilled ‘return-to-work mum’ is expected to provide compliant labour out of gratitude to her employer. Family-embeddedness posits the worker not only as attuned to the needs of others but also as needy of others; needing the opportunity, support and encouragement provided by the employer in her transition from home to work. Employers represent themselves as meeting the needs of their unskilled, feminised workforce by providing entry to the labour market, training and flexibility for the employee to juggle their familial care obligations with their paid work. The latter is particularly important in the way that employers discursively manufacture the ideal care worker as placing other’s needs above their own self.

Leadership matters
There is a considerable body of leadership literature which defines the organisational leader as the manager of meaning (Smircich and Morgan 1982). ‘The actions and utterances of leaders guide the attention of those involved in a situation in ways that are consciously or unconsciously designed to shape the meaning of a situation,’ argue Smircich and Morgan (1982, p. 261). Using such a framework we can see how employers draw on the love not money discourse to actively define the aged care work as primarily an act of selflessness by the workers. With the quality aged care worker constructed as one who will choose low pay in favour of the emotional reward gained from self-sacrifice, the rationale for paying low wages remains intact.

The notion that the best care workers are those more interested in love, not money, is designed to achieve two additional important outcomes for employers. First, in combination with the suggestion that aged care work is inherently unattractive, employers situate choosing aged care work as an irrational, masochistic feminine desire. The benefit to the employer in this management of meaning is that it discursively transfers the responsibility for low pay to those who choose to accept it. Second, by romanticising emotional commitment employers create an impression that costly professional skills are being replaced by something equally or even more valuable: the idealised selfless devotion deemed to characterise familial care.

Economists have used the theory of compensating wage differentials, whereby workers will accept low pay where it is compensated by non-pecuniary benefits such as emotional reward, to explain away low pay in care work. The love not money discourse expands on this idea by linking reward with quality. In the management of meaning this linkage, which is underpinned by anxieties around the commodification of care, is constructed as follows:
1. Women will choose low paid care work because the lack of pay is compensated by emotional reward.
2. Quality care work must be emotionally/intrinsically motivated.
3. Low monetary reward therefore ensures quality care.

Employer application of the love not money discourse does not happen in a vacuum of meaning but is facilitated by the familial logic that expects women to be reliable and quality home-based carers. As traditional home-based carers they are expected to have a male breadwinner partner and a traditional family situation of children and relatives who also need their caring labour. This need for caring on the home front fits her out with skills that are needed in aged care work but are gained at no cost to the employer. Through this shaping of meaning the aged care worker is rhetorically produced as an aged carer, with ‘carer’ operating as oppositional to ‘worker’. Thus the aged care worker is defined as ‘other’ to the ideal worker, who is male, works to support his family, has no direct caring responsibilities of his own and for all those reasons is worth more to the ‘normal’ employer.

Within this meaning-system the emotionally-motivated and therefore quality care worker can either afford to choose low-paid aged care work because she is family-embedded and thus financially-supported, or if not supported by a breadwinner then the state stands in for that breadwinner by providing parent benefits which make her willing to continue to accept lower pay in favour of family-friendly work arrangements. With the introduction of the love not money discourse, the higher pay that one might predict that the market would award for such skilled and in-demand labour is deemed irrelevant or even inappropriate. Indeed the suggestion is that the women’s capacity to care well is the very skill that justifies care work as appropriately low paid. If all of this works out in practice then the employer has become an effective manager of meaning and therefore, in Smircich and Morgan’s (1982) terms, an effective leader.

The benefits of this shaping of meaning for employers are obvious. Yet a question arises as to whether the notion of choice that is central to this proposition can be sustained. Feminists have proposed that low pay might actually exclude quality care workers who cannot afford to choose low paid work (Nelson & Folbre 2006; Nelson 1999). The problem then for both this management of meaning and thus for successful employer ‘leadership’ is that this complicated rationale for quality cheap labour is built on shaky assumptions about how long a situation of quality low paid care can continue, particularly if they are to keep the equation between altruism, cheap labour and quality in play. Already, home-grown ‘white’ caring labour is being replaced by immigrant labour in many aged care institutions (Palmer 2007). And as Palmer (2007) shows, there is considerable ethnocentric reaction by both residents and their families to the lack of English language skills and other signifiers of cultural difference of these immigrant workers. Will employers in this sector find a new logic of care from which they can manage meaning to keep both ‘quality’ and low pay in tandem? If not, will they lose their already tenuous relationship to leadership?

References
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Appendix A
The Struggling Logics of Care Framework

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Care recipient</th>
<th>Caregiver</th>
<th>Institution</th>
<th>Ideology/assumptions</th>
<th>Control mechanism</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Familial</td>
<td>Care dependant: relative, friend or neighbour</td>
<td>(Female) informal caregiver: significant other</td>
<td>Family /community</td>
<td>(Gendered) social bonds /moral claims</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bureaucratic</td>
<td>Citizen /taxpayer</td>
<td>Public service</td>
<td>The State</td>
<td>Fairness/equality /regulation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Market</td>
<td>Consumer /customer</td>
<td>Entrepreneur</td>
<td>Commercial Market</td>
<td>Profit/efficiency /individual freedom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional</td>
<td>Client/patient</td>
<td>Expert/specialist /professional</td>
<td>Specialised profession</td>
<td>Discretionary power/expertise /individualised treatment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Appendix B
The Aged Care Skill Hierarchy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Standard</th>
<th>Australian Qualifications Framework</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Registered Nurse</td>
<td>Professional</td>
<td>Bachelor (University)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enrolled Nurse</td>
<td>Para-professional</td>
<td>Min. Level IV Certificate (Government and private Registered Training Organisations, including TAFE)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Care Assistant</td>
<td>Vocational</td>
<td>Optional Level III Certificate</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Women get wolves. Men get mentors.
Leadership development viewed from a social relations perspective.

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Abstract
This paper explores a successful and award-bearing leadership development programme from a social relations perspective. The focus on social relations as the underlying theoretical approach in this paper signals a sociological, as opposed to an educational or human resource management, perspective on leadership development and gender. A social relations perspective sees society as a space “in which individuals and groups acquire different positions in respect of each other” (Irwin, 2005: 23). In keeping with this framework this paper frames gender differences in leadership development programmes as the outcome – and not the cause – of inequality of opportunity.

Introduction
In December 2007 I attended a women’s leadership programme advertised by a training consultancy based in Midshire, UK. I am interested in the discursive strategies used to market leadership courses to women and, whilst sifting through the 96,000 or so UK web pages an internet search engine suggested matched my query I discovered this programme. The training provider promised women a unique experience that would enable them to discover their personal leadership qualities – they would be given the opportunity to ‘walk with wolves’ at a local wolf sanctuary and education centre. (What management learning researcher with a gap in her diary could resist?)

I attended the course as a participant-observer with the permission of the training providers. I spent two days on the programme collecting data and completing the course alongside six other women. The course was facilitated by two trainers – one, a woman, who was the owner-operator of the training company and the second, a man, who normally operated as an independent consultant. I paid the individual rate of £599 + VAT to join (approximately 1400 AUD), four others were attending on the company sponsored rate of £799 + VAT (approximately 1875 AUD) and two women paid cost price as they were past participants who were returning for a refresher course. The walk with a wolf session was augmented with ones covering personal leadership, emotional intelligence and the interpretation of self-reported personality and communication preference tests.

I think I can say with considerable understatement that it was an interesting couple of days. And, as a researcher, there are many academic perspectives that I could have drawn upon to explore the programme. I could, for example, have used Houde’s (2007) concept of the analogical situated experience, which involves exposing participants to a novel, simulated context in order to provoke insights about the participants work behaviour. Or I could look at the way in which sharing of personal information and confessions of perceived inadequacy by the women on the course could be read as an example of how training interventions are increasingly part of the proliferation and weight given to therapeutic discourses in the workplace (Swan, 2008). Both of these perspectives focus on the issues of pedagogy - a common lens in considering women and leadership training. However, what I would like to do in this paper is to think about this training course as an outcome of particular social relations. Social relations that themselves create distinct ‘position’s in respect of leadership training for women.

The focus on social relations as the underlying theoretical approach in this paper signals a sociological, as opposed to an educational or human resource management, perspective. A social
relations perspective sees society as a space “in which individuals and groups acquire different positions in respect of each other” (Irwin, 2005: 23). Differences between groups are not as a result of essential characteristics or tendencies. Therefore the social relationist perspective rejects biological and social essentialism in respect of gender and instead sees social positions, behaviours and identities as coded as ‘masculine’ or ‘feminine’. Irwin states:

Relations position people differently in social space, with diverse material and citizenship-related opportunities and constraints ... Interpretation of these diverse ‘positions’ requires analysis of how difference is constructed culturally as well as materially. It entails consideration of attributions of difference, and linked evaluations of cultural worth, as well as differential life chances. (Irwin, 2005: 24)

My starting assumption in this paper is that, in respect of its pricing, content and pedagogy, the ‘Walking with Wolves’ programme is the expression of a particular set of material opportunities and constraints affecting both the participants and trainers. And, that by looking closely at the different elements of the programme, we will be able to evaluate the likely social value given to the programme. The paper is structured in the following way; in the first section I look at the sort of leadership training that is available in the UK for men and women and the academic critiques of practice. In the second section I explore the ‘Walking with Wolves’ programme in more detail and suggest ways in which the course content and its position in relation to other courses on offer can be read as material inequality. In the last section I suggest that sociological analyses such as the one I am putting forward need different, and additional, data in order to build a more comprehensive picture of the differentiated social space of training for women.

What gets done in the name of leadership development?

In a review of leadership development, Day (2000) commented on the relative paucity of academic material on the topic. He limited his comments, therefore, to examples that he had found in the practitioner literature as opposed to practice described within a theoretical tradition. Regardless, his review still has a face validity in terms of the practices described and stands as a summary of basic leadership development approaches. Leadership development is differentiated from management development in the description of the latter as being concerned with the acquisition of specific knowledge and skills to help enhance task performance in the role of manager. Being a manager is primarily, according to Day (2000: 582) “the application of proven solutions to known problems”. Leadership, by contrast, can be a role that is conferred or practised without formal authority and is applicable across a wide range of (unknown and unknowable) contexts. Leadership development is, in this view, a process that builds an individual’s capacity both to generate new solutions to unknown problems.

Given that the emphasis in leadership development is on leadership ‘readiness’ rather than performance-in-role there is a marked tendency to interpret development needs of individuals in terms of self-knowledge. The goal of leadership development is primarily to equip the proto-leader with the intra-personal competencies of self-awareness, self-regulation and self-motivation. As well as an emphasis on increasing individual human capital leadership development also seeks to develop social capital - the ability to build networked relationships that “enhance cooperation and resource exchange in creating organizational value” (Day, 2000: 585). In other words, an individual with self-awareness and self-control is more likely to participate in, and build, relationships with co-workers that are built on trust and therefore overcome the tendency of organisations to pool, and then jealously guard, information and other resources that would be beneficial to the organisation if shared freely.

The dual focus on leadership development on human and social capital capacity-building is visible in the list of development activities that Day (2000) has compiled. The activities he has identified as being related to leadership, as opposed to management, development are: 360-degree feedback
(for self-knowledge and behavioural change), coaching (self-knowledge, behavioural change, career development), mentoring (broader understanding, advancement catalyst, lessons learnt), networking (socialization, problem solving, expert identification), job assignments (skills development, broader understanding of the business) and action learning (socialization, teamwork) (Day, 2000: 588).

One consequence of the emphasis on self-knowledge and the corresponding lack of emphasis on job-related or technical skills has been the marketing of any number of ‘self-developmental’ experiences as relevant to leadership development. Therefore alongside Day’s list of distinctly businesslike developmental activities we need to factor in the unknown number of programmes created, sponsored or encouraged by businesses that expose their employees to opportunities for personal growth (variously defined). If lack of completeness is one obvious criticism of the list of development activities then another is surely the lack of acknowledgement of the gendered nature of the access to these various developmental routes.

I have argued elsewhere (e.g. Perriton, 2006) that networking does not create a level playing field for men and women. Networks, as well as other development activities that rely on patronage, are located within, and not outside of, existing social structures and belief systems. The advantages of networking behaviour, from a social relations perspective, does not accrue to both genders equally. Networks reflect and determine existing gendered norms and their positioning in respect to other systems of advantage and disadvantage (Perriton, 2006). It is more likely that access of individuals to networks and coaching and mentoring programmes are as a result of their existing position, rather than an antecedent to a new (improved) one.

Rather than looking closely at how commercial self-development programmes position women and are positioned themselves the literature is more likely to concentrate on what are seen as the more ‘academic’ failures of leadership programmes i.e. the idealisation of the idea of leader-as-hero, the absence of an acknowledgement that leadership is exercised in different contexts, the training of individual leaders in isolation (rather than with their followers) and the lack of exploration of the basic constituents of the Organisational Behaviour curricula in any Business School - authority and power.

There is a greater appetite for critically engaging with gender when exploring formal education programmes such as the Masters of Business Administration (MBA) than when looking at programmes in the commercial sector. Leadership development for male managers normally mixes these modes i.e. commercially provided continuing professional development programmes alongside the opportunity to study for an MBA (Vinnicombe, 2003). Yet, across MBA programmes across different nations, the involvement of women in MBA programmes plateaus at 30%. Vinnicombe and Singh (2003) suggest that this not only reflects a lack of women role models but also a rejection by women of the traditional orientation of business schools to wealth maximisation, game theory conceptualisation and rationality. Their solution to this gender ‘deficit’ (the assumption is that equity requires women to make up 50% of MBA cohorts) is to push for women-only development programmes. “On women-only management programmes, women can contribute openly, their femininity can be freely expressed and they can demonstrate authenticity to their values” (Vinnicombe, 2003, 300). The aim of the programme is expressed in the familiar social-psychological language of self-development. Aspirant women leaders need to attend this programme in order to:

- Clarify attitudes and feelings about themselves in relation to their work roles and personal roles
- Review their experiences of managerial life
- To examine their managerial styles
- Study the concept of politics and power to enable themselves to apply the concepts effectively
- Help themselves become proactive in managing their careers
- ‘To satisfy these goals in a safe environment in which they can test their own experiences against the experiences of other women’ (Vinnicombe, 2003, 300)

Interestingly, it is the element of women-onlyness in the design that is seen to guarantee women self-knowledge by reflecting on their own skills, personal style and life goals whereas Day (2000) would suggest it is the various exercises designed to foster a sense of self-knowledge rather than the context it is delivered in.

In this section I have looked at the common forms of development activity associated with leadership development. I have argued that accounts of practice in organisations are incomplete and should also include self-developmental programmes (variously and loosely defined) offered by the commercial sector and MBA programmes offered by the higher education sector. Despite self-awareness being seen as a universal intrapersonal business competence programmes aimed at women either declare this to be a unique female leadership development need or development outcome. There has been little attempt so far in the academic literature to use a social relations perspective to question the forms that women’s leadership development commonly takes. The next section briefly describes a self-development course for aspiring women leaders before the paper goes on to look at how a social relations framework helps us look past the pedagogical.

A brief description of the ‘Walking with Wolves’ programme
The ‘Walking with Wolves’ programme was held in a modest ‘country house’ style hotel on the outskirts of Midford, a county town in the south of England. There were two facilitators running the course - a woman who was the owner-operator of the training consultancy and a male freelance associate. There were seven women participants on the course - all local to Midshire. I was the only participant that required accommodation in the hotel and the course was not designed to be residential. Three of the women worked for the same public sector employer (although in different geographical locations). One woman worked for a local manufacturing organisation. Two other participants were self-employed women and, it becomes obvious in conversations, friends of both the trainers and have had past business relationships with them.

The programme consisted of one and a half days of classroom based exercises. The morning of Day One was spent on Introductions, programme objectives and an awareness exercises designed to identify our communication preferences called ‘What colour are you?’ After lunch we visited the Midshire Wolf Society where there was an informational talk by a wolf handler and an opportunity to accompany the handler and a wolf on a walk of approximately 45 minutes. Day Two was entirely given over to classroom sessions and exercises on motivation, team dynamics, emotional intelligence and a coaching dialogue between pairs of participants. Extra sessions of one-to-one coaching are available with one of the facilitators after the programme ends and were included in the joining fee.

The section of the programme that is held at the Midshire Wolf Society was obviously a key element of the programme. The visual identity of the programme was heavily dependent on wolves. The background to each projected slide featured a black and white photographic image of one of the Midshire wolves, photographed during a previous visit. The ‘alpha female’ of the wolf pack was constructed by the programme and the wolf society spokesperson as an inter-species role model for women in leadership positions. The claim made for alpha female wolves was that their pack position was gained as a result of their confidence and social literacy. And, during the educational session at the wolf society, it was repeatedly stressed that social order was maintained through the exercise of social intelligence and not the rule of fear. There was no separate de-brief for participants after the walking with wolves session ended as it was the last session of the day nor was there a discussion about the alpha female as role model on the second day.

Each participant was given a personalised folder on arrival on the programme. The folder contained
copies of the slide presentation for each session and spaces for note taking. The slides contained statements drawn from a number of - mainly popular - texts on coaching, lateral thinking, emotional intelligence and motivation. A typical example in the training folder, drawn from John Whitmore’s book *Coaching for Performance*, suggested we should think about the following:

> I am able to control only that which I am aware of. That which I am unaware of, controls me. AWARENESS therefore empowers me!

But the content is not exclusively derived from business texts as this quote from George Bernard Shaw is also included in the material:

> There are no impossible dreams, just our limited perception of what is possible.

During the introductory session both the facilitators have indicated that self-development is their primary focus and that they view their involvement in this programme as part of their own ongoing developmental process. The male facilitator indicated that one of his goals was to read at least one self-development text per month.

Given the focus and content of the classroom elements of the course and the (admittedly problematic) equating of alpha female behaviour in wolves with successful female leadership behaviour in organisations, it is clear that the aims of the programme were consistent with the view that leadership development is concerned with intra-personal competency building. It isn’t the aim of this paper to challenge that underlying logic or, indeed, to speculate on whether this was a successful programme of its type or not. What I do want to suggest is that we can read this event as an outcome of social relations, especially in relation to the (apparent) social value placed on this programme for women. In the next section of the paper I argue that women find themselves on these types of courses, not because they reflect state-of-the-art thinking in terms of pedagogy and content but because they reflect the resources available to participants and trainers.

**Women get wolves. Men get mentors.**

The UK demonstrates some political and economic specificities in respect of how it organises training and development for the 19+ market. In the UK it is envisaged that once you have left compulsory secondary education your further development in job or personal skills will be met predominantly within or by the private sector. Although the state has increasingly been concerned with transforming Further and Higher Education into institutions that will offer economically relevant skills training in partnership with private enterprise, it is still the case that once you are over 19 years of age and in need of additional training and development you will be a customer of a private training company of some sort - i.e. attending a course offered as part of an employer’s in-house provision, or one that your employer has sourced on your behalf or as a consumer looking to contract individually with a training provider.

It has only been in the last decade that the UK government has started to articulate a national skills agenda, but even in doing so has not been able to shake off its socio-historical preference for employer-led initiatives and private sector provision. This in-built conservatism (paradoxical given the government’s belief in private sector innovation) has meant that few of the advisory bodies that have looked at management and leadership skills have considered gender to be an issue worthy of comment. As a result there is a lack of an expressed agenda or state-led training provision for women looking to move into management and leadership positions and a plethora of private sector training providers looking to fill the vacuum.

In keeping with its voluntarist preferences in respect of skills development the training and development market in the UK is unregulated. In the 1980s former state-owned companies were busy divesting themselves of their training units even before the trend towards outsourcing
encouraged organisations to spin off their in-house training and to source training courses from other private sector providers. Service sector employers needed generic skills training rather than the specialist technical or engineering skills training of a manufacturing economy. Trainers were no longer expected to be experts but facilitators of process. The training consultancy firms that sprang up to cater for this generic training need often no more substantial than a sole self-employed trainer or a loose collection of associates who would work alone or in pairs depending on the work they were contracted to do. The proliferation of self-employed trainers reflected both the low human capital cost of entry into the market and the low financial costs of doing so. These are just the sort of conditions that are ideal for women to move into the market.

This is consistent with the biography of the female facilitator of the ‘Walking with Wolves’ course. Diana’s employment had, prior to becoming self-employed, been with a large male-dominated public sector organisation. When her marriage broke down she decided that she needed to start a new professional as well as personal chapter in her life and she had looked around for something that she could do and that would fit in with her needs as a single mother. And training, for Diana, was something that she felt personally well-matched to.

Diana’s client base was local as was her own business support. Diana ran the individual courses drawn from a portfolio of generic skills courses she had developed (either on her own or making use of a small network of other self-employed trainers) and also handled all the administration and marketing. She relied on the services of other self-employed professionals for the accounts, legal and taxation needs of the company. The individuals she used to support her business, her client base and the premises and other services she used were all contained in a relatively small geographical area. Diana was an influential and central figure in local entrepreneurial and employer networks and skilful in her use of local venues and also local print media for profile building and marketing.

The content of the courses that Diana ran - including the ‘Walking with Wolves’ programme were sourced entirely from the public domain and from popular practitioner literature. She drew a lot of material from popular texts ranging from biographies, management titles (both elementary textbooks in areas such as organisational behaviour and the popular ‘airport’ type of book) and self-development manuals that she had read and found useful. The course also relied on a range of free-to-use personal development tools sourced via the internet or by non-copyright material distributed at training seminars she had attended as a participant. The content of the classroom element of the course reflected what is readily available, readily understood and cheaply sourced. Even elements such as the walk with the wolves, which might be expected to have been a deliberate design decision, was the result of happenstance. The course was originally named ‘Walking with Wolves’ because this is how Diana had experienced working as a woman in a male-dominated workplace and thought it was apt. Her association with the wolf education centre, and the use of the alpha female as a role model for aspiring women leaders, was as a result of Diana approaching them after seeing an article about them in a Midshire business magazine. The synergies that Diana saw between her work and that of the wolf centre were accidental rather than planned.

My argument in this paper is that there are some quite complex processes at play in determining why it is that some women get their leadership development in a lupine form in a field in Midshire whilst others are sent to corporate events in London. The processes that shape women’s access to labour markets generally and the socio-historical development of skills training in the UK are also relevant to how training and development is designed, delivered and understood. In order to analyse how women become differentiated (from other women and from men) in respect of the type of leadership development they are offered we need new ways of exploring social relationship hierarchies, interdependencies and differences that we might not have previously. As Lewis points out, "[t]here is not a singular theoretical model of such practices, their recovery is an empirical analytical task", a task that requires us to keep difference, interdependence and social value in the
foreground of our interpretive frameworks (Irwin, 2003: 581).

Difference, interdependence and social value is, I suggest, visible when we consider why it is the women find themselves on development programmes held away from the workplace. Women typically occupy weak positions in networks of influence in organisations. Without patronage (i.e. official or unofficial coaching and mentoring) women often find themselves directed to external networks - often women only networks - in the belief that they can recreate the sorts of strong ties externally that men enjoy internally. Development programmes that bring women together often play on the idea that women need the reassurance of a closed or ‘safe’ environment in which to undertake personal self-development. This is a useful marketing tool for training providers who stress their unique ability to provide such an environment in order for women to increase their self-confidence (often identified as the reason that talented women do not win early promotion). Academics are not immune from this. In the article I quoted earlier this paper, Vinnicombe and Singh (2003) talk in similar terms of women needing a safe environment in which to open up freely, share authenticly with other women and be feminine. Whereas men, already embedded in informal and formal patronage networks in the workplace are more likely to be offered leadership development via one-to-one relationships such as coaching and mentoring. Women get wolves. Men get mentors.

**Conclusion**

One of my fears for this paper is that it will come across (in its very ‘drafty’ state) as an analysis that only a conspiracy theorist could come up with. There is a shortage of tools, as Crompton has pointed out, for the work we need to do in tracing the normative content of gender developments (Irwin, 2003) but social relations theory is, I believe, a promising one for the Human Resource Development field especially in relation to gender.

There are, of course, gaps in the empirical evidence base that we need in order to add rigour to this sort of analysis. In the UK we just don’t collect the sort of data that would help this approach to analysing gender differentiation. We have never fully explored what it means in terms of practice for the UK government to have encouraged the private sector to provide the development that it argues is essential to the economic performance of the country. We know that it has resulted in a plethora of independent consultants and small businesses in this sector but we have never really confronted the consequences of that in terms of the type, variety and quality of training they provide. We don’t really understand the role that training and development practitioners play in the economy or what their own economic status is. Nor do we know anything much about the demographics of training practitioners as a whole – their gender, age, education levels or ethnicity. We argue all the time that those things matter in relation to training and development participants but have been oddly lacking in curiosity about these things in relation to the people running the courses.

If we knew more about management development practitioners this paper on the wolf-walking women of Midshire could proceed with greater confidence in the analysis that it is attempting. By collecting data regarding the turnover of this particular training company, the percentage represented by the wolves programme, the split overall in their products between personal development and technical skills development etc we could start developing a richer understanding of management learning and leadership development. And, if I knew how typical this training company was in terms of its structure, personnel, sub-contracting, turnover, profit levels, clients, product and participant profile compared to other training providers in Midshire, England and the wider UK then I would be on my way to knowing whether programmes of this type were characteristic of a certain segment of the management development market in terms of pricing, client organisation, geography and gender of participant and facilitator. We need to know more about how the web of social relations and interdependence and difference helps produce different
experiences between groups of women and between women and men.

An obvious data collection project at the national level is one that would seek to quantify the relative contribution that these various types of practice (and practitioners) are making to the overall training and development landscape. If we knew, for example, that 100,000 UK managers were involved in formal management education programmes in UK universities in any given year but that 150,000 took part in one or more ‘personal development’ workshop in the same period at a total spend of £300m then personal development workshops would represent a significant feature of the training market in their own right. Whereas if we knew that only 10,000 managers attended personal development courses they might become less significant in terms of their interest to management education scholars but more interest to feminist scholars if we found out that 9,998 of those 10,000 participants were women.

Overall, however, it is difficult not to feel that more than a lack of data stands between HRD researchers and wider feminist research. The women and management (and now leadership) commentators’ pre-occupation often show little appetite for incorporating some of the wider concerns of the labour market literature or sociological literature, preferring instead to examine ‘best practice’ perspectives and to contribute to the building, or a slice of their own, of what is now a lucrative diversity training industry. Or, even worse, to take for granted the assumption that women are not present in management positions in any great numbers because of their own (lack of) personal resources such as self-confidence, self-belief or self-knowledge. I hope this paper, in some small way, makes us stop to think whether the training and development ‘solutions’ might not be part of the problem.

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Learning from Participative Occupational Health Management for Leadership Development

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Abstract:
Leaders need spaces in which they can reflect their own practice in the face of theoretical models and empirical data. The dilemmas in which leaders are operating cannot be discussed and dealt with in advance. For leadership development, reflection on the job is needed. This is what we found when we were consulting leaders in public administration who tried to implement occupational health management systems into their organisation. Not very surprising was that occupational health management could only be implemented successfully when leaders felt that organisational change was needed. Within the projects we were involved in, occupational health management was based on renegotiating working conditions in organisations of the public administration. Participation of employees, organisational development and gender mainstreaming were central principles. Focal areas of working conditions were job strains such as time pressure, compatibility of (paid) work-life and „private“ life, leadership behaviour, communication and organisation of work processes. To renegotiate gender relevant themes, participation was the key-element. That meant in the first place, that the top-management agreed to a participative process in diagnosis of job strains and organisational health resources, in setting priorities e.g. through implementing steering committees that included employees from high and low hierarchical levels as well as women and men, and in supporting the implementation of participating groups in focal areas.

This paper will discuss the field of (engendered) occupational health management as a task especially for leaders. It is based on experience and research, both gained and carried out at the Centre for Continuing Studies in Work Science (WA) at the University of Hanover, Germany. The main target group of the WA are leaders and specialists who are studying besides working in companies. The WA offers Occupational Health Management (as well as Leadership and Human Resource Development) as both a focal area of studies and a focal area in regional research and consulting projects for companies and public administration. This allows a vivid discourse between practitioners studying and researchers working at the WA.

As the huge amount of different approaches and guidelines shows, leading is not a question of knowing the best way but deciding which one to try. Müller (2000) points out that there has been a change in organisational theory and research from structure toward culture and interaction; from aspects of domination to signification and from a conception of work as an intentional object orientated activity to interaction and symbolically mediated communication. In the light of this cultural turn, it becomes clear that leaders cannot define and determine organisational change or status quo. Their organisational function is to influence other’s activities to produce (economic) success, but at the same time leaders are influenced by others (e.g. superiors and subordinates and other leaders as well as from substitutes of leading) and their own attempts to influence and change others cause changes in themselves as well (Neuberger, 2002). From this perspective we find leaders operating with dilemmas, which by nature of dilemmas they cannot discuss and deal with in advance.

“I assume that superiors essentially have to live in contradictions which offer no non-ambiguous and secure exit. The internal discrepancy of leading demands compromises between alternatives that are each indispensable. The total neglect of one aspect would definitely lead to a failure as a leader” (Neuberger, 2002, 341, translated by author)
Neuberger (2002, 359 ff) offers a variety of typical dilemmas (and paradoxes) of leaders and discusses ways to deal with them. Naming a few of them shows, how perfectly participative processes within occupational health management match with what might support leaders:

Do to not take the dichotomised poles of the dilemma for granted, but as (self-) constructed and perceived. Appropriate means to discover blind spots or inaccurate perceptions are coaching, supervision or Balint groups (or inter-vision).

Doubt that opposite options in decisions are contradictory. Apparently contradicting or opposing options can be different aspects in a broader context.

Alternatives are not in general antagonistic, but only in specific contexts. Control, for example, can be more than monitoring but also reassurance. In this context control is not the opposite of autonomy but one of its preconditions.

Contradictions can be handled not only as either-or, but as as-well-as. Leading could be task orientated as well as employee orientated in a high variation of combinations of both.

Contextualise totalising paradoxes. A central aspect of paradoxes is to totalise facts and by doing so neglecting differences. Assuming sameness, homogeneity and consistency needs to produce paradoxes in the face of empirical variety. Neuberger refers in this context to communication and the necessity to 'mark' the context of (any) communication to create a shared signification of terms (assuming that is possible).

These very few and selective examples of ways or methods to deal with dilemmas contain at least three aspects for leader(ship) development. First it shows how important it is to possess different concepts of work, leadership etc. to be able to reflect her or his own attitudes, behaviour and activities - and to make a change. So we need to discuss what kind of gender concepts leadership development needs (Krell 2008). This touches knowledge to be offered to leaders. Secondly, reflection is required, which needs time and attention - and regarding blind spots - can only partly be done alone. Thirdly, the reference to communication and context indicates that other individuals are involved in perceiving and producing dilemmas. So deconstructing or solving dilemmas needs communication and probably negotiation with other agents and members of the organisation.

This becomes even more relevant when we consider micro-political approaches and Giddens theory of structuration. What happens within an organisation is a result of different interests of actors or groups of actors and their ability and recourses to enforce their interests. A leader might be an actor with higher chances to gain his or her aims or to define the rules which structure recourses, but still they are surrounded by interests of others and restrained and enabled by structures (Ortmann, 2000). Leader(ship) development is interwoven into organisational development.

**Occupational Health Management (OHM) as an example for engendered organisational change**

Within the last five years we evaluated twenty-four projects within the public administration of Lower Saxony that tried to implement occupational health management systems into their organisation. As for so many other topics than occupational health management and gender equity, management is highly relevant for organisational change - and leadership is highly relevant for health(er) working conditions as well as for establishing new gender arrangements (at least in areas affected by the project). We found that projects that managed to implement participative processes within occupational health management also dealt with gender issues - sometimes without realising or naming it. From these findings we could learn for leadership development what is needed to allow leaders to cope with even more complexity without falling back into stereotyping women and men and without neglecting relevant issues that are not in the focal point of business affairs.
The Ministry of Internal Affairs, Integration and Sports in Lower Saxony, Germany, supports the implementation of occupational health management in organisations of the federal state Lower Saxony. Lower Saxony’s systematic approach and its explicit request to implement gender mainstreaming in occupational health management is unique. Since 2003 fifty-eight projects have been funded. Twenty-six have been evaluated by the consulting service that has been implemented in 2003 to enable organisations to conceptualise and implement OHM. The WA is co-operation partner in this service. The main principle for OHM are defined in a guideline (Leitfaden, 2002) on which official agreements on OHM rest. To be funded by the Ministry, projects have to line out in their application, how they intend to realise the principles of comprehensiveness, participation, project management, integration (Luxembourg Declaration, 1997) and gender mainstreaming. The application must be signed by the head of the organisation and the employee’s representative as a formal indication that both, management and employees support the project. The description of the project has to explain, how the steering committee is composed and show that again decision maker and employees are involved as well as women and men in adequate relations. Furthermore, a project plan and timeline is necessary.

The concept of occupational health management as a participative process

The key processes defined in the Lower Saxony’s guideline are:

1. identifying job strains and health resources in the organisation and
2. developing measures to decrease job strains and to increase health recourses
3. steering and decision making/decision planning

Illustration: Process model of OHM

In terms of project management and participation, projects are supposed to implement a method to identify which organisational units or which fields of operations - and groups show heightened job strain. Therefore employee surveys or diagnostic-workshops are carried out, some in combination with health reports and/or statistics on absenteeism etc. To match the requirements on participation it is necessary to ask the employees what their perceived strains and recourses are. On the ground of these data, the steering committee decides where intervention is needed. The analysis of causes for job strains has to be done by concerned employees, usually in participation groups that are moderated by an external and qualified person. The members of the participating groups

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1 Cabinet decision and agreement with unions
analyse the context and factors of perceived job strains and recourses. In a second step thes develop solutions (see also Badura 2003). Steering and decision making and decision planning imply that the steering committee had a chance to develop a common understanding of OHM. And last but not least the steering committee has to possess how-how and knowledge on surveys, assumptions of relations between work and health (and gender), how to moderate a group or how to design a change process.

Within the projects we were evaluating, occupational health management’s focal areas of working conditions were job strains such as time pressure, compatibility of (paid) work-life and ”private” life, leadership behaviour (as one of the most relevant risk factors or predictors for absence (Münch et al, 2004 20, Stadler and Spieß, 2005, 384), communication and organisation of work processes.

What’s gender got to do with it?
The main focus of OHM is to reduce job related strains and to strengthen health recourses. To realise gender equity in occupational health management, it is important, first of all, to realise the different constellations of strains and health resources on the job and in ”private” life between women and men (Ducki, 2000; Ducki and Marschewsky-Schneider, 2003). To give one example²: The division of work between women and men and social functional systems and the sole responsibility of women for children (and other dependants), lead to specific effects and burdens. Women who want and/or need to work and who have children (or other dependants) are forced to find time arrangements to meet all the different and contradictory requirements of work and family. Part-time working seems to be the practical and often the only solution - with high costs in social security, career and a high risk for poverty for elderly women. What might reduce job stress and enhance compatibility of work-life and ”private” life, might be (often is) a loss in the long run considering other aspects of gender equity than health.

Organisations operate within these structures of division of work between women and men. They share common mental maps and cultural constructions of femininity and masculinity etc. On the one hand, they are embedded in social structures and institutions such as law, politics, education etc. that still rest on a gender role model that assigns bread-winning to husbands and housekeeping and children to wives. On the other hand the gender segregation of work is partly created through organisational practices as well as income and status. Organisations are one area in which cultural images of gender are invented and reproduced (Acker, 1991, 162 f).

Organisational health management in the observed field aims to develop healthier working conditions by participation of employees, assuming an organisational urge to change current practices. Typical aspects of working conditions such as organisation of work, work load, employees participation, information etc. influence absenteeism, well-being and also productivity. But what about gendering processes described by Acker such as gender division, patterns of masculinity and femininity, subordination etc.? Are these aspects that will be entitled within the process of occupational health management? And if so, does it make any change?

As mentioned above, the concept of OHM in Lower Saxony contains gender mainstreaming as one of five principles - roughly outlined. Only two projects out of 46 in the first project funding phase had an nearly adequate understanding of gender mainstreaming. The majority of projects did not explain any ideas of how to realise that principle. After evaluating the first eight projects, it was obvious, that none of them had a systematic approach to gender mainstreaming and the project members approved that assessment. But those who had managed to implement the key processes of OHM, especially participating groups, showed astonishing results: They actually had worked on compatibility of work and ”private” life, sexism, division of work between women and men etc.

² for more detail see Pieck, 2008
Inspired by these results, a follow up study asked what kind of gender conflicts and gendering processes can be dealt with within occupational health management.

**Case Studies**

Four projects, that were evaluated as having successfully implemented OHM, were selected for the case study. Eighteen members of the steering committees were interviewed (guided interviews) as well as the external consultant if they had engaged one.

The interviews affirmed, that the steering committees had no systematic approach on gender mainstreaming, but were able to work on gender issues.

The steering committee of a large hospital implemented several sub-projects. The women’s representative was not involved in the project. A survey on working conditions was conducted in each sub project. A question on gender discrimination was added to the survey but not evaluated. Non item (!) was evaluated by sex, but all by profession. The consultant claimed: "I do not evaluate by sex, nor age, because I cannot change that. I am looking for working conditions, that’s what I can change, I don’t want to make a gender change.“ (rough translation by author)

Nevertheless, the evaluation by profession could compensate for that, due to gender segregation in professions and status. To be able to set up participation groups, the results of the surveys were presented separately for the distinguished professional groups qualified and non-qualified employees in the sub-project "kitchen". The unqualified employees were all women, partly from Eastern Europe and highly qualified kitchen helpers. The qualified group were chefs - with one female exception - and dieticians - all female.

On the base of the results, two workshops were implemented, one for the qualified and one for the non-qualified employees. By then no gender relevance was perceived by the steering committee, with the constriction, that the steering committee had decided that the moderation within participating groups should pay attention to gender themes.

The workshop for the kitchen helpers revealed a very hot topic among the women that was not detected so clearly in the survey: injustice among the women. The women claimed injustice because some had to take the early shift and others did not. Analysing that problem it became clear, that for women with little children, childcare was not available as the kindergarten opened too late. Others could not take the early shift because they were dependent on public transport, which did not run so early either. The surprising solution was, that they analysed their work process searching for a way to shorten the shift so that everybody could start later. And they succeeded.

A second strain was the co-operation with the chefs. The problem here were insulting behaviour, a rude conversational manner. This included sexist verbal attacks as well as a sexist note in work division. The women claimed, that the chefs would scorch huge pots and let the women clean them, if they meant to punish the women. So new roles of conversation were established and chefs that did not full-fill the roles had to leave, which shows the relevance of management and employee’s representatives supporting the project. Furthermore they redefined the working process and within it the division of work between women and men (chefs and kitchen helpers).

The workshop for chefs and dieticians revealed a gender conflict, that was not named as such by the interviewees: The dieticians and chefs, both the same level of qualification, were struggling. The women claimed rudeness and problems distributing the cooking material. One interviewee described that the chefs regarded themselves as the bosses in the kitchen and denied to be lead by women. The group leaders here were the female dieticians. A regular meeting and rules for the working process were the result of that group. An internal evaluation showed, that the employees where content with the implemented solutions - and the absence rate decreased.
Limits of gender equity in occupational health management

To reflect the limits of what OHM can achieve, a negative example will be described briefly.

In one project gender discrimination was directly appointed. In a male dominated high qualified field, a women claimed that women were discriminated against as they were given tasks that were associated with women such as monitoring the adherence of safety rules concerning maternal leave and maternity protection. These tasks would not qualify to be send to further qualifications that were necessary for a career. This allegation could not be handled within a participation group. The interviews suggest two interpretations: Within the two workshops that were implemented for the high qualified employees, the single women had no chance to set her topic on the agenda, as the groups set the priority and decide which matters are relevant.

The second interpretation concentrates on the superiors in the organisation: The woman’s claim as well as other voices claiming in-transparency on staffing and decision making concerning further education where perceived as a critique on leaders. Those themes that concerned managerial aspects and leader’s behaviour, could not be analysed. It was not possible to implement a participating group to analyse e.g. how to make decisions on staffing or allowance for further education more transparent. Why it was so hard to work on these themes might be explained partly by the project organisation: All (perceived) accusations directing towards leaders have been discussed in the steering committee of which the concerned leaders were members. It is likely that the leaders had no chance to find a constructive way to deal with the critique in a constructive way - as the confrontation took place in a public arena. By denying an analysing process for leaders, they did not get any support either. An alternative to a leader’s group could have been a heterogeneous expert group working on things like staffing processes to start on a more task orientated level rather than working on leadership behaviour. In this project, the acceptance for participation seems to be limited to work processes excluding leadership behaviour.

Participative leadership development

To re-negotiate gender-relevant themes participation was the key-element. That meant in the first place, that the top-management agreed to a participative process in diagnosis of job strains and organisational health resources, in setting priorities e.g. through implementing steering committees that included employees from high and low hierarchical levels as well as women and men, and in supporting the implementation of participating groups in focal areas.

Furthermore they needed to allow discussing leadership within this process. To win employees and leaders from middle to top-management for OHM, it was necessary to implement participating groups for leaders of each hierarchical level, too. Giving leaders space and time - and methodological support through professional moderation - to reflect their own working conditions was a crucial point in the process to allow and support a participative over-all process. From the OHM projects we can learn that a rather unsystematic and naïve approach towards gender in OHM could still achieve a complex and appropriate handling within participating processes - and produce acceptable results. A last remarkable observation: Analysing job strains in participating groups seems to prevent from stereotyping women and men. For engendering leadership we might be confirmed that space and time for reflection is a must have for leadership development, and that we need an understanding of leadership that encourages leaders to share questions with colleagues and subordinates and to search for decisions jointly rather than having to know it all.

Within participative processes, starting from job strains and recourses, lies the chance for empowerment and for some relevant changes for gender equity.

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‘Gendered leadership in Australian unions in the process of strategic renewal: instrumental, transformative or post-heroic?’

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Abstract

This paper considers the gendered nature of union leadership in Australia in a context of very significant union decline and an active process of strategic renewal. It focuses on two questions: amidst much change in unions, what models of union leadership are discernable, and how are they gendered? The paper draws on a set of interviews of union leaders who are seen as successful ‘cutting edge’ leaders, working in a range of roles: as educators, senior leaders and organisers. We supplement these with a focus group of similar leaders. We find that forms of ‘transformational’ leadership are employed by these leaders, men and women alike. However, the mechanisms for shaping the vision, values and strategies at the core of this leadership type appear gendered with women employing more consultative processes and men more likely to set directions themselves. The ‘ways of doing’ transformational leadership are gendered. Forms of ‘transactional’ leadership and management – that rely on monitoring, reward and sanctions, for example – are also obvious, but for these leaders this form of leadership follows in sequence from transformational leadership. Both genders are increasing their attention to this instrumental work of leadership and management. These patterns of leadership are overlaid – especially amongst women - by visible signs of ‘post-heroic’ leadership, that is less individualistic and heroic, and more self-reflective and relational. We conclude from our modest study that the character of gendered leadership in unions is changing, that gender remains a vital line of analysis and that more work is needed.

Introduction

The years of conservative Federal Government under John Howard (1996-2007) saw steps towards more equal representation of women in union leadership structures in Australia overwhelmed by the demands of a robust union defence. Unions were forced to respond to a conservative onslaught, as well as dramatic falls in union density. On the positive side, a vigorous campaigning response to this onslaught in 2006-07 saw new inclusive forms of campaigning that, in themselves, were transformative of gender politics in significant ways. However, the deep masculinist traditions and practices of Australian trade unionism, are hardy creatures with deep roots.

Australian unions, like those around the industrialised world, have a male-dominated history. (In part, this is because women’s workplace and union activism was not properly chronicled.) Despite its deep and expansive roots, male domination was far from a simple unitary tale. There were always unions and unionists with concern for women alongside men. And gender politics in Australian unions played out in different ways in different unions and at different levels of unionism: in the workplace, the local union branch, state branch level, regional union council and at the national peak body, the Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU) (Pocock 1997; just as they have in the US – see Cobble 1993 for example). Gendered power structures throughout the

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1 We would like to thank the unionists who shared their experiences of union leadership and organising with us. Some other union leaders expressed a desire to participate in the project but were unavailable or their involvement was restricted by the limited nature of the research timing. We also thank Chris Walton, ACTU Assistant Secretary and Paul Goulter, ECC Director for their support and access to the 2007 ACTU Organising Conference. ECC Educators, Kate Coleman and Jane Clarke were also generous with their time and experience.
horizontal sediments of unionism differ widely, and the prospects for more representative unionism vary between these sediments as well as by industry and occupation.

The thirty years from 1970 to 2000 saw rapid advances in action and understanding about women’s equality in Australian unions, and the justice of, and pragmatic arguments for, more inclusive and representative unionism. These were led by feminist unionists by and large and some made their way into union leadership (Pocock 1997, Franzway 2002). Rapid declines in union density since the nineteen-eighties have further encouraged this interest, at least rhetorically, with a growing realization that turning around union density figures requires much greater unionisation of the millions of women who now join men in paid work (McManus 1997).

Australian unions have long been an important forum for the interests of Australian women. Many feminists entered the union movement or engaged with it from the early days of second wave feminism, seeing the movement as a critical means of advancement for women – but one which also resisted women’s interests (Sudano 1997, Franzway 2002). The movement and voice of feminists in the labour movement in Australia was stronger than in the US and Canada, for example.

Part of the strategy to increase women’s place in unions rests on more women in leadership positions. However, leadership itself is generally under-studied in unions (with some exceptions, see Weil 1994, for example, for his work on strategic planning in unions). And while there are many reports measuring women’s chronic under-representation in union leadership, there are few that examine the gendered nature of that leadership (once again, with some exceptions like Eaton 1992, Sudano 1997, Franzway 2002). The operation of ‘gendered hierarchies’ and the fabric of masculine symbols, rules and routines, and the ways in which unionism embeds male privilege and female disadvantage – the stuff of gendered organizations in Joan Acker’s (1990) conceptualisation – are of interest in the process of union transformation and defence.

In this paper we ask, amidst much change in Australian unions, what models of union leadership are discernable, and how are they gendered?

**Theoretical background**

In terms of gender theory, Joan Acker’s conceptualisation of gendered organisations is very relevant to unions which are characterised by a gender hierarchy, one that is reinforced by masculine practices, habits, symbols, rules and routines. This fabric both reflects and reconstructs the social relations of male privilege and female disadvantage.

In terms of theory of leadership it is useful to define what we mean by leadership: we find Amanda Sinclair’s (2007: p xvi) definition useful in the current union context: that is leadership is a ‘process of influence...involving some form of power’. In this definition leadership is often about leading change.

Sinclair is also helpful in setting out different models of leadership. Following her, we delineate three forms of leadership:

1. A fairly traditional form of ‘**transactional**’ leadership that relies on ‘influencing followers by material rewards and sanctions’ (Sinclair, 2007, p 23). This form of leadership tends to collapse leadership and management and is about the ‘doing’ of instrumental leadership and management, especially relying upon the measurement and management tools associated with scientific management. This form of leadership has been critiqued as ‘too much about control and not enough about vision’ (Sinclair, 2007, p 21);
2. **Transformational** leadership that inspires and motivates; appeals to and harnesses higher moral and ethical motivations; emphasises response to change and challenge. This form of leadership carries others with it for a higher purpose (McGregor 1978). It can be charismatic and is very fashionable in current business leadership literature;

3. **Post-heroic or critical leadership** (Fletcher 2004, Sinclair 2007). ‘Post-heroic leadership is ‘less individualistic, more relational’. It focuses on ‘purpose’, not just technique. It requires the exercise of power and vision - but *put to transparent purpose*. It is ‘self-conscious’ – in that it involves awareness of the self, the leader’s own needs and identity (and how to ‘take these out’ of their leadership where there are ‘dark sides’). It recognises the importance and management of, symbols, emotions at work and the embodied nature of work and workers (e.g. own bodies, dependent bodies, care responsibilities...). With its roots in feminist analysis, it recognises gender. It leans towards reflective, contextual practice.

These models of union leadership may not be mutually exclusive although they are sometimes treated in the literature as if they are alternatives (Fletcher 2004, Sinclair 2007).

**Historical signs of these models in Australian unions?**

There are signs of these three forms of leadership amongst Australian unions. These types are not consistently aligned to left or right politics. The movement has had its share of ‘transactional’ leaders who have adopted an instrumental approach to leading and managing assets and people. The Wobblies revolutionaries of the early part of the twentieth century were, in part, a response to this form of leadership with their cries of ‘Down with the bureaucrat!’

In the union personification, the transactional/instrumental leader – and we refrain from naming any - keeps good minutes, organises meetings meticulously, controls processes of election and runs the budget carefully. This type of leader places control as a primary objective and at the extreme, might be holding the union in a grim, frozen static state. In the interviews we discuss below, one of our interviewees describes his predecessor:

> ‘When the last State Secretary was asked about his vision for the branch, he said that his goal had been to not change anything as his predecessor had done a pretty good job. You know a lot of things change in 10 years, but our union wasn’t changing anything.’ (Thomas)

Perhaps this represents a fourth type of leadership: ‘static state’.

Turning to transformative leadership, there are many examples of such transformative leadership in the Australian context: leaders who are *charismatic, visionary, and able to deal with massive change*.

Examples include:

- Tom Mann (1856-1941, both in his UK and Australian union work. Mann led unions towards the ‘New Unionism’ which saw unskilled workers join skilled workers in union formation;
- Jim Healy (1898-1961) who led the Waterside Workers Federation (WWF) of Australia. Healy was charismatic and much loved: his funeral cortege stretched for nearly a mile in Sydney when he died;

2 Of course the Wobblies were about much more than critiquing styles of leadership: they wanted a radical unionism that challenged capitalism and created rank and file-led unions.
- Zelda D’Aprano (1928-) a union activist who, amongst other things chained herself to the doors of the Melbourne Commonwealth Building and the Conciliation and Arbitration Commission in Melbourne to protest against the 1969 Equal Pay decision;
- Jack Mundey (1929-) who led the Green Ban movement in Sydney;

Part of our purpose in this paper is to consider the relevance of these models in the current crisis moment in unions, and to consider whether better models might apply, especially models that consider the influence of gender.

### The context of leadership in Australian unions

Leaders in Australian unions face a particular context. Its features include emergence from a period of harsh political attack under the Howard Government. It also includes a sharp decline in membership.

Figure 1 is a frightening sight for any union leader showing a persistent decline in union density in Australia since 1990. The causes of this are complex (Peetz 1998). But it sets a tone of crisis in which all Australian unionists lead, a crisis that permeates all aspects of leadership: overall organisational strategy, finances, resource deployment, organising, bargaining and political strategy.

#### Figure 1: Union density, Australia, 1990-2007

![Graph showing union density by sex from 1990 to 2007](image)


### Historic characteristics of union leadership and its context

A number of features mark union leadership historically in Australia; some of these are shared with other organizations (we suggest five) while others (eight) are historically distinctive.
The characteristics shared with other contexts include:

1. Union leaders have tended to rise up through the ranks making ‘time served’ often a critical marker of leadership ascendancy. This works against women, especially if their working patterns are not continuous;

2. Union leaders are often accidents of history: death, unexpected election, and this means their preparation is often meagre to say the least;

3. Few union leaders take up leadership of any type with formal leadership and management training. Some have had some informal mentoring but many have lacked even this;

4. Historically, neither union leadership nor management have been recognised in unions as a craft to be learned, taught or evaluated (Sudano 1997). ‘Sink or swim’ and the ‘school of hard knocks’ are the unions’ universities. This has changed in the past decade with the implementation of much more deliberate education of union leaders and managers through the work of the ACTU’s education bodies, led by Michael Crosby (2005) and Chris Walton (2005);

5. Interests of unions do not always trump - or coincide - with personal interests of leaders, whose material goals and personal ambitions and/or political, party or factional goals may be the main – perhaps subterranean – motivations.

These five characteristics are not unique to unions: there are plenty of university structures, for example, which are led by people with very similar ‘under-done’ backgrounds and experience.

But in eight other ways union leadership is distinctive, including:

1. Union leaders often have a level of discomfort with the exercise of individual power in what are ‘collectivist’ bodies. Some have particular discomfort with ‘management’. Unions emerged in opposition to management so its leaders are often very uncomfortable, almost sheepish, about their power. Leadership and management are not always treated as a craft that political leaders must do and can do well. Union leaders sometimes have particular discomfort with the exercise of managerial power over other people as employees, and the tasks of recruiting, developing staff, and managing performance. (Other progressive and feminist organisations often share this discomfort). So historically union leadership/management has not been seen as a craft, or as an honourable or politically important activity. In a movement where honour and politics are almost everything, leadership and management have thus suffered a bad press;

2. ‘Leadership and management’ are merged in the responsibilities of most union leaders - as they are personally accountable to elected and legal bodies;

3. Union leadership is often very personalised, narrowly embodied in the National Secretary or State Secretary, for example;

4. Unions are democratic, collective not corporate organisms. As Michels famously showed, the reality of democracy is very variable. However, this difference distinguishes the governance structures of unions and their capacity to quickly change course;

5. Union leaders hold formal positional and legal power. Having been elected, which most are, union leaders have a limited term of power. Their ‘office’ is not infrequently contested – both by staff and members. Their power is also legally defined in national and state law and union rules. Union leadership often comes with insecure tenure, and is sometimes exercised in an externally and internally hostile environment. The bosses are gunning for them, and sometimes the members and the staff as well.
6. Hyper-masculinised organisations? It is tempting to name unions as distinctively masculine organisations saturated with the habitus of masculinity, but this is probably arguable given that many corporate environments are very hostile to women;

7. Australian unions have a weak history of female leadership. While there have been very important women leaders in individual unions and in peak councils (most notably Jenny George and Sharan Burrow at the ACTU), most leaders have been men and they have set the climate. Homo-social reproduction of leaders, and union milieus has traditionally been common through ‘the brotherhood’ of striking, bargaining, meeting, drinking, socialising and caucusing;


Our data

In considering the nature of gendered union leadership now in Australia we draw on a set of interviews conducted in 2007. We employed a reputational snowballing method to recruit participants. This method involves identifying key informants with expertise in the field/issue in question, and asking them to provide perspectives, based on their specialist knowledge, on the elements of good reputation or influence on the issue at hand and then to identify individuals/agencies that possess this reputation or influence (Kadushin 1968; Headey and Muller 1996).

In our study, key informants with expertise on successful union leadership and best practice in union organising were asked to provide perspectives on what are the central characteristics or elements of these two outcomes and to identify union leaders that exemplify those qualities or achievements. In the first instance, informants from the following three groups were approached:

- Trade union peak body representatives in NSW, VIC, QLD, SA and the ACTU;
- ACTU union educators who have contact with officials at all levels of unions;
- Academics with expertise in the practice of union organising and leadership.

Individuals and unions nominated by these ten informants were then invited to make further nominations until a list of approximately 30 leaders was identified: many individuals were nominated multiple times. The individual nominees were then ranked according to number of ‘votes’ and categorised by gender, state, national, blue and white collar industries, public and private sectors. A smaller list of interviewees was then sampled to ensure coverage across these categories, working from the most frequently nominated. An invitation was issued to 10 union leaders and interviews were held. Not all of the initial leaders were available to participate for various reasons.

Further to this, we invited union leaders from both Australia and New Zealand to participate in a focus group at the ACTU Organising Conference held at the University of New South Wales in June 2007. These were invited on the basis of their roles as leaders of significance. In this group we explored some of the themes that emerged from interviews and sought the views of these leaders in a confidential forum.

We use pseudonyms throughout and have changed some obviously identifying details to ensure that confidentiality is maintained. Interviews were mostly conducted by telephone and all were transcribed. For the purposes of this paper, these transcripts were thematically analysed manually by the authors.
Interviewees: who are they?

Our interviewees are not your usual union leaders. They are exemplars of successful leadership in current context, as nominated by knowledgeable experts in the field of union leadership and union reform.

They hold various leadership roles, including state and national secretaries, peak council leaders, union educators, lead organisers and organisers. Six of them are men and four are women.

This study was not designed specifically as a study of gender. It was designed as a study of union leadership and the characteristics associated with successful leadership in the current context. However, for the purposes of this paper we have placed a gender lens across the data to address our research questions.

Evidence about models of leadership

These leaders aspired to, and enacted, forms of leadership that comfortably fit the definition of transformative. They saw themselves as change agents, who were implementing strong visions in their organisations. They spoke of the centrality of this vision and the values that underpinned it as the central motivation of their leadership, and all saw their role as motivating and inspiring their staff through this vision.

Given our very skewed sample of leaders we did not expect to find great gender differences in terms of leadership styles: we were not surprised to find widespread use of a transformational model in the language of these leaders, all working in a values-based, political movement. We expected, and we found, that ‘good, organising’ leaders share a common approach to leadership that meets the definition of transformative. This primary characteristic was not gendered.

All epitomised ‘transformative’ leadership - in words and action. In these accounts good leaders need to:

- ‘set an example in terms of the work, your ethics, your passion for the union movement. inspire people around you’; (Charlie)
- ‘be inspirational’; (Georgia)
- ‘take people with you’; (Georgia and Charlie)
- have ‘vision’; (James, Jack)
- have ‘shared vision’. (Hannah)

However the means of determining and implementing this vision or these values did appear to be gendered. Women were more likely to talk about cohesion and making the plan together while men were more likely to rely on their individual contribution and direction-setting.

‘What is successful leadership? ... It’s when an organisation is very cohesively working together and everybody’s clear and focused about what needs doing. And you don’t actually have standout leaders. There’s just a leadership ethos that [permeates] everybody’s activities...It’s about whether the organisation is transforming and adapting to the needs of the future for its members...building a consensus around a vision...It’s a collective leadership, it’s not about individuals.’ (Hannah)

‘[A union has] a lot of history and its collective...so there’s never one individual who could put their hand up and say I have defined what this organisation is about and why we do it because that’s just rubbish...as a leader you need to understand that...you’re part of it...it’s not something that I - a person - sits down in a room and invents and then says to everyone ‘well this is what we’re gonna do.’ (Ruby)

‘We miss out on stuff when we don’t get people to more collaboratively develop the strategy rather than say ‘well we’ve developed the strategy, this is what you have to do, this is what we want to see, now go and do it.’ (Georgia)
‘Where we want to go is decided by the leadership group.’ (Grace)

*The Big Red Diary*

While being very values and vision driven, men were more likely to just get on with the plan and to be its primary or even sole author:

‘Before I came into the job, when I sat down with another person and worked out that I was actually going to run for the position, I went and got a big red diary and I started writing and I thought of every area of the union from how we sign up members to how we deal with members to how we run our cars to how we run our phones and I wrote down all the ideas that I had, in different sections and then when I got in, I used that as a guidebook…I get very excited about projects and I push them through…My style is I’m fairly passionate…I think I’m caring and I think my staff like me and that’s important to me and I think you have got to be able to give them a vision or a belief that they are going to win and know you to win and they will follow you towards victory’ (Thomas)

‘I’ve always expected people to come along with me on the basis of rationale argument frankly.’ (James)

While not all men or all women leaders were the same, there were discernable gendered patterns that were marked.

**Transformative AND transactional**

Having established the transformational direction and vision (by more or less consultative – and gendered - means), the dominant model of transformative leadership did not exclude forms of transactional leadership behaviour. Indeed, this group of leaders were all consciously trying to lead and manage the instrumental elements of their work more deliberately than their predecessors, by and large. They were very focused on good people and financial leadership and management, goal setting and evaluation, and making detailed plans that were implemented. This monitoring and control was a vital part of their jobs that they all wanted to see done well and more thoroughly than had been traditionally the way in unions. Both sexes saw the importance of a plan:

‘You gotta have a plan. It’s gotta be linked to your budget.’ (Liam)

‘A successful union will see a union that has a good strong strategic vision…a ten year plan…and then good leaders will build a good team, right down to delegate level and have in place the mechanisms to achieve your goals.’ (Charlie)

They were attentive to ‘material rewards and sanctions’ in classical transactional leadership style, and even the most consultative, democratic and collegial of them was keen to measure progress against goals. They saw the failure to do so as an historical weakness in unions.

They all used the language of ‘transactional’ leadership and management. However, for all of them the tasks of transformative leadership (vision, values, goals) *came before* the tasks of instrumental/transactional leadership. However, both were seen as essential - they were not alternatives – but they were sequential sets of activities.

There was a common, ungendered view that a good union leader now had to be both visionary/transformative *and* good at the instrumental transactional tasks of leadership and management. Further, in their context, good leaders had to be much better at these last activities than previous generations of union leaders.

‘[It used to be] no-one bothered about what they did. It was a traditional approach of ‘here’s some stuff, go and fix it’...so the approach [now] is to try and drive a greater level of accountability…and much clearer work allocation between various staff...a whole range of tracking mechanisms to provide a higher level of accountability for outcomes...mechanisms to performance manage staff...and that’s the area we have struggled with most.’ (Jack)
Hannah is collaborative, but also strongly supportive of having a plan and being accountable to it, both as an organisation, and as individuals within it:

‘We do try and make things increasingly quantitative because the days of saying ‘How’s it going? Oh yeah it’s going well’ get us nowhere. [Now] we say ‘How is it going against our three objectives, what’s our sign up rate…?’

What is more, the instrumental tasks of managing and leading, especially where they involve managing people who were struggling with their jobs, were very difficult for both the women and men in this group. Both sexes struggled with performance management: ‘it’s the hardest stuff’. ‘Being a boss is the hardest thing’. ‘Dealing with poor performance, it’s hard’.

One interviewee had a concern that there was too much attention to performance management and not enough to development:

‘We’ve picked up too much management culture….It’s better to develop people than get rid of people’ (Georgia).

However, Georgia had herself struggled with performance management issues: she has dismissed someone who did not support the organisation’s direction - and it had been hard; she had sought her management committee’s advice and support to do it. Others were keen to talk about development and support as well as performance management:

‘I remind them it is performance management and development.’ (James)

Any signs of ‘Post-heroic’ leadership?

We also found signs of a less individualistic, less heroic and more self-reflective, relational leadership style. However, this was quite gendered. Women showed many more signs of a post-heroic model, which they enthusiastically adopted, partly as a survival mechanism. These differences were especially apparent when considering the advice that they would give to future leaders.

In answering this question women were much more likely to talk about ‘knowing why you are doing it’, having strong relationships, finding support, and developing oneself:

‘Be clear about where you’re heading and why you’re doing it, and you’ve gotta be certain about that in yourself before you can do that with other people. You absolutely have to have strong relationships within the union and outside the union to do the job and survive it.’ (Ruby)

‘Develop a vision…a plan…align everything and everyone…articulate values…The other thing I would say is for God’s sake get yourself some support structures outside of your jobs and talk to other people…You can’t be friends with people you are managing and that’s hard and I hate that. You’re sort of lonely at the top and people can hate you and I’m not very good at people hating me and I’ve learnt to deal with that so much better now…So that’s why you need support outside and you need people to toss things around with.’ (Georgia)

For Georgia this included her partner and other officials, including some men. Georgia’s comments about what she has learned about herself are reflected in her advice to future leaders. She is a leader who is not simply caught up ‘in the pursuit of the gratification of unconscious urges’ (Sinclair 2007, p 55), but trying to rise above them, and encouraging others to do so also, before becoming leaders.

Much more commonly, in thinking about their advice to future leaders, men focussed on having a plan, being strong, being disciplined and avoiding ‘being screwed’. Liam was succinct, while Charlie’s metaphors are militaristic:

‘Come up with a plan and find the money to put it in place with... You’ve gotta be proactive and on the front foot.’ (Liam)
‘Be strong, have a good vision, articulate it to your people, bring them with you and build your army before you fight a war - and be strategic at all times. I think they are the key things for me.’ (Charlie)

‘Get the plan together for what you want to do and sell it. Thrash it out before announcing it, the more you do that, the more successful the changes are. Then also being disciplined [to implement it] to avoid getting screwed.’ (Jack)

Finding support
Women talked more about the importance of support from within the union and beyond, at home and amongst friends and peers.

‘You have to have support around you, you need to debrief about your job, your day whose done what to you.’ (Olivia)

Grace supported coaches ‘breeding our own coaches’. Without it ‘you basically recreate the mistakes of your organisation’. For Hannah, mentoring is ‘definitely, definitely needed’.

However, some men also talked about the challenges of their jobs in ways which we felt their predecessors would not have, indicating that they sought support for debriefing, for example:

‘You can go through some really hard times. Sometimes we need mechanisms to debrief and people we can talk to, and seek a bit of counsel from...it can sometimes be really quite taxing (Charlie)

Diversity is strength, unity is strength?
We found some signs of difference around diversity and ‘sameness’ in terms of employees, with contrasting views from Hannah and Charlie:

‘I think the weakness comes when everyone comes from the same mould and there’s no challenge and I guess this concept of challenge, I think is really important to good leadership. There’s got to be a culture of critical analysis and challenge but within a constructive environment.’ (Hannah)

The scope for critique and diversity was more limited in Charlie’s union: sign up to unity or be singled out for ‘betrayal’:

‘I think one of the great things about our union over the last decade is that we have had a team that has been very united and really quite clear about its mission...I think we have created a culture, that anyone who comes into it, is going to feel singled out quite early and is going to feel that they are betraying the organisation if they don’t stick to the game plan.’ (Charlie)

Conclusion
We conclude that there are many similarities amongst these leaders about their practices of leadership. There is a lot of shared ground between the sexes about the importance and practice of transformational leadership that is rooted in vision, values, and inspires, motivates, leads change and takes people with it.

However, there are signs that ‘ways of doing it’ are gendered: women seem much more likely to develop the vision collaboratively and men seem much more likely to see this as their personal task: to write and to lead it.

Transformational leadership and transactional leadership/management coexist in this context: they are not alternatives. Both are valued. They are, however, in clear sequence: the tasks of transformational leadership precede and have priority over transactional instrumental tasks. However, transactional, instrumental leadership work is on the rise amongst both men and women.
in this group of leaders in the face of union crisis. Both place great weight on doing it – and doing it more than previous leaders.

However, ‘ways of doing it’ show some signs of being gendered: for example, women are more likely to mention staff development, while men are more likely to talk more about planning. But the evidence from this small group is fragile and uncertain: more work is necessary to test for gendered differences in the practices of instrumental union leadership. Our evidence is only suggestive.

Transformational leadership and transactional leadership/management are overlaid with signs of ‘post-heroic’ leadership that is more collective, self-reflective, and more concerned with relationships and relational leadership. However this is much more pronounced amongst women than men.

The study shows that all three forms of leadership co-exist amongst this group, but in gendered ways, with post-heroic leadership complementing transformative and transactional leadership especially amongst women. Figure 2 captures some of this.

Figure 2: A tentative model of union leadership approaches and their gendered dimensions in Australia

Phase 1: Transformative leadership work

**Transformative leadership**: vision, values, inspiration and motivation

Not gendered in significance attached to it

Gendered in ‘ways of doing’

- **Women** more collaborative & consultative in its development
- **Men** more directive and personally responsible

Phase 2: Transactional leadership work

**Transactional leadership**: implementation of plan, including use of material rewards and sanctions, quantitative goals, monitoring and performance mgmt.

Not gendered in significance attached to it

Gendered in ‘ways of doing’?

**Post-heroic leadership work**

More collective, self-reflective, alert to symbols, seeks support

Gendered: women do more of it

Post-heroic leadership work conducted simultaneously with transformative and transactional leadership work
Is leadership in unions still gendered? Our answer, based on our small study, is yes. And it is not just about women’s numerical under-representation. Women see unions as ‘harsh’ places for leadership, places which remain dominated by men:

‘What shocks me more and more is the absence of women...it’s stark and it’s got to be addressed...with the commitment of a lot more time and effort...not just tokenism...Part of it is the harshness of it all.’ (Georgia)

Some, like Georgia, are puzzled and frustrated about this and see it as a key strategic issue for the future of unions. Acker’s conceptualisation of dense masculine symbols and routines remains relevant to the practice and possibilities of union leadership. We believe there are implications from this study for the development of future union leaders, men and women and we hope to make a contribution to this larger discussion in time.

The history of gender politics in Australian unions shows how the effort to increase the voice and leadership of women requires meticulous attention to detail and persistent, well-resourced efforts, with attention to patterns of male over-representation and habitus, and their redress. Without such action, old habits prevail: men resist women, old organising habits screen women out of unions and representative structures, and some leadership practices remain alien to many women.

References

**The authors**

Professor Barbara Pocock is Director of the Centre for Work + Life at the University of South Australia. Barbara has been researching work, employment and industrial relations for over twenty years. She has worked in many jobs – advising politicians, on farms, in unions, for governments and as a mother. She was initially trained as an economist. She has written several books including *The Work/Life Collision* (2003) and *The Labour Market Ate my Babies* (2006), and edited *Strife: Sex and politics in labour unions* (Allen & Unwin 1997) and co-edited *Kids count: better early childhood education and care in Australia* ((Allen & Unwin 2007)

Karen Brown was until 2007 the elected state secretary of the Finance Sector Union, SA/NT Branch. She took up union leadership at 27 after some years of union activism in other roles. Thus Karen has recent first hand experience of union leadership. She has also worked as an adult educator, youth worker, disability support worker and mother.
For whom the bell tolls:
Women’s labour market experiences and expectations of WA’s booming economy.

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Curtin University of Technology

Abstract
Within the context of discussions about booming global and national economies, Western Australia provides an interesting, local case study. It is a State that is experiencing particularly buoyant economic conditions, largely due to demand for minerals and petroleum products. However, it is also possible to identify growing areas of inequity alongside growing average incomes and employment levels. This article provides insights into the capacity of booming labour markets to deliver equitable outcomes. A key conclusion is that employees do not necessarily experience high levels of individual bargaining power, even in periods of buoyant labour market conditions.

Introduction
The term “boom” is frequently used to refer to the Western Australian economy and, given current levels of activity in WA’s mining sector, this is hardly surprising. In response to increased demand for mineral and petroleum products, particularly from China, the annual value of production in these sectors exceeded forecasts for 2006/07 and increased over the previous year by 24.7 per cent, or $10.6 billion (WA Department of Industry and Resources 2007). In September 2007, the State’s labour force participation rate of 68.8 per cent was the highest recorded since the monthly data series commenced in 1978 and was higher than all other States. At 3.5 per cent, the State’s unemployment rate was the lowest in Australia and job advertisements were consistently at historically high levels (WA Department of Treasury and Finance 2007). In general, Western Australia exhibits features consistent with the colloquial label “boom economy”.

The rewards of Western Australia’s minerals boom are, however, unevenly distributed. Women’s labour market experiences are one example. In this article we compare and contrast insights from three diverse research projects that have examined specific aspects of WA women’s employment experiences and expectations. Firstly, we review patterns in WA’s gender wage gap during two waves of industrial relations reform, one at the State level and one Federal. At an aggregate level, this demonstrates a relatively inequitable sharing of the rewards from economic growth that appears linked to specific forms of employment contract (Preston and Jefferson 2007). Secondly, we overview insights into the experiences of women working in low paid sectors of the WA labour market (Jefferson, Preston, Chapple-Fahlesson, and Mitchell 2007). Thirdly, we discuss a study of young women who are undergraduate students considering careers in the minerals sectors. The study gives insights into young women’s opportunities to engage in minerals industry employment as a direct means of sharing in the wealth being generated by the mineral and energy boom (Lord, Preston, and Crosbie 2007).

Viewed together, the three studies – described in greater detail elsewhere - demonstrate the diverse range of women’s experiences of WA’s economy and illustrate some of the policy challenges for both the private and public sectors as they attempt to address current and future labour market issues.
Study 1: Western Australia’s gender wage gap

A buoyant minerals and energy sector has not been the only influence on Western Australia’s labour market in recent years. Since the early 1990s, Western Australia has experienced a range of labour market reforms that have prioritized individual agreement making in place of formerly traditional, collective approaches. The shift toward individual agreement making, alongside a range of other labour market reforms, occurred at both the State level (1993-2002) and the Federal level (1996-current). Australian Bureau of Statistics earnings data indicate that these institutional changes have coincided with a growing gender pay gap in Western Australia (Preston and Jefferson 2007).

Columns 1 and 2 in Table 1 show the gender wage ratio of women’s to men’s Average Weekly Ordinary Time Earnings (AWOTE) for both Australia and WA. It shows that the relative pay position of women in WA deteriorated in two particular periods, 1992-4 and 2002-6. By May 2007 the gender pay gap, defined as the percentage difference between women’s and men’s average full time, weekly ordinary time earnings, was equal to 25.9 per cent in WA, compared with a national estimate of 16.8 per cent.

While it is sometimes suggested that declining gender wage ratios reflect the relatively low numbers of women employed in the highly paid minerals and energy sector, this is only part of the story. This can be illustrated by comparing the earnings of WA women with women nationally, which provides a form of control for different industry effects on the wages of women and men. Column 4 of Table 1 compares WA women’s earnings with the average earnings of all Australian women and shows significant deterioration in the relative pay of WA women relative to Australian women in the early 1990s and again from 2002. These changes are not driven by developments in the mining industry. Nor are they accounted for by changes in the human capital characteristics such as the education or workforce experience levels of WA women relative to Australian women. These changes would not impact so strongly in such a short period of time.¹

Table 1: Average Weekly Ordinary Time Earnings Ratios for Adult, full-time employees, Australia & Western Australia 1990-2007

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<th>Year</th>
<th>Gender Wage Ratio (%)</th>
<th>WA/National Wage Ratios (%)</th>
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¹ Further details on weekly earnings for different occupational and industry groups for most of this period are available in Preston and Plowman (2005).
Insights can also be gained by comparing hourly earnings data, which allows us to examine the average earnings of employees in the full-time and part-time sectors of the labour force. Table 2 sets out the average hourly cash earnings (adjusted for salary sacrificing) of men and women in Australia and WA in 2006. When the analysis is restricted to non-managerial employees and based on hourly cash earnings rather than AWOTE a different picture emerges. The first and perhaps most obvious feature is that the gap in the earnings of Western Australian women relative to women nationally almost disappears. The second is that, when different forms of employment contract are considered, significant gender differences exist for some forms of contract compared with others.

WA women on awards and unregistered individual agreements earn between four and six per cent less than women nationally. There is a minimal gender wage gap among those on these forms of contract, both in WA and nationally. The story is less positive for workers covered by other agreement forms. AWAs (registered individual agreements) have the worst outcomes. Nationally, the AWA gender pay gap is around 20 per cent. In Western Australia the AWA gender pay gap is closer to 37 per cent.

Table 2: Average Hourly Cash Earnings (A$), Non-managerial adult employees, May 2006

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Source: 6306.0 Reproduced from Preston and Jefferson (2007)
Compared with the other states and territories, WA’s record with respect to gender equality (as measured by the gender pay gap) is disappointing. We suggest that institutional factors have played an important role in this. In Table 1, the first period of gender wage ratio decline coincides with the introduction of individual contracts in Western Australia and a strong growth in individual agreements in sectors such as health services and retail trade (Crockett and Preston 1999). The more recent improvement in the pay position of women in WA relative to women nationally may relate to recent legislative changes in the federal jurisdiction, the removal of award protection (through the year-long removal of the no-disadvantage test) and possible deterioration in Australian women’s wages as a result.

Our suggestion that wage setting institutions and minimum wage laws are particularly important for gender wage ratios is consistent with previous findings from both Australia and overseas (Gregory 1999:277). Decentralised approaches to wage determination are generally less favourable to women, particularly women on relatively low earnings, compared with centralised wage fixing systems (Blau and Kahn 1992; Gregory and Daly 1990, 1992; Rubery 1992; Whitehouse 1992). Previous research in Western Australia is also consistent with the national and international literature. It has been demonstrated that there are links between the increasing use of individual agreements and of a growing low-wage labour market segment (Bailey and Horstman 2000). It has also been shown that Western Australian Workplace Agreements did little to increase the use of negotiated employment contracts but, instead, extended managerial prerogative to increasingly adopt unilateral approaches of defining wages and working conditions (Berger 2000).

There are, of course, limits to the extent to which all women’s labour market experiences are reflected by estimates of average earnings and average gender wage ratios such as those used above. The situation is likely to vary significantly between women, with those at the lower end of the earnings distribution likely to be more disadvantaged than others (Gregory 1999; Whitehouse 2001). Further, wages are only one indicator of labour market outcomes. Pocock and Masterman-Smith make the important point that those on relatively low earnings are also likely to experience unsocial or unpredictable working hours and greater difficulty balancing paid work and household caring responsibilities (Pocock and Masterman-Smith 2005). In the following sections we provide overviews of two studies that examine specific labour market sectors.

**Study 2: Women working for minimum conditions in Western Australia**

The second study looks at the labour market experiences of WA women working in labour market sectors that typically rely on minimum conditions of employment to define their standard wages and conditions. The study was prompted by the introduction of the Commonwealth Government’s *WorkChoices* legislation. At the time of introduction there were concerns about the possible effects of the *WorkChoices* reforms on particular groups of vulnerable or ‘at risk’ workers such as women in low paid jobs with weak bargaining power. The Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission, the National Foundation for Australian Women and the Women’s Electoral Lobby jointly commissioned a report examining the ways in which women’s labour market experiences under *WorkChoices* might be monitored (Preston, Jefferson, and Seymour 2006).

The key finding of this report was that whilst some high quality, nationally representative data did exist, it was not sufficient to provide an adequate account of the wide ranging changes to the arrangement of working conditions that might be negotiated under the 2006 regulations. The authors recommended that a national program of case study and interview-based research be undertaken to further understand the effects of *WorkChoices*. Funding for interview-based research was subsequently provided through a range of State government departments and, in the case of WA, jointly through the Office for Women’s Policy and Curtin University of Technology. Complementary research was undertaken by teams in Queensland, New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia, Western Australia and Australian Capital Territory (Elton, Bailey et al, 2007).
The Western Australian report centred on findings from interview based research with low paid women workers in Western Australia. An inductive, qualitative research method was used to construct key insights directly from rich data. The data were collected through a program of twenty-two individual, semi-structured interviews designed to investigate the lived experiences of women employed in selected workforce sectors in metropolitan and regional Western Australia (Jefferson, Preston, Chapple-Fahlesson and Mitchell 2007).

The research method was specifically selected with the goal of allowing participants to discuss their experiences in the workforce and to define the issues of most importance to their particular context. The sample of women that participated in this study does not represent a statistical sample that can be considered representative of all women’s experiences. Interview participants were selected to focus upon areas and industries where employees were typically reliant on rulings about minimum conditions to define their working conditions. The rationale was that the possible advantages or disadvantages of WorkChoices will be most evident and industrially and socially significant in minimum condition sectors. With this in mind, the study focused on women employed in the areas of aged care, child care, cleaning, hospitality and retail sectors. The sample was selected to gain insights into key social and economic connections between working conditions and other areas of women’s working and non-working lives within the broader community.

The key finding from the project is that the interviews revealed little evidence that the WorkChoices legislation had facilitated a demonstrable improvement in employees’ capacity to negotiate individually tailored working conditions. This is despite a buoyant State economy and relatively favourable labour market conditions for employees. Further, some participants’ comments suggest that there are employers who have used their managerial prerogative to unilaterally change working conditions or hours of work in ways that have been detrimental to particular employees. There is little indication that, even in the context of an economic boom, the outcomes are particularly favourable for those in relatively low paid areas of the labour market.

A second key finding is that participants demonstrated a reluctance or unwillingness to engage in direct or individual negotiations to determine their employment conditions. This appears to stem from a lack of confidence in their bargaining power (which in turn has been is also affected by lack of protection for unfair dismissal) and a lack of knowledge about how to establish and pursue an appropriate claim for improved working conditions. Some participants spoke of their preference to change employment rather than work under the provisions of AWAs or to address other concerns at work. Those who were prepared to negotiate did not appear to be a preference for individual bargaining. Rather, they were acknowledging that the practicalities of the current labour market made negotiation a necessity even if it was an approach that they would prefer to avoid.

The third finding concerns community standards such as reasonable hours, penalty rates and minimum wages. WA participants’ discussions about these issues contrasted with those of other States (see Elton et al., 2007). Perhaps reflecting the earlier experience of state-based industrial relations changes, few of the WA participants directly attributed their concerns about their employment and working conditions to the introduction of WorkChoices. Participants conveyed a wide range of stories indicating uneven bargaining relationships, growing managerial prerogative and workplace cultures where poor employment practices had been normalised. However, few regarded this as a recent phenomenon and many of the issues discussed by participants occurred before the introduction of WorkChoices. Some of the discussions gave the impression that interview participants had little left to lose when WorkChoices was introduced. Further, WA’s buoyant economy has also cushioned the effects by enabling job churning (turnover). Rather than ‘rock-the-boat’ and risk dismissal for seeking improvements in employment conditions, some participants simply sought a job elsewhere; a luxury afforded by the current economic climate.
Confusion and high levels of uncertainty about entitlements, nature of contract and jurisdictional coverage constituted the key fourth finding. Rather than creating a ‘simpler’ system, there is a lack of certainty about issues related to the negotiation of entitlements such as wages, penalty payments and working hours. Under previous regulatory frameworks, industry standards were established in awards and this approach provided highly public and accessible sources of information about wages both within and between occupational classifications. The increased practice of individual bargaining, particularly formalised AWAs with their confidentiality provisions, has curtailed the free flow of information to employees and employers. Lack of institutional support and information may be contributing to inefficient labour market outcomes and lower productivity.

It has been suggested that deregulated labour markets have been an important contributing factor to Australia’s recent economic growth. The OECD has claimed that the Australian experience could provide a model for other countries. This project suggests grounds for caution. When considered against the stated aims of WorkChoices we found little evidence to suggest that the reforms were delivering the claimed outcomes of flexibility, family friendly working arrangements and a simpler, fairer employment regime. Participants were generally unable (or unwilling) to negotiate arrangements that enabled them to better balance their work and family responsibilities and they weren’t negotiating improved wages. Poor community standards and employment practices would appear to have been normalised in feminised, low wage sectors which could be expected to contribute to inefficient work practices and constraints on productivity growth. Finally, far from simplifying the system, the reforms have added another layer of confusion and have the potential to hamper the free flow of information necessary for the working of any ‘competitive’ market.

The findings from this study provide complementary insights into the growing gender wage gap noted in the first study. Women are over represented in occupations and industries in which minimum conditions of employment commonly become standard conditions. On an individual basis few of these women feel they have sufficient bargaining power to negotiate desired employment conditions and their evolving institutional context provides relatively few effective remedies at a collective level.

**Study 3: Young women and careers in the minerals industry**

WA’s minerals boom poses different challenges for different labour market participants. While the previous studies focus on the uneven distribution of earnings within the WA labour market, the third study addresses a different challenge: the need for the minerals industry to attract and retain a suitable labour force in order to meet the growing demand for its product. Skills shortages are expected to continue for several years to come. Faced with labour capacity constraints there is growing need for effective employee attraction and retention strategies. There is also growing acceptance of the need to draw on a broader labour pool, including women, young people and Indigenous Australians. Currently around 88 per cent of employees in the mineral sector are males, with about 57 per cent aged between 35 and 54 years (NCVER and NILS 2005). The women employees are rather younger on average, with 25-34 year olds being over-represented relative to other industries. The long hours, lack of part-time work and fly-in-fly-out (FIFO) arrangements, along with perceptions of a masculine culture, are frequently-cited explanations for the under-representation of women in this sector, particularly mature age women.

A study, undertaken as a contract research project for the Office for Women and Minerals Council Australia (Lord, Preston and Crosbie 2007), sought to identify the career goals and expectations of young people currently enrolled in mineral sector related degree courses and their perceptions about employment in the minerals sector. The research was undertaken in two stages. The first stage involved an analysis of a 2003 survey of first year university students. The second stage comprised a series of discussion groups with third and fourth year university students from a variety
of discipline backgrounds. The findings from each stage were largely complementary, as we discuss below.

The 2003 survey was undertaken by Curtin University's Women in Social & Economic Research (WiSER) unit to investigate first year students’ career goals and attitudes to gender roles. For the purposes of this study, the sample was reduced to students enrolled in minerals related courses (MRCs) and comprised 28 females and 65 males.

Female students identified good career opportunities, employment opportunities and their perceived ability to complete the course as important reasons for their choice of course. Future earnings potential also rated highly with 53 per cent of female students indicating that this was either an important or very important criteria.

Respondents were also asked to identify the importance of a series of job or occupational attributes such as the nature of the work and employment conditions. Nearly 100 per cent of the female respondents indicated that they were seeking a career with interesting work. A further 89 per cent identified exciting work as either an important or very important factor, while 82 per cent rated good career opportunities as important or very important. Future earnings potential and graduate starting salary were only described as very important by 25 and 22 per cent of respondents respectively. This may have implications for a sector relying on monetary rewards as a means of attracting labour.

When asked to picture themselves as graduates in the workforce, the majority of the young women said they expected to join a professional association (71.4 per cent), socialize after hours with their colleagues (75 per cent), work either standard or relatively long hours (over 50 per cent), earn a high income (60 per cent) and travel frequently as part of their job (89 per cent).

In most respects the female students’ responses were similar to those of male students enrolled in similar courses of study. The key differences between female and male student responses related to questions about the ways they imagined balancing work and family commitments if they later had children. Responses, if realised, are likely to impact on retention and labour (skill) supply.

The average female and male students expect to be around 27 at the birth of their first child, which is around five year’s post-graduation (assuming no gap years and progression from high school straight to university). Close to 100 per cent of students, male and female, anticipate returning to work after they have had children. However, important differences arise when timing (length of time out of the workforce) is considered.

Of the female students who envisage having children, around 50 per cent expect to take a significant career break of between 1 and 5 years. Less than a quarter (22.7 per cent) of the female students sees themselves returning to work before their youngest child is one year old. In contrast, 78 per cent per cent of the male students enrolled imagine being back at work before their youngest child is one.

Students were asked to imagine their employment arrangements if they became parents within a couple relationship. Nearly a quarter (23 per cent) of the female students imagined themselves in a couple partnership where both parents work full-time. The most commonly imagined arrangement (by male and female students) is one where the father works full-time and the mother works part-time.

Based on the survey data it seems fair to conclude that the vast majority of these young women expect to become the primary care giver should they have children. They similarly expect to have lengthy periods of time out of the workforce. Whether these women see themselves making this
decision by ‘choice’ or because of prevailing ideologies and social norms surrounding motherhood is something we can’t determine from these data.

There is a high degree of congruence in the findings from both the student survey and the discussion group components of the study. Discussion groups were held with young women students enrolled in courses typically associated with the minerals industry (such as geology and chemical engineering) and those with a broader focus (such as science or business). Discussion group participants described a strong commitment to their career and were looking for varied, interesting, challenging, meaningful and fulfilling work. They also described their preparedness to move from one employer to another to gain such job satisfaction. Money was identified as an important factor, although good employment conditions and flexibility were just as important for many. Thus work rosters, the degree of flexibility and the type of facilities that were offered were also considered highly important features of a potential job offer. A number of the participants considered these factors to be more important than money and indicated they would be prepared to sacrifice salary if it meant that they could have more control over other aspects of their work.

Discussion group participants enrolled in courses specifically related to the minerals industry spoke of the need for flexibility in order to maintain personal relationships. They were happy to work hard for their money but not at the expense of ‘a life’. They wanted the flexibility to be able to match shifts if they were in a relationship and to be able to attend significant family and other events.

Among young women who have undertaken vacation work in the minerals sector, the experience was generally described as positive. Young women spoke about loving their work and the opportunity to work outside of the city and/or an office environment. However, they also spoke about challenges of living on site. They felt they were relatively more ‘visible’ and likely to be the subject of gossip and innuendo when they socialise with their work colleagues. This signals potential challenges for retaining women in employment in the minerals sector. The survey results indicate that an important aspect of working life is being able to socialise after hours with work colleagues. In contrast, the experience of a male dominated workplace may be one of isolation because there are few women colleagues and young women can find themselves ostracised if they socialise to any great extent with their male workmates. Some students noted a lack of older female role models in the sector.

Young women expected to stay in the minerals sector at least until they had children. It was at that stage that they anticipated problems due to the type of work they expected to be doing either on site or on a fly-in, fly-out basis, as well as the lack of accommodation of the needs of pregnant women by employers. Some anticipated having gained sufficient industry experience to facilitate a move to a city-based job at that stage of their working life. Others saw working independently as a more likely option that would enable them to balance work and family. Most expected some time out of paid employment and to work part-time for a period while their children were young. Together with perceptions that few older women work in the minerals sector, students’ views about possible ways to achieve a desired balance between work and family appears to indicate a relatively short term or ‘pre children’ focus for their on-site industry careers.

More generally, discussion group participants identified a large number of negative and positive characteristics associated with work in the minerals sector. Some of their views arose as a result of their direct experience through vacation programs; others were the result of stories from family and friends or other sources. While some views may not accurately reflect employment in the minerals industry, they constitute perceptions that may need to be addressed if the sector wants to widen its employment pool to recruit and retain more women from both minerals related and other courses of study.
Among the perceived negative features of working in the minerals sector, students discussed the likelihood of a masculine work environment; sexual and other forms of harassment and not being able to ‘be a girl’; having to prove yourself; unattractive work hours; a lack of workforce diversity; a predominantly uneducated workforce; workplaces and towns characterized by gossip or innuendo; remoteness; pressure on family and other relationships; and difficulties with meeting work and family responsibilities.

There were, however, a range of positive features that participants associated with the minerals sector, including: interesting work; high income; attractive lifestyle; quality time away from work; direct involvement with projects; opportunities to ‘make a difference’; high quality experience to enhance employability; opportunities for travel; and the chance to work outside of the capital cities.

Student discussion suggests that the negative images of the minerals sector outweigh the positive images. Whilst this may affect the sector’s capacity to attract and retain women it also suggests there is ample opportunity for change. Perhaps more importantly, the preparedness of the industry to both commission and seriously discuss such findings indicates that there is a potential for the development of employment practices and policies that attempt to initiate such changes. This is an important point of contrast between the employment contexts of those entering the minerals industry and those in relatively low paid employment.

Areas of commonality and contrast
The studies of women in low paid employment and those planning on a minerals industry career demonstrate a number of contrasts that have long been identified as important to the operation of labour markets. The female students planning on securing employment in the minerals industry are: relatively highly educated; entering an industry dominated by a small number of large organizations; part of a labour pool that is a small proportion of total costs in the industry; and entering an industry that is (currently) highly profitable and experiencing strong demand for its product. The women employed in the low paid labour market areas of aged care, child care, cleaning, hospitality and retailing are: working in sectors with a larger number of smaller employers; part of a labour pool where wages represent a significant proportion of total costs; employed in sectors that are typically less profitable or more constrained by budgets associated with restricted public funding programs. Entry to these latter sectors does not require high levels of education so there is a relatively larger pool of labour from which to recruit employees. As might be expected, these factors contribute to significantly different labour market experiences and expectations.

The students planning on a minerals industry career are likely to graduate into a labour market that is keen to buy their highly marketable set of skills and to be in a relatively strong negotiating position. Their potential employers have a high capacity to pay for their labour. As individuals they have a degree of negotiating power. However, they also have a relatively favourable institutional context. Graduate earnings surveys, professional association membership and the internal wages policies of large companies provide reference points for both potential employees and employers to compare salary and employment packages. Their institutional context provides important sources of information for the operation of the graduate labour market. The challenges for female students, and for those wishing to retain their skills, are likely to arise later in their life course and to involve issues around the balancing of paid work and household responsibilities. Current expectations appear to include a continuation of existing gender roles with respect to the organization of work. However, a failure to address women’s working life requirements may have significant economic consequences for both sides of the labour market - the supply of women employees prepared to work in the minerals industry and the capacity for minerals sector employers to meet their demand for labour. Pressure from both the supply and demand sides of the labour market may provide sufficient impetus for the development of innovative and flexible working arrangements that meet the needs of both parties. The commissioning of research by the Minerals Council of Australia and
other organizations involved in the minerals sector is one indication of possible change in this direction.

The expectations of young women who are considering careers in the minerals industry pose a different set of issues from those discussed in the study about low paid work. Like the minerals sector students, women in low paid sectors are also working within the context of a relatively tight labour market. However, they face a significantly different institutional context. They are unfamiliar with the process of negotiating an employment contract and express considerable uncertainty about how and where to obtain information about relevant employment standards. Interview participants expressed a preparedness to rely on employers to define appropriate employment standards and to adjust wage rates over time. However, participants’ experiences suggest that some employers are also relatively uninformed about appropriate employment standards. Further, in a context where labour costs are a significant proportion of total costs, employers risk reduced viability if they pay higher wages than a competitor. Without an acknowledged community standard or mandated award minimum, there is an incentive for employers to avoid any risk of paying wages that are above those of a competitor. In addition, where cash payment of wages is relatively common, such as in the hospitality sector, timely and reliable information about an industry’s wage practices may be difficult to obtain.

In contrast to the minerals sector there is little sign that employers in feminised industry sectors are undertaking coordinated research at an industry level to address potential labour shortages or examine employees’ expectations from employment. The experience of interview participants is one of unilateral approaches to defining employment conditions by employers, and by implication, an extension of a managerial prerogative.

The different labour market context of the two groups of women demonstrates contrasting effects of industrial relations institutions and regulations on different labour market sectors. For those in relatively low paid sectors, industrial tribunals provide an important source of information about industry standards and minimum employment conditions that is likely to have direct relevance to their employment. The minerals industry students with skills that are in high demand appear less likely to be affected by changes in the methods for determining minimum levels of pay and conditions. Potential employers in the minerals industry are also in a position to coordinate their approach to information gathering and to address potential labour shortages through industry level programs of research that will establish common ground for their future human resources policies.

The contrast between the two labour market sectors provides insights into some of the causal mechanisms behind the widening gender wage gap identified in the first section of this article. Women’s over representation in the minimum conditions sector of the labour market results in a heavy reliance on terms and conditions of employment that are defined by institutions such as industrial tribunals and, now, the Australian Fair Pay Commission. Reductions in minimum conditions can lead to reductions in industry standards, particularly in feminised industries. This has a gendered impact because of women’s employment patterns.

In the absence of third party regulation and with declining union representation, employers generally retain the authority to set the agenda and to address the challenges of tight labour markets. The minerals sector study illustrates one possible scenario: proactive research and policy development to address skill shortages that potentially limit industry profitability or growth. However, not all industries have the same concentrated structure or profitability of the minerals industry. Further, the development and implementation of appropriate policies to address labour market concerns can be difficult and long term. As indicated by the study of low paid workers, it seems likely that some employers in other industry sectors will continue to adopt a more fragmented and short term approach, relying on unilateral decisions that can have adverse effects on employees’ earnings and employment conditions.
Conclusions
The long boom in Western Australia has posed a range of challenges and opportunities for both employers and employees. Moreover, it is clear that the rewards from the boom are unevenly distributed. At an aggregate level, WA’s labour market shows increasing gender inequity. This has a number of linked causes, including significant shifts in the labour markets’ institutional arrangements. Women in low paid sectors appear to be particularly vulnerable to missing out on the potential advantages of economic growth, and those employed on Australian Workplace Agreements are faring relatively poorly. Those with little bargaining power depend on labour market institutions such as industrial tribunals and the Australian Fair Pay Commission playing an important role in defining appropriate standards of employment and redressing labour market imbalances. In contrast, students hoping to pursue a career in the minerals industry appear to be in a relatively favourable negotiating position and their potential employers appear to have significant internal institutional processes relevant to establishing favourable wages policies and employment standards. Challenges for future women employees in this sector may arise if they attempt to combine work and family commitments or if there are significant changes in the industry’s profitability or structure.

References
Change as a Gendering Agent: a theoretical examination of why organizational change initiatives seem to reinforce the status quo.

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Abstract
“The only true constant is change itself” may be a fairly accurate depiction of life; however, it may also be true that when organizations attempt to create change, the result is the reinforcement of the status quo and, in particular, the inequalities that exist between men and women in organizations. For decades, organizations and governments have been attempting to understand and resolve the barriers that have kept the upper management level of organizations off-limits to all but a small minority of women. This paper will examine the gendering effect of organizational change programs, particularly legislated equity programs and internal change initiatives such as business process reengineering and total quality management.

A number of organizational change programs are based on concepts of efficiency and growth, which according to Stein (2001) are masculine in nature. They also serve to further the interests of those with the decision-making power to implement change, who are predominately male. Not only are the goals of organizational change programs factors in the maintenance of the status quo, but the organizational tools that are used to implement the change have implications for gender inequity. In particular, stereotyped roles of men and women for paid work and family responsibilities, and teamwork are examined for their roles in inhibiting any real change to the current social inequities.

Introduction
The number of women in the workforce has increased steadily, from 25 percent of the workforce in 1930 to 47 percent in 2005 (Pinker, 2008); however, the increases realized have not been distributed through all levels of organizations. Although women dominate the middle and lower ranks of organizations (Feminist Research Centre, 2007) it has been estimated that at the current rate of increase, it will be the year 2466 before women reach equity with men in the upper echelons of corporations (Feminist Research Centre, 2007). Initiatives such as employment equity, which were the result of many years of struggle by courageous social action groups have left disappointment and frustration at the lack of true change in their wakes. In the midst of social and regulatory change, something is keeping organizations relatively the same. This paper will examine organizational change initiatives, for their impact on maintaining the existing social relations of power, while at the same time, being perceived as a conduit for change. The authors build on the work of other researchers who connect previously separate areas of study to “forge new connections that go beyond the coalescence of two fields of inquiry (Acker, 1998, p. 195)” by taking a critical look at the most common organizational change programs to expose the “abstract, gender-neutral organizational theory for its failures to represent what actually happens in and between organizations (Acker, 1998 p. 195)”. By doing so, the goal is to provide an opportunity for leaders of organizations, who are the agents of change, to see a new perspective about organizational change programs and to recognize that they may not be gender neutral or equality enhancing as has been previously assumed.

A theoretical approach is used that combines the literature on the language of gender that will discuss how actions and events can have a gendering effect (Eveline, 2005); the language of management that will examine the feminization of the terminology used to describe management

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1 This phrase is credited to the ancient Greek philosopher Heraclitus from around 500 B.C.
skills (Fondas, 1997); the language of organizational development and change, which will describe
the increasing desire for efficiency and its connection to masculine ideals (Stein, 2001); the ideal
employee (Bailyn, 2003), which will demonstrate how the structure of organizations and jobs limits
the participation of women in our current social environment; and class issues (Acker, 1989), which
will examine how the goals of management are prioritized during change. These areas of research
will form the filter through which change programs such as legislated equity (Acker, 1989;
Armstrong & Cornish, 1997; Wilson, 1997), business process reengineering (Hammer & Champy,
1993) and total quality management (Garrison, et. al., 2006) will be examined. By combining these
fields, a paradox may be exposed to show that change programs designed to be either gender-
neutral or explicitly equality-driven, may actually impede the progress of women in organizations.

This paper will build on the work of Acker (1989), Fondas (1997) and Stein (2001) to theorize that
change programs, both legislated equity programs and internal change initiatives, have latent
contradictions that tend to reinforce the existing power relationships instead of creating real
change for women in organizations. This paper proposes that organizational change can be a
gendering agent, particularly when it takes on many of the characteristics of organizational
development as defined by Beckhard (1969) and is a planned, top-down, organization-wide
initiative. The authors will theorize that this is due to the impact of the language of management
and change, the class and power structures within organizations, and the masculinization of the job
and the “ideal employee” (Bailyn, 2003).

Reflections, Limitations and Opportunities

“...organisms in an ecosystem don’t just evolve, they coevolve... Real organisms constantly circle and
chase one another in an infinitely complex dance of coevolution (Waldrop, 1992, p 259).” Waldrop
(1992) discusses the complexity that occurs with the interaction of organisms – a concept which
applies to organizations and individuals within organizations as well. Since we are unable to analyze
organizational behaviour in a vacuum, there will always be alternative perspectives and
combinations of interacting elements with which to examine a phenomenon. This provides both a
limitation with which we, as researchers, must constrain our analyses to a feasible selection of
variables, and an opportunity to expand the discussion of others by combining elements in new
ways.

One of the most relevant complexities with respect to gender is the level of analysis – at a group
level, or at an individual level. At a group level, statistics can be calculated to highlight inequities
between groups; however, the danger of group level analysis in the discussion of gender is the
potential reinforcement of the essentialist traits associated with the sexes. Group level statistics
can be used to create an “average” individual, or essentially, a stereotype for the group, which may
not truly represent anyone when examining individuals. Group level statistics are important in
exposing the inequities that exist between men and women, but should be used with caution for
fear of motivating the discussion to remain at the group level. The key point, for this paper, is that
it is impossible to predict the behaviour of one level from the understanding of the other level
(Waldrop, 1992). In other words, given a desired collective behaviour, there is no procedure for
determining the individual level rules that produced that collective behaviour (Waldrop, 1992).
Therefore, it is recognized that while the discussion in this paper remains at an abstract, general
level, the opportunity exists to examine these phenomenon at an individual level as well.

An additional complex relationship is the one that exists between class and gender. Acker (1989)
studies the dynamics between class and gender with an examination of the attempts to implement
comparable worth, or true equity, in Oregon’s public sector. This study highlighted the challenges
with organizational hierarchies that create opposing goals for equity between men and women, and
equity between classes of women (Acker, 1989). Therefore, it is important to note that equity is not
necessarily distributed equally – equity for one group may create inequities for a different division
of groups or for individuals. Thus, the goal of this paper is not to devise concrete solutions, but to illuminate perhaps a new perspective.

**The Language of Gender, Management and Change**

Language can be viewed as a collaborative process (Holtgraves and Kashima, 2008). Therefore, this section of the paper will examine how language may impact the change process and re-create inequality.

**Gender as an Action**

[It is suggested that] rather than viewing gender as an attribute we focus instead on the process of gendering – which means understanding gender as a verb. In common usage, gender is deployed and viewed as a noun. As a noun it is difficult to portray gendering as an effortful and adaptable ordering which assembles, embodies, differentiates and regulates women and men into binary masculine and feminine identities. As a noun gender too easily assumes and portrays a fixed binary, embodied attributes and institutionalized symmetries and inequities. (Eveline, 2005, p. 642)

Eveline’s (2005) suggestion to view gender as a verb allows one to examine how individuals, collectives, organizations, actions and events will create and re-create the concepts of masculine and feminine. This aligns with Acker’s (1998) view that “gendered inequalities, gendered images, and gendered interactions arise in the course of the ongoing flow of activities that constitute ‘an organization’” (Acker, 1998, p. 196). In other words, the creation of gender, or gendering, is an action, an interactive process. In the process of gendering, the characteristics of what is deemed to be feminine and what is masculine are reinforced and attributed to those who are biologically female or male, respectively. By deeming a specific characteristic or trait as masculine or feminine, an entire group is excluded from its properties and is condemned to a lifetime struggle to demonstrate that they, too, can possess this characteristic or trait.

**Organization Development and Change**

Organizational change is an element of organizational development and, therefore, it is relevant to examine the definition of organizational development for its impact on gender equity. Organizational development is “… considered as a response to accelerated changes in the technological, political, and institutional dimensions of our societies… [and is] directed toward using behavioural science knowledge to assist organizations in dealing with the problems of change… to attain such goals as developing greater organizational competence, improving quality of work life, and organizational effectiveness (Sinangil and Avallone, 2001, p. 332).” Although the definition may be assumed to be gender neutral, when examined from a feminist perspective, this definition has some distinct problems. The first section of the quotation indicates that organizational development and change is in response to external forces; however, the definition does not identify whose responses will be represented. It is those individuals and collectives that are in possession of authority and power who will have the ability to voice their opinions on the types of responses allowable. With the large majority of senior management positions held by men (need reference), the voices of women will have very little chance to be heard during the change process.

The second issue is found in the second section of the quote in which change is referred to as a problem. Those who study complex systems and adaptive behaviour would argue that change is inevitable, not a problem (Waldrop, 1992). However, it is likely that it is a specific problem with respect to change that is being referred to in this definition – the resistance of those who are having change processes enforced upon them by those in the upper echelons of an organization’s hierarchy. Perhaps it is change that is not within the control of those in power that is deemed a problem in organizational development. Therefore, in its definition, organizational development is a tool that can assist organizations in dealing with those who are not in possession of authority or power.
One of the more prevalent goals of current organizations is the pursuit of efficiency (Stein, 2001); which organizational development tools are purported to help achieve. Although the definition of efficiency was once that it was a process through which, each individual is assessed for their own strengths so that these strengths can be utilized (Stein, 2001), the word efficiency, however, has been mutated with the “progress” of industry to relate more to an ever-advancing state of bigness whilst using fewer and fewer resources (Stein, 2001). Along with industrialization, efficiency was realized not through the allocation of the appropriate resources, but through the minimization of resources, particularly through the de-skilling of work and the use of scientific management principles (Stein, 2001). The principles of scientific management, which were based on mathematics and engineering – both disciplines which are male dominated fields – assumed that the skills necessary for organizations were embodied in men more than women (Stein, 2001). And so, as modern organizations continually strive for improved efficiency (Stein, 2001), this quest can also be examined from the perspective of its impact on the pursuit of gender equity.

The final issue with the definition of organizational development lies in the statement that organizations need to deal with change. It is not the organization, per se, but the representatives of the organization, the managers, or agents, who will plan, implement, and evaluate change (Garrison, et. al., 2006). The goals of the management class can become the priority as evidenced in the study by Acker (1989) in Oregon when managerial goals for re-writing job classifications trumped the goals of the task force that had been set up to devise a plan to implement a comparable worth program. The goals of managers can be self-serving, especially when change programs threaten to change the relative advantage of the managerial class (Acker, 1989). This exemplifies the inherent conflict of interest situation in agency relationships (Shapiro, 2005) where those who have been delegated responsibility for the change may also be the ones who have something to lose (personally) from the change. When we consider that management is comprised, for the most part, of men, and they function as a separate class than the working class, which is dominated by women (Acker, 1989), the agency relationship has considerable implications for the ultimate potential for change initiatives.

**The Ideal Manager**

The language of management has been dominated, in the past by masculine language. In 1976, Schein discussed the “think manager, think male” phenomenon, which described how the position of manager was seen to be within the domain of men. Acker (1989) examined the nature of any job and how the “underlying image of the job is tied to a particular historical meaning of masculinity (Acker, 1989: p. 221)”, and how this connection between masculinity and jobs is rooted within the structure and hierarchy of organizations. This connection between masculinity and jobs has been persistent, even as stereotypically feminine traits have been discussed as essential for successful modern managers (Fondas, 1997).

The language of management theories and styles has changed and Fondas (1997) found that it was becoming “feminized” in that typically feminine traits were being associated with management theory through the language used to express the new management skills and leadership styles deemed necessary in the new economy. Managers in contemporary organizations were being instructed through textbooks and training that they would need skills such as coaching, leading, and concern for employees and teams – all of which are associated with stereotypically nurturing feminine abilities. These ‘new’ management styles, at first glance, would seem to encourage the promotion or hiring of women to managerial roles due to their anticipated ‘natural fit’ to these necessary qualities. However, the feminized language of management has also undergone changes due to the fear of managers that their roles within the organizations would be seen as “unreal” or “soft” (Fondas, 1997). Having concern for employees was edited to having a “hard-line concern” through pressure from managers in the creation of management textbooks (Fondas, 1997). The addition of the masculine traits to the feminized language served to reinforce that “caring, concern, and being exclusively people oriented tend to be counted as ‘women’s work’ not ‘real’ work”
(Fondas, 1997, p. 271) and thus the management skills required the masculine adjectives to legitimate the new management styles. It appears as though there is a negative reaction to femininity being associated with management and “real” work, thus perpetuating the masculinization of management.

**Change as a Gendering Agent**

Acker (1998) recognized that “contemporary changes may alter the conditions that created the gender understructure. For example, organizational restructuring towards less hierarchy, team functioning, and flexibility might offer possibilities for shaping organizing to accommodate non-work aspects of life, reducing the disadvantages for women in paid employment” (Acker, 1998, p. 197). This is, however, tempered with the warning that the potential positive outcomes may not be realized in organizations. This section of the paper will discuss specific change initiatives, both externally and internally driven, and theorize why these initiatives have not lived up to their original potential for improving equity.

Change initiatives can have numerous goals including to increase productivity and effectiveness, adhere to regulatory pressures (for example, equal opportunity laws), and to implement the latest management trends (Six Sigma, TQM, for example) (Coyle, 1996). In a patriarchal system, power and formal authority is held by men (Foster, 1999) and with change initiatives, there is usually a “change agent” involved – someone who is granted the authority by those in power to spearhead the change initiative (Sinangil and Avallone, 2001). This change agent can be someone internal to the organization or an external expert who is brought in to lead the change. Regardless of their origination; however, this individual represents the interests of the dominant group.

**Regulated Change**

Some change initiatives, even when designed to benefit those who are discriminated against in the workplace, will end up further disadvantaging those it was designed to help. Employment Equity legislation, or affirmative action, is a prime example of a situation in which in many instances, the opposite effect was developed from what was intended (Wilson, 1997). Although employment equity legislation was created to further the interests of women and visible minorities and, indeed, experienced some short-term results, the implementation of the program resulted in long-term negative impacts such as a backlash from the white male majority, a potential negative impact on the self-image of women and visible minorities, and limited actual results (Armstrong and Cornish, 1997, Wilson, 1997). In fact, government intervention has “often served to reinforce inequality” (Armstrong and Cornish, 1997, p. 67) and “lend legitimacy to existing practices” (Whitehouse et. al., 2001, p. 365). The ineffectiveness of legislated equity can be summarized into three main issues with legislated change: the nature of embodying change within the law, the backlash from the white male majority, and the reinforcement of masculine and feminine stereotypes.

One of the concerns with government intervention is that political parties have their own agendas and may operate in the interests of their own party as opposed to the interests of their constituents. In Ontario, Canada, the New Democratic Party introduced the Employment Equity Act 1993, which focused on merit-based hiring and promotion while recognizing the need for equitable treatment of individuals. This Act was repealed shortly after the Conservative party launched a successful political campaign in 1995 that fostered the fears of the white male majority by implying that the Employment Equity Act 1993 would privilege others. The Conservative party was able to appeal to the majority in their bid for power, which then provided them with the means to quash legislation that had been designed to equalize the playing field (Armstrong and Cornish, 1997). In a similar fashion, the comparable worth project in Oregon (Acker, 1989) was unsuccessful in part because of the reluctance of those in the male-dominated job sectors to give up their relative advantage (Acker, 1989). The relative advantage achieved through promotion is both through pay and in the “symbolically larger increments in respect (Acker, 1989, p. 159). Jacques (1997) expresses this sentiment well in his reflective discussion as a white male when he states that...
“...change for the privileged, by definition, means giving up privilege. Whether such privilege was deserved or not, this will often be difficult; it will often seem unfair to those losing it, and there will be a situation where what is gained does not compensate for what is lost, at least within the value system of those losing (Jacques, 1997, p 83).” The white male majority does not associate the concept of special privileges for white males with the status quo, and therefore changes to the current power structure are seen as providing special privileges to others as opposed to leveling the power scale. In the Oregon comparable worth project, it was also an instance where class and gender interests conflicted; women who were members of the male-dominated sectors such as management, were interested in preserving their relative status and pay advantages. Increases given to those in the working class and not to those in the management class would serve to put the interests of women in the different classes at odds. Thus, the resistance to equity legislation can be both a gender issue and a class issue.

There has also been a defensive reaction to legislated equity from the white male majority in that “state intervention to promote equity is coming under attack as both interfering with the market and offering special privileges to interest groups” (Armstrong and Cornish, 1997, p. 76). The market became a critical element in the Oregon project with the determination of benchmarks for job classifications and a potential wage scale (Acker, 1989). The assessment scale for analyzing job content was based on the Hay Guide, a tool developed from the market in order to assess how the duties of a particular job fit into the typical scale. Since the market is composed of organizations that predominately exemplify the traditional patriarchal hierarchy, the gender inequities built into the market will be re-created when the market is used as a benchmarking model. In Ontario, had the equity legislation survived, it is not likely that the desired effect would have been realized anyways since “...meritocratic systems simply reinforce the advantages that men have over women by requiring women to behave and think like men (Probert, 2005, p 53).” Acker (1989) encountered a similar situation in the development of assessment criteria for job analysis in the Oregon project. In order to assess the relative worth of different jobs, jobs were analyzed for their content. The standards for what constituted work were based on masculine ideals, for example, physical effort was based on the need to use strength and force. These masculine elements are more likely to be found in male-dominated jobs whereas the physical strain associated with small routine tasks were more likely to be found in female-dominated jobs (Acker, 1989). There are substantial health risks associated with the physical strain contained in the jobs that are dominated by women, but this physical component is largely unrecognized (Messing, 1998). The absence of this type of physical effort from the analysis of jobs served to maintain the masculine image of work and the gap in pay and status between jobs.

Finally, employment equity legislation may not have succeeded in achieving its goals of equity due to the implied inferiority inherent in the legislation, which reproduced the masculine and feminine stereotypes of feminine weakness and masculine superiority (Wilson, 1997). Legislated equity implies that those who will benefit from the legislation are inferior to the white male majority and therefore require preferential treatment in order to achieve the positions and promotions that they have. In effect, those who are protected by the legislation are seen as unable to earn their success on their own (Wilson, 1997), which is in clear opposition to the actual goals of the legislation.

**Organizational Change Initiatives**

In Canada, the downsizing and restructuring in both the private and public sectors has been primarily justified as necessary in order to remain competitive in a new global economy. State cutbacks are defended as improving efficiency and effectiveness at the same time as they save social programmes by targeting services at the most deserving. While market forces and the public debt are blamed for many of the strategies and their consequences, increasingly, the transformations are being promoted as not simply necessary but desirable. More and more frequently, state intervention to promote equity is coming under attack as both interfering with the
market and offering special privileges to interest groups. Meanwhile, restructuring itself is encouraging this view, as insecurity in employment and pay spreads throughout the workforce. (Armstrong and Cornish, 1997, p. 76)

In the interests of gaining efficiencies, organizations have “tried on” the latest trends in organizational change initiatives, with two of the most popular being Business Process Reengineering (BPR) and Total Quality Management (TQM) (Garrison, et. al., 2006). The assumption was that these new ideas would have a gender-neutral effect on the organization. The latent reality, however, is that the change programs may have resulted in the reproduction of gender inequities and the reinforcement of gender stereotypes.

**Business Process Reengineering (BPR)**

Business Process Reengineering (BPR) is a reorganizing strategy for organizations, made popular by Michael Hammer and James Champy (see Hammer & Champy, 1993), that is touted to, when successful, increase competitiveness, reduce cycle time and costs, and flatten organizations (Jaffee, 2001; Pearce & Robinson, 2000). The focus of BPR is to eliminate wasted effort through a radical change effort that details and examines every step taken in completing a task within an organization and re-designs the processes in an all-encompassing overhaul, usually accompanied by the re-design of jobs and positions, and substantial layoffs (Garrison, et al., 2006). Evident within these potential outcomes are the masculinist ideals of competitiveness, and efficiency, but along with these more explicit masculine goals is the flattening of organizations, with many layers of management disappearing. Although, at first glance, this might appear to have a neutral impact on the social relations within the organization, there is a gendering effect to flattening the organizational chart. Since women are more likely to be in the lower management levels and men are more likely to be in the upper management levels, removing the middle layers will have a negative impact on women in two ways. The first is that the gaps between the steps up the corporate ladder have now become wider. Competition for the fewer upper management positions will become more intense. The second effect is that the lower management levels, where most female managers are found, will be delegated more responsibility, thereby increasing the workload, reducing any flexibility in working hours, and increasing the number of working hours expected (Coyle, 1996).

When the ideal employee is one “who gives total priority to work and has no outside interests and responsibilities” (Bailyn, 2003, p 139), this leaves individuals who have family responsibilities in a position where their familial duties leave them disadvantaged in the workplace. This disadvantage is also extended, however, to individuals who are expected to have familial duties, regardless of whether or not those responsibilities are actually present. It is noted that it is primarily women who tend to take on greater responsibilities for the care of children and households (Probert, 2005), which automatically places women outside of the range of an “ideal employee”. The responsibilities of child rearing have left a significantly greater number of women than men feeling that they are forced to reduce their workload by cutting back their hours of paid work (Probert, 2005). By doing so, women may be impacting their status within the organization since “…full-time work and quantities of overtime work are associated with loyalty, devotion and competence, while part-time work is associated with restricted loyalty and less productivity… [and] …the length of the working day defines the character of the employee (Kugelberg, year, p 153).” An argument may be made that it is a choice by the individual to prioritize familial responsibilities over the demands of paid employment and that all individuals face these choices equally; however “…in reality, women’s ability to devote time to paid work is the outcome of a complex and highly gendered set of negotiation and compromises within the household (Probert, 2005, p 70).”

**Total Quality Management (TQM)**

Total Quality Management (TQM) is likely one of the most popular approaches by management in recent years for continuous improvement of organizations (Garrison, et. al., 2006). This change initiative features a focus on customer service through the use of teams for problem solving
(Garrison, et. al., 2006; Pearce & Robinson, 2000), accurate measurement of all critical variables, and continuous improvement of products, services and processes. Although similar in nature to BPR, TQM is not as radical in its approach because of its emphasis on continuous improvement as opposed to a complete and immediate redesign of all processes as seen in BPR. An additional, albeit small, difference is that with BPR, integrative teams are used to assist in the analysis of the business processes, while TQM is driven on an ongoing basis by the utilization of teams.

Teams have been deemed to be an essential element of “organizational transformation and process improvement strategies (Metcalfe & Linstead, 2003, p 96) and should, therefore, be examined for any potential gendering effects. Teamwork has been discussed as requiring the “softer” skills of management and has, as such, been seen as a potential area for improving the equity position of women in organizations; however, this has not materialized. Metcalfe and Linstead (2003) posit that the reason that women have not been able to take advantage of the perspective that teamwork utilizes feminine qualities because teamwork is “…underwritten by masculinist discourses of performance, management and organization (Metcalfe & Linstead, 2003, p 94).” In other words, the language of teamwork is laden with masculine concepts, ideals and goals. “Team practices and team language alienate, make powerless, and silence the feminine, the female and woman (Metcalfe & Linstead, 2003, p 100).” Along with the language of teamwork, research on team effectiveness and team strategies has tended to focus on the team as an abstract idea, devoid of the human element which would highlight the different experiences and realities of men and women within teams (Metcalfe & Linstead, 2003). Team performance is the focus, and because of this, the interpersonal skills of teamwork that have been touted as providing an opportunity for the more “feminine skills” to come to the forefront, yet it is outputs, achievements, efficiencies and effectiveness – the masculine elements – that are the objects of focus. “The subtext in team discourses reveals how team output is associated with masculinity and performance, what a team achieves is, above all, the most significant aspect of understanding teams and team working. Significantly, team behaviours and attitudes must demonstrate commitment to achievement and control and deny any possibilities for closer intimacy (Metcalfe & Linstead, 2003, p 105).”

**Conclusion**

Women are not powerless because they are feminine; they are feminine because they are powerless (Ferguson, 1984).

The irony that change programs may actually reinforce the status quo is an intoxicating phenomenon that warrants further study. This paper has taken an introductory look into the way organizational change programs may perpetuate the gender inequalities within organizations and the stereotypical definitions of feminine and masculine. The authors posit that regulated change, or legislated equality programs, perpetuates the assumption that selected groups need to be protected and are, therefore, unable to compete in the marketplace on their own merits. In addition, merit-based hiring, compensation, and promotion programs are built upon a masculine standard which forces individuals to try to meet a standard that is perceived to be outside of their stereotyped norm.

Internally motivated change programs may not fare any better as they focus upon moving the organization’s activities towards a vision of efficiency and success as defined by the dominant, and masculine, power hierarchy. Not only do the goals of internally driven change programs such as business process reengineering and total quality management create a gendering effect, but the methods through which they are initiated are problematic as well. Downsizing and flattening of organizations, which are prevalent in BPR programs leave women in an environment of heightened competition for even fewer advancement positions and struggling to compete against men who are assumed to be more committed and loyal to organizations while women are assumed to have split loyalties with a priority towards family and household responsibilities. Acker (1998) furthers the
argument that gender equity in organizations may need to begin with the equitable division of non-paid work in the home, but recognizes that "this is not a minor change, because it implies that neither men nor women could be expected to meet the work demands of most organizations; thus organizations might have to change" (Acker, 1998, p. 199). Additionally, teamwork, a critical element of most organizational change initiatives, while assumed to provide an environment to foster feminine qualities, is, in reality, driven by an undercurrent of masculine language, ideals and performance expectations.

It is, perhaps, the language of gender that traps us within this struggle to overcome the binary restrictions of masculinity and femininity and yet Ferguson (1984) describes an alternative use of the words masculine and feminine that fits more with a poststructuralist feminist perspective that "stresses plurality rather than unity, and in particular rejects the categorization of women as a monogenous group, and that femininity and femaleness are unitary conceptions that are associated with the biological sex of woman" (Metcalfe and Linstead, 2003, p. 98). In fact, complexity theorists would argue that the idea of plurality could be taken to an even higher level to help resolve the issues faced by the genders. Instead of an approach of feminine versus masculine, a perspective of how feminine and masculine can work together could help to produce an environment of collaboration and mutual survival, as opposed to a “survival of the fittest” competitive social landscape. For “…once you drop the duality... then the questions change. You can’t then talk about optimization, because it becomes meaningless. It would be like parents trying to optimize their behaviour in terms of ‘us versus the kids’ which is a strange point of view, if you see yourself as a family (Waldrop, 1992, p 333).” Perhaps this perspective of mutual survival could bring the concepts of masculine and feminine together in an attempt to respect individuality while functioning as a collective and bring the goal of efficiency back to its original equity-based meaning.

References


Engaging Men To Progress Gender and Leadership Equity In The Workplace

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Summary
Traditional gender roles and characteristics still tend to dominate today’s working landscapes. Women have long headed a campaign for equity and leadership in the workplace with little positive result to show. To date, Australian statistics demonstrate that gender equity is progressing very slowly, if at all and in some instances it is going backwards. Current methods of improving actual rates of female participation in leadership are having minimal effect.

This discussion paper reflects on the current status of each gender in terms of equity and leadership in the workplace. It challenges existing thought and practices through self awareness and language to strengthen understanding and increase participation of the male gender in the change process. It then suggests, from a practitioner viewpoint, built on sixteen years experience working in male dominated environments, how both genders can expand their thinking to progress gender and leadership equity by offering simple, practical and achievable strategy and actions, embracing a way ahead for positive change.

Background
‘Make no mistake about it; women want a men’s movement. We are literally dying for it…. We have to use our instincts when deciding what to trust. We need to ask questions…. Then women can find allies in this struggle for a future that has never been.’ Gloria Steinem in ‘Women Respond to the Men’s Movement.’

My observations and reflections are formulated on engaging with men and women at all levels in the workplace, specifically relating policing and union industry experience. However universally, prohibitive gendered practices continue to inhibit the progress, promotion and retention of women in leadership positions. I have witnessed much on the frontline and accurately present before you what I see, hear and feel. I am self taught and don’t pretend to be an expert.

I grew up in a family of five females. My dad held a leadership position and was the Affirmative Action for Women representative in his workplace, maybe this sparked my interest. After leaving my co-ed high school I worked in male dominated environments. This was not a conscious decision; I just seemed to fall into working with men.

At fourteen I started as a dish hand in a local Chinese restaurant, all the cooks were men; then graduated to a restaurant chain where I was the only female grill cook in charge of a group of male teenagers; then I joined the NSW Police Force of which 75-80% are male and now I am employed by the Police Association of NSW with an all male management team. Similarly the large majority of leadership positions in all these workplaces were held by men.

In the NSW Police I remember spending 8-12 hours at a time on patrol with only male company, working night shifts for seven nights in a row, just four men and myself. Often it would be two weeks before I had the opportunity to interact with a female at work. I roughly calculated this out as equivalent to spending over 10,000 hours sitting with, talking with, listening to and observing...
men. Men of all types including young, old, gay, alpha, chatty, disconnected, happy, serious, physically healthy, emotionally unhealthy or vice versa. I always joked that I spent more time with these men than they did with their partners.

As much as I loved the NSW Police Force, as with all Australian policing institutions I believe they are still rife with the unofficial ‘boys club’, intentional or not it exists. When I joined the Dog Unit in 2000 it was the first time more than one female officer had entered this lair of female challenged men. I soon discovered their excellent communication skills translated only to the dogs. One of my first tasks was to approach my Commander to request sanitary bins be placed in the female toilets, these toilets had long been considered the men’s second bathroom.

In 2004, of senior police officers, (that is above the rank of Senior Sergeant) in NSW in leadership positions, only 9% were female. The obvious conclusion drawn is the remaining 91% are male! Of the 25 police Commanders I currently converse with, 24 are men. Whilst I attempt to remain positive and hopeful, great leaders of both genders don’t appear to be pouring out of the policing environment. The police environment tend to attract and churn out a certain type of leader — male, conservative in thinking, embrace of command and control, desperately lacking in creativity, feelings and freshness. (Occasionally one breaks the mould.) Innovative leadership I think not!

In my current position I work as an Industrial Relations Officer within a New South Wales union. Whilst the majority of my colleagues are female, my direct team members are male and all senior positions in my organisation are held by men. Cracking this glass ceiling is as challenging as trying to melt the Antarctic with only one match. Pictures similar to this are mirrored across Australian unions.

Running parallel to my fascination with the world of ‘man’ I absolutely 100% support females. The lack of females in leadership positions greatly concerns me. This concern is primarily based on the inadequate representation and accurate reflection of today’s working population in addition to my own idealistic thoughts.

I often and regularly have animated, vibrant discussions with male clients, colleagues and senior management on behalf of women in relation to quality part time work arrangements, accommodation of carer’s responsibilities balanced with operational requirements and appropriate, respectful and safe pregnancy in the workplace plans.

It is debates with these men that have enabled me to hone my skills, challenge my thinking, my speech and campaign for educated change. These men set me on the path in pursuit of gender equity in leadership.

Where are we now?
Whilst there is a basic knowledge, understanding and existence of gender equity legislation, it is clearly not enough on it’s own to ensure gender equity.
The 2006 census of Women in Leadership from the Australian Government Equal Opportunity for Women in the Workplace Agency acknowledges organisations are creating equal opportunity for women. It also highlights that women remain largely excluded from positions that have significant influence over business direction, the economy, public policy and the community generally.

The overall picture of female representation and participation in Australia in 2006 looked like this –

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<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tr>
<td>2%</td>
<td>ASX 200 Chairs</td>
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<tr>
<td>3%</td>
<td>ASX 200 Chief Executive Officers</td>
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<tr>
<td>8.7%</td>
<td>ASX 200 Board Directors</td>
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Executive management positions saw a marginal increase over two years. During this time Chairs increased by 1%, Chief Executive Officers remained the same, Board Directors increased by 0.5% to 8.76% and Executive Managers increased by 0.6%.

Compare the Board of Directors percentage internationally with 12% in Canada in 2005, 14.7% in the USA in 2005, 11.5% in South Africa in 2006, 10.5% in the UK in 2005 and 7.1% in 2006 in NZ.

We are far from the tipping point. Simply put, over time gender equity seems not to be progressing and on occasions when it does progress, it is very slow.

The irony being this, the gender with the most comprehensive knowledge and understanding of the specific issues and concerns relating to gender equity and leadership are women, whilst the power and decisions which directly impact on the professional and personal lives of women, are usually held and determined by men. Why?

Traditionally the general cultural view in Australia still sees women as the primary carer giver and keeper of the home, the usual suspects who put their career on hold to occupy the home maker position. Women still often earn less income than men (the pay equity challenge rages on) and when they do return to work they are often no longer valued by their organisation like they once used to be. Men on the other hand are still perceived as ‘breadwinners’ and with no break in their career usually progress to the positions at the top of the ladder with far less obstacles to overcome.

In a masculine occupation such as policing, conversion to part time employment or a request by a male for parental leave as a primary carer is still viewed as irregular, highly unusual and a diversion from the norm. Men in this position also find themselves ‘victims’ of the gender divide in the traditional thinking of perpetuating themselves as breadwinner. The task of attitudinal change remains a challenge.

A further common occurrence worth some reflection relates to the regular efforts of women attempting to overcome the imbalance. This usually takes place, for good reason, within female only environments. It has since occurred to me that at every woman's forum, committee, seminar, conference and meeting held to promote and address gender equity variances we always preach to the converted. Whilst these opportunities are vital I wonder if this is the only way. I wonder if this may be impacting on the stagnant progression of women in positions of leadership.

Religiously we sift through statistics of where women have been and where we are today to the extent even I have briefly done so in this paper. However we appear to lack a stated vision and focus about where we are going. The challenge now is to acknowledge the data of the past and move on from describing the problem to describing the solution, in addition to engaging men to get on board for the ride.

Where do we, both women and men, want to be in terms of leadership, in twelve months, ten years and fifty years from now? Who can clearly envision and articulate what we want this to look like?

**What is gender equity?**
What does gender equity in terms of leadership look like for women? And for men? Both genders are responsible by failing to assist the progression of gender equity.
The Collins Dictionary defines equity as ‘fairness and equality’, ‘a state of being equal’.

I would like to challenge whether we know what we want gender equity to mean past equal pay, positions of leadership and alternate weeks of putting the garbage out or is that it? Do we want to be equal or do we want fairness or simply the choice and availability for each?

Women and men are capable of generating a whole new energy shift in this world. We should be prepared to consider that a forward progressing, revitalised gender equity movement should actively engage men. Therefore as women, are we prepared to engage men as professional partners in the pursuit of leadership excellence and equity? How might we go about this? What strategy and every day actions can we incorporate to continue the gender equity evolution?

What we know about men
I have always been curious about men. How much does anyone really understand them? Not much?

In the book ‘Manhood’ by Steve Biddulph, a family psychologist, he acknowledges, ‘men are a problem to women but this is rarely intentional. They are, to an even greater degree a problem to themselves. The gender debate raged for twenty years, often fruitlessly before we woke up to the fact that men are not winners. There are very few happy men. Simply blaming men doesn’t change a thing. We need help to change ourselves.’

It could be bravely stated that equally both genders sometimes contribute to the perceived problems of the other, perpetuating the non friendly myths, encouraging the not so great realities of each gender. It is this continued focus that will reinforce the stuck in the mud existence.

Ask yourself, do you put down the opposite gender? Are you convinced you belong to the superior gender? Do you gain a sense of power from being angry and acting self righteous when dealing with the opposite gender? Do you need to challenge your perspective?

Continued development and greater appreciation towards self awareness, gender neutral language conveyed through non sexist language and the action of gender positive opportunities may assist equity progression. Recognition brings about transformation.

Men in the workplace
While most rational men support equality for women, their ‘eye’ hasn’t become accustomed to the new look. They are confused and ambivalent. Their hearts and minds know what is fairer for women and for themselves, yet they ‘see’ as attractive many aspects of the old model. Many of us (women) are still attracted to the idea of men being the primary breadwinner, so many of them (men) are still attracted to the idea of women taking care of the home environment.

Other reasons why men struggle with equity in the workplace include general resistance, a lack of interest, feeling threatened, little or nil education regarding issues that concern women, old fashioned attitudes and a general belief in reverse discrimination.

It is recognised to exert power and control over women some men still engage in subtle or overt tactics to maintain the status quo. Tactics such as kissing as a greeting; ignoring issues in meetings raised by women then acknowledging the same issue when raised by a man; exclusion from formal and informal networks for example not being considered to attend functions or golf days, little assist progress.
Interestingly these attributes are used every so often by the few women in positions of leadership. A female Probationary Constable once told me she was informed by a female superior that because she was pregnant she was no longer eligible to complete some academic assignments; she would have to repeat the relevant course once she returned from maternity leave. Not to be outdone by a male Commander who refused to allow a female Constable to walk a dog in the course of her duties because she was pregnant. Releasing prejudices such as these may well promote a shift to increased respect and equality.

To progress leadership equity we don’t need men to feel threatened, disengaged or excluded, create obstacles or exhibit a genuine lack of support at the top echelons.

To progress leadership equity we call for men to come forward with their support, ideas, enthusiasm, their workplace power and most importantly their active contribution.

Can we make this shift happen faster than is currently occurring? I suggest to do so we need to stretch our thinking further then it has ever been stretched before.

The way forward
It is obvious we need the help of both men and women, to make, support and sustain change. Gender challenged thought still exists and we must continue to reach out. Now we require further advocacy utilising innovative methods.

Why not appeal to the holders of senior positions to lead by example in turn encouraging respect and appreciation of women, acceptance as an equal? If both genders are sincere and engaged about the pursuit of leadership equity and liberation the success will surpass the effort.

Consider what you can do to take action and build equal working relationships and leadership in your organisation. From a pragmatic view point try combining any of these real, practical, simple solutions -

- To effect genuine change, change yourself - have an honest look at yourself and review what you do in terms of promoting leadership equity in your organisation.
- Educate both genders about equity in leadership though language.
- Look at your old visions and expectations, revision them. Try something different.
- Educate yourself about the opposite gender in general.
- Become an advocate of gender neutral language.
- Identify current issues for the lack of female leadership in your organisation for example conduct a workplace survey.
- Engage men who are pro women in your activities.
- Make women’s concerns, men’s concerns, or at the very least family concerns.
- Educate men about pay equity and promotion.
- Focus on where you want to be not where you have been.
- Moderate male and female bashing material.
- Conduct reviews to stay on track.
- Move beyond egos.
- Include both genders in the process.
- Should you feel any resistance to this topic examine why.

Conclusion
Any or all of the above actions will progress a practical understanding of gender equity in the workplace and increased activism among our male counterparts to move forward with gender
equity in leadership. Education conjoined with a change in organisational culture targeted through real workplace activities will challenge and create new attitudes.

Whilst women may have declared ourselves worthy of equal leadership we are experiencing a normal lag time between our declaration of equality and the new behaviour and beliefs that would support that declaration. Both genders are in a transition period and have not yet made the requisite mental leap for a transformational change in leadership equity.

I believe that women are capable of making profound transformations in our actions with men, as are men with women and in doing so will continue to make a profound contribution to this world.

In time men will make the leap necessary to enjoy women as equals in all contexts.

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“We are only women here”
Women managers as norm for leadership.

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Abstract
Feminist organizational research on women in leadership positions has largely focused on women managers, and their terms in male dominated work environments. The gender structuring in these organizations correspond with the gender order in society with male domination on positions of power and the majority of women in positions with less power. This study explores how the majority position affects women leaders workplace experiences and sense of belongingness in organizations. It also examines how women managers negotiate meanings of gender and leadership when they find themselves in majority at positions of power. Results suggest that the majority position opens up various ways of challenging and transforming prevailing male constructions of leadership. The managers do not have to relate to pre existing notions of leadership. Women constitute the norm in the organization in the sense that it is the things they do at work that constitutes leadership. They enjoy having power to shape the organization and they are constructed as competent managers. Moreover, they do not perceive themselves as part of a gendered category as managers. At the same time however, women’s subordination in gender power relations in society affects the social constructions of gender identity. Men in the organization are highly valued and the women managers strive to increase their numbers.

Keywords: gender, gender order, leadership, leadership norm, management, power, women majority.

Introduction
Women managers in majority positions of power are in focus in this study. The organizations studied have a majority of women in the whole organization as well as in leadership positions. Feminist organizational research on women in leadership positions has largely explored women managers’ terms in male dominated organizations. Several studies show how the minority positions shape the women managers’ workplace experiences. Kanter (1977) points out how women managers manoeuvre repertoire is circumscribed by high visibility, gender stereotypical expectations, and informal isolation. Further are women managers in minority positions often constructed as less competent than their male colleagues (Ely 1995, Wahl 1996, Holgersson 2003). Descriptions of organizations are often gender neutral although images of leadership are rooted in men’s lives and experiences. Women are expected to conform male norms of leadership (Collinson & Hearn 1994, Connell 1995, Holgersson 2003).

The paper explores what role the majority position plays in shaping the women managers’ workplace experiences. Can women constitute the norm for leadership when they are in majority positions? How are leadership and gender constructed in these organizations?

The Norm and the Other
Theories about norm and other are applied in the study. A cornerstone in feminist research is the idea that men has represented the universal and women the gender specific (Beauvoir 1949/1997, Harding 1986,1993, Haraway 1991, Gemzöe 2002). In the Second Sex, Beauvoir’s pioneering work she explores in detail how women are socially constructed as the “Other”. She writes: “Thus humanity is male and man defines woman not in herself but as relative to him; she is not regarded
as an autonomous being. /.../ She is defined and differentiated with reference to man and not he with reference to her; she is the incidental, the inessential as opposed to the essential. He is the Subject, he is the Absolute – she is the Other.” (Beauvoir 1949/1997 p. 16). Being positioned as a woman thus means not only being constructed in relation to men and masculinity there is also a power dimension permeating the relationship where men are subjects and represents the universal. The concepts used in the study are related to hegemony and represent the processes where certain definitions are given priority over other. As a result of this certain experiences and definitions are regarded as more normal and natural than other, for example what it means to be a leader. What is normal or natural is defined in relation to what is not in a process of differentiation (Gramsci 1949/2001, Connell 1995, Barrett 1996, Ambjörnsson 2004, Lindelöf 2006). Men’s dominant position allow them to enjoy the privilege of the norm, to speak from the positions of the norm, to claim that whatever they do is work, leadership, or what they want it to be (Fiske 1993, in Martin 2003).

Organizational demography and symbolism

The study applies analytic insights of earlier work on gender demography, gendered structures, processes and symbols. As briefly mentioned above, research on women in leadership positions has largely focused on the woman managers’ terms in male work environments. (Kanter 1977, Cooper & Davidson 1982, Asplund 1984, Morrison, White & Van Velsor 1987, Cockburn 1991, Wahl 1992, Ely 1995, Höök 2001, Holgersson 2003). Kanter’s (1977) groundbreaking work, explores how the low (token) representation of women in management positions affects the women managers performances. The minority position is associated with several structuring effects, such as performance pressures, role encapsulation, informal isolation and loyalty testing from the dominant group. Ely (1995) examines how women’s proportional distribution at higher echelons in organizations affects the social construction of gender at the workplace. Organizations with lower proportional representation of women in positions of power (less than 15 percent) had more stereotypical constructions of gender. What was perceived as women’s attributes was considered less favourable in relation to what was required for success in the organization. The women responded to this with lower job satisfaction and lower expectation of promotion. In firms where women at the upper echelons were higher than 15 percent there were more positive constructions of femininity. Feminine attributes were regarded as source of competence among the women. Feminist organizational research has shown how the masculine-feminine dichotomy is deeply embedded in organisational practices. Gender is constructed (practiced or done) in relation to power. The gendered practices take place within the gender order reproducing or contesting prevailing gender structures. Structure both constrains and enables the play of practice and structure is altered and renegotiated by practice (Giddens 1984, Connell 1987, Smith 1987, West & Zimmerman 1987, Acker 1990, 1992, Wahl 1992, Widerberg 1995, Fenstermaker & West 2002). Gender hierarchy in organizations shape as well as is shaped by symbolic meanings attached to leadership and gender (Acker 1990, 1992). The historically low proportion of women in leadership positions has resulted in that masculine images are disguised in constructions of leadership (Folgerö-Johannesen 1986, Calàs and Smircich, 1991, Collinson and Hearn 1994, 1996, Connell 1995, Wahl 1996, Holgersson 2003) Women in leadership positions creates confusion when challenging prevailing conceptions of leadership and femininity (Sheppard 1989, Regnö 2003 b). The conflation of masculinity and leadership has the consequence that men in leadership positions not have been regarded as part of gender category (Collinson and Hearn 1994).

When women hold leadership positions the male prerogative of defining leadership becomes visible in the constructions of women. Women’s status as the other is revealed for example by naming them as women managers in contrast to normal managers. The male norm embedded in leadership is moreover visible in the dominating discourses emphasizing “sameness” or “difference” of women managers in relation to men (Cockburn 1991, Wahl 1996, Ely & Meyerson 2000).
Sameness between men and women is the underlying assumption in what Ely and Meyerson (2000) calls the “fix-the women discourse” and Wahl (1996) “the insufficient women discourse”. Women have the potential to be as good as men at leadership positions. The explanation for the low levels of women is that they are currently less prepared and skilled to hold these positions. Women are perceived to lack the experiences and knowledge required. The insufficient woman has the wrong education, choose the wrong job, work in the wrong sector, is not interested in managerial positions, have children, try too hard, are not part of the right networks, and is simply not a man (Holgersson 2003). When women are described as less skilled they seems to be less suitable for leadership positions. The solution put forward is that women should conform to prevailing masculine norm of management. The requirements of leadership are expressed in a gender-neutral way that disguises that the formation of management positions is rooted in men’s lives and experiences. The male norm is maintained with the insufficient women discourse.

Difference between men and women is stressed in the “value the feminine” (Ely & Meyerson 2000) or “the different” (Wahl 1996) approach to women mangers. Women are perceived as contributors of feminine values to organizations. The feminine values are defined in relation to, and subordinated to, what men leaders do not represent. Women have little influence over the definitions of the feminine contributions. Expectations femininity are limiting to women as it provides a fixed room for manoeuvre. Men as the norm remains unquestioned and hence male dominance in positions of power are reproduced (Cockburn 1991, Wahl 1996, 1999, 2001, Holgersson 2003).

Research on organizations with relatively even gender distribution at higher levels in organizations suggests that negative notions of women are expressed through a perceived surplus of femininity. In a managerial group of five women and three men, interviewed by Wahl (1999, 2001), men and women managers were perceived to have the same leadership styles. Both men and women were moreover described as properly skilled for the task. The construction of the insufficient women that lack required qualifications was replaced by a perceived surplus of femininity. Negative notions of women were manifested by the experience that there was ‘too much femininity’ in the group.

In a mentoring program for women in leadership positions in a large male dominated company women met without male colleagues. The program provided arenas where women could construct alternative images of leadership instead of trying to conform to pre-existing images of management. The managers reconstructed the dichotomy between management and femininity. Their alternative images were formed from their own experiences of management where being women was perceived as positive in relation to management. The alternative constructions were however, marked by the gender order and existing male images of management in the sense that they were constructed in opposition to them (Höök 2001).

The studies presented above explore how women’s representation in upper echelons in organizations affects the gendering of occupations, places and practices. In light of these studies it is interesting to explore how the majority position affects the women managers’ sense of belongingness in the organization and how constructions of gender and leadership are negotiated in organizations with a majority of women. The paper endorses the view that, gender not is something one has or is. It is something that is constantly negotiated, reproduced or contested in relation to power. Individuals are both positioned and position themselves in every day life. Gender is a constitutive element of life in organizations, present in gender divisions’, hierarchies, practices, and symbols. Gender hierarchy in organizations shape as well as is shaped by symbolic meanings attached to leadership and gender (Smith 1987, West & Zimmerman 1987, Connell 1987, Acker 1990, 1992, Fenstermaker & West 2002).
Managers in the Social Work and Care Sector

The study is based on a qualitative data form and interviews with women in leadership positions at different levels in two organizations in the Social Work and Care Sector in Sweden. The managers work in geriatric care and in housing services and care for the disabled. The managers in the study work at all levels in the organizations, where the first level typically means to head 2-3 housing services or daily activity centres for the disabled or elderly people, run by between 5 and 20 employees. Middle managers are heading groups of approximately 6-8 first level managers. Top management is heading for example all the elderly care or a both the elderly care and the care for the disabled depending on how the organization is structured. The managers are between 30 and 60 years, most of them between 40 and 60 years old. Many have long experience of working in the care sector, 10-20 years in the organizations is not uncommon. Most common is to have none or one male colleague in the same managerial group.

Sweden is often depicted as paradise for women. Along with the Nordic\(^1\) countries Sweden has the highest proportion of women employed outside the home among the EC countries (Regnó 2003 a). The proportion of Swedish wage earning women almost equals the proportion of men. 80 percent of the women and 86 percent of the men are part of the workforce. Parenthood is combined with employment outside home for a majority of both men and women although women tend to work more part time than men do (SCB 2006).

Looking closer however, the gender structuring at the labour market becomes more distinguished. The sexes are hierarchically structured in positions and salaries, with men at the top. Men and women are also found at different occupations and in different sectors at the labour market. 37 percent of the employees in the private sector are women and 63 percent are men. At managerial level 22 percent are women and 78 percent men. In the public sector 74 percent of the workforce is women and 26 percent are men. 56 percent of the managers in the public sector are women and 72 percent are men (SCB 2006). The proportion of women is falling and the proportion of men is rising at managerial levels compared to the proportion of men and women in the workforce. The pattern is the same in public and private sector.

The organizations in the study do not follow usual patterns of male domination at leadership positions in Sweden. Out of 58 industrial sectors according to international industry classification\(^2\) only 6 (one tenth) have 40 or more percent women at leadership positions (SCB 2003). 80 percent of all industrial sectors in Sweden have more than 60 percent men at the upper echelons. The Social Care sector in Sweden is the sector with the highest proportion of women at managerial levels. All managers interviewed work in organizations dominated by women both at the upper echelons of the organisation as well as among the staff. 85 percent of the employees in this sector are women and among managers are 77 percent women and 27 percent men. (SCB 2003, 2006). The Social work and Care sector has traditionally been a workplace for women.

**Methods**

The findings are based on interviews, observations and forms. 12 women in leadership positions were interviewed twice over a period of two to three weeks. Each semi-structured interview was between 30 and 120 minutes long and took place at the managers’ workplace. In the interviews they were asked to describe every day life at work and relations with co-workers. Between the interviews they were asked to fill out a form. In the form managers were asked to reflect on and to describe situations when they felt like leaders, women, women managers. The aim was to explore how the managers constructed leadership and gender. The qualitative data form examine when the

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1. Denmark, Finland, Sweden. Norway is not included in the EC statistics.
2. SNI 2002 Swedish standard of industrial classification, harmonized with the Statistik classification of economic activities in the European Community.
managers interpreted themselves as gendered, leaders and so forth, what meanings they attached to the membership in different categories. The paper is based on the part of the empirical material that examines the manager’s views on leadership, situations when they felt like leaders, women, women managers and thoughts about and experiences of men in the organization. In the following section the empirical results will be presented.

The joy of power
When the mangers describe what they find most rewarding with their job, they refer to the sense of shaping the organization. They enjoy having power and being in charge. Managers at all levels express a clear sense of ownership of, and belongingness to the organization. They mention the power to make decisions, to shape the vision, to build teams and coach the staff to enhance their performances among the things they find most stimulating with the leadership position.

“I really enjoy shaping the development, discern tendencies 

“I like to actually be able to, to some extent, make decisions.”

“I like to enhance the public sector, to clarify the mission [to my staff]. This kind of strategic work I find very, very rewarding.”

When they were asked to describe situations when they felt like leaders, they could easily give numerous of examples. Most of the leaders express great comfort in their position. They do not express any ambivalence or perceive any contradictions between leadership and their own identity. A few of the managers even find it difficult to single out ‘management activities’ in their daily work since it was so integrated in their work activities. What they do at work represents leadership.

“I am a manager. The things I do at work I do because I hold I leadership position.”

The examples the managers gave of when they feel like managers involve interaction with colleagues. They describe when colleagues ask for advice or when they are assessing their work. They also mention situations where their power positions is explicitly articulated, for example when they make decisions without consent form colleagues.

“It is me that ends the social talk in the beginning of the meeting. /.../ I set the boundaries for what we discuss and what we put on hold to later. I have the mandate to speak for the group.”

They also fee like leaders in situations where they can inspire colleagues and when they feel that the group trust their judgement.

“When my colleagues become creative and trust me as a leader. That is a positive feeling.”

Why should I feel more or less like a woman?
It is interesting that the women managers do not perceive the leadership position as gendered. When they were asked to describe situations when they felt like women or women managers, most of them were struggling to answer the question. The concept women manager had very little meaning to them.

“I do not know any difference between being a woman manager and being a man manager. I do not think about that. That is a strange question to me.”

“I never feel like a woman manager. I does not mean anything to me.”
“I do not feel any particular difference.”

Positive constructions of femininity occurred when a few women tried to give examples to what it could mean to be a women manager. They gave examples of things they perceived as being female, for example, being helpful and caring. They were however ambiguous about the examples.

“Maybe I am giving my colleagues more time when they talk to me, but I do not feel like a woman manager.”

Negative experiences of being a women manager were related to feelings of not being treated with respect. A few examples were from interaction with men when they felt that men had treated them with disrespect. There were also some examples of when other women had behaved disrespectfully.

“I believe male managers think that women managers can wait a little longer then men managers can, for answer.”

It was even more difficult for the managers to answer the question when they felt like women.

“Why should I feel more or less like a woman? I am a woman. I could not think of anything. Have I said anything? Maybe the other day when I complemented my college on her pants.”

“I was really thinking about when I felt like a woman. But no, I could not feel like that. I did not find anything. It was just me.”

Two of the answers relates to being an object of desire. One manager describes a situation with a customer at the daily activity centre for the disabled. He is standing very close to her showing his admiration and arousal. Another manager described a situation outside work, at a party when she felt dressed up and beautiful.

To be a competent individual
The women interviewed held various leadership positions at different levels in the organisation. They were asked to describe if they feel that they are at typical managers, if such exists. In contrast to stereotype notions of women in male dominated organizations where women managers often are constructed as less skilled and suited for leadership positions, the managers in the study do not express any stereotypical expectations of women managers in their answers. Women are not described as lacking any necessary competence. Nor do they express any ideas of specific feminine values that they contribute with to the organization. Their answers give account for many different ways to be a manager among their colleagues. They describe each other as different from each other. They are different as managers because they have different personalities, different positions, different driving forces, different careers, different strengths, different educational backgrounds and have reached different stages of personal development. This could be interpreted as what Höök (2001) described as the privilege of the norm; to be different individuals and at the same time, constitute the whole competence needed together.

Desired men
The low proportion of men in the organization is not mentioned as a problem of competence or quality. Even if more men not are perceived to increase the competence in the organization the managers are very positive to augment the proportion of men in the organization. Like in Wahl’s (1999, 2001) study it is perceived as something negative with to too many women. When the managers are asked about the importance of gender in their daily work their accounts of gendered experiences are very few. On the other hand when they are asked about their view of men in the
organization, negative notions of women are articulated and become visible through the desire for more men.

“I am very blessed to have men [at my department].”
“We want to have more men in the care sector that is for sure.”
“We are only women here and I think that is very sad.”
“Everyone is very happy when we have a man manager. Everyone thinks that it is very good”

Men are seen as inherently good. They are described as carriers of positive values as men. They do not have conflicts and are straight to the point, effective and decisive. They group dynamics improve with men. They can contribute to raise the status of the care sector.

“There are many men working here [at this department]. It is almost never any problems, everything is solved.”

In contrast to women’s positive notions of men the managers own experiences of men in the organization is more neutral or even negative.

“I can not say that the discussions we have in our managerial group are different because we have a man now.”

The gender order gets articulated and enacted in interactions with men. Women experience having to wait longer than their male colleagues for services in the organization. They note that men attract more attention, are offered attractive jobs and career opportunities.

“It is very often men in our organizations that make careers.”

**Concluding discussion – beyond sameness and difference, women as norm for leadership.**

The study shows how women in majority positions opens up for renegotiation of symbolic meanings of leadership and gender in organizations. In contrast to earlier studies of women managers in male dominated organizations, where women have to relate and conform to male images of management, there is no women’s slot in these organizations. The managers do not relate their work to male norms of management and leadership. Their manoeuvre repertoire is not restricted by expectations of feminine management qualities. It is what they do at work that constitutes leadership. They describe themselves as individuals different from each other. Together they constitute the necessary competence to run the organization. The power positions the manager’s hold and moreover the position as part of a majority category has the effect that the gender category is dissolved. In the managers daily work they feel the freedom to act as individuals in contrast to be representative of a category. They experience no tensions or contradictions between what they do and what management and leadership are. This could be interpreted as they are enjoying the privilege of the norm in the sense that they are not defined as a gendered category. The norm, or the position of subjectivity holds the power to describe and define the world and are therefore seldom aware of them selves as part of a category.

The majority position is giving woman mangers the prerequisite to define what it is to be a manager. At the same time however, women’s subordination in gender power relations in society affects their notions of men in the organization. Men are highly valued in the organization and women are striving to enhance the proportion of men, even though their own experiences of men are ambiguous and full of contradictions. Statistics show that the proportion of men is rising at managerial levels compared to among the staff. It is still easier for a man to reach the upper echelons than it is for women.
At the same time managers express ownership of and belongingness in the organization. They enjoy the sense of shaping the development. The joy they describe in their work as managers can be interpreted from a power perspective. In contrast to holding power positions within terms of male dominated organizations and within male norms of management, the majority position allows the managers to shape the organizations future as well as the very conditions for management.

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‘Girl Disease’: a consideration of the contradictions in women managers’ reticence and ambivalence towards organisational advancement.

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Abstract
Reticence is a term frequently associated with modesty and reserve. Ambivalence can be defined as being pulled in opposite directions. We use these terms to explore the contradictions that emerge when a group of women in senior positions talk about their careers, promotion and organisational advancement. The paper is based on selected findings of an Australia-wide study of the experiences of women and men in senior management in the public, private and higher education sectors. Males in our study evinced more ambition about career advancement and at times even asserted their ‘right’ to be promoted. Women on the other hand frequently expressed uncertainty and reluctance about advancing their careers and prospects for promotion; this hesitancy was described by one woman as ‘girl disease’. Embedded within the contradictions that emerged from the in-depth interviews which formed our primary method of data collection were distinctive differences in both the attitudes and experiences of the different age and sector cohorts that participated in the project. Older women interviewed had frequently struggled against discrimination and many in the higher education and the public sector had been ‘first generation’ senior women managers. But most no longer saw themselves as tokens in leadership expressing enthusiasm about their positions and what they had been able to achieve. Younger women interviewed came mainly from the private sector; they believed they had been appointed on merit, were at ease with their male colleagues and confident of their capacity to influence events and to effect changes. Yet there was still some evidence of ambivalence and reticence about proceeding to more senior positions. This reflected both individual confidence but also structural discrimination that suggested to women that they might not be accepted in senior positions. In addition, the forms of ambivalence varied: some women were explicit in expressing their lack of confidence in their abilities while others demonstrated this by a tendency to seek additional qualifications. Evidence of women’s difficulties in reconciling family responsibilities with the demands of senior level appointments was also manifest. Drawing on a range of approaches to understanding women’s social identity we illustrate different instances of ambivalence and reticence evident among our participants. We seek to explain this phenomenon by analysing the tensions between women’s gender identity and the organisational factors that shape their ‘managerial’ identity. We conclude by suggesting strategies to improve organisational practices in relation to women’s career development and promotion practices.

Introduction
Women account for 12 % of senior executive appointments in Australia’s publicly listed companies (EOWA, 2006), 35% of senior executive positions in the Australian Public Service (ofw.facs.gov.au) and 21.1 % of vice-chancellors’ positions in Australian universities (EOWA, 2006). Although still clearly in the minority in all three sectors a generation of women in this country have attained and sustained careers in senior management. Our research project sought to explore the career experiences of such women including the factors that enabled them to sustain their roles in senior
management and the impact that their presence in senior management had on cultures in their organisations. In this paper we particularly focus on women’s career advancement into leadership roles. We explore perceptions on the part of both men and women about what we have termed ‘reticence’ on the part of women to seek senior level appointments and analyse possible reasons for the ‘ambivalence’ that a noticeably high proportion of women in our study expressed about wanting to take on senior management roles. We also examine distinctive differences in both the attitudes and experiences of the different age and sector cohorts that participated in the project.

We argue that one explanation for the apparent contradictions the women in our research experienced between achieving career success and yet at the same time seemingly resisting it can be attributed to the tensions that women in senior roles experience between their identity as ‘women’ and their identity as ‘managers’. We go on to explore the nature of these contradictions drawing on recent literature and research that address issues of women’s career progression and organisational advancement. In particular we examine the prospect that our participants’ expressions of ambivalence and reticence are underpinned by a limited form of agency occasioned by a breakdown of traditional gender norms as a result of women’s entry into male dominated social fields such as management (McNay, 2000).

Finally we reflect on positive ways to leverage change for small wins (Meyerson and Fletcher, 2000) by making explicit to women themselves the factors that work to limit their progression and by suggesting to organisations ways of improving practices in relation to women’s career development and promotion.

**Gender identity, managerial identity and organisational advancement**

Previous research has drawn attention to the tensions that women managers experience between their identity as managers and their identity as women. Pinpointing social identity theory as a useful way of capturing “how individuals’ identity group memberships shape their perspective and experiences in different settings,” Ely (1995: 591) notes that women’s gender identity is the meaning that women attach to their membership in the category “female”. She found in male dominated firms women perceived the psychological and behavioural differences between men and women in sex role stereotyped ways. In a reflection of this phenomenon Chesterman, Ross-Smith and Peters (2006) found that even in organisations where women constitute 30% or more of the senior management they frequently conceptualised their contributions to the organisation to attributes of femininity rather those of successful management. Fournier and Keleman (2001:271) citing Gherardi point out that “the presence of women in the workplace breaks with the symbolic order of gender”. They go on to outline a series of balancing acts that women ‘perform’ in order to reconcile their dualistic position as ‘women’ and as ‘competent managers’ including downplaying their gender identity by investing in various images that make them acceptable in the organisational world, assuming various guises of male identity or breaking away from individual strategies such as these and using collective action to differentiate themselves from male-dominated work environments. The need to engage in balancing acts such as these suggests that dominating masculinist cultures of organisations of themselves limit women’s capacity to undertake leadership roles.

Van Vianen and Keizer (1996:113) posit that gender difference in motivation resulting from tension between women’s various roles in society is a potentially powerful explanation for their lower disposition or intention toward a managerial job. In their study of the managerial intentions of males and females in a Dutch multinational and automotive firm they found that “the more experienced a person is with management tasks and the more verbal encouragement in the work environment the person receives, the higher is his or her perceived self-efficacy for management tasks and the motivation to secure a management position”. In studies undertaken in private and public sector organisations Van Vianen and Fischer (2002:333) in the Netherlands found that both men and women “feel attracted to competitive environments, and are prepared to put a lot of
effort into their work occupied management positions”. Yet when specific motives for taking on a senior management role were examined salary and status were less important for women than for men.

Despite the ease of some women with more masculine cultures their study also found that whether ambitious or not women were more intent on maintaining work-home balance and on protecting themselves “against the stress and time investments that top management jobs require” (Van Vianen and Fischer, 2002: 334). Davidson and Cooper (1992) argued that the critical difference in occupational stress between male and females in management are the higher pressures that women face which are external to the organisation particularly those within the domestic and social arena. In a study of academic promotion there is also clear evidence that women are far less likely to apply for promotion than men. Probert (2005:56) suggests that women do not seem to attack career structure as vigorously as men with significant proportions appearing to stop climbing just as they are getting near the peaks. In seeking to explain this Probert (2005: 69) draws attention to a “relentless and continuous collision between work and life on a daily basis” experienced particularly by women academics. She argues that “if we want to understand more about the difference between men’s and women’s experience of paid work we need to acknowledge how much of this depends on what happens in the household” suggesting that “women’s ability to devote time to paid work is the outcome of a complex and highly gendered set of negotiations and compromises with the household.”

In a move away from explanations that focus primarily on societal influences on women’s organisational advancement Niederle and Versterlund (2007) conducted laboratory experiments in an environment where men and women perform equally well and where issues of discrimination and time spent on the job could not be used to explain male/ female differences in behaviour. The findings of these experiments led them to suggest that women respond differently to competitive environments with men being considerably more overconfident than women in such contexts despite both sexes being of equal ability.

The research studies cited above serve to confirm both the well known organisational structural and cultural as well as individual factors that impact on women’s career and promotion intentions. They also support our formulation that ambivalence and reticence emerge from women managers’ frequent identification with stereotypical versions of femininity typically associated with the domestic sphere. At the same time these studies confirm that women who aspire to leadership roles have a strong sense of identity with many of the attributes of successful management such as ease with masculine cultures and preparedness for hard work.

Background and Methodology
The data we analyse in this paper is drawn from an Australian research project: Women Executives in Australian Organisations: an investigation of their role in the transformation and maintenance of managerial cultures. Senior executives in 19 public, private sector and higher education sector organisations where women constituted 30% or more of the senior executive1 and had held an executive role for three years or more years were interviewed. Data was collected via ethnographic interviews with 168 women and 87 men. The interviews averaged between 45 and 60 minutes. All

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1 Senior management was defined by the use of the Equal Opportunity for Women in the Workplace Agency categories of Tier 1, Tier 2 and Tier 3 managers (AAA, 1995). Tier 3 Management includes those managers who are responsible for the formulation of programs and polices and assume accountability for financial, employment and human resource aspects of a specific work area. Tier 2 is responsible for, and supervises, Tier 3 Managers. The duties of Tier 2 Managers are of a higher order than Tier 3 Managers in that they are directly responsible for leadership and strategic direction of lower Tier managers. They directly report to Tier 1 Managers and also support Tier 1 Managers in relation to strategic organisational operations and development. Tier 1 Management is defined as having ultimate control of the organisation and usually there would only be one person in that category in each organisation.
interviews were conducted by 3 chief investigators on the project using a semi-structured interview format. The interviews were transcribed and subsequently read by each researcher to get a general sense of their content. This process was followed by several meetings at which emergent themes were discussed and broad categories of analysis agreed upon. These categories of analysis formed the basis of a more nuanced analysis of the data using NVivo.

In our initial analysis we noted a series of tensions and contradictions in women’s discussions of their achievements in senior managerial roles in particular when they discussed their career success, promotion and organisational advancement. The NVivo software enabled us to apply our emergent themes to the different age and sector cohorts. This process is reflective of what Van Maanen (1979) refers to as first and second order analysis in ethnographic inquiry. Van Maanen (1979) describes first order concepts as the ‘facts’ such as observations of actual behaviours as well as the interpretations by organisational members of their behaviours in this case the interviews. Second order concepts are the ‘theories’ that researchers use to explain first order data. Van Maanen’s (1979:3) description of second order analysis as “interpretations” of “interpretations” that is interpretations of participants’ own interpretations of their behaviours was the second step in the analytic process. In this instance we ‘theorised’ the tensions and contradictions about promotion around the concepts of ‘reticence’ and ‘ambivalence’.

As will be clear from the discussion below what emerged were discernable differences in patterns of response pertaining to the different age and sector cohorts. In the higher education sector 74% of our female interviewees were aged over 50. This meant they had been among the first women to achieve senior management roles in an Australian university. In the public sector the average age of our female interviewees was 40-49. The cohort of women from the private sector companies was younger with almost 47% aged 39 years or below and 91% under 50.

Women in Higher Education
In the higher education sector we interviewed women vice-chancellors, deputy and pro-vice-chancellors, deans and senior directors of administration. It therefore was surprising that the women we talked to often undervalued their own skills and were not as good at self-promotion as men. They had frequently needed to be encouraged to seek more senior positions and would not apply without specific endorsement. Women were more likely to overvalue the qualifications of their colleagues.

A female Deputy Vice-Chancellor explained what she saw as the phenomenon of women not applying for senior positions:

The big problem is actually getting the women to the point of application. Maybe I’ve been a perfect example of it, saying no, I wouldn’t apply for the Vice-Chancellor’s job because I wouldn’t get it. Women think they have to be perfect before they actually apply for jobs. Men with an imperfect record will apply much more readily than women and take the gamble. Women like to get it all stitched up and then run.

Women sometimes expressed uncertainty particularly about their credentials. It seemed women academics defined their roles primarily as teachers or researchers. The step into a role that was seen as purely managerial produced a wariness about applying unless there was very specific encouragement.

Examples of ‘reticence’ in this context were for instance that the majority of women we interviewed were in their current jobs because they had been invited to apply, were approached by search firms or their own direct superiors or were appointed from acting positions. Some women were aware of their strengths but wanted others to endorse them. Others indicated that they waited for a signal to
apply for the job. In a number of cases it was clear that women thought that they were not ready for the jobs overvaluing the qualifications of other colleagues.

A female Director of an academic centre had assumed that a male colleague had better qualifications. Her direct superior, a DVC, had to ring her to request that she apply:

So they advertised for a Director and funnily enough I actually didn’t put in, didn’t even think of applying to be the Director and it was only that the DVC rang me up about a day before the applications closed and in hindsight he must have looked to see, but at the time I didn’t think. He said ‘Have you got your application in?’ ‘No’. ‘Why not?’ I said ‘Oh well a good friend of mine’s applying and he’ll get the job for sure so there’s no point in me applying’. And he said ‘Oh no don’t do that because even when you think someone’s a shoe-in for a job, their institution makes a counter offer and then we go to the number two person on the list’. And I thought ‘Oh that’s right’. So I put in an application but funnily enough they offered me the job and not him. So it’s quite funny.

In reality, this situation is not ‘funny’. The woman concerned was demonstrating her diffidence by consistently emphasising how ill-equipped she felt for the task particularly in relation to her colleague’s competence. The role of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor is also complicated. He clearly valued her competency and approached her to apply. He nevertheless implied she might have a chance of getting the job if she were to be number two on the list and the number one candidate (her male friend) were to get a counter offer. So at best his encouragement would seem to be qualified. This woman’s situation is reflective of Probert’s (2005) finding that women academics are far less likely to apply for promotion than men and that men were more relentless in their pursuit of promotion that women (2005:56). As she notes this lack of willingness to attack career structure as vigorously as men results “in significant proportions of women appearing to stop climbing” just as they were getting near the senior levels of the organisation. Van Vianen and Keizer’s (1996: 113) suggestion that women’s managerial intentions can be undermined by a circular process whereby “lower expectations of female ambition by managers result in less support of female employees which leads to lower ambitions of female employees which in turn confirms the initial expectations of the manager” is salient here. At odds with this woman’s expressed lack of confidence in applying for the position is the fact that she was ultimately successful in getting the job.

A small but significant group also expressed concern and doubt about their credentials and wanted to be absolutely certain they would be able to deliver as is evidenced by this comment from a woman who had been both an academic and a senior administrator:

I came to be here because I was doing a similar job in the Division. Initially I was approached perhaps a year and a half prior to my coming across to this central role from a Divisional role and at the time I thought it was premature which is very interesting. I thought that I wasn’t yet experienced enough. I’d been doing a (similar) role in the Division and the VC actually approached me and said ‘What about coming across to the centre?’ It’s very interesting because this goes back 7 or 8 years and I said I didn’t believe I had fully conquered the job in the Division. Isn’t that an interesting thing? Probably I’d been there for 3 years and I hadn’t tidied up all this end. So some 18 months later I was approached again. I think there actually was a selection panel on that occasion and I did apply because I felt I was ready and I had really got it.

This woman went on to reflect that much of her delay in applying could be attributed to her own confidence, to her sense that she had ‘got on top’ of the job:

I also reflect upon whether or not I am confident enough in my own abilities and pushy enough. It’s an interesting issue about women in management. I don’t even know on reflection
I think it was the correct decision but it may not have been a decision that others would have made. But I think now I’m quite sure it was the right decision because I certainly felt that I was very much in control of what was going on and I really felt that I knew more than anybody else by the time I finished the five years at the divisional level.

Niederle and Versterlund (2007) citing Dweck (2000) suggest women may fall into “confidence traps” possibly arising from a tendency to incorporate more negative feedback than men. This situation was exemplified in our research where some women justified applying for jobs by describing the application and interview as a way of giving themselves practice or some form of professional development. Others talked about themselves ‘hoping to get an interview’. Again it seemed as if they had not visualised themselves in a senior role and were ‘surprised’ when others viewed them as competent and committed as exemplified by the experience of one female Pro-Vice-Chancellor:

I was encouraged to apply. … I was then in another State. In fact the VC wrote to me and she also suggested that (another executive) ring me up and make sure I applied. I hadn’t been thinking of any such thing. I’d been appointed for 5 years and this was just 2 years into that, I’d bought a house and my partner had moved to be with me. I discussed it with my then boss who had been a Vice-Chancellor. He thought it was a very good exercise and sent me to apply. It was a public presentation, a two-day process; it was a way of signalling to the other State that I had a life other than there. Also to signal to this State that I was alive and well. So I really undertook it as a professional development exercise, never dreaming, never even considering, that I would be offered the job. Hadn’t given a moment’s thought to that or how I’d react so it was astonishing when I was.

A female Director of Human Resources argued that even when an institution was committed to equity women had to be actively encouraged to apply for more senior positions or to act in them:

There is still an issue because I think men are actively fostered more and they’re pushier. I can think of two absolutely excellent women who were Deans, both of whom could have been excellent VCs had they chosen, or if they’d taken certain decisions. There’s more consciousness of men’s careers so if you’re looking at who will act as DVC over the next while, women have to be more assertive to get themselves on the list than men. Men are more assertive so when those things come up … For example a six-month opportunity as a DVC. It would not be unusual for two male Deans to put their hands up really quickly to be considered. I talked to (one of the women I mentioned) at the time and said: ‘Are you going to put your hand up?’ And her view was that she wasn’t getting enough explicit encouragement. It was a two-way thing. There was an executive who may not be giving (signals). But also she was waiting for more, waiting to be asked. It made a difference to at least one of them who was dithering about whether she would go back into being a Professor and update her research profile or whether she would tip her hat into academic management. And I think it was a really fine line. I think she would have been an absolutely excellent DVC. I like to think what made the difference was there was a critical acting opportunity coming up and she didn’t feel that she got enough encouragement. She wasn’t willing to assert it and a male Dean was.

This woman did not see this as ‘overt discrimination’. Rather she suggested that senior men could lack ‘particular sensitivity around what some of those women might need to play the game’. In other words she had seen that many women needed to be specifically encouraged to apply for senior jobs or even to take up a short-term acting opportunity. Since women did not compete as willingly as their male colleagues there were assumptions made about ‘who is ambitious and who is not ambitious’. She believed it was not that women were not ambitious rather that they were more modest about their capabilities and their readiness for the position.
This view is confirmed by a recent survey conducted by the Equal Opportunity in the Workplace Agency (EOWA: 2008) which found that Australian women were equally ambitious and committed to their careers as men. This was supported by a similar US survey which found that “male and female executives aspire to occupy the most senior role in an organisation in almost identical numbers” (EOWA, 2008:9). What this suggests is that questions concerning women’s ambition to achieve leadership roles should be uncoupled from discussions about getting women to the point of application for promotion. The two are clearly different phenomena with some straightforward support from the organisation in the form of encouragement by both male and female colleagues in leadership roles providing a relatively simple solution to the latter.

Similarly one should ask whether the trait of reticence can be seen as gender specific. In an account of his personal experience of becoming an academic manager, Martin Parker (2004: 47) writes “Before I became Head of Department ... I wondered what it would be like and worried I would not be able to do the job. One of my worries was that everyone and everything would stop working.” This is an example of a male academic expressing his concerns about assuming a senior management role. Our research suggested that academics be they male or female are often concerned about relinquishing their teaching and research careers in favour of roles in academic management and leadership for which they had not been trained. The comments of our respondents above might also be explained by Katila and Merilainen’s (2002) theory that women’s resistance relates to the powerful definitions of senior jobs as all-consuming and dominated by male values. Ross-Smith, Kornberger, Anandakumar and Chesterman (2007:50) support such a view and argue “this tendency can be attributed to a discourse steeped in gendered versions of management where masculine norms of work continue to prevail and where the social milieu that exists at senior levels of management frequently displays dynamics which can be likened to those of organized sports – endurance, strength and competitive spirit (Goffman, 1977)”.

**Women in the Public Sector**

The evidence concerning women’s reticence or uncertainty about their abilities in applying for senior positions was also compelling in the public sector interviews. For some women there had been a real struggle for self-confidence. The confidence of others in one woman’s abilities and the length of time she had worked in jobs at this level had enabled her to acknowledge that she performed well:

> It’s only probably in the last four or five years that I stopped feeling inside that I’m a fraud, that in fact, one day at some point, somebody will say, “Why are we paying this money? Why do we keep giving these jobs to this woman?” But I’ve stopped thinking that, because now I’ve reached a stage.

Another more senior woman described her uncertainty about going for promotion as self-doubt - a trait she saw as being much more common among women than men:

> I’ve noticed that women generally, and I think that I fall into this camp as well, are not as good at self-promotion as a lot of senior men. So that it would not have occurred to me to promote myself in the same way that I’ve seen senior men do. And I think I’ve also suffered more self-doubt along the way. There’s a bit of a tendency for women like me to focus on their shortcomings whereas I’ve noticed that men focus on all of the wonderful things that they can do. And so I think that in some ways I’ve held myself back. It’s probably made me more cautious. And I think that the sorts of behaviours that are valued in the public service at the moment, the sort of ‘Go out and get’em’ behaviours, the big bold statements, the taking people along with you by sheer will, are not necessarily things that come easily to me. I’m a bit more cautious by nature.
Women might recognise that they were capable of doing the job but felt more certain of applying if they had had opportunities to act in the job. The woman quoted below showed her deep uncertainty trying to work out whether she should go for a job she clearly could excel in. She was able to make the shift because of experience acting in the role.

I guess I was at the stage where I thought it would be a challenging position and saw that I had a level of competency to meet that. I had the acting experience for some time, and interestingly enough ... it was not necessarily a position that I had aspired to. If you’d asked me even probably two years ago or two and a half years ago whether I saw myself as being a Director, I would not have necessarily sensed that I would be. And it was really having the opportunity for different reasons over different periods of time to act in it, that I gradually saw that, yes I felt competent to do that.

Self-efficacy can be defined as belief in “one’s capability to perform a specific task”(Gist, 1987:472). Whilst stopping short of suggesting that women might generally experience a lack of self-efficacy it can certainly be seen from some of these comments that women in our study did express a lack of self-efficacy when considering promotion to a more senior role. The chance to act in such a role for a period of time as evidenced in the above quote seemed to provide this woman with what Bandura (1982) refers to as enactive mastery which is “facilitated when gradual accomplishments build the skills, coping abilities and exposure needed for task performance” (Gist, 1987:473) and highlights the importance for organisations of providing women with opportunities to act in more senior roles.

Other women were aware of their strengths but wanted others to endorse them for promotion. One woman described her first management job in the private sector when her boss had personally approached her to apply:

I was very resistant to my first major position. I said, “No, I can’t do this”, as women always are so good at doing. He said, “Yes you can”. So anyway we agreed we’ll have a trial of it and so we did and I did that for eight years.

For one woman reticence about capabilities and confidence was overcome for her personally by an awareness of others performing below the level that she was demonstrating. She went on later in the interview to discuss how she saw what she called ‘girl disease’ affecting other women:

There’s always the problem that those who are the quieter achievers get left behind and I think that’s a problem in every organisation and sometimes that is a gender issue. There’s a lot of ‘girl disease’ I call it here, of women who quietly do their work and excel but don’t develop the other skills, the presentation skills or the selling of themselves skills. Most of the women here are, and I think all the executive Directors are, quite alert to that but I’ve had a number of cases with women who failed at the interview stage. And it’s terrible because you work with them and then they get to the interview stage and they’re so self-conscious, they’re under-confident about their skills and it’s a real problem and it’s a problem that we’ve identified here. It happens time after time.

As with women in higher education the women quoted above demonstrate an innate lack of confidence in their ability to perform in senior positions. This is yet another manifestation of ‘girl disease’ - a term which provocatively expresses the multiplicity of micro-factors in women’s lives that can impact on decisions to pursue a role in organisational leadership. In a reflection of this Niederle and Versterlund (2007:1085) show that women not only turn away from competition while men are attracted to it but also that in their lab experiment “high-performing women entered the tournament too rarely and low-performing men enter it too often.”

Related to the issue of reticence was the fact that many women interviewed showed a lack of career planning. They were more likely to take opportunities that become available thus advancing
their careers almost by serendipity. Women were more likely to focus on their current position and the pleasure they derived from doing that job well than to focus on the next step of their career.

The public sector in Australia has a much better track record than the private sector in terms of the percentage of women in leadership roles. It also has had for over 30 years a stronger commitment to gender equity. One could therefore be surprised at the apparent lack of self-confidence expressed by these women in advancing their careers even though they had all made it to the top three echelons of their organisations. Van Vianen and Keizer (1996) found that self-efficacy also played a critical role in managerial intention. The comments quoted above would seem to suggest once again a certain lack of self-efficacy when it came to seeking organisational advancement rather than what might be seen as a more general lack of confidence or self-esteem. We have seen numerous examples of women who once they are encouraged or directly approached to apply for promotion are able to overcome what might be regarded as a situational or task related aspects of behaviour. The recent EOWA (2008:20) survey found that two of the five most common reasons why women left their previous jobs were “difficulty in progressing” and “lack of clear career development”. Our research findings suggest that if organisations want to retain talented women and enable them to make progress in their careers they must resolve the factors which constitute women’s reticence and their apparent lack of self-efficacy and ensure that they receive appropriate training to build skills to overcome this.

**Women in the Private Sector**

The two private sector agencies were both large financial institutions. Although the women we interviewed were defined by their organisations as ‘senior’ managers, they were concentrated in Tier 3, with only one woman in the two top tiers of senior management. So despite both organisation’s commitment to advancing women into senior management they were still in the minority at the top of the organisation and had to deal with significant discrimination. One woman pointed out that men were still numerically dominant despite the positive reputation of her institution for gender equity at senior levels – she had analysed statistics and discovered that only 5 women earned over $150,000, only 1.9% at those levels.

Private sector women were on average considerably younger than those in higher education and the public sector and showed much greater readiness to apply for jobs. They were well-qualified, demonstrated confidence in their capacities and were eager to advance themselves. They expressed faith in the merit principle. Nevertheless there were instances of women expressing ambivalence towards progressing their careers. Several demonstrated the characteristic reticence we found in the other sectors:

I don’t see myself as being a general manager or anything higher than I am. I actually like doing these types of roles so I’m not very driven to go ‘Right, that’s my next position’. Actually, all my career, all my 16 years, I’ve fallen into roles that have always been very challenging. To date I’ve never applied for a role.

This woman had been asked to apply or ‘fallen into a role’. She did not have a clearly designed career plan. Further as the following comments suggest women often need to be encouraged to seek more senior positions:

I think it’s now incumbent on anybody at a senior level to make sure they provide a nurturing environment for men and women. For women it means you have to drag them a bit harder up, to say yes, you can do that job, yes you can apply, but I don’t think it’s any more than that. I don’t think we should be (doing more).
One woman acknowledged that structures to recruit women into leadership roles were in place. She suggested however that she would need to act in a more aggressive way if she were to succeed. She would need to be less ‘nice’:

I never think I am going to get on. It could be because I’m too nice. But one tangible example is we do have a recruitment policy when recruiting for people externally that the consultants must have X number of women on the list. They must come forward with a reasonable number of women in terms of the candidature.

Another exercised a choice to remain in her current role for the challenge it provided although she also acknowledged in this position she could control the demands on her time; she indicated she would in fact seek other positions that offered greater flexibility in line with her need to care for family:

For the first time in many years I feel that I am really doing what I want to do. I feel that I have got to where I wanted to get to in terms of really enjoying what I do, really enjoying the challenge of it and feeling as though I have a great influence over it. So from that perspective it’s great and I have been doing it for almost two years, this particular role. And I have been very happy to stay doing this because the company is getting bigger, the issues are getting larger, there is a lot of change. So it’s not very static even if I did stay in this role. But I suppose long term I do want to move onto other things. I want to, either within the organisation or outside. I would like to take on directorships and things like that because I think that gives me more flexibility. I mean I have to face the fact I have four children, almost, and I’m very busy. I mean they’re not going to go away. I have got a lot of other commitments really, so while it’s been fine doing this and it probably would be in terms of all the support and everything I’ve got, probably if I did it for too long, I’ll burn out. I mean I don’t mean to make it sound like it’s really demanding, it’s not, but you have to go overseas probably four or five times a year. There are a lot of things that actually really disrupt the family. Even if they are being taken to school and you know Dad’s there or someone’s there if I am not there, um, so I suppose I never think beyond one or two years and I hope that I will be able to do something to sort of have more time which is what I want. I like the demands, I like the demanding, the challenging nature of the work but I prefer to have more time outside work.

This woman foregrounds the significance of her family responsibilities in limiting her ambitions. The conflicts between highly demanding and enjoyable work and the demands of family life were often the way ambivalence presented itself in the private sector interviews. This was not surprising given that the majority of our sample in this sector were younger, 30-49, and had children. Probert’s (2005) notion of the relentless clash between women’s work and personal lives is evident in these comments by a young woman who presented as a confident professional, ambitious and eager to advance her career:

So now at my age I need to progress my career quickly and what I don’t want to do is sit in roles for six or twelve months too long. I haven’t got time to do that. And once I understand the issues of the role and got on top of it, I’ve added value. I believe it’s just sensible to allow me to move on. Trapping me in a role and I’ve got a history of this throughout my previous roles, is that I kind of get stuck because they say, Oh no you’re too good and we rely on you and I become like this, and it’s my own fault. I am not trying to be immodest, but I sort of become like a centre of the universe and everything comes to me and I have to know everything. And we have to run it past her (the interviewee) because she knows what’s going on and then I become so important to the organisation or the department or whatever it is that they won’t let me go. And I guess I’m intrigued as to how do (women) get through to that next level.
In stark contrast to this confidence later in the interview she stated quite bluntly:

If I was to get pregnant, that would be the death of me here.

Liff and Ward’s (2001) research which identified the culture of an organisation in the finance sector in the UK as having a critical impact on women’s career paths and more particularly on whether or not they sought promotion to in-house senior roles explains this woman’s situation. They argued that the reasons for the organisation’s failure to achieve a target of 30% of women in management by 2000 could be found in a link between the cultural context of the organisation and individual decisions relating to whether or not to seek promotion to senior management. They found that at all levels managers’ understanding of the promotion process shaped or ‘gendered’ their own career orientation in two regards. First the promotion process was understood by men and women to reward characteristics and behaviours that were much more problematic for women than for men. Second there was also an anticipated conflict between taking on a senior management position and active parenting. They identified the promotion process and deep-seated attitudes concerning work and family responsibilities as cultural characteristics that discriminated against women’s individual decisions to seek promotion and suggested that the “dominant organisational model of those who will succeed is strongly sex-typed male” (Liff and Ward, 2001:31).

Qualifications – do they matter too much?
In the two private sector financial institutions we also found that reticence presented itself in more subtle ways. We have already indicated that the women interviewed were considerably younger on average than those interviewed in either the higher education sector or the public sector. They also emphasised individual merit more fully than interviewees in the other sectors.

All interviewees were asked to fill in on a voluntary basis demographic data sheets. As Table 1 shows when these were analysed it was found that a much greater proportion of women had postgraduate degrees compared to the men in the sample. It is highly likely that the tendency of women to seek higher qualifications reflected not only their age but also their concern to be fully qualified for senior positions with masters’ degrees often in business dominating and despite their demanding jobs.

Table 1

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<th>Qualification</th>
<th>Percent</th>
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<td>None</td>
<td>Men</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dip/Cert</td>
<td>Women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor</td>
<td>Men</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grad</td>
<td>Women</td>
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<tr>
<td>D Dip/Cert</td>
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<td>PhD</td>
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In the public sector as well educational qualifications was another area where significant differences between genders appeared. Two participants (both women) held only secondary qualifications. They had followed a traditional public service route to senior positions joining as junior clerks and working their way up. Four men interviewed had diplomas. The significant differences emerged in tertiary qualifications in particular postgraduate qualifications. Twice the proportion of women had obtained masters degrees, graduate diplomas and doctorates.

### Table 2

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<tr>
<th>Qualification</th>
<th>Men</th>
<th>Women</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>10%</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dip/Cert</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bachelor</td>
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<td>Grad Dip/Cert</td>
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<td>Masters</td>
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<td>PhD</td>
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Davidson and Cooper (1992) in their book “Shattering the Glass Ceiling” noted that British employment surveys showed marked gender differences between men and women in educational qualifications with women being twice as likely as men to have postgraduate or higher degrees suggesting that women managers felt they needed to be better at their jobs as evidenced by their qualifications. Despite the intervening years and the Australian focus of our study the women we interviewed also seemed to rely on further education and training to boost their human and social capital to ensure that they were able to compete for senior positions. This should be considered in relation to reticence and the concern that women showed to ensure that they were absolutely ready to apply for senior positions. This finding again should be a concern for employers especially when one considers that Niederle and Versterlund’s (2007) contention that high performing women do not enter competitive contexts often enough while low performing men enter too often.

**Analysis**

The reasons for women’s reticence and ambivalence are as we have shown complex. Although the organisations we studied had explicit commitment to gender equity at senior levels their success in achieving this was only partial. The most senior levels of management were still dominated by men and many of the organisations retained the imprint of competitive and aggressive cultures that women found unsympathetic and difficult to negotiate. The formation of women’s subjectivities in our society still influences women to be more modest, not to go all out for ‘winning’ the career and promotion game in senior leadership roles and this is reflected in women’s professional identities. The ongoing unevenness in responsibilities for home and family continue to hamper women’s attachment to demanding full-time work.

Foucault (1990) first proposed the perspective that gendered social practices become so normalised that the injustices they perpetuate are utterly transparent so that the everyday practices of
gendered hegemony are taken for granted even when its very existence is being questioned and in some cases directly addressed. In a reflection of this organisations in our study even those with specific programs to support equity still demonstrated subtle patterns of systemic disadvantage. These patterns can only be understood by considering understandings that operate in the cultures that exist in managerial settings. Any analysis of organisational culture and knowledge creation is also an analysis of the way tacit knowledge shapes the way women (and men) executives perceive their roles and indeed their likelihood of success in promotion. Our research suggests that women in executive managerial roles are judged as are all workers against a norm or average in a way that continues to favour men. This normative division rarely offers the linguistic and structural space in which it is possible to think and work in diverse ways. As Sinclair suggests there are substantial hurdles to doing leadership differently. They are deeply embedded in cultural mythology, in economic structures and in social expectations (1998: 179). Women are therefore much less likely to see themselves in leadership positions.

Van Vianen and Fischer (2002) make the point that women are as much agents of their own career advancement as they are victims of discrimination and bias. So whilst there are well identified organisational, structural and cultural factors which affect women’s organisational advancement agency can also play a crucial role in decisions to seek promotion. Our study showed participants had strong sense of identification with the ‘feminine’ that may limit but not fully contain their capacity to engage with the dominant or ideal worker model aligned with senior management. It seemed the reticence and ambivalence we detected in our interviews was underpinned by this alignment with the ‘feminine’. Even though the organisations had affirmative action policies in regard to the recruitment and retention of women in senior management stereotypes such as being too nice to ‘get on’, too concerned with fellow workers and unwilling to pursue a career often prevailed on our participants’ discourse on advancing their careers.

McNay (2000:73) supports the idea of a more active role “played by the subject in the construction of a coherent identity which allows a more nuanced concept of agency to emerge”. A powerful example of agency in our research is evident in women deciding that their life is too full to pursue careers and that balance between work and family responsibilities is too important. The exercise of agency in this regard reveals how strongly the trajectory of motherhood and family prevails in women’s lives (Crompton and Le Feuvre, 1992). So while men and women can and do describe women’s participation in senior management in terms of their professional status and their success or otherwise in managing and holding power (Ross-Smith et al: 2007) real aspects of domestic life such as caring responsibilities interplay with stereotypical female rationales for the same.

**Conclusion and strategies for the future**

Reticence reflects both individual confidence and structural discrimination in that women do not expect that they will be accepted in senior positions. Any future strategies need to acknowledge the complexities this poses in relation to achieving gender equity in senior management. Organisations committed to bringing women into senior positions must analyse their organisational cultures to ensure that these are not competitive and aggressive. Success is reliant on changes in both women’s professional identities and in the social construction of organisations that perpetuate masculine power and reinforce inequitable gender regimes.

We have shown that women lack a sense of self-entitlement to these senior roles. The very identification and ‘naming’ of ‘girl disease’ as a metaphor for women’s reticence in applying for promotion and their ambivalence towards assuming more senior managerial roles provides a powerful linguistic device through which women may be better able to define their own role in limiting their career prospects. We have also seen these tendencies can be overcome through the explicit support and encouragement of a senior champion. Our interviews show that when women are encouraged to apply for a more senior job they feel more conviction to cross a threshold at a
time when they wonder whether they are able to perform or will be welcome. Organisations should develop strategies for succession planning exploring how they pass on knowledge and develop the leaders of the future in a tradition of equity. There needs to be a more positive effort directed to the recruitment of women which would identify and target those with high potential and actively prepare them to apply for senior positions. Organisations should also develop a policy on short-term vacancies in senior positions and offer women the opportunity of acting in senior positions or undertaking higher duties. Developing workforce succession plans that specifically aim to increase the representation of equity groups such as women in senior management is also a specific and visible commitment that could encourage women to consider applying for more senior positions. It is also critical that men and women are given equal access to similar coaching and mentoring. The identification and targeting of individual women with demonstrated high potential to contribute at a senior level is more likely to produce success than generalised programs of leadership training although many women vouched for the importance of these in establishing supportive networks among women in senior roles.

Our research also draws attention to a form of agency albeit limited exercised by some of our participants and frequently occasioned by the still predominant societal role women have in home and family. Not surprisingly we saw examples of women choosing to give precedence to their family and home commitments over the pursuit of careers in the upper echelons of Australian organisations. These women are nevertheless in comparatively influential organisational roles and were employed in organisations that had achieved a critical mass of women in senior management. We would argue their agency may have the potential to disrupt more traditional career trajectories and draw much needed attention to different ways of working at this level.

It must be said though that the most significant factor in ensuring that women and men have equal opportunities is the quest for a societal transformation of responsibilities for home and family. It is evident that women still bear major responsibilities for care of children and older dependants and that the present structures of high profile work is not easily compatible with this.

References


**Keywords:** Gendered organisations, Reticence, Ambivalence, Cultural determination
Gendered Organisational Cultures, Men’s Networks and Women Engineers’ Career Chances: Results from two European Research Projects.

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Results from research of Womeng “Creating Cultures of Success for Women engineering” (website: www.womeng.net)1 (2002-2005) and from PROMETEA “Empowering Women Engineers in Industrial and Academic Research” (website: www.prometa.info)2 (2005-2007), two European Commission projects, are subject of the paper. Gendered organisational cultures of engineering are the common focus. Aim is to give an overview about state of the art, hypotheses, methodology and results of the special work package, dealing with effects of gendered organisational cultures on careers in engineering research3.

1 State of the art
Several theoretical fields can be useful for interpretation of Womeng results: gender studies, gender in academia, critical men’ studies, studies on feminist technology, organisational studies and studies on gendered career and profession (Sagebiel 2006; 2006a; 2005c).

Picture 1: Theoretical and research fields

1 Participating persons and institutions were Besides Felizitas Sagebiel (University of Wuppertal, Germany) Christine Waechter (IFF/IFZ Graz, Austria), Maureen Cooper (University of Stirling, UK), André Beraud and Jean Soubrier (INSA, Lyon, France), Anne-Sophie Genin (ENSAM, Paris, France), Päivi Siltanen (Witec, Finland), Dora Kokla (EDEM, Athens, Greece), Oto Hudec (Technical University Kosice, Slovakia), coordinated by Yvonne Pourrat (CDEFI, Paris, France).


3 The author has been coordinated this work package in both European projects Womeng and PROMETEA.
2 Hypotheses and methodology for Womeng

Living in a two gendered society with gender segregation in professional sphere following a gender segregated educational situation women engineers as professionals are embedded in a male domain. Working in a minority situation can lead to marginalisation and exclusion or integration through adaptation of male working culture, which is characterised by strong competition, less cooperation and teamwork besides overtimes and all availability. Informal cultural pattern include men’s networks on one hand and men’s jokes and stories on the other hand. Women engineers, having taken over a gendered division of labour tend to give so called work-life-balance priority, which lead to preference of part-time work, both strategies influencing their career aspiration. As managers on basis of gendered working styles they develop a new leadership style, which differs from traditional male leadership style. So social constructed gender differences can be weakened or strengthened through women engineers behavioural patterns.

Expert-interview, focus discussion groups and website analyses were chosen as investigation tools (Pourrat 2005; Sagebiel 2005a), besides official statistics from companies and Statistical Office of the European Communities. For sampling in each country two companies had to be chosen, one from production sector and one from energy sector.

3 Results on professional experiences and barriers for career of women engineers (Womeng)

Starting from description of dominant men’s working culture women engineer’s career concept, professional priorities and men’s networks as career barriers will be analysed (see Sagebiel 2005, 2006).

3.1 Dominance of men’ working culture

Masculine culture and minority situation of women

Working in a male domain for some of the women was a big challenge. Women agree that it is not easy to assert oneself and gain acceptance if you are a woman. “It is a men’s world and women have to accept that it is a men’s world” (an Austrian female engineer). Women engineers have to prove that they are competent, working hard, know what they are doing and want to be taken seriously (“I had to fight to convince the company that as a woman I could make it” (a French woman engineer who quit). The Austrian women see men having a conservative worldview and so they cannot handle assertive competent women. Many men are not aware of their old-fashioned gender stereotyping.

The women at a Slovak company talked openly about facing completely different problems in comparison to their male colleagues, the explanation for the discussion members lies in traditionally different position in family and society. Also the general approach to the problems or failures caused by women or men is different: if a woman ‘spoils something’ the reaction is usually as follows: “well, she is just a woman, what else could we expect from her (woman has a ‘hen brain’)?” If there is a problem caused by a man the reaction is: “well, it could happen to anybody.”

Even though some women engineers told about dominant traditional masculinity at the same time most of them told that they don’t have any problems with this culture. This result can be explained differently: first, the awareness of traditional masculinity is confirmed, but this working culture is really not a problem, second, the expected tough image does not allow being weak and having problems, or third, it is the product of balancing controversial perceptions of self and inner emotional processes (Sagebiel, 2005b; Sagebiel/Dahmen, 2006).

For more details and structures of hypotheses see Sagebiel (2006b).
Coping strategies between demonstrating equality and difference

How do women engineers cope with their minority situation in the engineering working culture? The asked Austrian women clearly stated that they still feel as being a minority and being dominated by a traditional masculinity culture, in which one characteristic part is the culture of sexist jokes. They think that only with great self-assurance they can cope with this working culture. So one of the coping strategies is to demonstrate great self-assurance, but. Most of the time men engineers show a much more self assurance “Men have a gigantic self-assurance. Even if they know nothing they open their mouths. Women open their mouths only if they really know something. That is where we do not match at all” (so one asked Austrian women engineer).

The opinions of women managers about gender differences in profession, especially in leadership style vary from country to country. While asked engineers in France and UK explain differences in leadership behaviour with personality traits, many of those asked in Germany, Austria, Greece, Finland and Slovakia tell about different styles by gender. When asked about what is important for management, most of the asked managers see team work, working atmosphere and fewer overtimes as central, in contrast to male colleagues in same position. Overtimes versus part-time are central elements of masculine versus feminine organisational cultures.

A special focus of coping seems to lie on dealing with sexist or stupid jokes. Regarding to the statements in the Austrian focus group it is best to find a joking way to react on sexist jokes, which does not turn male colleagues into enemies. Women need a lot of sensitiveness and delicacy but on the other hand men do not need sensitiveness when communicating with women. Nevertheless one younger manager in Germany uses to behave the same way like “…I send the jokes back, but better!”, she always tried to be better and straighter than her male colleagues, a women engineer from Finland said: “I’m working like a man!” and some French women adopt that behaviour too. Asked Austrian women think there is no need to change into a man either. “You should remain a woman. That is okay. But, if you are oversensitive that is of course a problem.”

3.2 Women engineers, career definition and barriers

Many women do not follow the traditional career definition as vertical progression, they have found their own values describing career. All over the samples and the nations job satisfaction depends on work contents, including widening the individual horizon by doing a horizontal career path, and work atmosphere. These characteristics have a higher importance than vertical career steps. “Career efforts do pay a certain price”, was a main statement in both German discussion groups and also asked women from Austria feel the same.

In Austria and Greece the asked women engineers talked about not planning the next career step, “it just happened”, on the contrary to U.K. and Finland where career is noticed as important to all of the women engineers. Interviewed women in Slovakia are not personally interested in leading positions, they would have to be supported and urged for leading positions. But they think women who are interested in leading positions have a good chance in the company. They consider themselves as being competent for their positions. A traditional gendered division of labour in Slovakian society (Hudec/ Urbancikova, 2005), which mostly gives the burden of homework to women builds the background of this argumentation.

Interviewed French women engineers got their own explanation: „Why so few women top managers? Well do they really want it? It implicates so many sacrifices, at the personal level, and familiar, why the top management compel people to spend their lives working? I think that women are not ready to pay such a price!” The price would be an unbalanced working and private life, which has a high priority for the women.

And the explanation of a German female engineer supplements: “It’s not desirable for women because the female concept of life and relationships does not fit together with managing positions so women can not identify themselves with the way of leadership. It would be much effort necessary to create a female work environment.”
Asked women engineers managers told about societal and company internal reasons for less career progression of women; these are gender stereotypes, traditional ideas about gendered division of labour, and traditional role concepts on one hand and overtimes, men’ networks and restricted entrance of women on the other hand.

3.3 Women engineers’ priorities
Women engineers mostly see themselves as having different priorities in comparison to men in combining work and private life and those who had climbed a management position seemed mostly to have a different leadership concept.

Objection to Male culture of overtimes
Overtimes versus part-time are central elements of masculine versus feminine organisational cultures. Most of women managers, practicing their own leadership concept with focus on a good working atmosphere, are conscious of the importance of reducing overtimes to urgent and necessary cases.

Concerning the working hours and doing overtimes there is a big cultural difference in Europe. In Germany, France, Slovakia, Austria and in the U.K. it is quite normal to do overtimes and show all time availability. Overtimes do not seem to be a big problem for women engineers being in the position where requested, just for the Austrian women. Here in one company the culture of working overtime and late night leads to strange practice. The women engineers in the focus group told that some men go on hour-long coffee breaks and in the evening they work and send emails late at night with the intention to impress the others. Or some cheat by setting the computer clock ahead of time. All this seems to be show in their view, because the majority of superiors are unable to assess the work of the employees they say.

The fear of the pressure doing overtimes when having a management position is very high in Germany preventing asked women engineers in focus groups partly from career aspire.

Women’s culture of part-time working?
Part-time working does not have the same standing all over Europe. In some countries like Germany, Austria and France part-time working is quite normal and accepted and offered at all companies especially for women having children. But in other countries it is offered rarely like in the U.K. and in Slovakia. Having no possibility of working part-time causes quite different decisions concerning family and career and can lead women engineers to drop out.

Being an employee working part-time is a way of work-life-balance for women especially when having children. But like the example at a German company shows, reducing working time can go along with some negative effects. Through reducing the work time the visibility shrinks and also the intensity of social contacts, which are necessary for networking and information spread. A French women engineer who quit talked about her experiences after reducing her weekly working time: “At the beginning, yes, some people tried to transform me into a secretary, and I said: no, I can’t do that. It was the job of his assistant!”, so women are, if they take a part-time job, sometimes considered as an assistant.

Work-life-balance with children
The interviewed women managers all over Europe show and live the possibility of combining family and career. But, they are unknown role models as women engineers who are not working at this career level being in a minority situation normally do not have contact to women managers. Especially younger women engineers still fear a career break when having children and looking for a work-life-balance (voices of German and Greek women engineers). The asked women managers, having experiences in combining family and being a manager, know about the difficulties but found their personal way of compatibility.
The asked German women engineers in focus groups talked about a company’ phenomena which might be transferable to other companies as well: before getting pregnant most of the women were aspirants for reaching the next career level, the promotion of superior’s stopped through pregnancy and taking parental leave, and career promotion did not start again after returning back to the work. Eventually the superiors still had the old-fashioned opinion that a combination of career and family is not possible or the superiors assumed that the women don’t want to be further promoted, because they will concentrate on their child.

Women in Germany, Austria, Slovakia, France and Finland do not necessarily drop out from job when having children. In France there is a great difference between good practice company practicing maternity leave as a kind of diversity and finding solutions to support and the women and the companies seeing pregnancy and maternity just as a problem. Company internal childcare facilities are not offered everywhere; this should be improved to take pressure especially from younger women engineers who fear career breaks or problems as parents.

Some women in the U.K. do not want to have the focus on childcare and work-life-balance, because not all women want to have children. Superiors in all nations are still assuming that women will have children. But the reality shows that some women do not have and do not want to have children. Those women always feel the prejudice, the opinion of all women having children. And this prejudice causes the loss of support for women or more support for men.

Women managers’ leadership style
When asked about what is important for management, most of the asked managers see team work, working atmosphere and fewer overtimes as central, in contrast to male colleagues in same position. But, the opinions of women managers about gender differences in profession, especially in leadership style vary from country to country. While asked engineers in France and UK explain differences in leadership behaviour with personality traits, many of those asked in Germany, Austria, Greece, Finland and Slovakia tell about different styles by gender.

3.4 Men’s networks as career barrier for women engineers
The importance and influence of networks in career making processes was confirmed in all project partner countries. Most of women engineers are aware of the male networks and their importance for career except Finland, where men’s networks seem not being so influential for career. Often women engineers told that they have only restricted access to the men’s networks, which to change seems to be very difficult. Only one asked French female engineer denied the fact that one could stay outside of the networks because of his/her sex: ‘you enter networks only because of your competencies’.

The appearance of men’s network is quite different. It starts with the informal meetings while drinking a coffee or smoking a cigarette, continuing to so called informal meeting after work or like in Finland where it was mentioned that men have own ‘sauna meetings’, where men can communicate also about the professions.

Women networks exist but the understanding of women and men networks is split into two components, one concerning private and the other concerning professional sphere. Professional sphere is related to having a formal women’s network, e.g. raised in an engineering association or especially for entrepreneurship. In Austria women networks are just starting. And in France already women networks exist, but they are associations, they seem to induce more a reflection on subjects like work-life-balance, dual career... than to help women to find a job, so it’s more an advising function than some concrete support.

The informal network like men have it has nowhere been the point of discussion. Especially for German women engineers who participated in focus group discussion it was clear that networking is necessary for career progress, but how to do networking was not clear for all. A recommendation was taking a mentor in a higher position, which can help with the men’s network. ‘You need someone to push and you need someone to pull’ (a German woman manager told). Because of the
few women engineers and fewer women engineer managers, they are not as powerful as male networks.

Women engineers need time to build up their own networks including men and women at high positions and they need cooperative men, not fitting in dominant masculinity. Besides women engineers discrimination also new masculinities experience the same, if they do not work in a company with a living diversity culture.

4 Hypotheses and methodology for PROMETEA
In PROMETEA the question was in what ways and to what amount social structures and cultures of engineering research organisations are traditionally male oriented dominated by hegemonic masculinity and men’s networks. Hypotheses from the former European project Womeng (European Commission 2006) about gendered organisational cultures and networks in professional sphere of engineering (Sagebiel 2005b; 2006a; 2006c) were transferred to the field of engineering research. Further hypotheses were taken from research literature about investigations of genderedness of science and career (Sagebiel 2006b).

For issue of this paper the following hypothesis was taken:

Women engineers in research, working in a traditional masculine organisational culture, are excluded from men’s networks and cannot rely on a powerful women’s network to compensate the exclusion from men’s networks.

Qualitative data on gendered organisational cultures and networks in academic and industrial settings of engineering and technological research have been gathered through semi-structured interviews with women and focus groups with men and women separately. Focus group discussion was the privileged method to get known the more tacit elements and was taken from Womeng project (Godfroy-Genin and Sagebiel 2007; Sagebiel 2005a).

5 Gendered networks and networking in engineering research organisations
Even though women were asked individually and in focus groups men talked much more about networks, so they produced as much material.

5. 1 Understanding of networks and networking
Understanding of networks differs depending on awareness and perception of networks and networking. Some interviewees have only a vague impression and can’t really tell their definitions, others refuse to talk about informal networks and only refer to professional formal ones. Overall men could describe different kinds of networks with different functions.

Male discussion members in Sweden talked about three kinds of networks: networks with former fellow students, networks with people one has worked together with (in different projects) and external networks with people with the same (technical) area of interest. Respondents of other countries also referred to this kind of differentiation. Swedish academic informants also talked about the researcher networks which are built up in conferences and, increasingly, by international research projects.

There was a general opinion of women engineers and of men engineers that becoming a network member is gender independent.

5 For more hypotheses used in this work package see PROMETEA final report (www.prometea.info) and Sagebiel (2008).
5.2 Manifest and latent functions of networks and networking

Getting to know people generally or relevant people, fresh information exchange, sharing material, acting collectively and getting job perspectives, these are manifest functions of networking in summary. External networks have manifest functions as initiating projects, especially international ones. Publication is another manifest function, but at the same time the information channels for publication are most of all not very transparent. In higher education networks are seen as necessary for career at a certain point of qualification with the aim to selling oneself and enforcing one’s visibility. Internal networks build the unofficial organigram of the organisation which allows information exchange. In some countries networks are depending on hierarchical structure and decision of superior about the amount of restriction of information. From men focus group participants some take advantage from tacit knowledge they get by networking, others think it is not always career relevant.

A male Austrian engineer at university explained in detail how he networks and how it supports his work: “If you take a look, you need networking to initiate projects. You need external partners, you have international partners and without networks this doesn’t work. And yes, if you do your PhD you can also use the network of a colleague. If you know someone who works at the institute who works with specific equipment some things work out much easier. Getting any analyses, getting any chemicals, borrowing equipment, all that works much easier if you walk over and say hello” (H_NT_FGM_Y1).

Even if the Finnish saying goes that “good work always sells itself”, it’s just not enough, because actually the knowledge and information “between the book covers” is silent. One of the men said that the network helps you to “peel the cream of the top’ before anyone else gets the chance to do it. That is not necessarily always fair but it helps you to know that if you had not done it, somebody else would have” (H_FGM_J1).

5.3 Process of networking – from initiation to patronisation

Networks work with sympathy, personality, good performance, same professional and private interests, fraternisation after getting drunk together and luck. Several interviewees told that networking would start with common education in school or later during study time or even later during in service training in companies for example. Commitment often would go back to these roots.

In a German discussion round at a governmental institute men explained that first personal links would be already made during study time and can sometimes last a long period in someone’s professional live. “Networking starts already during study time and continues on conferences or while preparing together a project proposal.” Additionally this institute was a good example for prolonged commitment within a specific community. When the institute was founded by some professors (mostly coming from a certain university nearby), they supported their close research assistants and offered jobs at the institute to them. The connections to this university would be still strong nowadays, and the new personnel were likely to be recruited out of the university department of the current institute’s leader. “You always can see where the institute leader has his connections; there is a commitment which obliges him to some kind of patronisation of his roots!” (G_GP_NT_FGM1_M1).

5.4 Evaluation and devaluation of network and networking

Male interviewees are aware of the importance networks have for daily work life and particularly career advancement. Difficulties for becoming a member of networks were not reported. Some respondents stated that network’s impact might be overvalued, because at least professional performance counts for climbing up the career ladder and not connections. But some male discussants see this totally different, for them network contacts are highly influencing organisational
cultures and decision makers; for career progress knowing the right people in decisive positions is essentially.

Women engineers perceived that they were not part of powerful networks, even though many of them felt or knew the importance of networks. Some of them underevaluated the importance of networks and networking for their careers. They spent too less time for informal opportunities to contact these networks outside the narrow defined work environment. Men in contrast, even though they told that becoming a member was seen as something not being reflected, what just happened by meeting and knowing the right people at the right time and place, they realised that these opportunities to take advantage of were worthwhile.

British men engineers in a focus group discussion in business sector (B_FGM_O) saw networking as vital: “I think it’s the hardest part of the scientists job” and his colleague adds: “I think you ignore it at your peril, I would say!” A woman engineer in Germany consciously stated: “Networks are the nuts and bolts - privately and professionally. Without (private) networks I could not have worked in that way.” (G_NT_WR2_M2).

On the contrary male researchers in France and Slovakia show a distant approach towards informal networks, “I prefer the term: “scientific community”, that is very different from those influence networks, very insane, chaotic and perverse” (male engineer France - H_FGM_N1c). And one Austrian engineer from university personally feels “that scientists are more defined by their performance than, like a strategic lawyer who can tell you anything and you can tell a lot, but here we have numbers, data and facts. Here you can’t sugar-coat anything” (H_NT_FGM_Y1).

5.5 Rituals and activities of networking
Many rituals and activities especially of informal networking take place without women. Networks are knitted and tightened after work. In most of the partner countries women engineers feeling more responsible for family duties and life will not join these activities as much. Besides for joining special sports (extreme) and sauna meetings the sex difference counts and, even if women are not excluded in these activities and rituals, men don't seem to look for alternatives not so excluding for women.

In a German men focus group discussion in governmental research it was clear for all that important contacts to other people are mostly made after work, while going out for dinner or some drinks. “My first superior told me, if you want to be successful in raising funds or getting project partners, you have to get once drunken with your future cooperation partner!” More experienced participants agreed on this story. “Inhibitions get weak and you can talk more frank and free about cooperation structures.” (G_GP_NT_FGM1_M1)

5.6 Women’s exclusion from or integration in men’s networks
For answering hypotheses about women’s lower integration in men’s networks, two questions were analysed on basis of interviews with women engineers and of men and women focus groups. Women were asked about access to men’s network (extent, areas). Men and women were asked about barriers against networking (lack of time, restricted access) and gender differences.

Men asked about exclusion of women generally answer that they see no access barriers for women in joining networks. On the other hand in some situations having women included could damage reputation of men’s network, men and women realised. One interviewed German female engineer, working in industry, had a very clear opinion about how male networks work, but this was outstanding: “Networks function due to the fact that they exchange information and informally a "non-aggression pact" exist and also supports itself maybe. The men are maybe afraid to damage their reputation with a woman as a network partner. And men probably see there more common characteristics among themselves. Are women defined as the “others”? (B_T_WR4_M4). Another
male German engineer in industry argued “Fostering networks with women is more inhibited“, because it easily gets a kind of sexual touch ... (B_FGM_M2).

Family responsibilities are often used arguments or prejudices of women themselves and moreover of men against women joining men’s networks. But, partly women didn’t realise the usefulness of networking for their careers and this might have influenced their time argument. Less time resources (except in Sweden, where only one woman saw problems in timing) and less mobility are factors, besides special activities and rituals by men, in which women engineers are not interested in.

One of the Chilean respondents said: “Networks are hard to get in since it often implies going for drinks someplace you don’t particularly care about...” (H_FGM_2). When asking Swedish informants in academic research about networking with men, one informant said in a humorous manner: “No, you can’t network with them” [everybody laughed]. And she continued explaining what it takes to network with men: "Then you have to play football with them and I have no desire to do that". (H_GP_FGW_W2). One other female discussant from Sweden said: "I was never invited to the sauna evenings. One of the other women with a management position higher up in the hierarchy was invited but I think she turned down the invitation because it did not feel right for her" (H_GP_FGW_W2).

A special phenomenon found in PROMETEA results was that partly women did not perceive being excluded from men’s networks, and this seems to be combined with non perception of gender differences and discrimination.

The hypothesis focussed too on women’s networks, but about these PROMETEA results showed hardly any engagement of women engineers in research. Moreover these women’s networks overall were not estimated as helpful.

6 Summary of results of Womeng and PROMETEA and conclusions

Womeng shows women engineers are conscious of working in a male domain with dominant masculinity culture, but the ones who did their job in the company, did not define those as problems. Most asked women engineers were satisfied with their job, but sceptical about combination of career progression and preferred work-life-balance. Their restricted entrance to men’s networks is seen as an important career barrier by women engineers, especially in management positions. Diversity programmes seem to help to weaken the power of traditional men’s networks.

The results of PROMETEA show interdependence between existing gender equality in society and organisational culture in engineering research. Gendered differences in networking exist everywhere. But, discrimination and excluding processes are more open (manifest) in very traditional societies and more tacit (latent) in more equal societies.

Future research should further develop concepts of gendered organisational cultures and networks. Also, men’s networks as instrument for social regulation should be more focussed, and, relationship between men’s networks’ power and gender awareness should be more investigated.

6 Only some Swedish female focus group discussants referred to networks with other women, when asked about networks.
References


Leading to Inspire: Opportunities to Lift People Higher

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Introduction
Clemens and Mayer (1999, cited in Holmes, 2000) proposed that the central aspects of effective leadership are motivation, inspiration, sensitivity, and communication and suggested that these aspects have changed little over the last 300 years. Lee (2003) suggested that leaders who can inspire would boost the energy levels of others enabling them to act and achieve. Kotter (1992) went further by suggesting that:

Motivation and inspiration energise people, not by pushing them in the right direction as control mechanisms do, but by satisfying basic human needs for achievement, a sense of belonging, recognition, self-esteem, a feeling of control over one’s life, and the ability to live up to one’s ideals (p. 21).

Research by Kouzes and Posner (2002) showed that for people to follow someone willingly, leaders must be honest, competent, forward-looking, and inspiring. In addition, Bass and Avolio (1993) considered that transformational leaders have vision and trustworthiness and the ability to inspire and motivate. It is evident from the research that inspirational leaders have a tremendous effect on people. In fact, visionary and inspiring leadership was found to be a critical trait in the top 100 best companies in the USA (Leiber, 1998 cited in Kinjerski & Skrypnek, 2006).

Paradoxically, however research reports that there appears to be a lack of inspirational leaders. Research conducted by Mount Eliza Business School confirmed that there was a lack of inspiring leaders (Lee, 2003). Despite the growing body of research and its confirmation that people know inspirational and charismatic leaders, the knowledge about inspiration remains mainly abstract (Frese, Beimel, & Schoenborn, 2003). Mio, Riggio, Levin, and Reese (2005) posited that relatively little attention has been paid to the process by which transformational leaders inspire and motivate others. There seems to be a paucity of evidence illustrating a process for leaders to inspire others or facilitate inspirational moments. To compound the problem, there seems to be little evidence of how a leader may become inspiring.

Research Questions
The purpose of this study was to gain an improved and richer understanding of leaders’ experiences of inspiration and inspiring others. It is hoped this understanding will uncover practical strategies that can be applied in the real world setting. Key questions to guide the process included:

• What are the key features of inspiring others?
• What is the role of charisma in inspiring others?
• How do environmental factors impact on inspiring others?
• Can a leader intentionally inspire others?
• If there is intent to inspire from leaders, will it translate into others being inspired?
• If leaders were to inspire others, what strategies would they use to achieve it?

Method
A qualitative approach was selected primarily to provide a deep and rich understanding of inspiring others from a leader’s perspective. The current study was investigated through phenomenological design. Phenomenological design seeks to understand experiences in relation to a phenomenon from other people’s perspective with the aim of identifying the essence of their experience (Cresswell, Hanson, Clark, & Morales, 2007).

Selection
The key criterion for selecting inspiring leaders was based on the perception of people, who participated in the nomination process, that the leaders were people who exhibited the following
characteristics: vision, openness, transparency, passion and being somewhat unconventional. Other key criteria were that nominated leaders were over 21 years and were located in South-East Queensland. Essentially, the nomination process asked people to consider inspiring leaders in the context of prescribed criteria, and to provide a maximum of two sentences to validate their choice. Current leaders were chosen because phenomenology is best suited to the construction of social reality by those within the situation (Stubblefield & Murray, 2002). Where a person was nominated by four or more people, that person was invited to be part of the study. Where a person received one nomination, three people who knew the nominee were sent a questionnaire and asked to rate the nominee on their demonstration of the leadership criteria.

Description
The sample included seven participants, which is consistent with the recommendation from Suzuki, Ahluwalia, Arora, and Mattis (2007) that phenomenological studies should consist of a sample of three to 10. There were almost an equal number of female (n=4) and male (n=3) participants in the study. Participants came from various industries including community welfare, fitness, industrial relations, sport, and government. Participants comprised a range of ages from 21 to over 60, with most participants (n=3) in the 40-45 year age group. All participants were from an Anglo-European background with five from Australia and one each from England and Switzerland.

Interviews
Consistent with phenomenological design, data were gathered through relatively unstructured and in-depth, 1-2 hour, recorded interviews (Stubblefield & Murray, 2002; Suzuki et al., 2007). Time spent on interviews ranged from 33 to 75 minutes with the average interview taking 59 minutes. The quickest interview was a result of meeting with the chief executive officer of a large organisation, who agreed to participate on the understanding that the interview would be limited to 30 minutes.

Focus Group
Colaizzi (1978) who asserted that final validation of data is achieved by asking the participants how the themes identified by the researcher compare with their experiences. A focus group was chosen to enable this. On the day of the focus group one person confirmed absence from the session due to illness and therefore only person attended the session.

Analysis
Data analysis from the in-depth interviews followed Colaizzi’s steps (1978; Table 1). Data were recorded in digital format during interviews.
Table 1. Application of Colaizzi’s steps - data analysis in phenomenological design.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Colaizzi’s steps</th>
<th>Practical Application</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Review all participants’ descriptions of their experience to gain a general</td>
<td>The researcher transcribed all interviews, checking and re-checking participant dialogue through the transcription. This process enabled a thorough microanalysis of the data.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>perspective</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Extract significant statements related to the phenomenon</td>
<td>Statements were considered significant because they were similar to findings in reviewed research or they represented distilled key thoughts of the participant.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Formulate meaningful units or themes for each significant statement</td>
<td>Each significant statement was summarised in a few key words. Where possible, the participants’ own words were used as tags to describe meaning units and themes (Lally &amp; Kerr, 2008).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Organise raw themes into clusters of related themes</td>
<td>The raw themes were sorted into six broad categories to analyse similarities and formulate meaningful units. Twenty-five themes were identified following the analysis.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Refer the theme clusters back to the original descriptions to validate them</td>
<td>Higher order themes were compared with the original descriptions from the transcript to confirm accuracy and again the participants own words were used to label the higher order themes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Distil the results into a description of the essence or understanding of the</td>
<td>Higher order themes were coalesced into the final dimensions through data analysis. The dimensions enabled the development of a statement that described the phenomenon.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>phenomenon</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>7. Ask participants how the themes and theme clusters compare with their experiences as a final validation</td>
<td>Information relating to key themes and dimensions were handed out and the focus group participant was given the opportunity to reflect, share, question, and challenge based on their experience.</td>
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</table>

Results
As a result of the preliminary analysis, participants provided 41 raw data responses when asked questions relating to their experiences of inspiring others. These responses coalesced into initial key dimensions of the phenomenon of leading to inspire others:
1. Relationship
2. About Self
3. Climate

As Colaizzi (1978) indicated results need to be distilled into a description of the core of the phenomenon. In essence, leading to inspire others could be described as intentionally enabling others to feel inspired by connecting with them at an interpersonal level to crystallise their visions of new and achievable possibilities, that they would not have attained solely by themselves, that moves them to actualise these new possibilities and achieve their potential.

Relationship
All participants referred to the relationship between self as leader and those around them as an integral component to inspiring others. And the relationship had to develop: “Well you have to build it, you have to build the relationship,” according to Bob. Jakob indicated that its not just about having a relationship, he added, “I don’t believe you can inspire if you don’t have a relationship that is okay.” Emily summed up relationship most eloquently: “So I think for me that it always starts and ends with people and how you connect with people.” It appears that a relationship is central to
inspiring others and without it, inspiration is unlikely. Figure 1 outlines the raw and key themes that comprise the dimension of relationship.

**Figure 1. The relationship dimension.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Higher Order Theme</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Knowing</td>
<td>Connect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relating</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reciprocity</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finding the potential</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connecting</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpersonal</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telling stories</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feedback</td>
<td>Communicate</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Critical to the formation of a relationship was, the need for people to know the values of the leader and see the values modelled. Once the relationship began to build, the leader had to identify and tap into the potential of those to be inspired. Bronwyn said, “I believe a leader is someone who can see something in you that you can’t see yourself.” Jakob concurred: “Everyone has a great potential but not everyone will get to it and I think great leadership guides people towards that potential on a very individual base”. To enable people to see or have a vision of their own potential, the leader may need to help the individual to make their own connection to their potential and therefore what is possible.

Communication is pivotal to inspiring others and Emily reinforced, “never underestimate the challenge and the criticality of communication in this whole mix.” Communicating with others is clearly a two-way process. Creating the feedback loop through which people can respond to or initiate communication is vital. Emily suggested, “you just have to be open I think to creating feedback loops to people, to get out as much as I can and buy a level of honesty in the organisation.” Communication can also build connection as all participants advocated the use of stories. When asked about the value of stories to inspiring others, Bronwyn stated:

I think that stories are a great way to help the brain create a picture. Creating pictures provide an opportunity to see what is possible – when you can see what is possible is it easier to achieve that possibility and get a result.

**About Self**

About self is the being aspect of leading (see Figure 2) and encapsulates the intrinsic qualities of the leader. These qualities are a combination of personality, learning, and experience. Bob relayed the story of being mentored early in his career that helped him grow as a leader. Jakob confirmed the need to grow and also acknowledged that: “I had so much potential within myself in this particular area and other people helped me to find my way around to make me good at it.” Being a leader sometimes requires you to be firm in certain moments and be true to the vision or direction that is set. Bronwyn used the analogy of carbon needing pressure to create diamonds and confirmed that she looked for: “the pain triggers, because I believe that some people make change more to pain than they do to pleasure …. I call it being an unreasonable friend.” Being yourself, being true to
yourself, and presenting yourself in a natural way to others were consistent messages from participants. It is apparent that being genuine and authentic when leading is paramount. Furthermore, Shelley added,

I don’t think you can sell a message or inspire someone if you don’t believe it yourself, like if you don’t actually feel it, because I think people can tell really easily when you are being disingenuous or putting on an act.

Figure 2. The about self dimension.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Higher Order Theme</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Self reflection</td>
<td>Being self</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural presence</td>
<td>About Self</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be strong</td>
<td>Backing Self</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowing the moment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For a leader to inspire others, Bob advocates, “you’ve got to position yourself in the right place at the right time. So it’s timing, you’ve got to think about it and you’ve got to make that inspirational moment at the right time.” There are a lot of moments that are important and can be leveraged off to coach, re-focus, and develop others. The real skill to inspiring others, is knowing the “big” moments. And in those “big” moments, the leader needs to identify the trigger to: “turn around a few things that they start to believe more in themselves and therefore the outcome then will be a different one closer towards their potential,” reflected Jakob.

Climate
Participants reinforced the need to create the right climate to enable the inspiring moment (see Figure 3). When the climate is “right” there is a sense of excitement and a buzz in the air. Lisa provided a great summary:

The context, it’s about having humour, having a bit of fun, having people feel valued, having people feel listened to, even the most ridiculous comment can be reframed into something really useful, so I think valuing what people say, allowing the space for people to say it.

Providing a climate where people felt valued was consistently reinforced as a critical factor. Emily put the responsibility on the leader and said, “you (as leader) have to create an environment where they feel valued, where they can feel they have influence, people want to have influence and they want to be heard.” Vision appears to be a critical ingredient for inspiring others. From the leader’s perspective it is evident that they need to have a clear vision of the future and must be able to articulate that vision to those around them. Emily suggested that, as a leader, “you need to advocate for that future, you need to paint a picture of what that will look like, feel like … the vision is really the aspiration, the compelling picture of the future.”

Providing an environment where people feel safe to take risks, try new things, or dream of new possibilities is paramount if people are to take action and achieve their potential. It is the leader having the confidence to let people “go for it”. Jakob relayed a story that epitomises the support for risk-taking:
If you never dare, if you never put yourself entirely out there, you hold that little bit back, you can’t fail in your own eyes because you haven’t really given it everything and for me it was important at that moment to tell her to give everything and don’t care.

Figure 3. The climate dimension.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Higher Order Theme</th>
<th>Dimension</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Set the climate</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support risk-taking</td>
<td></td>
<td>Atmosphere</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fun &amp; enjoyment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Value others</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tapping into others</td>
<td></td>
<td>Environment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical space</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vision of something better</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Discussion
It is seems difficult to delineate between transformational, charismatic, and inspirational leadership in the literature as sometimes they are used interchangeably. From a ubiquitous perspective, there is a consistent view that theorists emphasise leadership as a charismatic or transformational influence used to inspire others (Petersen & Seligman, 2004). Furthermore, some authors promoted the evangelical role of the leader (Weick, 1979 cited in Limerick, 1989) and suggested the intensity of conviction from the ‘evangelist’ is key to inspiring others (Kakabadse, Kakabadse, & Lee-Davies, 2005). However, the days of leaders feeling compelled to inspire followers with charismatic rhetoric by occupying a central position in the public space (Taylor, 1985 cited in Wallis, 2002) seem to be numbered. The participants in the current study, through their actions and words, exuded passion, enthusiasm, and belief without over-dramatic outward projections of self. They had, what could be described as, a natural presence. Interestingly, Sidani’s (2007) study found that people still assign attributions of charisma to leaders whose behaviour was not described as being transformational. Participants in the current study support the view that charisma appears to be more about the leader’s connection with self and the leader’s connection with others. Kakabadse et al. (2005) provided the only support for this notion by asserting that charismatic leadership is neither personality based nor contextually determined but more relational and perceptual. A new wave of leadership thinking advocates connecting people, both to direction and community, as way to meaning and therefore build outcomes for the person and the organisation (Duke Corporate Education, 2006; Kinjerski & Skrypnek, 2006).

Climate
There seems to be an interdependency between the relationship and climate dimensions. In fact, Duke Corporate Education (2006) asserted that: “Understanding the person + Adapt the environment = Inspired Behaviour” (p 17). Participants articulated the need to provide an environment where people felt valued and supported to take risk. Councill (1998) noted that leaders could woo inspiration by creating an environment that is positive, conducive to exploration, and supportive of personal freedom. One practical strategy is for the leader to do something out of the ordinary or something that is unexpected. It could be something as simple as taking someone to the coffee shop and buying them a coffee in lieu of a meeting or as elaborate as a breakfast...
barbeque that one participant arranged in a large organisation that had traditionally socialised in silos. Telling stories and sharing stories is a simple and effective practical strategy. A number of participants organised, at the appropriate time, for other people to share their personal or organisational history in story form to facilitate inspiring moments. Duke Corporate Education (2006) concurred, “true inspiration often comes when you get to know a person and his story” (p 40). These examples are positive and supportive, however sometimes leaders need to apply a little pressure to create a change or keep progress to the vision on track. Examples provided by participants were as simple as increasing the performance requirements of repetitions in a training session through to re-writing the charter of a statewide organisation. Setting a challenge or creating a tension that requires people to test and go beyond current abilities is a useful leadership strategy.

Future Directions
Indicative results suggest it was possible to intentionally inspire others. However, for intent to become reality, there appears to be a continuum of events that take place before, during and after the inspiring moment. Duke Corporate Education (2006) contends that inspiring others takes work. Participants reinforced that being in a position to intentionally inspire others requires preparation and effort on behalf of the inspirer and inspiree. The inspirer needs to plan, think, encourage, and provide challenges. The inspiree needs to have put in effort, seen others overcome obstacles, and developed the competence to be in a position to actualise their potential. If competence and effort are in place, intent to inspire requires the leader to know the right moment and then know what to say and do in an authentic manner within that moment to crystallises for the individual the vision of actualising their potential. Following the moment, a structured process that facilitates action needs to be in place. Arieti (1976, cited in Hart, 1998) supported this view by asserting the inspirational moment is when an idea is converted to action. Furthermore, (Ochse, 1989) indicates an intentionally controlled activity must follow inspiration to complete an output. It is conceivable that the leader must harness the energy created by the inspiring moment to build momentum and translate the moment into action. It is evident that continuing to explore the phenomenon of inspiring others has potential to provide greater insight into leading and leadership strategies.

References


Gender differences in approaches to leadership: the evaluation of Oxford University's academic leadership development programme 2006-7

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Keywords: Gender, academic leadership, programme evaluation

Abstract
Oxford University's academic leadership development programme is for academics wishing to explore and develop their leadership capacity. Evaluation of the programme has provided an insight into women's and men's differing perspectives on academic leadership.

Key findings are that:
1. Although women were attracted in equal numbers to a women-only and a mixed development centre, those joining the women-only centre were more likely to continue with the programme than those who joined the mixed centre.
2. Men came to the programme with clear career goals and continued to focus on attaining established positions; women tended to come with a view to testing themselves and finding out whether leadership at Oxford might fit with their personal values and skills, and to leave expressing a taste for leadership across established boundaries.
3. When sex equality concerns were directly addressed:
   • Women were more likely than men to identify gender differences in leadership style.
   • Women were more likely than men to identify possible barriers to women's careers compared with men's.
4. While both men and women were able easily to describe the key leadership features and priorities of departmental leadership, women were more likely than men to give priority to interpersonal skills and work relationships and to focus on support for individuals
5. Some features of the programme were valued equally by men and women; others were valued by members of one sex only. Women tended to favour features providing individual support more than men; men tended to favour theoretical approaches more than women.

1. Introduction
The 2006-7 Academic Leadership Development Programme was Oxford University's first attempt at developing possible future academic leaders. Women academics and academics from ethnic minority groups were particularly encouraged to attend. A description of the programme is annexed at A. The aims of evaluating the programme were to:
  • test to what extent it meets the University's aims in providing it:
    - positive action in leadership for women and ethnic minorities,
    - capturing (from sponsors and senior mentors) experienced colleagues' know-how,
    - broadening the pool of leaders,
    - increasing involvement of academics 'on the ground', and
    - improving perceptions of leadership amongst academics
  • find out in respect of participants whether the programme is:
    - enabling them to set and achieve personal goals,
    - improving perceptions of leadership amongst academics
    - changing their perceptions of leadership,
    - changing others' perceptions of them, and
    - which features of the programme they believe to have added most value
Only those aspects of the evaluation which relate to gender are discussed in this paper. Further information on other aspects is available from the author (judith.secker@learning.ox.ac.uk)

2. Evaluation methodology
The evaluation methods used were:

- A questionnaire capturing initial responses to the development centre.
- An on-line participants questionnaire administered mid-programme which attracted 10 out of a possible 19 respondents.
- Observation of termly meetings.
- Structured interviews with participants carried out in summer vacation 2007, attracting 14 respondents.
- Individual contact with project sponsors, to which all sponsors responded.

The University’s Diversity and Equal Opportunities Unit (DEOU) will continue its longitudinal assessment of the positions held by men and women and members of ethnic minority groups at departmental, divisional, and University levels.

This paper focuses on responses to the structured interview as this explored the views of participants in more detail than did the other instruments, providing the ‘gender lens’ described by Joan Eveline (Eveline (2004): 27). (The interview pro-forma is not annexed; as the questions asked are described in the relevant sections of the paper)

3. Findings
(i) Using positive action to broaden the pool from which leaders are drawn

At the inception of the programme, women formed 36 per cent of the total number of the University’s most senior academic leaders; amongst heads of department they formed less than 4 per cent; and there was no-one of known ethnic minority origin amongst heads of department and other leaders. It was against this background that a positive action strand was designed into the programme, with heads of academic divisions, who were asked to nominate participants, being asked to consider particularly women and colleagues from ethnic minority groups.

Initially 27 academics joined the programme, which began with a two-day residential development centre. Women participants were invited to choose between a women-only and a mixed centre. Participants were free to decide after attending the centre whether or not they wished to continue with the programme and 20 decided to do so (one woman dropping out later for personal reasons).

An analysis of starters and leavers on each programme by sex and ethnicity (where known) for each of the development centre groups and for the programme as a whole is annexed at B, showing that:

- Women were attracted to the programme in greater numbers than were men and were fairly evenly attracted to the women-only and mixed development centres
- Women joining the women-only centre were more likely to continue with the programme than those who joined the mixed centre
- In total, women were 72% of those joining the programme and 65% of those continuing after the development centre

It remains to be seen whether or not the programme contributes to broadening the pool of leaders and influences the gender or ethnic composition of the University’s future leadership. In the
meantime it seems that positive action in leadership development can succeed in drawing women in.

(ii) Gender differences in career aims
Of the fourteen interviews conducted, four were with men and ten with women; of the women eight had attended the women-only-development centre.

Looking first at participants’ aims on joining the course, three of the four men and none of the ten women quoted clear career-oriented aims. The other man and four of the women wished to find out more about leadership at Oxford. Five women wanted to test out their own abilities, one wanted to develop her networks and one had no clear aims.

Turning to personal leadership goals at the end of the programme, men were more likely than women to come with clear career goals: three of the men were able to name a position at Oxford that they aimed to achieve, as did one of the women. For the most part, women tended to come with a view to testing themselves and finding out about leadership and to leave expressing a taste for leadership across rather than within established Oxford hierarchies. For one woman this was in respect of an external, national role; for the others it was about co-ordinating a function across departments/divisions at Oxford. One woman said that she was 'ducking out' of leadership, while three others could not name a specific goal but talked about 'actively looking', 'higher aspirations', and 'interest in the larger Oxford arena'.

It is, of course, possible that some of this difference in career thinking might be explained by non-gender factors such as experience or career stage. Interrogating university personnel records for the age and length of service of respondents to the individual interviews shows that:

- There was a greater age range amongst the women (36-54) than amongst the men (42-47).
- The average age for each sex was 44.
- The women had a slightly greater range of length of service (2-10 years compared with 4-10 years).
- Men had a slightly higher average length of service (8.5 years compared with 6 years).

The numbers of respondents is probably too low to produce any firm conclusions as to influences other than gender on goal-setting. The above data does, however, tentatively suggest that neither age nor length of service can explain the difference in response between men and women respondents.

University personnel records also provide information about an individual's grade and role. Amongst our respondents:

- Five of the 10 women and two of the four men were lecturers.
- One of the women and two of the men were professors
- Four of the women and none of the men were in the research grades.

So the women participants, unlike the men, included relatively low-graded researchers. Correlating the responses of the four researchers to the responses on goal-setting shows that they were perhaps less likely than most other respondents to have come to the programme with clear career goals but that they were as likely as others to leave the programme having clarified their career goals. It is perhaps worth noting that three of the four researchers were amongst those women who saw a leadership role for themselves as spanning traditional boundaries; two of them having already taken specific steps in this direction by the time that they were interviewed. It is not, of course, possible to predict whether the responses of men in research grades would differ from those of this small sample of women researchers.
Speculating on other possible reasons for women’s lack of interest in traditional academic leadership roles compared with men’s led me to the work of Louise Morely and Val Walsh (Morley & Walsh (ed.) 1995; Feminist Academics: Creative Agents for Change) and two scenarios in particular held resonance:

In her chapter, ‘Irrigating the Sacred Grove’, Barbara Brown Packer quotes Cynthia Secor’s ‘Swiss Cheese Model’ of social change:

“In the Swiss Cheese Model, the individual ‘finds a hole and keeps nibbling’. Its essence is to find a place where it is possible to act out of one’s new values and understanding immediately, without requiring the rest of the institution to change….if enough people in an institution over a period of time adopt this approach, the configuration of the whole changes.” (Pearson et al., 1989)

Lesley Kerman, in her chapter ‘The Good Witch: ‘Advice to Women in Management’ quotes Luce Irigaray’s pithy comment on feeling herself an outsider:

“How can we speak so as to escape from their compartments, their schemes, their distinctions and oppositions, how can we shake off the chains of their terms, free ourselves of their categories, rid ourselves of their names, disengage ourselves from their concepts?” (Irigaray 1985: 212).

(iii) Gender and leadership

It is sometimes said that women and men lead in different ways. The structured interview therefore explored with participants ideas about gender in leadership, looking at views on leadership style and barriers that women might face compared with men.

Asked about any perceived differences in leadership style between men and women, none of the four men interviewed perceived any gender differences in leadership style. In contrast, all of the women had perceived differences, many of them with common themes of women aiming to create consensus and harmony and being more concerned than men about discord. Their observations included:

- ‘Men don't see the effect of actions and are often surprised by reactions but they are good at cutting through things – they don't worry so much’
- ‘Women are more innovative, making connections between people and between broad ideas’
- ‘Men are more confident, even when not right; women are more cautious and consensus-seeking’
- ‘Women have more social skills’
- ‘Men are more authoritative, women more consultative’
- ‘Women have greater interest in creating harmony’
- ‘Men are more risk-taking’

Other observations made by women were related to perceived gender differences in skills or traits:

- ‘(Because of dual roles) women are better at time-management and performance achievement’
- ‘Women are prone to 'queen bee syndrome' and have to do more to earn respect’
- ‘Men are less good at multi-tasking’
- ‘Women are more pragmatic, sensible, straightforward’

The majority of Currie, Thiele and Harris’s respondents in a much larger survey (2002: 101) identified gender differences between men’s and women’s working styles. However, a quarter of all
male respondents, compared with a very small group of women denied that men and women’s styles differed. This research went beyond asking about views on style to ask ‘what would a predominantly female workforce be like, and what would a predominantly male workforce be like?’ The thought-provoking responses are supported by our participants’ views.

(iv) Barriers to leadership

Turning to any barriers to women’s entry into leadership compared with men’s, interviewees were shown a card identifying three barriers facing women that had been identified in interviews with men and women in senior academic roles in five Australian Universities. Interviewees were asked to rate on a scale of one to five the extent to which they thought that each of these concerns may influence women, compared with men, in thinking about the most senior posts.

Table 1 Men’s and women’s views on barriers to leadership facing women compared with men (1= not very influential, 5= highly influential)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Self-confidence</th>
<th>Lower value placed on senior roles</th>
<th>Work/life balance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Men’s average rating</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.75</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women’s average rating</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total average rating</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thus women rated women’s lack of self-confidence as a more highly influential barrier than men rated it, while men were inclined to rate work/life balance as a more highly influential barrier than women rated it. The potential attributing of lower value to senior roles by women than men was more likely to be viewed by women as a barrier to leadership, although both sexes rated this as less influential than the other two factors.

Asked about any other factors not suggested on the card which might influence women compared with men in thinking about their careers, there were clearer gender differences. Two of the men mentioned a break in a science career as affecting women more than men, with one also mentioning low numbers of women faculty. The other two men elaborated on work/life balance in respect specifically of women’s family responsibilities, one of them alluding to men’s potential role here too. Eight of the ten women interviewed cited additional factors. These can be grouped as factors concerning characteristics that they felt many women share:

- Reticence
- Social expectations - wanting to keep everyone happy; women are not as indifferent as men
- Women react to others more than men
- Women’s desire for compatible relationships at work;

and institutional factors:

- Less opportunity, fewer contacts
- Women being assigned more pastoral roles and other activities that keep them from leadership
- A perceived Oxford culture of: “if you want a role you’re the last person who should get it”

1 Chesterman, C. ‘Not doable jobs? Exploring senior women’s attitudes to leadership roles in universities’ at the Women’s Higher Education Network conference, Bolton UK, 14 May 2004
• Admin roles not being valued – “on U.S. CVs you see ‘professional service’ not ‘administrative duties’”

This pattern of women, but not men, identifying structural barriers to women’s careers replicates the findings of Jan Currie, Bev Thiele and Patricia Harris (2002: 66):

‘Our final group of responses is those that point to structural factors discriminating against women….more responses by women (64 percent) than men (38 percent) fell into this category. Women are far less likely to deny there is a problem with their representation in senior ranks and their responses are almost twice as likely to attribute their under-representation to systematic structural factors discriminating against them.’

Sara Connolly\(^2\), in her work on a database of over 2,000 men and women academics also reports that women are more likely than men to observe barriers specific to women’s careers, indicating that one’s sex does have an impact on the perception of barriers.

(iv) **Perceptions of leadership**

Perceptions of leadership, and the extent to which these were changing as a result of the programme, were tested by a series of questions during the structured interview. Participants were asked to describe the key leadership features of the role of head of department or faculty board chair at Oxford. Interviewees were, for the most part, easily able to describe what for them were the key features of the departmental or faculty leadership role. Table 2 sets out the features mentioned and the numbers of men and women mentioning them:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feature</th>
<th>Nos. men (men interviewed = 4)</th>
<th>Nos. women (women interviewed = 10)</th>
<th>Total mentions (interviewees = 16)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vision and/or strategy</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consultative approach/interpersonal skills</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support for academics</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recruiting and retaining academics</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exemplifying leadership in teaching and research</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organisational/technical skills</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ensuring proper procedures</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethical principles</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

While both men and women mentioned the importance of vision and/or strategy, this was the only feature consistently mentioned by men. Women, on the other hand, were also reasonably consistent in mentioning both consultation, linked to inter-personal skills, and support for academics.

To further interrogate their views of departmental or faculty leadership, interviewees were shown a card setting out the view of a head of department in a pre-1992 university when interviewed for a piece of research (Deem and Johnson 2003):

‘My…line has always been to attempt to have a fairly light hand on the rein and to get people to do things and more or less leave them to it. Sometimes they fall flat on their faces of course.’

\(^2\) Connolly, S. ‘Careers in Science – evidence from the UK at the 5th Gender in Higher Education Conference, Berlin, September 2007
Interviewees were asked to what extent this statement reflected their own views of how a head of department (or equivalent) should lead. One of the four men interviewed and one of the ten women agreed with the statement with little qualification. One man and two women strongly disagreed with the statement. The majority of the interviewees partially agreed to varying extents, with women more likely than men to specify checks and balances to the suggested ‘hands-off’ approach and to emphasise the importance to them of support for individuals.

(v) Valued - and not so valued - features of the programme

The development centre

Interviewees were shown cards naming the various centre components and were asked to tick the three features which had been of most use to them and to put a cross next to the three features that had been of least use to them, therefore leaving some features unmarked. Those features which were most frequently perceived to be among the most useful were:

- People management exercise (9)
- Myers Briggs personality type Indicator (MBTI) (8)
- One-to-one coaching (8)
- Leadership group discussion (7)

Women, more than men, indicated that the MBTI and the one-to-one coaching were among the most useful features; 7 of the 8 positive responses for the MBTI and 6 out of the 8 positive responses for the one-to-one coaching came from women. For the other ticked features, taking into account that there were only four men interviewed compared with 10 women, responses are gender neutral.

Those features which were most frequently perceived to be least useful were:

- Learning styles questionnaire (8)
- Leadership questionnaire (6)
- Management meeting exercise (6)

Women, more than men, appear to have found the learning styles questionnaire (6 of the 8 negative responses) and the leadership questionnaire (5 of the 6 negative responses) less useful than other features. There also appears to be a difference in the views of men and women about the leadership group discussion: Three of the four men interviewed considered this to be among the three most useful features compared with only four of the 10 women. No men considered it to be among the three least useful features, compared with 3 of the 10 women. Because only two of the women interviewed attended the mixed development centre it is not practicable to compare their responses with those of women who attended the women-only centre, although this might be possible on a cumulative basis in future years.

The project

Interviewees were shown a card listing the options that had been available to assist with their project. They were asked to place those used in numbered rank order and to indicate any not used that, with hindsight, might have been helpful. Interviewees were also asked how they felt about the
project generally as a means of developing their understanding and experience of leadership. Table 3, below, summarises responses to the card questions:

### Table 3  Ranking of project options taken up (1= least useful, 5= most useful)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>No. of men using (men interviewed = 4)</th>
<th>No. of women using (women interviewed = 10)</th>
<th>Total using</th>
<th>Men's averaged ranking scores</th>
<th>Women's averaged ranking scores</th>
<th>Total averaged ranking scores</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Academic assistant</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sponsor</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>2.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer mentor</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior mentor</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2.25</td>
<td>2.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other senior support</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:1 with programme leader</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Participants were encouraged to develop a peer mentoring relationship within the programme and were offered help with finding a senior mentor. None of the men took up the opportunity to have a mentor (either a peer mentor or a senior mentor). Four women had a senior mentor, one of whom ranked her mentor as the least useful component of the programme and the other three giving a middling ranking.

Although none of the men had taken up the option of a mentor, three of the four men interviewed reported that they already had, and valued, the support of another senior colleague such as a head of department, compared with 5 of the ten women, who, on average, appear to have valued the support provided by that relationship rather less than the men did.

The apparent greater likelihood of men compared with women having the support of a senior colleague, outside of formal mentoring schemes, merits further investigation. For example, to what extent might this be explained by non-gender factors such as position or length of service, by potentially gendered factors such as the availability of support within a predominantly male context from someone senior of one’s own sex, or, as Virginia Vallian’s work might suggest, by differing expectations of men and women on the part of those in a position to support more junior colleagues?³

With the benefit of hindsight, only one man felt that his project might have benefited from taking up an unused option (a senior mentor) compared with:
- six women who felt that an academic assistant would have been helpful,
- one woman who cited a peer mentor and three women who cited a senior mentor, three women who would have welcomed other senior support, such as from a head of department, and
- three women who felt that their project would have benefited from one-to-one discussions with the programme leader.

Benefits of the project cited by women but not specifically mentioned by men were:
- ‘the opportunity to learn how the University, or aspects of it, work’
- ‘learning to organise and delegate work’
- ‘a sense of ‘permission’ to test out and explore leadership’;

³ Virginia Valian (1999) ‘Why So Slow? The Advancement of Women’: having controlled for such ‘human capital’ factors as qualifications and experience, Vallian reports that the advancement of men and women continues to differ in favour of men. She hypothesises that this comes about as a result of gender schemas, a set of implicit, non-conscious hypotheses about sex differences which affect our expectations of men and women.
‘the opportunity to work across the University rather than in one’s own normal area of work’

Termly meetings
During the structured interviews, participants were shown a card listing the components of the termly meetings and were asked to rate these in order of their usefulness. (Not all of those interviewed had attended a termly meeting):

Table 4 How useful were the termly meetings? (1= not very useful, 4= very useful)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Nos. men responding</th>
<th>Nos. women responding</th>
<th>Total respondents</th>
<th>Average men’s rating</th>
<th>Average women’s rating</th>
<th>Total average rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Action learning set (HT07 only)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guest speakers</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Networking</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

One man and two women used the action learning set to explore their project work with a view to overcoming barriers. Both of the women who used the action learning set rated it high, while the man who used this exercise rated it low. The opportunity to otherwise network with participants and contributors was universally highly rated by those who attended meetings.

Looking overall at the programme, it seems that men and women benefited differently from the diverse features of the programme, with women demonstrating a preference for features providing individual support and men for features exploring theories. The programme succeeded in catering for these different needs.

Summary and conclusion
It is early days in the life of an academic leadership development programme at Oxford and the small size of the cohort studied for this evaluation means that we must be cautious about the impact of a single-sex strand for women. However, Joan Eveline (2004: 86) gives us hope, reporting on Leadership Development for Women, operating at UWA since 1994 that: ‘A series of evaluations show success on a number of vital yardsticks, including personal and professional empowerment, participant opportunities and organisational effectiveness. The difference between the promotion rates for academic staff who have participated and those who have not continues to be high’. To date at Oxford we are able to suggest only that leadership development for women appears to be a worthwhile route to follow. In particular, women seem more likely to pursue a leadership programme when they have pursued a single-sex approach. Supporting evidence for such an approach (as well as for overdue institutional change) can be seen in women and men’s different perceptions of career, of what makes good leadership, and of the different approaches that men and women take in leadership.

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(http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/eop/gender/athena.shtml)
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Annexe A

Academic leadership development programme

1. **Objectives**

**The University aims to:**
- undertake positive action in leadership for women and ethnic minorities,
- capture (from sponsors and senior mentors) experienced colleagues' know-how,
- broaden the pool of leaders,
- increase involvement of academics 'on the ground', and
- improve perceptions of leadership amongst academics.

2. **Components**

**(i) The development centres**
- Based on design produced by Leadership Foundation for Higher Education
- 27 participants in total – across two development centres: one mixed-sex, one women-only – but both included discussion and reading on gender and leadership in HE
- One-to-one coaching: Myers-Briggs, leadership, learning styles, goals
- Discussion of leadership and governance at Oxford
- Dinner with current academic leaders
- Practice of and feedback on leadership activities: difficult situations, management meeting
- Setting up peer mentoring

**(ii) The projects**
- Sponsors (pro-vice-chancellors, heads of division) who produced list of priorities
- Participants chose from list or suggested their own
- Negotiation and discussion between participant and sponsor

**(iii) The termly meetings**
- Speakers:
  - ‘Getting things done at Oxford’ – stories
  - ‘Perspectives on academic leadership’ – senior administrator and head of department on what constitutes academic leadership
- Discussion of projects using action learning format
- Research seminar on leadership:
  - The distribution of leadership in HE: figure and ground (Gosling)
  - Leadership in HE: it doesn’t have to be herding cats (Alban-Metcalfe)

**(iv) The academic assistants**
PhD students employed to undertake academic work as a training opportunity for them and as support for practising academics. They worked to help participants with their projects.
Annexe B

Analysis of the proportions of women and minorities starting and continuing the 2006-7 academic leadership development programme

Women only development centre
- 11 women attended this development centre
- Of these one was from an ethnic minority (9%) and three were of non-UK nationality (27%)
- Nine women continued the programme (82% of those starting)
- Of these one was from an ethnic minority and three were of non-UK nationality (100% of those starting in each case)

Mixed development centre
- Seven women attended a development centre of 16 people (44%)
- Of these none were from an ethnic minority and four (57%) were of non-UK nationality
- Four women continued the programme (57% of those starting)
- These included one of the four starters of non-UK background (25% of both the non-UK nationality women starting and of all women continuing)
- Nine men attended the development centre (56%)
- Of these three were from ethnic minorities (33%) and one was of non-UK nationality.
- Seven men continued the programme (77% of those starting)
- These included the one starter of non-UK nationality and two of the three starters from an ethnic minority background (66% of the ethnic minority men starting and 29% of all men continuing)

Women as a proportion of those starting and continuing the programme
- 18 women attended the two development centres of 27 people (66% of those attending)
- 13 women continued the programme of 20 people (72% of women starters and 65% of all those continuing)

Minorities as a proportion of those starting and continuing the programme
- Four people with ethnic minority backgrounds attended the two development centres of 27 people (15% of those attending)
- Three people with ethnic minority backgrounds continued the programme of 20 people (75% of ethnic minorities starters and 15% of all those continuing)
- Eight people of non-UK nationality attended the two development centres of 27 people (30% of those attending)
- Five people of non-UK nationality continued the programme of 20 people (62% of non-UK nationalities starters and 25% of all those continuing).
Complex and contradictory: the doing of gender on regional development boards

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Abstract
In this paper we explore the complex, and in many ways contradictory, picture of how gender is enacted and reinforced within regional development boards/commissions in NSW and WA.

While the number of women on these regional organisations has increased over the past decade, the overwhelming sense of these organisations is one of homogeneity. Members of the boards/commission are very alike in age and socio-economic circumstances, highlighting that body counting by sex doesn’t adequately capture gender, which we take to be a socially constructed facet of identity. Recognising gender as a social construction (West and Zimmerman, 2002), where the doing of masculinity is privileged over femininity takes our analysis to a deeper level. In this context, as Ministerially appointed organisations, the individuals appointed can be seen to be privileged through the social structures. Their roles, while ambiguous, provide status to those involved and benefits through increased networking and knowledge. Their membership positions them within the (masculine) hegemony (Connell, 2005).

For women to be appointed to these roles, they have had to perform much like their male counterparts, so they can ‘pass’ for the elite and their nominations be accepted by the Minister; that is, they are connected, have a high profile and are able to understand and conform to the ‘rules’ of the boards/commissions (in terms of being able to make it to meetings, fit in socially with the group, like mindedness...).

While the women performed similar roles as men to gain access to the boards, they are less likely to label their appointments as political. They do not lay claim to the political nature of their appointments as their male counterparts do. The women’s narratives relate to connections within and external to their region, where these connections are represented as a means of ‘serving’ their community. In contrast, men saw their connections as something they could utilise for their community; almost as a benevolent act. Using a gender lens highlights how the gender roles are reinforced along sex lines – women framed themselves as ‘serving’ (associated with femininity) while men framed themselves as ‘doing’ (highly masculinised). Such compatibility with the normative gender expectations highlights the ‘doing’ of gender.

1 The authors gratefully acknowledge the financial support provided by the Australian Research Council and the industry linkage partners, the NSW Office for Women, the NSW Department of State and Regional Development and the WA Department of Local Government and Regional Development.
Another layer to the doing of gender on regional development boards concerns the ‘feminisation’ of these boards. The title of board conveys an authority and power which on closer examination is unfounded. With limited resources at their disposal, and little public recognition or understanding of their roles, the boards/commissions have limited agency. Rather, as ‘modestly staffed and modestly resourced’ organisations, they are expected to facilitate/coordinate networking activities. It can be argued then that these poorly resourced boards are populated by women and men who, while vested with important titles, are relatively ‘powerless’ and are expected to undertake duties and display behaviours more consistent with a feminized role.

Making sense of how gender is manifested in the boards/commission is further compounded when the discourse around regional development is considered. The responses pointed to a primacy of the economic over the social in regional development (Shortall, 2006), where the economic is strongly associated with creating employment, especially in the industries where men have traditionally dominated, rather than in what could be argued to be the more feminised domains of services. The doing of gender in this domain points to the persistence of conservative gender patterns reinforcing a masculinised model of business (Connell and Wood, 2005). The contradiction here is that while they are subscribing to this masculinised model, they are unable to deliver on the outcomes because they do not have direct agency over resources.

Complex and contradictory: the doing of gender on regional development boards
Background
In May 2004, an ARC Linkage grant was awarded for the project ‘Regional boards: Understanding the impact of gender diversity on board performance’ to be administered by the University of New England for 2004-2007. The industry partners to this project were the NSW Department of Women, the NSW Department of State and Regional Development and the WA Department of Local Government and Regional Development.

As described in the ARC application, the original aims of the project were ‘to identify the impact of public policies to increase women’s representation on boards has been to the operations and effectiveness of regional development boards…. [a]nd to assess whether the benefits assumed to occur as a result of diversity have been achieved for these boards and their communities, and if not, why not?’

The first stage of the research project involved interviewing members from six regional development boards/commissions across NSW and WA. In total, 53 interviews were conducted with board/commission members, of which 21 were women and 32 were men. Interviews were conducted between November 2005 and April 2006. As well, six of the Executive Officers/CEOs associated with the boards and commissions were interviewed (three women and three men).

Questions asked of interviewees sought to explore the human capital (abilities, expertise and knowledge) the board/commission members brought to their roles; the social capital (relevant social relationships) they drew on in their roles; and the structural capital (routines, policies and procedures) created through the board/commission interactions (Nicholson and Kiel, 2004). The second stage of data collection was based on an electronic survey of the remaining regional development agencies in NSW and WA. For the purposes of this paper, we have combined the findings of the interviews and surveys where practicable to give the overall findings from the research.

The doing of gender
Underpinning our analysis of gender and regional development boards/commission is the framing of gender as an interactional, dynamic and fluid conception which differs from more traditional understandings of gender as a sociological variable. In engaging this conceptualisation we open up opportunities for examining gender beyond the category ‘man’ or ‘woman’ and explore the ways in which culturally defined meanings and assignations of masculinity or femininity are implicated in
the regional boards/commission, in daily practices and processes and in a vast array of values and beliefs.

While Kerfoot and Knights (1996) recognise masculinities in managerial work as multilayered, fluid and contingent on context, they point to the dominant form of contemporary masculinity which is privileged in current management discourses. This form of masculinity implies coordination and control, with a preoccupation with the achievement of goals. Femininity, on the other hand, is not discursively associated with control. Rather, it is represented as being ‘vulnerable to the demands of ‘others’” (Kerfoot and Knights, 1996: 87) and of connectedness to others. It is these forms of hegemonic masculinity and femininity which we employ in our analysis.

Drawing on Cockburn (1991: 168) we take masculine hegemony to be the ‘sway exerted over women and men alike, not by legal coercion or economic compulsion but by cultural means, by force of ideas’. This definition highlights an important point; that the common association of masculinity with men does not mean that it is exclusive to them. As Kerfoot and Knights (1996: 85) describe ‘women can and do constitute themselves at least partially through masculine discourses and modes of behaviour’.

In our analysis we seek to illustrate some of the ways in which gender is ‘done’ within regional development agencies and how it reinforces the current masculine hegemony, while at the same time is constrained by limited resources. Before we do this, however, we consider the numerical representation of women on the boards/commissions and consider the question of the boards/commissions effectiveness.

**Women’s representation on regional development boards/commissions**

At the state level, 13 Regional Development Boards have been established in NSW and nine (9) Regional Development Commissions in WA. As seen in Table 1, in November 2006 the size of boards/commission ranged from 7 to 12 members, and women’s representation varied significantly across the different boards/commissions. Women’s participation on boards or Commissions ranged between 12.5% and 64%, with NSW boards generally having a higher representation of women than the WA Commissions.
Table 1 Women’s representation on RDOs*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reg. Dev. Orgs</th>
<th>Men (no.)</th>
<th>Women (no.)</th>
<th>Total (no.)</th>
<th>Women board members (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>NSW</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hunter</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illawarra</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern Rivers</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greater Western Sydney²</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central West</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Far Western</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid North Coast</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Murray</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern Inland</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orana</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>133</td>
<td>72</td>
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* statistics as at 30 November 2006.

Women’s representation on these boards/commissions increased over the previous decade and is recognized as being higher than their representation in leadership roles in rural industries (Department of Transport and Regional Services, 2005) and is also greater than the corporate sector where, for instance, it has been reported that women hold only 8.7% of board directorships in the ASX200 Australian companies (Equal Opportunity for Women in the Workplace Agency, 2006).

In the rest of this paper, we reflect on how gender is enacted and reinforced through the boards/commissions, and that the doing of gender is in fact a complex process of competing influences.

**Body counting not enough**

At the most superficial level of our analysis we conclude that while the number of women on these regional organisations has increased, the overwhelming imperative of these organisations is one of homogeneity. That sex has been used as the metric for monitoring gender is the problem. The physical attribute of sex doesn’t adequately capture gender, which we take to be a socially constructed facet of identity. As such, implementing a policy to enhance diversity through increasing the number of women on boards fails to grasp the multiple dimensions of difference – age, race, class, education, etc. It conflates physical attributes and diversity (Agnew, 2003). The

² As this region is located in metropolitan Sydney, it was excluded from the research.
lack of significant differences in men’s and women’s responses to the interviews and surveys questions led us to conclude that these boards/commissions were made of women and men who were more like each other – in terms of age, race, class – than different. Their ‘surface level’ diversity was not replicated at a deeper level in terms of a diversity of attitudes, opinions, information values (Phillips and Loyd, 2006). As such, it would seem that the policy to increase women’s representation on these organisations has done little to change how they operate. As one participant said ‘everybody on the board drives a reasonable car and so it is not representative in that sense. It’s sympathetic but it’s not representative’.

The status of board membership
Body counting by sex is a very blunt instrument for understanding how gender influences these regional development agencies. Recognising gender as a social construction takes our analysis to a deeper level. ‘Framing gender in terms of its collective institutional and historical properties depicts it more accurately and renders it more accessible to … analysis’ (Martin, 2004: 1259). In this context, as Ministerially appointed organisations, the individuals appointed can be seen to be privileged through the social structures. Their roles, while ambiguous, provide status to those involved and benefits through increased networking and knowledge (Conway, 2008). Further, their membership allows them alignment with the (masculine) hegemony. These roles are ‘gender marked’. Paraphrasing Schein (1976), as board roles have traditionally been held by men, there is a common association of masculinity and board membership, with the associated privileging (Connell, 2005).

Accessing membership
For women to gain access to these roles, they have had to perform much like their male counterparts, so they can ‘pass’ for the elite and their nominations be accepted by the Minister (and his/her advisers). Too many differences from the hegemonic norms would exclude them. We see the women who have made it to the boards/commissions being able to meet the criteria for entry to these positions; that is, they are connected and high profile and they are able to understand and conform to the ‘rules’ of the boards/commissions (in terms of being able to make it to meetings, fit in socially with the group, like mindedness, knowing the political scene and working within the system…). They are able to ‘pass’ as a board member. These women are able to conform with the dominant norms. This helps to explain why the groups within the boards/commissions tend to be so homogenous. An interesting dimension to this argument is that while the women performed similar roles as men to gain access to the boards, they are less likely to label their appointments as political. They do not explicitly lay claim to the political appointment as their male counterparts do.

Gendering connections
Exploring this further lead to our observation that women and men reflect differently on their connections. The women’s narratives relate to connections within and external to their region, where these connections are represented as a means of ‘serving’ their community. In contrast, men saw their connections as something they could utilise for their community; almost as a benevolent act. Analysing their responses through a gender lens highlights how the gender roles are reinforced along sex lines – women framed themselves as ‘serving’ (associated with femininity) while men framed themselves as ‘doing’ (highly masculinised). While they did not use the terms serving and doing themselves, we have identified these labels through our analysis of their responses, both through the interviews and the surveys. Such compatibility with the normative gender expectations highlights the ‘doing’ of gender and is consistent with the work of Grant and Rainnie (2005) where they found men in regional development agencies in Victoria saw their role as consistent with their assumed broader political role in the region.
The feminisation of these boards
Yet another layer to how gender relates to regional development boards/commissions concerns what we have labelled elsewhere as the ‘feminisation’ of these boards (Sheridan, Pini and Conway, 2006). As noted above, organisations as social structures have status associated with them. The title of board/commission conveys an authority and power which on closer examination is unfounded, particularly in the case of the NSW boards. With limited resources at their disposal, and little public recognition or understanding of their roles, the boards/commissions have limited agency. Rather, as ‘modestly staffed and modestly resourced’ organisations (Beer, Maude et al., 2003), they are expected to facilitate/coordinate networking activities. It can be argued, then, that these poorly resourced boards are populated by women and men who, while vested with important titles, are relatively ‘powerless’ and are expected to undertake duties and display behaviours more consistent with femininity.

The masculine discourse of regional development
Making sense of how gender is manifested in the boards/commission is further compounded when the discourse around regional development is considered or, as Shortall (2002: 168) suggests, the questions are asked as to ‘who is in control and what types of gender ideology do they adopt?’. The responses by interviewees and survey respondents pointed to a primacy of the economic over the social in regional development, where economic is strongly associated with jobs, especially in the industries where men have traditionally dominated, rather than in what could be argued to be the more feminised domains of services (retail trade, community services, health and education). There was very little to distinguish between the women’s and the men’s responses, with both clearly being influenced by the dominant discourse associated with the state bureaucracies. This discourse, where business is strongly associated with the sphere of production (Cameron and Gibson-Graham, 2003) or ‘men’s business’, with projects more likely to be funded relating to employment (but rarely in areas where women have traditionally been employed) reinforces men’s collective dominance over women.

The doing of gender in this domain points to the persistence of conservative gender patterns and a masculinised model of business (Connell and Wood, 2005). The contradiction here is that while board/commission members are subscribing to this masculinised model, they are unable to deliver on the outcomes because of the feminised experience of not having direct agency over resources. In the New South Wales case, they have to seek any substantial funds from other sources, much like the housewife having to seek her housekeeping allowance from her husband, the breadwinner. Further, those funds are only forthcoming if they conform to the funding body’s current priorities. This reality is explained by one of the survey respondents as ‘we spend more time looking for projects that fit the correct funding avenues rather than choosing the best projects’. In Western Australia, funds are available but only through resources already decided by State government agencies regardless of regional development commission decisions or activities, conforming to a paternalistic pattern. This was reflected in the comment by a survey respondent from WA who noted ‘boards are limited to staff decision process and government policies and end up ‘rubber stamping’ processes set by others’. So despite apparent status, it seems the experience of these board/commission have limited agency and lack recognition by stakeholders. As such, their masculinity is compromised, because as Kerfoot and Knights (1996: 91) note ‘masculine subjects are dependent not only on the thrill of conquest but on the need for constant confirmation from onlookers, real or otherwise’.

Taking the housewife metaphor a step further, the husband/breadwinner has the final say on what the allowance is spent on.

There is, therefore, a set of conflicting elements to how gender can be understood in relation to the RDOs which we have represented in Figure 1.
Figure 1: The Gendering of Regional Development Boards/Commissions

The choice of amorphous shapes to represent the masculinising and feminising influences recognises that while there are influences, we do not claim to be able to quantify exactly how they determine the individual’s experience of their board/commission roles, nor how the overall effect of the competing influences shapes the board/commission in its entirety.

Why isn’t there more diversity?
The original aims of the project were ‘to identify the impact of public policies to increase women’s representation on boards has been to the operations and effectiveness of regional development boards…. [and] to assess whether the benefits assumed to occur as a result of diversity have been achieved for these boards and their communities, and if not, why not?’ In seeking to complete the project and draw conclusions, the process is confounded by the difficulties in measuring the performance of these boards. In discussions with the linkage partners, it was realized early on in the project that it was not possible to gauge the impact of increasing women’s representation on the boards/commissions on their performance because there was no adequate measure of board/commission performance. Conway’s findings (Conway, 2008) about the ambiguity of the role of boards/commissions and the lack of clarity in the minds of board/commission members as to what regional development, and their role in it, is highlight the difficulty in gauging performance. If it is not possible to define the role of the board/commission is, or to whom board/commission members are accountable, then measuring performance is compromised. As Conway’s analysis of the interviews with the 53 regional development board/commission members shows (Conway, 2008), this confusion creates a difficult environment for the board/commission members to operate in.

The political nature of the appointment process, and the lack of transparency around how board/commission members are selected, is a significant impediment to why there is not more diversity. The selection criteria are not clearly defined, nor are they explicitly seeking to capture diversity; rather they reinforce existing elites. Those people who are already well-connected, with high profiles in their communities, who can commit the time to what are essentially volunteer roles, are those who are most likely to be appointed to the boards/commissions. Men and women have been able to meet these criteria, although it does seem that for women the bar is a bit higher, with their competence not being assumed so readily. For women, there seems to be greater attention to either education or election as evidence of their competence. Overall, though, the sense of homogeneity on the boards/commissions is quite striking. Where there were more diverse backgrounds and experiences of board/commission members was in the WA Commissions, where three members of the Commissions were from elected local government. This process did, it seems, draw forth a more diverse representation of community members to the Commissions and
so allowed for more diversity. But until the processes of selection for the board/commission roles are more transparent and specifically seeking to include a more diverse representation of members, they will remain fairly homogenous. As one respondent to the survey noted ‘board members should be apolitical (as an ideal) but in reality that seldom happens because either of the selection process or of one’s own personal backgrounds and past affiliations’.

From the survey responses, it seems that the majority of respondents were satisfied with the composition of the boards/commissions as they are, although some did suggest there could be greater representation of younger people, indigenous members and/or members with different cultural backgrounds. The absence of these groups from the current composition did not, however, draw strong comment from either the interviewees or the survey respondents.

The attraction of working with like-minded people is another of the factors limiting diversity. As was evident in Conway’s work (Conway, 2008), board/commission members acknowledged the pleasure they experienced in coming together. The sense of working harmoniously together for the good of their communities was something that the board/commission members valued.

“Board members do not see themselves as part of a new order of New Regionalism. In contrast they see State Government firmly steering the course for regional development, and attending to the needs of large scale capital. Despite the reluctance of the board to draw their own meaning of regional development, the political machinations, and concerns for adequate resources, there is expressed enjoyment in meeting with other like-minded regional players. Board members acknowledge they have gained more from being on the board than they contribute. These board roles do not reflect a new order of inclusive practices for regional development as New Regionalism would suggest. Board members describe the weightlessness of their role in regional development governance, and yet continue to serve on these boards knowing that the big decisions for the region’s development are not made within the board and generally not within the region” (Conway, 2008: i).

This was also evident in the responses to the open-ended questions in the survey, where both women and men pointed to the ‘good balance of personalities’, and there being ‘a high level of shared values and approaches’. In such a pleasant environment, there is not a sense of urgency on the part of the board/commission members to agitate for more diversity.

**Conclusion**

In exploring the board/commission members’ experiences of their roles, what has emerged is a complex, and in many ways, competing picture of how gender impacts on the regional development agencies. While superficially the boards/commission may appear to be reflective of a masculinised environment, with the positions being Ministerial appointments and carrying titles suggesting power and control directed at economic development, the reality of the board/commission experience is quite different. It seems the lack of resources available to the boards/commissions, especially in NSW, renders them powerless and invisible, and with their focus on networking and poor remuneration, suggest a feminised entity. The lack of clarity around what the board/commission roles entail confounds the process of measuring the effectiveness of these agencies.

The gathering of likeminded people in the existing boards/commission is something that is valued by the board/commission members and contributes to the satisfaction they gain from what can otherwise be seen as a frustrating experience. The impetus for more diversity in the boards/commissions is not emerging strongly from the existing board/commission members, nor is it being actively sought through the appointment processes. Cohesion and political alignment seem to be more powerful influences than diversity.
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Leadership, Friendship and Power Relations in Female Work Areas

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Abstract
Quite a few of the middle managers in female work areas are women, having the same vocational training and background as many of their subordinates. Thus, managers may feel close both to professional groups and to people on the ground floor. Friendships are developed at the workplace, and working relations and private relations can be intertwined in the organisation. This is not unproblematic, because work organisations are based on a rationality and logic different from what is expected in private relations. Closeness between leader and subordinates opens up for various uses and misuses, and may have ethical implications. However, the middle manager, who knows her subordinates from different angles, could have an advantageous and powerful position in relational and motivational work. This may not be fully acknowledged, because of the more subtle ways of expressing this power. My primary concern is to throw light on the managers’ use of this kind of power, but also to consider ethical implications of a conduct which may have detrimental effects on subordinates and clients.

Introduction
In this paper I will reflect on leadership and relations in female work areas, especially in the health and social sector. Quite a few of the middle managers in this sector are women, and my attention is first and foremost drawn to this segment of leaders. Very often holders on this layer have vocational training and background as nurses or social workers. They may feel close both to professional groups and to people on the ground floor. Assumingly, this means experiences of conflicting identities and loyalties. Such conflicts may also arise if colleagues have private relations to each other. Friendships are often developed at the workplace, and working relations and private relations can be intertwined in the organisation. This is not unproblematic, because work organisations are grounded on formal positions and roles. Friendships and private networks may represent sources of informal power in the organisation, having other agendas than the formal system.

Reflecting on power relations and the role of leader on this layer, I will draw on a Swedish study by Carin Holmquist (1997). In my view her study illustrates some important dilemmas connected to leadership in female work areas, actualising also ethical questions. But before commenting more on this study, I will go further into the role of the middle manager and relations between colleagues in female work organisations. However, it is important to have in mind that the daily work in the organisation are influenced and shaped by different rationalities. I will give a brief presentation of two different rationalities which have a strong impact on the middle manager’s role and behaviour in the health and social sector; the rationality of caring, and a technical-economical rationality.

Different rationalities in female work areas
The abovementioned rationalities, the rationality of caring, and a technical-economical rationality, are representing different value systems and are often considered as opposites. Different values and rationalities may inflict problems of identity and loyalty in middle management positions, as the holders on this layer may feel they belong to different cultures. Whilst management positions first and foremost are based on a technical-economical rationality, the rationality of caring is fundamental for carrying out professional or core work in the health and social sector.
In feminist research the concept of caring has been a core concept and subject of attention for many years. Kari Waerness (1992) has been a significant contributor to this theory building and I will draw on her work in this presentation. As Waerness (1992: 210f.) puts it, caring has to do with feeling concern for and taking charge of the well-being of others. And it is about relations between people. However, in her theorizing she makes some important distinctions between caring for dependents, caring for superiors and caring in symmetrical relations. Caring for dependents she defines as caregiving work. As my concern is female work areas, especially the health and social sector, where the clients or patients are dependents and often in vulnerable situations, I find this distinction useful. Caregiving work is a core activity in this field. Waerness argues that this kind of work has its own rationality, called the rationality of caring. Feelings as well as thoughts should be involved in caregiving work. Thus, the meaning of rationality is not in accordance with mainstream western theory and its clear-cut distinction between emotion and rationality.

However, the influence of a technical-economical rationality seems to be overwhelming in many organisations in the health and social sector, despite the fact that caregiving work is a core activity. In the name of New Public Management, economic values and traditional rational thinking about organisations are adopted and have a great impact on the daily life and work in the organisation. If a technical-economical perspective is the more influential and dominates ways of thinking, organising and carrying out work, the character of the work may change and the quality of the work may deteriorate. On the other hand, organisational changes should be welcome if working conditions and activities are improved by using this approach.

The middle manager – identities, roles and relations

Holding a middle management position implies being exposed to different expectations from different parties and layers in the organisation. Expectations are often contradictory and impossible to fulfil. In many ways holding such a position in the middle could be extremely difficult, as role conflicts and dilemmas of identity and loyalty may be frequent experiences.

Middle managers belong to different social and cultural groups. Belonging to different groups means developing several identities, based on different categories; for instance, gender, profession, work and work organisation. The identity as manager is expressed in the actual role behaviour. However, this behaviour may be susceptible to the meaning of other identities, grounded for instance on gender and vocational training.

A technical-economical rationality dominates in organisational thinking and management theory. Consequently, this rationality can be forceful in forming the identity of manager. However, if the manager has a vocational training and background from the working area in the health and social sector, a caring rationality may be strongly felt and contribute to forming the identity as manager and the role behaviour in the actual position.

Former vocational training as caretaker may be influential in many ways. As managers in this sector, they may be attached to colleagues they have learned to know and have cooperated with, and they may also feel a part of a social communality of women, having made friends or developed private relations with some of them (cf. Solberg, 2000; Solberg, 2008). To have such relationships with colleagues may not be experienced as a problem when people are on the same level in the organisation, but there could be alliances and conflicts among the workers, due to different friendship constellations. However, friendship among colleagues often contributes to good working relations and a cooperative climate. A difficult situation may occur if managers are close friends with some of their subordinates because there are essential differences between friendship and working relations (cf. Spencer & Pahl, 2006: 97). Work organisations are based on a rationality and logic different from that expected in private relationships. Although it is possible, theoretically, to distinguish between work-relations and friendships, this may be difficult or impossible in real life.
where roles and relationships can be intertwined. The fact that women’s professional work often has a strong resemblance to their traditional work could contribute to such behaviour.

Because the position of manager implies a distance to others and women usually are less acquainted with such a role, it may be more difficult for them to adapt to the associated rules, conventions and expectations. However, as expectations are often different for men and women, they have to consider what this means to them in their situation. Thus they contribute to shaping and framing the role. Greater demands are probably made on women managers than on their male colleagues, to legitimate their decisions and transactions – in a way it is easier to question the authority and power of female managers, because holding a management position is usually associated with traits and characteristics more in accordance with a traditional male role. However, it might be difficult to find consistent differences between male and female conduct in leadership positions in empirical research (cf. Alvesson & Billing, 1997: 151). Though, there are reasons to believe that women leaders are facing stronger expectations to take on relational work than their male colleagues, in accordance with more traditional role expectations.

The manager’s actual conduct and framing of the role tell something about coping behaviour. I will go further into some possible accommodation strategies in the following passage.

**Accommodation strategies**

Reflecting on coping behaviour, I find the following concepts developed by Hirschman (1970), *exit, voice* and *loyalty*, very useful. In short, exit means leaving the organisation, whilst the voice strategy is an expression of dissatisfaction, addressed to the authority or to anyone who care to listen. Moreover, the latter represents more than a silent, private protest. Seemingly, the meaning of loyalty is pretty obvious. However, loyalty may take different directions. Trying to combine different loyalties may result in conflicts and problems; for instance, if values and goals in the organisation are contradictory, or if strategic decisions seem to imply changes to the detriment of values and work in caring. As pointed out by Billing (1991: 86), choosing approaches like exit and voice may tell something about difficulties with combining different loyalties. Furthermore, loyalty may activate voice as a strategy, thus preventing the use of exit (Hirschman, 1970: 78; Billing, 1991: 85).

Different and conflicting loyalties in the organisation can be reflections of rationalities and identities in conflict. If the manager does not succeed in compromising and combining the different perspectives in acceptable ways, it may be impossible to continue in the leadership position and the only alternative is to leave (‘exit’). Before this strategy is chosen, arguing in favour of a caring perspective has probably been tried (‘voice’), without being successful. When such arguments are neglected or turned down, the reaction may be disillusion and pessimism, seeing no point in going on. On the other hand, holding a management position gives more power and better opportunity to articulate and fight for important values and needs than being on lower levels, making it more worthwhile to stay and continue the struggle for better conditions for clients and subordinates. However, whatever the values and priorities are, there are strong expectations to behave in accordance with what is decided (‘loyalty’). Very often this means being loyal to decisions taken on higher hierarchical levels, without having had much opportunity to influence those decisions.

Conclusively, although managers in middle rank positions have some freedom in framing their role and in carrying out their work, there are strong demands on loyalty and to implement strategic decisions, first and foremost grounded on a technical-economical rationality, which implies compromising with other identities and a caring rationality. Individuals probably have to compromise or live with such dilemmas and conflicts; otherwise they would not stay in the job.
Friendship in work organisations – functions and meanings
As pointed out by Spencer & Pahl (2006: 96), the workplace is an extremely important context in which friendship can be made. Working in a common professional field can also be a powerful basis for developing friendship. However, workplace friendships have received little research attention, although such relationships are very important in the organisation (Sias et al., 2003: 323). They can have a variety of functions and be different in degree of closeness or intimacy. Relationships may develop over time from what can be called friendly relations to close friends. It is not unusual that friendships, which in the first place are developed at the workplace, transcend into other life arenas. Thus, personal and private dimensions in the relationship become more obvious.

Hochschild (1997) has shown how important work and workplace relations may be in meeting different demands of the members, including emotional needs which first and foremost are expected to be satisfied in private life. Spending long hours at work, often in jobs or situations requiring emotional labour, could increase the need for support. It is a significant function of friendships to provide emotional support (Sias et al., 2003: 322). Friends can also be helpful in reducing stress and job dissatisfaction. However, having a good friendship could be rewarding in itself. As pointed out by Sias et al., friendships have important functions for both organisations and individuals, and those who are left out of such relationships, are disadvantageous, because they miss useful informal information and support.

Workplace friendships can be regarded as a unique type of workplace relationship because of two defining characteristics; friendships are voluntary, and they have a personalistic focus (Sias et al., 2003: 323). In friendships coworkers or colleagues are chosen, and partners do not treat each other as mere role occupants, but as whole persons. In this way friendships are different from other peer relationships, which may have organisational roles as the only focus. Treating each other as whole persons will probably imply that different aspects of life, including roles and relationships in private life, are of relevance for colleagues who are friends.

As mentioned before, friendships among colleagues could contribute to creating a good working climate, but there could be conflicts, rivalry and antagonistic feelings between individuals and groups, based on different friendship alliances. Furthermore, relations to the leader could also be different; for instance, in respect of loyalty and closeness/distance. Such informal relationships may represent sources of potential power and influence for every parties, leaders as well as subordinates. However, their meanings and functions are often undervalued in organisational theory and processes of change at the workplace.

In the following passage I will go further into relations between middle managers and their subordinates in female work areas (cf. Holmquist, 1997). I am especially interested in managers' use of indirect power in order to implement strategic decisions and organisational changes, but most of all I am concerned about what the consequences of this conduct might be for subordinates and clients.

The middle manager – in an invidious position?
In many ways the middle manager, who knows her subordinates and the work on the ground floor, has an advantageous position in relational and motivational work at the workplace. Although in a management position, she is not very different from her subordinates and can easily identify with professionals and work on lower levels. She may even have made friends with some of them, especially if she has been working in the organisation for some time and developed friendship with colleagues before she was promoted. Furthermore, subordinates may also identify with their leader, who does not emerge as very different from themselves.

However, knowing that female work areas may consist of different relationships and constellations, with differing kinds of relationship to the leader, I think it is very important, though, to explore the
meaning of being rather close to subordinates in managerial work, especially if knowledge and relationships are used by leaders in ways which may have effects to the detriment of subordinates and clients, as indicated in the following presentation.

According to a study by Carin Holmquist (1997: 149f.), female managers in public sector try to accommodate to changes in the organisation by choosing loyalty as a strategy and working hard to live up to expectations. In other words, they internalise problems, taking on a personal responsibility to fulfil obviously conflicting goals. Furthermore, they are successful in motivating their subordinates to give their utmost, although economising and cost reduction seem to be the main focus and concern. Closeness to their subordinates may explain why they succeed in this respect. Moreover, subordinates may also identify with their leader, who is supposed to handle a difficult situation as best she can.

Being a great motivator is regarded as very important in middle management, but there are also reasons to be critical and question intentions and consequences of being forceful in this respect. Possessing such power opens up for various uses and misuses, having intentional and not intentional consequences. If economising and cost reduction is the main focus and concern and managers are motivating their subordinates to give their utmost and even more than that, managers might succeed in fulfilling important goals. Nevertheless, they might lose in other respects; for instance, if the consequences are worn out workers or if the effects are harmful to clients. Another serious consequence is that economical and organisational problems in the sector, which first and foremost constitute a political matter and responsibility, are concealed as individual problems (Gullikstad & Rasmussen, 2004: 37). Thus, managers may contribute to this individualisation, putting heavy loads on the subordinates’ shoulders. The latter’s responsibilities as caretakers and devotion to their clients will probably make it difficult to leave clients without doing their utmost, even if this means overloading themselves. They may take on a personal responsibility for having work done, despite in short of time or having other clients/tasks to attend to. Moreover, relations to colleagues and feelings of communality and solidarity work in the same direction. However, this could be called a defensive communality, characterised by good internal relations and feelings of solidarity, but powerless when it comes to external influence (cf. Holter et al., 1982). A combination of loyalty and voice approaches could probably have given a more robust communality, being more powerful outwards (cf. Haavind, 1982).

The question is if women generally, more readily than men, are susceptible to accepting and adjusting to existing work conditions or changes in the organisation, because of different or traditional expectations of role behaviour. Holmquist’s (1997) findings may therefore also reflect more traditional female virtues, being ‘obedient, conscientious and clever’. Appropriate behaviour includes expressing loyalty more often than being in opposition. In their traditional role women are often expected to adapt readily to other people, situations and settings, which in turn may make it easier to accept changes in work organisation. Thus, being used to adjusting in other relationships and situations makes women’s accommodation at work easier.

There are some ethical questions to pose to the behaviour of the leader as revealed in Holmquist’s study. What kind of leader is the middle manager in her study, is she “good” or “bad”? Obviously, the answer is not clear-cut and by naming the middle manager in her study ‘the tender executioner’, Holmquist (1997: 168) indicates some sort of ambiguity. I will go a bit further into this as I conclude my paper.

Conclusions
If the main focus and concern are economising and cost reduction, I suppose employers are happy with managers who accommodate to changes by choosing loyalty as a strategy, and in addition are successful in motivating subordinates to yield their utmost. Whether deliberate or not, having women in middle management positions to implement such changes in the organisation could be a
successful strategy from the employers’ point of view (Holmquist, 1997: 165). However, if the consequences are worn out workers and an unacceptable worsening of the conditions for clients, this way of accommodating does not serve the interests of the latter. Nor do concealing economical and organisational problems, which in reality constitute a political responsibility, as individual problems (cf. Gullikstad & Rasmussen, 2004). Conclusively, having good relations to subordinates and the best will and intentions to be clever and a good manager, cannot make up for such effects. Therefore, a voice strategy is also needed, in speaking up for subordinates/clients. This could be a kind of solution to conflicting loyalties and hopefully contribute to empowering actors and communalities in the field. As pointed out by Holmqvist (1997: 176), the chosen approach (loyalty) leaves the managers (and their subordinates) in a powerless position. They are not influential on important strategic and political decisions which have great impact on the daily work and relationships in the organisation.

How we conduct ourselves in our relations with others is an ethical question, implying critical self-awareness and the ability to reflect on the import of one’s actions, but also on what are the wanted guidelines or values in our lives (Townley, 1994: 166-167). In carrying out their work managers certainly have to take into account, consciously or not, whom they are and whom they are representing. That means considering questions related to identity and loyalty, and not to forget reflecting on power relations. Moreover, albeit not a sufficient presupposition for developing a non-exploitative relationship, it is necessary to recognise the importance of the inter-subjective dimension of social relations (cf. Townley, 1994: 168).

References
The Value in Leadership: The influence of values on decision-making and in defining perceptions of leadership

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Abstract
This paper draws on findings from my recent doctoral research (Stewart, 2006) which utilised a case study approach to investigate perceptions of leadership in relation to the implementation of an equity change-agenda related to sexuality in an Australian university. Findings from this study challenge the traditional construct of masculine ‘heroic’ leader through identifying multiple leader groups working in synergistic and collaborative relationship with each other. These groups shared a number of key characteristics including: risk, influence, power and authority, respect, and courage, and underpinning these, personal values relating to social justice and equity. These qualities were manifested differently in each group in relation to the function of that leader group. Drawing from the field of leadership literature, I will discuss the implications of these findings opening up discussion around the need to understand the way in which values influence decision-making, and argue for an alternative model for strategically implementing organisational change through identification and engagement of leaders and leader groups.

Introduction
The question that this research addressed was: What are perceptions of leadership in equity in relation to sexuality and gender identity within an Australian higher education institution notable for its policies in this area? The case-study upon which this paper is based took a unique perspective in that its purpose was to establish how those involved in the implementation of an equity agenda related to sexuality, perceived leadership to be enacted.

A number of imperatives underpinned this study. For many years I lived and worked in the tertiary sector as a ‘closeted’ lesbian with no legislative protection. Even today, in lived reality the official safety afforded by the legislation is partial and tenuous. I therefore had a personal interest in the issue. Secondly, leadership in regard to ‘equity’ is given little attention in the literature. There is somewhat of a void about leadership in higher education per se and what has been written mainly focuses on academic leadership. Finally, my professional role is directly related to equity practice in higher education, and while Australian State and Territory legislation calls for institutional equity practices to incorporate issues related to sexuality and gender identity, preliminary studies demonstrated that there was a conspicuous lack of policy and programs in Australian universities specifically targeting discrimination against lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, transsexual or intersex (LGBT/I)1 staff and students. The topic was therefore of both personal and professional importance.

In this paper, I will briefly overview the main issues from the literature that informed the study drawing from the field of leadership studies, in particular that related to ethics and values as well the small body of work related to issues of sexuality in the workplace. I will outline the methodology used in the research and discuss the key findings, arguing firstly that the issue of values is fundamentally important in understanding the nature of decision-making, and secondly that the model of leadership that operated in this case study not only suggests an alternative to traditional constructs of leadership but also has implications for organisational change practitioners. I will also suggest possibilities for further research.

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1 Refer to Appendix for glossary of terms.

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Background literature

Leadership

In undertaking a review of the relevant literature, I sought firstly to inform the definition of the research question and identify areas where further research might add to the current body of work in relevant fields. I particularly wanted to explore the literature related to leadership within institutions of higher education.

Much of the traditional leadership theory is derived from research undertaken in a corporate environment and demonstrates an “adherence to functionalist structures and orthodox control models of organization ...[within which]... the leader-follower relationship is of central importance” (Gordon in Parry and Meindl, 2002, p42). Waldim suggests additionally, that “historically... leadership theories have been framed narrowly at dyadic or small-group level” (Waldim, 2007, p239) and is predominantly comprised of studies by men about men (and for men) in Anglo cultural settings (ibid). Sinclair proposes that leadership theory is in dire need of re-visioning due to its traditional link with ‘heroic masculinity’ and male heterosexual identity, in part due to the tendency to see both gender and sexuality as belonging to women and not to men (Sinclair, 1998).

Recent trends have seen a shift towards exploring more dispersed forms of leadership that reflect the development of “flatter, more organically oriented structures” (Gordon, 2002, p42). Issues of power and the two-way influence of the relationship between leaders and followers are of increasing interest (Parry, 1998). Eveline (2004) identifies a number of dispersed leadership models of the ‘post-heroic’ kind that are of a companionate nature. ‘Networking leadership’, she suggests, is demonstrated by groups that self-organise around a common purpose for mutual support and lobbying purposes using strategies such as submission and letter writing, building a case to senior administration in order to bring about desired change. Avery (2004) proposes that in fact it is possible for a number of different models of leadership to operate at any one time within an organisation. However, the existing body of literature related to leadership and specifically leadership in higher education fails to adequately address perceptions of how leadership is manifested. As Bensimon states, “what a [university] president does is less important than how others interpret presidential behaviour” (1990, p72).

Values and Leadership

During analysis, emerging theories about the relationship between ‘values’ and ‘leadership’ compelled me to explore this aspect of the literature. It was apparent that much of that available reflected the predominance of a model that is “rooted in instrumental rationality, concerned largely with techniques of control and manipulation” (Rizvi, 1985, p2) and which has therefore deliberately ignored issues of a non-rational nature, such as values. Positivist and post-positivist research approaches alike have tended to ignore values as influencing leadership behaviour and decisions (Rizvi, 1985) and have focused on “the empirical and technical” (Begley, 2000). Although values are fundamental to critical theory and constructivist paradigms, especially in giving voice to alternative and/or marginalised voices, there has been a focus on rationality. Begley describes this as the ‘Dogma of Immaculate Perception’, which “holds in essence, that the ‘facts of the matter’ can be surgically severed from the attitudes, values, beliefs, sentiments emotions, character, personality, biology, biography, and physiology of the agents in the matter” (Begley, 1999, pxii).

Begley suggests that “[t]hose scholars whose work reflects the interests of socially marginalized or minority groups of any sort are clearly attracted to the adoption, or critiquing of, particular values ...” (Begley, 2000, p247). This can be seen in the work of feminist researchers such as Ferguson (1984), Sinclair (1998), and more recently Eveline (2004) who have had a particular concern with ‘gender’ and the continued marginalization of women in organisations. The importance of values in leadership is nevertheless beginning to gain greater attention, with a growing recognition of their
centrality to decision-making. (Begley, 2000, Avery, 2004, Robbins et al., 2001). Avery defines three types of values within the organisational context:

- personal values;
- those values shared with others; and
- values core to the organization.

(Avery p 102)

There has been a significant amount of study undertaken in the area of business ethics, however, little of this relates to the ethics of leaders, “suggesting that theoretical formulations in this area are still in their infancy” (Northouse, 2001, p249). The available literature on ethics and values and Avery’s work in particular, alerted me to the manner in which personal values play a fundamental role in influencing, possibly even in determining, the decisions made by leaders, either overtly or subconsciously.

**Equity practice**

The research question specifically related to the implementation of an equity agenda focused on sexuality and gender identity, however, there was a paucity of literature related to equity, equity practice in universities and in particular that related to sexuality and gender identity in the workplace. Those studies which did explore the ‘Queer’ workplace experience (Diamant and Lee, 2002, Irwin, 1999, Tierney, 1997) indicated some commonality in matters of discrimination and harassment. This gap in the literature highlights the pervasiveness of ‘heterogemony’; a cloak of invisibility that serves to marginalise the experience of non-heterosexuals and those who do not identify with the dominant binary-gendered mainstream.

**Research Overview and Methodology**

In this study, I utilised a ‘partial grounded theory approach’ (Parry, 1998), which particularly suited a case study and influenced the methods of data gathering and analysis. Grounded theory was originally developed by Glaser and Strauss in 1967. In the ensuing 40 years it has been used in interpretive studies, feminist theorizing, modernist and postmodern approaches (Gordon in Locke, 2001, p44) with resultant modifications and changes.

**The Case Study**

A number of exploratory pilot investigations were undertaken including (i) a scan of Australian university websites to identify how issues related to sexuality and gender identity were integrated through the university policy platforms, (ii) collection of additional relevant information from equity practitioners, and (iii) a further ‘climate’ study with higher education staff identifying as lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender. The case study university, ‘Reform U’, was duly selected as representing leading practice in the area. It had introduced a suite of social justice policies and programs with the clear objective of creating a university climate more accepting and tolerant of lesbians, gay men, transgender, ‘queer’, intersex and bisexual staff and students. Through using a highly focused case study approach, the research sought to utilise this as a ‘lens’ through which participants’ perceptions of leadership could be explored.

**Data Collection**

In research of this nature, where it is not possible or feasible to engage the entire case study site, “the best compromise is to include a sample with reasonable variation in the phenomenon, settings or people under study” (Marshall and Rossman, 1999, p69). The sample in this case was specifically selected to bring focus to the study, and 25 participants were identified on the basis of their close involvement with and knowledge of the introduction of the sexuality equity agenda. Participants included both academic and general/professional staff from a range of levels of seniority across

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2 Refer to Glossary. Appendix 1
different areas of the University, male and female, representing a cross section of those who identified as heterosexual, gay, or lesbian (ref Appendix 2).

One-to-one interviews of approximately one hour in length were held with each participant and key informants participated in additional follow-up interviews. Such a form of interviewing key, influential or well-informed people is sometimes labelled ‘elite’ interviewing (Marshall and Rossman, 1999) and assured the quality of information relevant to the topic. Interviews were supplemented with data drawn from multiple sources including web pages, reports, newsletters, brochures and information sheets, and archival material.

Data analysis

Interviews were transcribed, thematically analysed and coded. Data from different sources was explored to both confirm and disconfirm emerging theories. The primary analytic tool used to work with the data was QSR N6, previously known as NUD*IST (Non-numerical Unstructured Data Indexing Searching and Theorizing). N6 is a software program that enables storage and rapid code-and-retrieve work to be undertaken, N6 supports the theory-building efforts of analysis through providing a range of features, including memoing. It can be used at a sophisticated level to facilitate key word or phrase searching, pattern searching, or at the relatively simple level, as used in this study, where it was utilised essentially as the primary management tool facilitating my ability to access and interrogate the large quantity of data, systematically categorise themes, concepts and ideas and note emergent theories in the form of memos.

Analysis was supplemented by the use of Leximancer, another software program, which, equated ‘words’ with ‘concepts,’ and therefore was unable to identify concepts of a more abstract nature. I also engaged with the data through manual interaction with documents and interview texts.

The analytic process constantly raised questions about emerging theories, which would drive me back to the original data in a cycle of query, search, compare, categorise, and question. The data was revisited over again as questions arose or as inconsistencies appeared in participant accounts, to seek evidence or explanation as to why these contradictions might exist and to seek disconfirming data or explore alternative interpretations to emerging theories.

The combination of analytic methods (triangulation) assisted in clarifying meaning, addressing matters of potential bias and overlooking possible concepts and themes, (Stake in Denzin and Lincoln, 2000). The analysis did not “serve to overcome partial views and present something like a complete picture” (Silverman, 2001, p234). What is presented in the findings is therefore historically situated, culturally constructed, and consequently partial.

Research Findings

Three groups of leaders were identified from the data. Each held a different role in the development and implementation of the sexuality equity agenda: the Initiating leaders (I-leaders) who drove the agenda, the Positional leaders (P-leaders) who were positioned to be able to propagate the agenda; and the Designated institutional leader, the ‘D-leader’, who approved its implementation. Data analysis revealed a complex synergistic relationship among the three leader groups, as illustrated in Figure 1.
Figure 1: Relationships among the three leader groups

I-leaders had selected members of the P-leader group on the basis of their empathy and the positional influence they could exercise and also supported P and D-leaders by providing essential knowledge to enable them to successfully carry out their roles. The D-leader influenced P-leaders through his visible support for the agenda and was himself influenced by the courage and knowledge of I-leaders and supported by the commitment of P-leaders. In this case study, ‘leadership’ was clearly a relational process engaging all three leader groups.

Although each group’s role was distinctive, they shared a number of key characteristics that were identified by research participants as signifiers of leadership:
- having a capacity to exert some degree of power, authority and influence,
- willingness to face risks in supporting the sexuality equity agenda,
- courage in the face of risks,
- significant attributed professional and personal respect,
- values that strongly supported equity.

These characteristics were situated within a complex interrelationship with some degree of overlap between them, although they were manifested differently by each leader group as illustrated in Figure 2 below.

Figure 2: Shared leadership characteristics
Identification as ‘a leader’ required visible and consistently demonstrated commitment. One-off action was not sufficient. All leaders indicated their personal commitment and belief in the importance of the sexuality equity agenda by being publicly and very visibly associated with it on a number of occasions.

Leaders were also recognised as having varying degrees of influence, power and authority.

Well I think for me, the critical issue was personal leadership... I think that's a very powerful statement. Actually saying, "I'm willing to put my, who I am in my entirety, on the line, including this last frontier."

So I think that is very powerful. And they did that. So they modelled the practice I guess. That was very powerful. So showing personal leadership in the area.

The power and influence of the leader groups was derived from a number of bases. I-leaders were held in respect because of their professional track record and as such, were regarded seriously. They were able to capitalise on this in proposing the sexuality equity agenda and they were regarded as having authority because of the authenticity of their positioning and the first hand knowledge this afforded them. P-leaders derived their power from the positions they held and their capacity to influence others. However, this was also contingent on the professional respect in which they were held by their followers. The D-leader held power inherent in the position and was able to legitimise the agenda.

I-leader
You know, and like I've already said that I just felt like that was an endorsement from [the D-leader] that gave me permission to go on and do it .... If we hadn't got that, I don't know, I honestly don't know whether we would have had the guts to go ahead, done it without any institutional sort of support.

All leader groups were acknowledged as having influence over others, whether through the position they held, or as a result of the interpersonal networks that were established. Influence did not only extend over subordinates, but included peers and those situated above them.

The sexuality equity agenda was presented to the University and wider community as an extension of existing commitment by the institution to equity and diversity matters. There was a significant push to have this agenda taken up prior to foreshadowed legislative change being enacted, on the basis that the University presented itself as a leader in setting and exemplifying high moral standards within the wider community and should not limit itself to a compliance-driven response to legislation. While the I-leaders were recognised for their driving force and for the personal investment in the agenda and P-leaders for progressing the agenda more widely and helping to embed it within normal practice, it was acknowledged by all that without the support of the D-leader it was highly unlikely that the agenda would have progressed beyond a level of minimal compliance that would have been required of the University once the relevant state legislation was passed.

All leaders were held in high regard within the university in part because of their established professional reputation, partly because of the integrity they demonstrated over time and, in relation to the sexuality equity agenda, because they were regarded as potentially experiencing some degree of risk that made their visible support perceived to be an act of courage. The data demonstrated that decisions made by leaders to support the sexuality equity agenda were based upon the values they held. All leader groups shared similar characteristics, but these were seen to be manifested differently within the three different leader groups.
Johnson contends that “‘toxic’ or ‘bad’ leaders fail to demonstrate such traits as integrity, courage, moderation and compassion for the needs of others” (2007, p159) and participants in this research perceived that all leader groups were prepared to take risks and courageous actions on the basis of their personal values. The ‘values’ held by the leader groups therefore constructed a ‘value-platform’ underpinning decision-making.

The influence of values on decision-making
The findings of this case study foregrounded personal values related to issues of social justice and equity. These operated as motivators for leaders’ decisions and inflected what could be described as their leadership style. These values were shared between the leader groups and aligned with those of the University as demonstrated through its public positioning.

I think [the D-leader] has been an exemplary leader of change agendas. Um, one of the things he does is he makes sure there’s funding to support these agendas. He listens, he understands, he’s very keen on making sure diversity counts and it’s a very powerful concern of his. He’s attended all of the programs that are related to these agendas. He attends all of the functions; he has a poster up in his room to say these are important. I mean this is a very powerful leader in terms of helping change happen, and it’s one of the things that make him stand out so singularly.

The D-leader also referred to the alignment of values between himself and his senior staff, some of whom referred to the positive relationship they enjoyed with him because they shared his values, and these same values related to equity and diversity were acknowledged by participants and the D-leader himself, as core to the institution.

(D-Leader)
I’ve had a wonderful chance of picking my own Executive team...and I spent a lot of time selecting those people. And I’m confident that they share my view of the world and that... there’s a lot of good people out there and that we’ll move forward on these fronts.

(P Leader)
I’ve found it very good because we think alike, that’s why it’s been easy for me in the past to work [with the D-leader].

Utilising the concepts of ‘espoused theories’, and ‘theories in use’ (Schein, 1992, Agyris and Schön, 1996) developed by Agyris and Schön, I use the terms, articulated values and enacted values to describe the way in which values underpin action. Articulated values are those an individual posits as being important to them and which might indicate what they would say in a particular situation. Enacted values are those values that operate as motivators and are revealed by what an individual actually does.

Like at this kind of launch there’d be [all these senior people]... And they had all of these people there, you know, wearing their badges and it was quite visible that the project had really good support from the top.

At times leaders are clearly aware of the ways in which their values impact upon their decisions. There is not, however, always congruence between articulated and enacted values, particularly in situations where conflicting values intersect. For example, the D-leader articulated values of consultation and collegiality. On this basis, therefore, it might be assumed that he would engage in a consultative process when important decisions were to be made, and indeed this was the case on many occasions. There were other times, however, when he made decisions without any consultation at all. In one such instance, the D-leader recalled that he felt a moral obligation to ‘do the right thing’, that it was not only right for him personally but, by implication, it was also right for the University, which he represented.
D-Leader

I never consciously thought about “Well what will people think about this?” It just occurred to me that this is the right thing to do.

The D-leader’s articulated values related to consultation were on this occasion, subordinated to the dominant values he held related to the moral issue at hand supported by the belief that his values aligned with those of his staff and appropriately reflected those of the University.

At times when individuals are in situations of negotiating competing values, it appears therefore, that those most strongly held in that particular context, will dictate which action is eventually taken. Staff nevertheless developed a sense of trust and belief in the D-leader’s integrity because of the high degree of congruence between his articulated and enacted values.

It was this visibly enacted ‘value-platform’ around equity issues which gave I-leaders the courage to approach the D-leader to support the sexuality equity agenda and framed their selection of which P-leaders to approach.

Um yeah but, no she [P-leader] um, she’s wonderful so she’s always been supportive and of students, you know, that she’s looked after and other lesbians on staff. Yeah. And you know, there’s a gay boy on the staff and he still is and she was always fine with that. So I would put her up there as a real champion, yeah.

These same values were the motivators for the P-leaders decision to agree to actively promote the sexuality equity agenda.

P-leader

So I used every opportunity to talk about homophobia, sexual orientation, gender identity just because I thought it was one of the areas that people had little understanding of really, because it hadn’t been on the agenda. [It] hadn’t been talked about, it was one of the taboo, seemed to be one of the taboo subjects in society. So yeah, I just automatically arced it up there really.

This value platform therefore underpinned other perceived leadership characteristics (Figure 3).

Figure 3: Relationship of values to leadership characteristics
In deciding to support the sexuality equity agenda, all leaders had to weigh up the associated risks. This risk factor was amplified because of the controversial and troubling nature of the sexuality equity agenda and the degree of visibility that was attached to the leadership role. For example, the l-leaders might have chosen not to disclose their alternative sexuality, however, they believed it essential to be open in order to be able to honestly represent LGBTI staff and students and to demonstrate authenticity to those they were educating about the issues.

I-leader
And each of the training programs that we’ve run, we start by telling some of our own story... Every one that’s ever attended our training we’ve come out to, so, because that seems to be like the only authentic place to start from... That’s to say “Well this is why we run this program and this is what it’s about”, and trying to create a bit of a heart connection rather than it just being a head thing.

The risk for D- and P- leaders was perceived to derive from their association with an agenda which might lead others to question their sexual orientation and potentially diminish the respect in which they were held. They made courageous decisions based upon those values which infused their psyche with the moral and “intellectual justification for what is right” (Stein and Baca, 1981, p5).

The participants in the program themselves understood that they were making a big step, that they were taking a risk in being in it. Some of them are taking a risk in being involved because of what they perceived their work colleagues perceptions of them and their sexuality ... it was being reported ... that some people had the FLAG stickers ripped off walls and things like that ... That they felt that there was a hostile environment that they were likely to go back into...and needing to be reassured.

I-leader
... but I mean, for [the D-leader] to be able to take on this, or agree to this and support this as strongly as he did and then go to ... an AVCC meeting, or whatever, and him being in the newspapers, “Reform U is doing this sexuality stuff”...There was the potential there for, I guess, him to feel uncomfortable with his peers in other universities.

“Ethics is not a well indexed code of behaviour to be consulted when in doubt, but rather a system of thought developed over many millennia about how human beings translate their inner motivations into external actions having social consequences” (Chambers in Stein and Baca, 1981, p5).

D-leader
Every time you wimp out of doing something when you think it’s the right thing to do, you weaken your capacity to do the next thing.

In situations where we find ourselves in a moral dilemma our values influence, confine or mould the decisions we will make (Lakomski in Strike and Ternasky, 1993, Rizvi, 1985). The findings from this study support the contention that the decisions are based, perhaps even subconsciously, upon personal values and the moral and ethical frame of reference through which we operate. I will now discuss the model of leadership that emerged from this case study and how it might inform the implementation of a change agenda.

An Alternative Leadership Model
The model of organisational leadership that emerged from this research was one of ‘diffused’ leadership where power, influence and authority did not reside solely in the office of the university President but was manifested by multiple leaders at different levels within the university, working in synergistic and collaborative relationship with each other. There still remained, however, aspects of...
more traditional models of leadership inasmuch as the D-leader retained considerable power and authority. Although the particular context of this study was the development and implementation of an equity change agenda within a university, there is relevance for those involved in research related to leadership and organisational change, as well as for organisational change practitioners.

It would be important, for example, to also consider the implications of the ways in which power and authority are wielded within a particular institution and what mechanisms exist for those less powerful to influence the organisation and whether they facilitate the foregrounding of issues or alternatively, operate to maintain the status quo? The flatter, less hierarchical structure provides opportunity for those previously marginalised to more easily have their voices heard and removes layers of bureaucratic ‘gatekeeping’ mechanisms. Power and influence are not simply attached to office, but are recognised as also being derived from various sources, such as professional expertise, and personal respect developed over time.

This research has made explicit the importance of personal values in decision-making and therefore, change agents might consider the alignment of values on a change agenda, with those of the enacted values of institutional leader groups. They might also consider questions such as:

- Have all key leader groups been identified?
- Are the leader groups involved in the change agenda positioned appropriately to facilitate its promulgation through the organisation?
- Is there opportunity for leader groups to connect in ways that best facilitate and support the required synergistic relationship?
- Do the leader groups have the required knowledge and understanding to fulfil their potential leadership role in the implementation?
- Have the risk factors been sufficiently addressed and do leader groups have a commitment and the necessary tools to address these?

Although this research identified a model of leadership which is somewhat different from those discussed in the current literature, nevertheless, it does share features from the four different leadership paradigms proposed by Avery (2004) and the models of diffused leadership discussed by Eveline (2004). The data showed that the leadership model at the case study university retained features of chronologically earlier leadership models with a hierarchical structure, limits to devolution of authority but with significant executive power retained at the level of D-leader.

There simultaneously existed a number of aspects of the ‘Organic’ model (Avery, 2004), which enabled the emergence of the I-leaders and the cooption of P-leaders. Identifying the relationship between leader groups and the shared characteristics manifested differently in each, provides a new perspective on the way in which leadership is perceived to be enacted and also makes visible the possibilities for those on the margins to form strategic partnerships to enable new equity initiatives to be introduced within a university.

Implications for further research
The use of a case study approach in this exploratory study implies a contextual particularity for its findings. Research beyond the particular institution would be useful in exploring whether the model of leadership outlined in this paper is one that is manifested in other universities and whether there is any application to other institutional forms.

While the influence of values on decision-making emerged as a major theme in this study, it is not possible to state with any degree of surety whether this was unique to a social justice agenda or whether the moral nature of the sexuality equity agenda enabled a clearer perception of the way in which values permeate leadership and decision-making. The traditional view of rational and objective decision-making is nevertheless challenged by these findings. Popper remarks that
“homogeneity of values and cultural backgrounds might count most significantly in determining perceptions of leadership in organizations” (in Parry and Meindl, 2002, p10) and there appeared to be considerable congruence between the values of leader group members in this study. It is possible, however, that this leadership model may not occur where this close alignment of values between leader groups does not exist. Further research could explore these issues in depth.

Further research might establish whether the leadership model is particular to a context sexuality and gender identity or whether it might apply in other equity areas or might it in fact apply to other change agendas outside the social justice and equity framework? Comparative studies could establish the relationship, if one exists, between context, the nature of the organisational culture, the particular change agenda and leadership models that are manifested. Additional exploration of the relationships between the roles of the three leader groups might indicate whether this remains stable across different contexts or whether these groups come together in different ways.

While it was not a particular focus of this research, certain aspects about participants’ personal histories were revealed, sufficient to indicate the potential for further research that would expand the work of Shamir et al. (2005) who advocate that taking a ‘life-story’ approach to the study of leadership. There is potential to explore the relationship between individuals’ personal histories, the values they espouse and how these are enacted within their leadership role.

Conclusion
This research suggests that ‘leadership’ was constructed by observers of its performance as a recognisable behaviour, supporting the contention of some scholars that leadership does not rest in leaders, but is attributed to individuals by those who become their followers and as such is a socially agreed construct (Avery, 2004). The nature of the sexuality equity agenda foregrounded both articulated and enacted values of those involved and made explicit the way in which they influenced leaders’ decisions.

This study adds to the growing body of research that challenges the traditional ‘leader-follower’ perspective of leadership in which power resides in the ‘man at the top’. Three distinct leadership groups were identified which shared a number of key characteristics. Their synergistic relationship facilitated the implementation of an institutional change agenda and the alternative model outlined holds possibilities for those on the margins to form strategic partnerships to enable the successful introduction of equity initiatives.

References

Irwin, J. (1999) The Pink Ceiling is too Low, Sydney, Australian Centre of Gay and Lesbian Research, University of Sydney.


### Appendix 1

**Glossary of Terms**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LGBTI</td>
<td>Acronym for lesbian, gay, transgender, bisexual and intersex. Can be written in any order, and I have chosen to do this in this thesis to avoid privileging any particular group. Sometimes the 'I' is distinguished from the other letters to acknowledge to specific nature of being born Intersex. Q may also be added to indicate 'Queer'.</td>
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<tr>
<td>BGLT/I</td>
<td>Bisexual: A person who has a sexual attraction to people regardless of gender. Transgender: This term may be used by someone who identifies as a different gender to the one they have been assigned by society, often living their lives as that gender, and who may or may not choose to undergo surgery that more closely aligns their body to their gender identity.</td>
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<tr>
<td>BGLTQ/I etc.</td>
<td>Gay: A male homosexual (gay man), but more recently may be used as a broad term to include gay men and lesbians. Lesbian: A female homosexual. There are a number of terms (mostly derogatory) used to describe lesbians, including ‘dyke’, a term that has been reclaimed by the lesbian community. Sometimes incorporated under the general term ‘gay community’. Queer: This originally derogatory term used to describe gay and lesbian individuals has been reclaimed by some members of LGBT communities. Some TBLG people object to the use of the term (and this may also be true of other &quot;reclaimed&quot; words, such as “dyke”).</td>
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<tr>
<td>etc.</td>
<td>Straight Str8: Slang term for “heterosexual” - a person who is sexually attracted to someone of the opposite gender.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Heterosexism: Culturally and institutionally entrenched attitudes and practices which serve to oppress and marginalise LGBT persons.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Transphobia: A term is generally applied to anyone who dislikes those identifying as transgender or transsexual and who may discriminate, make derogatory remarks, or engage in any form of harassment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Homophobia: An irrational dislike of LGBTIQ people and may be expressed as avoidance behaviour, discrimination, or verbal or physical harassment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Heterogemony: A term I have developed to describe the hegemonic nature of heterosexuality which, as the basic assumption of the dominant sexual class creates a hegemony that invisibilises alternatives.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Closeted In the closet: A lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender (LGBT) person who is secretive about their sexual orientation or gender history, out of fear or insecurity. They may try to 'pass' as straight. The opposite is to be 'out' of the closet. To deliberate disclose another person's alternative sexuality is to 'out' them.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 2

Participant Data

Table A5.1: Participants by seniority.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Academic</th>
<th>Non-Academic</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>VC/President</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty Dean, Head of School or similar senior academic</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Departmental Director/Manager</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other academic</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other non-academic</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>10</strong></td>
<td><strong>15</strong></td>
<td><strong>25</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(to protect the identity of participants, this table is of necessity very general)

Table A5.2: Participants by gender and sexuality identification.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>M</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>STR8</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LESBIAN</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GAY MALE</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>14</strong></td>
<td><strong>11</strong></td>
<td><strong>25</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(note. No participant identified as transgender or intersex)
INTRODUCTION
This paper investigates the perceived low client service standards of engineering firms. The key questions that pertain to this issue are, first, how do engineers interact with their clients? Second, what are the fundamental issues? Third, are there any inherent problems?

Cause of concern
The annual Beaton Professions Report, based on simple survey, has always ranked the standard of client service quality of engineering firms the lowest among other professions such as lawyers, accountants and architects. While the relatively low ranking is a cause of concern, there is insufficient literature that would help us understand the reasons why.

Consulting engineers in construction project
This study focuses on consulting engineering firms engaged in construction projects, as the construction industry has such a significant percentage of consulting engineering firms involved that this study will not bias the results by focusing just on one single industry.

Consulting engineers in a construction project are mainly the civil and structural engineers (C&S), and mechanical and electrical engineers (M&E). Their role is to design structural and services capacities in conjunction with architectural drawings. Unlike other professionals, their clients are usually individuals rather than organisations and they interact in organisational settings instead of working by themselves.

The characteristic of a construction project is of a complex human relationship involving many different stakeholders. They are, the client/owner, architect, engineers, land surveyor, quantity surveyor, project manager, main contractor, specialist sub-contractors, building materials suppliers and tradesmen. As construction project involves a combined team effort, no single member of the project team deserves full credit for the outcome (Canby, 1956), but yet why do the clients rate the services of architects as far more superior compared with engineers?

LITERATURE REVIEW
Inherent Problem
Many engineering literatures describe engineering work as involving both technical and non-technical competencies. Their nature of work requires engineers to actively listen, ask questions to find the needs of clients, educate & advise them, motivate & guide the supporting staff, and coordinate (Trevelyan, 2007) the works of others to complete their tasks. However, in Trevelyan’s work, these non-technical activities are not considered as “real work” by engineers themselves. Similarly, women engineers fear that the relational practice done by them is not highly value by their employers (Fletcher, 2001).

Service Quality
METHOD
The writer sets out to investigate the Australian experience and perspective by conducting in-depth interviews with engineers and their clients. This is to uncover the technical & non-technical issues, concerns, & inherent problems from the client-engineer relationship in a construction project.

PRELIMINARY FINDINGS
Fundamental Issue
My research shows that the fundamental issue here is clients interact differently with different kinds of consultants. For examples, most lawyers interact with their client personally, it is a one on one conversation, and the same applies for accountants. However, the majority of clients first approach the architect to design and draw the building plans when launching a construction project. After that, they need consulting engineers to translate the architectural drawings and their requirements into a real and functional building structure. The architect gets a consultant team together & acts as the point of contact - collecting and distributing documentations to the relevant parties. Client prefers it this way as they need only call up the architect instead of the various team participants to find out about the project status.

Nature of Consulting Engineer’s Work
The engineer performs the required documentation (design calculation & detailing). Once completed, the plans are directly delivered to the main contractor; there is no need to go through the client or their representatives. Engineers thus coordinate directly with the architect and contractor. If the client wants to make any changes to their requirements, the architect will change the architectural drawings accordingly and the engineer collaborates with the architect for these changes and coordinates with the main contractor on site. Engineers conduct site supervision, in the case of C&S engineers, they inspect the site and ensure that the building structure is built according to the structural plans and that the building structure functions well for the people who will live or work within. They constantly check, spot mistakes, recalculate their design, and amend their drawings to rectify the construction mistakes. The constant checking is also to ensure that no rework is required as it is the primary cause of time and schedule overruns in projects.

Virtual vs Ultimate client
We can see that there is no need for an engineer to have direct contact with the client. Hence, the fundamental difficulty here is that clients interact differently with different kinds of consultants. Engineers interact with their virtual client, which is the person who issued them the contract. These virtual clients could be the developer or the builder who engaged the building consultants. Engineers do not require interacting with the person who funded the project, the ultimate client. So, who is the real client?

Complex human relationship
As mentioned earlier, the construction project is of a complex human relationship, which involves many different stakeholders and a team effort. Each of them does not generally have a global version of the project context. Each has a limited vision according to his/her contract, tasks and works to build. Therefore, it is imperative for the engineer to have a holistic or overall view of the project.

Lengthy service
Furthermore, the project duration can last from a few months to a few years, during this period the expectation, perceived performance and satisfaction of the client may vary during different stages of project life cycle. So unlike other services, it is a lengthy or long-term service.
One of the engineers I interviewed told me that they work hard to ensure successful project outcomes and make the architect and the whole team look good to the client. The advantage for the engineers is that they may be given another job opportunity. On the other hand, the disadvantage for them is that there is no direct access to the client for explanation when things are delayed.

**Prevailing bullying master-slave culture in the industry**
During the interviews, I was told that the culture of the construction industry is that the person-issuing contract has a bullying master-slave mindset. Sometimes, a staff of the client side will say to the junior engineer on the contract to do some work for them, and the young bloke will try and be helpful and because the boss of the client has spoken and will often go and do it, so it will incur cost or could not get reimburse because it is not really formal instruction. In reality, the engineers need to be able to talk to their client that they understand that if they are about to instruct the engineer to work that will cost them money to do and they have to go through the right process.

**Commercial Awareness**
My data shows that most young engineers are not interested or they lack commercial awareness i.e. Knowledge of contract, and the ability to identify work that is beyond the scope of contract

**Timeframe awareness**
During the interviews, the engineers told me that often junior engineers keep perfecting their works and forgetting the time. Sometime it is the unrealistic expectation of the client.

**Market Pressure**
Anecdotal evidence shows that because of the mining & resources boom, many consulting firms experienced rapid business expansion in the past few years. Currently, it is very hard to find qualified engineers; as a result, many firms are forced to limit their client base.

**Escalating building material cost**
The engineers I interviewed also told me that due to the escalating building material cost, they are often told to cut back on their designs to stay within budget. Furthermore, they are unable to give feedback to clients as frequent as they would like to as they are rather busy in the current market situation. Are the engineers overloaded with work?

**Public Perception of Engineers**
Some of the engineers I interviewed informed me that, if one notices the signboard on a work site, very often, it only shows the names of developer, architect and sometimes the builder. There is no mention of engineers. Once a project is completed, the main focus is who developed this project.
and how the architect makes use of the space of the building and engineers do not get mentioned in the project. The everyday person literally does not need to see an engineer, even if they build a house. Moreover, do you realize there is no television shows about being an engineer?

Engineers may be able to learn to be “tempered radicals” (Meyerson, 2001) to overcome these challenges by gradually change a traditional culture without sacrificing their visibility and improve the perception of their service quality.

CONCLUSION
In summary, engineers must have the correct attitude. While technical expertise is important, so are interpersonal skills. They should use both the technical and non-technical skills for collaboration, provide regular feedback to their clients, and at the same time achieve the goals of their clients. Preferably they are aware of the scope of their work and the allowable timeframe. In addition, they must have the initiative to develop a penchant for improving their quality of service in all aspects of their works. In this way, engineers may be able to improve their professional status gradually.

References
"Perfect Match": what makes formal mentoring successful?

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Claire.Webb@uwa.edu.au

ABSTRACT
Formal mentoring programmes have become popular in advancing minority groups within the workplace, including women, providing them with access to support networks not normally available, and encouraging their personal, professional and leadership development. Formal mentoring is assumed to be mutually beneficial to both mentors and mentees, but there has been relatively little exploration of this in the literature. It is unclear whether formal mentoring can successfully replicate the mentoring that occurs informally.

This paper reports on a formal mentoring programme for women operating at the University of Western Australia for the past thirteen years, and explores the following issues:

- What impact does a formal mentoring programme have on mentors and mentees?
- What influences the success or otherwise of mentoring partnerships, and what strategies can be put in place to support them?
- What impact does the gender of the mentor have on the mentoring experience for mentees and mentors?
- How effective is mentoring as a leadership development strategy?

Given that mentor matching is often highly individualised and time-consuming, and that those participating in mentoring programmes often invest many hours engaging in the process, it is vital to ensure that the experience is as productive as possible for all concerned.

Key words: Mentoring, Gender, Universities, Development, Leadership

"Perfect Match": what makes formal mentoring successful?

Introduction
Formal mentoring programmes have become a popular development tool in the last two decades, adopted by organisations for multiple purposes. Such programmes have been used to advance minority groups within the workplace, including women, providing them with access to support networks not normally available, and encouraging their personal, professional and leadership development (Chesterman, 2001). A review in 2007 of staff development for women initiatives in higher education identified that mentoring programmes were operating in at least 17 Australian universities. Several of these programmes have been operating over a number of years, and many have been evaluated (Butorac, 1998; Devos, 2003; Gardiner, 2005; Gustavson, 1997, McCormack, 2006).

The benefits of mentoring highlighted in the literature include greater career satisfaction, increased promotion, retention, publications, research grant income, confidence, self-esteem, networking, job involvement, and reduced stress (Blake-Beard, 2001; Gardiner, 2005; Ragins, 1999; Ragins and Cotton, 1999). On the negative side, mentoring can be time consuming, result in doubt on part of mentees and mentors, and some mentoring partnerships never develop.

Formal mentoring is assumed to be mutually beneficial to both mentors and mentees, but there has been relatively little exploration of this in the literature (Blake-Beard; 2001, Cox, 2005; Kram, 1985).

1 Data available on the UWA web site at http://www.osds.uwa.edu.au/about/activities/ldw/sdfw
There is also some doubt as to whether formal mentoring can successfully replicate and accrue the same benefits as mentoring that occurs informally (Blake-Beard, 2001).

This paper reports on a formal mentoring scheme which has been in place at the University of Western Australia (UWA) for the past thirteen years, and forms part of its one-year Leadership Development for Women (LDW) programme. Through feedback from individual mentors and mentees participating in the 2001–2006 programmes, and from comparative data collected as part of the programme’s tenth anniversary in 2005, I will explore the impact of mentoring on those involved, what factors have influenced the success or otherwise of mentoring relationships, what strategies have been implemented to support the process, what impact the gender of the mentor has had on the mentoring experience, and what effect mentoring has had as a leadership development strategy.

UWA Case Study

Background
The Leadership Development for Women programme was introduced by the University of Western Australia in 1994. It was established to address the continuing under representation of women at senior levels within the organisation, to increase women’s involvement in leadership and decision making processes, and to contribute to a culture change within the University that would value women’s contributions and encourage more inclusive management and leadership styles. Now in its fourteenth year, sixteen programmes have been run, with 445 women having participated. Each programme combines leadership skills development workshops, peer learning groups, career-related workshops and information sessions on how the University works.

Mentoring has always formed part of LDW and has provided a one-to-one component in contrast to the group aspects of the programme. It has also been integral to involving other UWA staff with the programme. Between 1994 and 2007 more than 410 women (193 academics and 217 general staff) have been matched with some 219 mentors from across the institution for a period of up to nine months.

Who Mentors?
Both female and male mentors have been involved in LDW since the programme’s inception. This strategy was favoured by the then female Vice-Chancellor, Professor Fay Gale, who saw it as important to encourage male supporters and champions of the programme, allow opportunities for men to hear women’s stories, and to change their understanding of gender issues. It also avoided too much load being placed on the few women holding senior positions. This approach differed from some other women’s mentoring schemes, where there was concern that men would not understand women’s issues and would offer inappropriate advice. Mentors are drawn from all areas of the University, and participants are usually matched with someone outside their work area or discipline group. Care is taken to ensure that direct reporting lines are not compromised.

Of the 219 mentors involved in LDW from 1994 - 2006, 67% have been female and 33% male. This is in part because some participants have specifically requested a female mentor, and also because past LDW participants have gone on to mentor more junior women in the programme. More academic than general staff mentors have been involved - 130 academics (59%) compared with 89 general staff (41%) - which is surprising given that there have been more general staff mentees (53%) than academics (47%). This difference is primarily due to the number of general staff mentees who have chosen to be matched with an academic mentor.

The programme has been fortunate in having strong support from the top, with 76 of the 219 mentors (35%) being at very senior levels within the organisation. Of this group, 71% are senior academics, including members of the executive, deans and heads of schools, and 29% are senior
general staff, including members of the executive and directors. The gender breakdown for senior staff mentors is 58% male and 42% female, indicating that although LDW has a higher proportion of female mentors, the male mentors are often at more senior levels. Involvement of senior male mentors has been one of the strengths of the programme, building strong and supportive relationships that have certainly contributed to the programme's longevity. Of the very junior mentors involved in the programme, 95% are female and only 5% are male.

**Matching Process**

Mentoring occurs part way through the LDW programme, with each participant being offered the opportunity to be matched with a more senior staff member, who can assist them with their professional and career development. All but a few participants take up the option to have a mentor. The matching process is highly individualised, based on goals, needs and criteria identified by each participant. Participants are asked to suggest possible mentors who might meet their needs, and the LDW coordinators approach potential mentors on their behalf. Mentors are drawn from all areas of the University, including past LDW participants. Once matched, written confirmation is sent to each mentor and mentee, with accompanying guidelines, including tips on how to begin the relationship and suggested activities to engage in. The process is driven primarily by the mentees, who are asked to organise and set the agenda for their meetings.

Experience has shown the importance of offering support and guidance to mentoring partners, and this level of support has been refined over time by the LDW coordinators. Separate workshops are provided for mentees and new mentors, giving them the opportunity to clarify roles and expectations and assist them in making the most of their mentoring partnerships. Follow-up emails are also sent to mentors and mentees at various stages during the nine months to gauge how the relationships are progressing, with a final questionnaire being sent at the end of the nine month mentoring period.

**LDW Data**

In exploring the impact and effectiveness of the LDW mentoring programme, data has been drawn from two main sources. Initial research was conducted in 2005 as part of the programme's tenth anniversary evaluation (de Vries, 2005). This included a survey on mentoring that formed part of an overall programme review. Questionnaires were sent to 293 women who had participated in LDW between 1994 and 2003 and 128 responses were received. The research also included in-depth interviews with 15 experienced mentors, who had mentored multiple times in the programme (de Vries, Webb and Eveline, 2006).

A further review of mentoring has been conducted in 2008, using feedback obtained from mentors and mentees over 8 programmes from 2001 - 2006. The feedback comes from responses to questionnaires independently completed by mentors and mentees at the end of their mentoring partnerships. These informal questionnaires were designed to give LDW coordinators general feedback on the mentoring experience and to assist in improving the programme. Questions asked included whether the mentoring partners were still meeting, how often and for how long they had met, how useful they had found the experience, what benefits they had gained, any goals achieved (mentees only), and what experience they felt they had been able to contribute (mentors only). Respondents were also asked to identify any problems or concerns they had about their mentoring experience and any suggestions for improving the scheme.

Of 215 pairs who were matched from 2001 - 2006, feedback was received from 166 respondents: 79 from mentees (37% of those matched) and 87 from mentors (40% of those matched). Of the mentees who responded, 63 had a female mentor (80%) and 16 had a male mentor (20%). Of the mentors who responded, 69 were female (80%) and 18 were male (20%). There were slightly more general staff mentors (54%) than academic mentors (46%). Forty-one of the mentors (47%) were very senior staff, e.g. executive, deans, heads of schools or directors, and of this senior group, 26
were female (63%) and 15 were male (37%). Female mentors are therefore proportionately over-represented in our sample, both as respondents to the questionnaire and as mentors of those who responded to the questionnaire.

An analysis of the results of these evaluations is outlined below.

**How useful is mentoring?**

There are many indicators that the mentoring experience has benefited LDW mentors and mentees. Feedback from the 128 respondents to the tenth anniversary survey indicated that 16% of participants regarded mentoring as the most influential component of the programme. In this same survey, 74% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the *time spent with their mentor was useful to their development as a leader*.

Data from the 2001 – 2006 programmes asked mentors and mentees to rate how useful they had found their mentoring experience. As indicated in the table below, 83% of mentees and 83% of mentors rated their mentoring experience as either ‘very useful’ or ‘moderately useful’ (mentors were not asked to give a usefulness rating in either of the programmes run in 2001).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Usefulness Rating by Mentors/Mentees</th>
<th>Very Useful</th>
<th>Moderately Useful</th>
<th>Not Very Useful</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mentees (n = 78)</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentors (n = 71)</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

While the majority of respondents found the experience beneficial, it is of concern that 17% of both mentees and mentors did not rate the experience as being very useful to them. Possible reasons for this will be explored later.

There are 33 matched pairs in the 2001 – 2006 data, where feedback was received from both the mentor and the mentee. Of this group 21 out of 32 pairs (66%) independently agreed on the usefulness of the experience, with 17 pairs rating it as ‘very useful’ or ‘moderately useful’ and 4 pairs rating it as ‘not very useful’. Of the 11 matched pairs that did not agree on the usefulness rating, 6 mentees rated the experience as more valuable than their mentors, and 5 mentors rated the experience as more valuable than their mentees. In this same group, there was a direct correlation between the benefits and goals identified by mentees, and the knowledge, skills and experience mentors felt they had been able to offer - 19/33 partnerships (58%). This suggests that in many cases, formal mentor matching provided a good match with mutually beneficial outcomes.

**Benefits**

Mentees were asked to indicate what they had learned and what benefits they had gained from their mentoring experience. The benefits they most frequently identified are summarised below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Benefit</th>
<th>% responses (n = 103)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Career related (e.g. promotion, secondments, new jobs, study leave)</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New/different perspectives and strategies</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People management/communication skills</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Better understanding of the organisation</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support, encouragement, sounding board</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greater confidence in self and abilities</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Networking</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clarifying goals and priorities</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Importance of humour – don’t take things too seriously</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
There is much overlap between these results and those identified in the tenth anniversary evaluation, where the top ranked benefits were encouragement, increased confidence, networks, feeling less isolated, and better understanding of the University. In the 2001 – 2006 data the most frequently identified benefits were career issues, different perspectives and people management/communication. These were not strongly identified in the tenth anniversary results, presumably because the earlier evaluation used set rather than open ended questions.

Mentors were also asked to indicate what they had learned and what benefits they had gained from the experience. The benefits they most frequently identified are summarised below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Benefit</th>
<th>% responses (n = 99)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Increased awareness and learning about another work area/another’s issues</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-reflection</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helping others/seeing them achieve</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Networking</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sharing and collaboration</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developing and improving listening and coaching skills</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These results are similar to the findings from interviews conducted with mentors as part of the tenth anniversary evaluation. It is interesting to note how many mentors identified self-reflection as a benefit. They talked about the value of “reflecting on my own approach to many aspects of work, life, management, etc.”, “revisiting my own fundamental principles”, rethinking “how I see myself coping with certain issues/problems”, and realising that “I do have something to offer”. We tend not to think of mentoring as a developmental tool for the mentors, yet many of the benefits identified above are important skills for leaders to have. It has also become apparent from incidental feedback received that many LDW mentors actively promote their mentoring experience when seeking career advancement, e.g. applying for jobs or promotion, and that such experience is recognised and valued by those higher up in the organisation.

One indicator of the positive impact of mentoring is the proportion of mentors who have taken on the role more than once. Of the 219 LDW mentors, 98 (45%) have mentored multiple times, with 35% having done so two or three times, and 10% having mentored four times or more. Two female mentors have mentored eight times, and the current male Vice-Chancellor has mentored nine times. Many LDW participants have also gone on to become mentors, with 53% of the female mentors having been past participants, and 47% of this group having mentored more than once. More than 18% of all LDW participants have become mentors. The benefits readily identified by mentors, coupled with their preparedness to mentor on multiple occasions are strong indicators of the programme’s success from the mentors perspective. This has led to a ripple effect, with more staff in the organisation valuing mentoring, and creating a mentoring culture.

Many mentoring partners are continuing to meet beyond the formal nine-month period. The feedback from 2001 – 2006 respondents indicates that 48% of the mentees and 51% of the mentors continued to meet beyond nine months. This is in comparison with 39% reported in the tenth anniversary evaluation. It is probable that those who responded to the end of mentoring questionnaires from 2001 – 2006 are more likely to be the ones for whom the experience was working well, so the data from the tenth anniversary evaluation may be a more accurate reflection of what is really happening. However, it still suggests that a significant proportion of mentors and mentees are finding the mentoring partnership beneficial and want to continue.

Those involved in the 2001 – 2006 programmes reported meeting between 1 – 25 times, with the average number of meetings being 5.9 for mentees and 6.0 for mentors. Those involved in the tenth anniversary evaluation reported meeting between 0 - 20 times, with 5.2 as the average.
The downside of mentoring

As mentioned previously, formal mentoring does not work for everyone. As part of the 2001 – 2006 feedback, respondents were asked to identify any problems or concerns they had about their mentoring experience. The questions were open ended and responses varied, but the following common concerns were raised:

Table 4: Concerns about mentoring (2001 – 2006)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issues/Concerns</th>
<th>Mentee Responses (n = 90)</th>
<th>Mentor Responses (n = 85)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Time/workload</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Differing/unclear expectations</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leave commitments/left UWA</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unclear goals/ideas on what to do</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Differing backgrounds/experiences</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of confidence</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relevance of advice given/sought</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationship wasn’t two-way</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insufficient commitment</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Not surprisingly, *time and workload* was most frequently identified as a problem, but more often by mentees than mentors. Specific difficulties mentioned included mentees or mentors being too busy, mentees reluctant to take up their mentor’s time, and difficulties such as one or both partners being away, not booking meetings in advance, etc. In the case of *differing/unclear expectations* it was mentors who expressed greater concern than mentees. For a few mentors this was because they were “unsure how to contribute most effectively”, unclear “what mentees want”, or unsure how best to advise their mentees on specific issues, perhaps indicating the need for further training for mentors. Others talked about their mentees being unclear what they wanted, seeking advice but unwilling to act on it, or having very different approaches. These along with *unclear goals* and *differing backgrounds/experiences* mirror the major concerns identified in the tenth anniversary review.

Issues around *leave commitments* (study, long service, parental leave) or mentoring partners leaving the organisation part way through their partnership were also rated highly in the 2001 – 2006 data. Concerns mentioned less frequently were around mentees being *too introverted/shy, prior relationship* with their mentoring partner or proximity of work areas impacting on the nature of issues discussed, and *goals or priorities having changed*. With regard to this last concern, it has been noted in the literature that mentoring relationships are not static, that the needs of mentees may change, and that mentors may require training on what to do when the unexpected happens (Cox, 2005).

An analysis of feedback from the 25 respondents who rated the experience as ‘not very useful’ gives slightly different results. Thirteen mentees - 12 with female mentors and 1 with a male mentor - rated the mentoring experience as ‘not very useful’. In addition to the concerns discussed above, this group rated more highly concerns around *differing/unclear expectations* (13%) and *relevance of advice given/sought* (9%). Bad timing, e.g. illness, family illness, work changes and job changes were also raised. Twelve mentors - 10 female and 2 male – also rated the mentoring experience as ‘not very useful’. Again, the most frequently reported concern was around *differing/unclear expectations* (42%), followed by *time/workload* (16%), and *relevance of advice* (11%). The issue of *differing/unclear expectations* is one the programme coordinators have tried to address through clearer guidelines, training and follow-up, and while identified less often in recent years, it still appears to be a concern for some. Perhaps it is more of a problem for LDW where mentoring is part of a larger programme and where those involved do not specifically enrol for mentoring. Some mentors expressed concern that the *relationship was not two-way* (11%), although it was less of an issue for mentees (only 4% expressed concern). Not only does this suggest that mentors are keen to
gain from a shared experience, but contrasts with the idea of the expert mentor imparting wisdom, but learning nothing in return.

With regard to *differing backgrounds/experience* comments included “mismatch”, “didn’t speak the same language”, “didn’t click” and “not sure we were a good match”. This perhaps indicates the greatest challenge facing those who coordinate formal mentoring programmes: how to match on the basis of personality, shared values, and common ground that tends to occur with informal mentoring. The literature suggests that less personal development may occur when people with similar personalities are matched (Clutterbuck, 1998; Cox, 2005), but that too much contrast can make it hard for relationships to develop and may lead to irreconcilable differences (Hay, 1995). Finding the right balance is not easy.

Interestingly, 10 of the 25 respondents (40%) who rated the experience as ‘not very useful’ indicated positive outcomes from their experience, including:

- “Found talking with my mentor useful. Gained another more detached perspective”
- “Enriching experience, but no real goals achieved” (mentee)
- “Mentor was supportive” (mentee)
- “Hit it off really well, but serious illness prevented things from progressing” (mentor)
- “… best part – forming a good relationship with another member of staff” (mentor).

Perhaps these respondents viewed the benefits they gained as something other than mentoring, or had very specific ideas about what they wanted from the relationship, which were not met.

As might be expected, the frequency of meetings for those who rated the experience as ‘not very useful’ was lower than for the overall group. Mentees met between 1 – 9 times, with the average number of meetings being 2.7 (compared with 5.9 overall). Mentors met between 1 – 10 times, with the average number of meetings being 3.4 (compared with 6.0 overall). Surprisingly, a small number of respondents who rated the experience as ‘not very useful’ met as many as 9 – 10 times. This would suggest that these participants were still gaining some benefit from the experience, or perhaps that they had difficulty ending the relationship.

Mentees were asked to identify what goals they had achieved through their mentoring experience. Twelve of the 79 mentees (15%) did not identify any goals. In addition to the concerns already discussed, one concern identified by some in this category was around lack of trust, reluctance to share/reveal information or be open to new ideas. Comments from these mentees included:

- “I am difficult to get to know well as I am quite guarded. I am not very open to situations that I feel are not what I am looking for”
- “Unsure how much my mentor wants to let me know about her and how much I want my mentor to know about me”
- “Wanted to know more about my mentor’s background, but this was not forthcoming. Didn’t like some of his suggestions/tasks”.

As suggested by Hale and Whiltam (1999), this issue of ‘unwillingness or inability to self-disclose’ can inhibit open communication, giving and receiving of feedback, and development of trust and learning.

Of greatest concern is the fact that some LDW mentoring relationships never get started. Feedback from the tenth anniversary evaluation indicated that 5 respondents (4.6%) had never met with their mentors, although the reasons for this are unclear. We are also aware that a few of the matches from the 2001 - 2006 programmes did not get established, primarily due to changing circumstances
of either the mentor or mentee. This is disappointing given the amount of effort that goes into the matching process and the potential benefits lost.

From the feedback above, it is clear that arranging the “perfect match” in formal mentoring programmes is not an easy task. In common with others, we have discovered that mentoring is not always successful or rewarding, and in a few cases can have a negative impact on those involved. For example, one female mentor who had an unsuccessful mentoring relationship was unable to identify any benefits and commented that the experience “made me feel quite inadequate”. Fortunately this particular individual has taken on subsequent mentoring roles, with much greater success.

Strategies introduced to support mentoring partnerships

Through a process of ongoing refinement the LDW coordinators have sought to address some of the problems associated with formal mentoring schemes. Strategies implemented have included:

- encouraging mentees to be clearer about their goals and mentoring requirements from the outset;
- providing more detailed written guidelines to mentors and mentees once matched, including tips on how to get started and manage the first few meetings, and suggestions of practical activities they might engage in;
- refining workshops for mentees and new mentors to assist them in clarifying mentoring roles and expectations, and identify ways to make the most of the experience;
- providing more regular and personalised follow-up with mentoring partners;
- encouraging mentors to be proactive about managing the relationship if mentees are reluctant to do so;
- sending reminders to both partners at the end of nine months, encouraging them to review the experience, provide feedback to the organisers, and draw their formal relationships to a close;
- encouraging mentees to maintain existing informal mentor relationships, in recognition of the fact that no single mentor may be able to meet all of their needs;
- providing the opportunity for those who are reluctant to have a mentor to opt out of the scheme.

No formal assessment of the impact of these strategies has been conducted. However, feedback from the 2001 – 2006 respondents indicates that there have been fewer requests in recent years for guidance on how to get started or suggested activities to engage in with their mentoring partners. There have also been more positive responses from mentors and mentees to follow-up emails reviewing how the mentoring is progressing, and a higher response rate from mentors to the end of mentoring questionnaires since the introduction of personalised follow-ups.

Based on feedback from the tenth anniversary evaluation, plans are in place to offer advanced training to the more experienced mentors, providing them with an opportunity to share experiences, discuss concerns and consider strategies for dealing with the unexpected.

Gender differences in the mentoring experience

It has been suggested that there are ‘critical gender differences in men’s and women’s experiences of mentoring’ and that ‘women often have to work harder to establish relationships that cross lines of gender’ (Blake-Beard, 2001). I was interested to explore this issue in relation to the LDW programme.

Feedback from the tenth anniversary evaluation highlighted slight gender differences in the way mentees and mentors experienced mentoring, depending on the gender of the mentor. Participants reported male mentors as meeting slightly more frequently, for longer, and as more likely to continue meeting after the nine months. They were also perceived by mentees to be slightly more committed to the process. A similar analysis of the 2001 – 2006 data has been conducted on the
basis of gender. Taking into account the fact that the sample size (79 mentees and 87 mentors) is relatively small, that only 16 of the mentees (20%) had a male mentor, and that only 18 of the mentor responses (20%) were from male mentors, the following differences emerged.

**Usefulness:** mentees with male mentors were more likely to rate the experience as ‘very useful’ (69%) compared with those who had female mentors (56%). In addition, none of the mentees who had a male mentor rated the experience as ‘not very useful’, compared with 21% of those who had a female mentor. The results for mentors were less clear cut. An equal proportion of male and female mentors (44%) rated their experience as ‘very useful’, but fewer male mentors (13%) rated their experience as ‘not very useful’ compared with 18% of female mentors.

**Frequency of meetings:** mentees with male mentors met between 3 – 17 times, with the average number of meetings being 6.5. This was slightly higher than for those with female mentors, who met between 1 – 25 times, but with the average being 5.9. Mentor responses also indicate that male mentors met slightly more often than their female counterparts, with the average being 6.75 for males, compared with 5.9 for female mentors.

**Continuing on:** 63% of mentees who had male mentors reported that they were still meeting after nine months, compared with 46% of those with female mentors. In contrast, 52% of female mentors indicated that they were still meeting after nine months, compared with 44% of male mentors.

**Benefits:** the benefits mentees with female mentors most frequently identified were in relation to people management/communication; clarifying goals/priorities; career-related issues; and increased confidence in their abilities. Those with male mentors most frequently identified support/encouragement/sounding board; better understanding of the University; new/different perspectives/strategies; and the importance of maintaining a sense of humour. For female mentors the benefits most frequently identified were networking; self-reflection, and listening/coaching skills. For male mentors they were helping others; sharing/collaboration; and learning about other areas/issues.

**Goals achieved:** mentees with a female mentor most frequently identified the goals they achieved as relating to management issues; help with grants/research; and increased understanding of the University. The most frequently reported goals for those with male mentors were around networking; career issues; and increased confidence.

**Repeat mentors:** female mentors have been more likely to become repeat mentors than males, with 47% of all female mentors involved with LDW taking on a mentoring role more than once, compared with 41% of male mentors. Of the 2001 – 2006 respondents, 61% of female mentors have mentored more than once, compared with 53% of male mentors. This may be a reflection of the desire by participants to have female mentors, or perhaps because there are fewer senior female staff available to draw from and so the same female mentors are being approached repeatedly.

**Concerns:** of the concerns identified by the 2001 – 2006 respondents, time and workload was the one most frequently identified by mentees, regardless of the gender of their mentor, and by female mentors, but was rarely mentioned by male mentors. Quite why this should be is unclear. Are the male mentors better at setting aside time for mentoring, or seeing it as a legitimate part of the role, or could the female mentors have more competing demands on their time than their male counterparts? Confidentiality was raised more often as a concern by mentees with male mentors and by male mentors. In all cases this was related to the fact that the mentoring partners worked sufficiently closely that they felt uncomfortable discussing certain people or work issues, for example “both in same professional area which made sharing office politics difficult”. Both male and female mentors identified differing/unclear expectations equally often as a concern, but it was less of a problem for mentees. Male mentors mentioned leave commitments as a concern more often.
than mentees and female mentors. In all cases this was in relation to the mentee having either left the University or gone on extended leave. *Differing backgrounds/experiences* was mentioned by mentees and female mentors, but never by male mentors. It is unclear whether this is because the men did not experience a problem, they expected there to be differences on the basis of gender and did not think it worth mentioning, or for some other reason.

From this data, there certainly appear to be some small gender differences depending on the gender of the mentor. For the mentees it would seem that those with male mentors found the experience more useful, met more frequently and were more likely to continue meeting beyond the formal mentoring period. This confirms the findings of the tenth anniversary evaluation. Such differences are not so clearly identified by mentors, although male mentors also report meeting slightly more often than their female counterparts. There appear to be differences in the benefits both mentees and mentors gained from the experience, depending on gender. It is reassuring to note that, in all but one LDW partnership, the concerns raised in the literature about men being unable to understand women’s issues, reinforcing existing ways of operating, teaching the women to “fit in” or offering inappropriate advice have not been borne out in our results. It must be cautioned, however, that the seniority of male and female mentors is not equivalent and that any suggested differences may be accounted for by seniority rather than gender. This is a limitation of our data, and one that needs to be taken into account in any further research.

**Mentoring as a leadership development strategy**

So how effective is formal mentoring as a leadership development strategy? The LDW programme has certainly proved to be an important leadership strategy, but mentoring is only one component, so it is hard to judge its effectiveness in isolation. In the tenth anniversary evaluation, where specific questions were asked about the impact of mentoring on leadership development, 68% of participants agreed that *mentoring had contributed to their leadership development* and 74% agreed or strongly agreed that the *time spent with their mentor was useful to their development as a leader*. In my analysis of the feedback from the 2001 – 2006 programmes, where no specific questions about leadership development were asked, very little reference was made to it. Only one mentee mentioned developing leadership skills as a result of their mentoring experience. Although they did not talk specifically about leadership or leadership development, many of the respondents did mention qualities which are considered important in good leaders, such as self-reflection, sharing and collaboration, people management/communication skills, and listening and coaching skills.

**Conclusion**

What does all this mean for programme organisers, mentors and mentees? The LDW experience suggests that a formal mentoring programme for women works for the majority of those involved and results in obvious benefits for both mentors and mentees. For many it is a valuable, mutually beneficial experience that broadens networks, enhances skills, assists career development, increases understanding of individuals’ circumstances and organisational operations, and offers new strategies and perspectives.

However, it is not always successful, has the potential to result in loss of confidence or self-esteem on the part of those who have a negative experience, and represents wasted time and opportunity for those partnerships that never get established. Unlike informal mentoring, it often requires more effort to establish and maintain relationships, particularly when the individuals are not known to each other. It is also hard to match on the basis of personality and to ensure that the matched pairs will be able to find sufficient common ground for effective learning to occur. Providing adequate guidance, training and ongoing support can certainly assist the process, but whether the “perfect match” can be achieved as a result of careful planning and judgement on the part of programme organisers, or whether it is largely the result of serendipity (Cox, 2005) is questionable.
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Challenging Heroic Masculinity: 
Leadership Myths of Nineteenth Century King Shaka Zulu

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Abstract
The Zulu of southern African have long been held as a particularly strong example of African patriarchy. Over almost two hundred years, king Shaka Zulu (b. 1787, d. 1828), has been credited with founding the great Zulu state, and he has often been described as a brilliant leader, warrior and military strategist conquering all in his path – the ‘black Napoleon’. Popular history books abound with ‘facts’ of Shaka’s life. Two books have been published in recent years that translate so called leadership secrets of king Shaka to modern leadership and management practice. Leadership lessons from Emperor Shaka Zulu the Great by Phinda Madi (2000), and Lessons on Leadership by Terror: Finding Shaka Zulu in the Attic by Manfred Kets de Vries (2004). On the basis of lessons learned from Shaka, or aspects of his psychology, Madi manages to produce 10 leadership lessons including ‘leading the charge’, while Kets de Vries provides 15 lessons. Not only is much of what is written about Shaka based on myth, but also totally ignores the leadership role of chiefly women. It is curious that these myths of Shaka still hold so strongly despite research findings to the contrary. Leadership by women was an intrinsic part of several pre-colonial systems in southern Africa, and Shaka did not rule alone. This is all very far removed from any lessons on modern management and leadership to be learned from king Shaka. Many of the points in this paper in relation to women have raised in previously published work (Weir 2006), but it is worth repeating in an effort to go some way towards limiting the impact and reproduction of Shaka myths in the modern leadership studies, and because the role of women has been left out. There’s enough evidence to show that the long enduring picture of Shaka Zulu presented by Kets de Vries, and many before him, is questionable.

Background
Zulu history has focussed predominantly on masculine militarism. Zulu king, Shaka ka Senzangakhona (b. 1787, d. 1828), is well known and has often been described as a great leader who almost single-handedly built the Zulu state. Popular perceptions of the Zulu have been built by images of Zulu savagery as represented especially via images of the very dramatic British defeat at Isandlwana, and their defence of Rourk’s Drift the following day in 1879, and where the Prince Imperial was killed. As Jeff Guy explains “all this was intensified by the grotesque imagination of H Rider Haggard who became the great popular writer of his time by showing the Zulu ‘as they were, in all their superstitious madness and blood stained grandeur’, and who successfully confused in his readers’ minds campfire anecdotes about the rise of Shaka with the later history of the kingdom” (Guy 1994: xx). Movies like Zulu (1964) featuring Michael Cane, and another later movie titled Zulu Dawn (1979), furthered the dramatic images of the ruthless savage Zulu warrior, with the most recent movie Shaka Zulu released in 2002.

There are few major historical primary sources when it comes to Shaka and the Zulu. Much swapping of ‘information’ went on. Much of our knowledge of the pre-colonial period comes from the writings of missionaries, and early nineteenth century travellers. As I have argued elsewhere (Weir 2008) the image of Shaka and the associated tales of the Zulu conveyed through the nineteenth and twentieth centuries owes much to H. Rider Haggard, Theophilus Shepstone, Henry Francis Fynn and James Stuart, and appears to have been interweaved. They were instrumental in crafting the image. That Rider Haggard’s and other novels such as that produced by EH Ritter in the
1950s have been accepted and reproduced as historical fact is alarming. Ritter’s work was not the biography often claimed.

Stories of Shaka often go along the lines of the following: he was illegitimate, bullied as a child, exiled to his mother’s people, seized the leadership, single-handedly build the Zulu state, was innovative in warfare, a military genius, a mass murderer, responsible for depopulating the region, a brutal and savage despot who maintained his state by terror and repression. More importantly, as Dan Wylie points out, most of it is wrong (Wylie 2006:1).

Nathaniel Isaacs (first published 1836) and Henry Francis Fynn (first published in Bird 1888) were among the first travellers to write about the Zulu, and so they had an enormous impact on subsequent writing - despite Isaacs’ having a poor understanding of the Zulu language (Bryant 1929), and being semi-literate (Wylie 2000:94). They had their own motivations for presenting the Zulu as they did (i.e. possible spoils for British annexation). Wylie suggests that some of those who wrote the so-called eye witness accounts were “actually violent and lying ruffians whose accounts cannot be trusted” (Wylie 2006:3). Isaacs actually urged Fynn to “make them out to be as bloodthirsty as you can and endeavour to give an estimation of the number of people they have murdered during their reign, and describe the frivolous crimes people lose their lives for. Introduce as many anecdotes relative to Chaka as you can; it all tends to swell up the work and make it interesting (Kirby 1968:67)” (Wylie 2000:95). Indeed when it comes to Shaka, a lot of ‘history’ was made up to fill the gaps. For example, Wylie explains that the battle of Gqokli Hill, evidence of Shaka’s great military tactics, never happened (Wylie 2000:8. Kets de Vries 2004:37).

Alongside this, much early historical writing about the Zulu is saturated with ‘great man theory’. In the 1960s the Africanist group of historians rejected the confines of history of ‘great man’ and began to offer more complex explanations. One of these, Max Gluckman, saw pre-colonial Zululand as having attained a state of equilibrium through controlled expression of conflict and conflict resolution. However, Gluckman also incorporated a dubious psychoanalytic analysis of Shaka that has been picked up by some others. He tended towards “committing a psychologism (the use of individual psychology to explain social and cultural phenomena)” (Gordon 1990:32. Gluckman 1960:167). Somehow Gluckman concluded, “Shaka was at least a latent homosexual and possibly psychotic” (Gluckman 1960:168). Morris (1973:91) even claimed Shaka was impotent although it is unclear how we could know such personal details. Kets de Vries pick this psychological thread up and expands it substantially labelling Shaka a “psychologically wounded man” (Kets de Vries 2004:162).

Shaka’s ‘charismatic’ leadership has been another theme in writing on the Zulu. Charismatic leaders may have a positive, or negative influence. They are characterised as transformative, visionary, excellent communicators, able to inspire trust, make people feel a sense of comfort, are action focussed and entrepreneurial, and can express emotion (Dubrin, Dalglish and Miller 2006:97). Although he is expanding views of charisma by including other related factors, in effect, Kets de Vries is reviving some discredited elements of older interpretations of Zulu history. He is heavily influenced by the approaches of Gluckman, and Walter who argued that Shaka instituted a regime of terror and violence as a mechanism for social control (Walter 1969).

Kets de Vries argues that we can take lessons from history and learn from Shaka’s terror-based despotic leadership. Madi’s (2000) Emperor Shaka Zulu the Great was unavailable at the time of writing. Despite my best efforts to locate a copy, I am still waiting for my second-hand book to arrive from somewhere in the world. Although Kets de Vries’ Lessons seem at odds with the theme of a psychotic person whose style is based on terror, they are as follows:

Lesson 1: Develop a clear and concise vision
Lesson 2: Recognise the importance of strategic innovation
Lesson 3: Know the competition

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Lesson 4: Act quickly and decisively  
Lesson 5: Empower subordinates  
Lesson 6: Promote entrepreneurship  
Lesson 7: Engage in effective symbol manipulation  
Lesson 8: Select and promote with care  
Lesson 9: Set a good example  
Lesson 10: Hold people accountable  
Lesson 11: Reward people fairly  
Lesson 12: Devote adequate resources to training and development  
Lesson 13: Be prepared for discontinuous change  
Lesson 14: Guard against hubris  
Lesson 15: Create a culture of trust (Kets de Vries 2004:140)

The lessons may be useful for leadership in general, but not because of Shaka. While there are many inaccuracies about Shaka in Lessons on Leadership by Terror, from his birth to the struggle with diviners, I would like to focus on some claims in the explanations associated with the Leadership Lessons and offer some challenges to his androcentric view. I will comment on several, but not all.

Lessons on Leadership
Lesson 1: Develop a clear and concise vision
“It was Dingiswayo’s statesmanship, supplemented by Shaka’s brutality in warfare, that planted the first seeds of the impressive Zulu empire” (Kets de Vries 2004:141).

Contrary to this claim, the Zulu were not the only group undergoing change and expansion in the early nineteenth century, and Shaka was quite simply not as significant as the extravagant claims. The Qwabe and the Hlubi were also expanding and forming part of what Wright and Hamilton (1989) termed the secondary category of defensive states. By the early nineteenth century several states were competing: “Mabhudu, Dlamini-Ngwane, Hlubi, Nd wandwe, Mthethwa and Qwabe.” (Wright & Hamilton 1989:66). By the 1810s the main struggle pitted Mthethwa against the Nd wandwe. By 1816 the Nd wandwe had attacked the Mthethwa, defeated the army and killed their king (Dingiswayo), which paved the way for the further growth of the Zulu under Shaka.

In earlier work I have argued that far from being victims of male power, many women can be shown to be political agitators, from a base of real power. Zulu royal women for example demonstrated such leadership before, during and after Shaka’s reign. In contrast to popularly held views, they were not the subordinates of Shaka. Women’s leadership took a variety of forms, sometimes military, but also economic and religious. There was also interlinking of these with ritual and religion being a component of leadership.

Hanretta suggests that as a result of the militarization of Zulu society a “new role for royal women developed” because the king needed “direct” representatives in the military establishments (Hanretta 1998). On the contrary, I found that women’s leadership had little to do with Shaka in the sense that he did not bestow leadership roles on certain women for the first time. Mnkabai y (d.1835), Shaka’s father’s senior sister, held power long before Shaka came to rule. Mawa (another sister of Shaka’s father), Langazana (a wife of Shaka’s father) and Nandi (Shaka’s mother) all exerted considerable influence in affairs of the Zulu. Some have argued that Shaka’s father, Senzangakhona, could not take charge because he was too young and so Mnkabai y his sister became joint chief of the Zulu with her male cousin Mudli (Bryant 1929:41, 45, 46. Fuze 1979:62). However, her leadership was not in any way a one-off event because even after her brother became chief, Mnkabai y continued to advise on political matters, most likely taking a key role in council. As before, she again assumed authority for a short time following his death and before Shaka became a chief. I say ‘a chief’ because we have always assumed singular chiefship, but perhaps that was not the case.
In contrast with the view of Shaka as the usurper of power expressed by Kets de Vries, and others before him, Mnkabayi’s transitional leadership suggests a relatively smooth transfer to Shaka rather than him seizing it. One primary source even suggests that Shaka was actually “offered the position of king” (Webb & Wright 1976:199). That immediately raises the question about who might have offered Shaka the position of king. Mnkabayi perhaps? She also played a role in determining the outcome of the subsequent succession dispute between Dingane and Mhlangana by installing Dingane (Fuze 1979:72, 97. Webb & Wright 1976:196. Webb & Wright 1982:217), and other leadership matters and together with Dingane overruled a chief’s decision to execute Allen Gardiner (Gardiner 1966:222-3). Mnkabayi was leader at three significant points in Zulu history — following the deaths of her father Jama, her brother Senzangakhona, and Shaka, meaning she ‘survived the absolute ruthless despotism’ of both Shaka (1816-1828), and Dingane (1828-1840), through to Mpande (1840-1872). This is because such women were actually part of the system of Zulu leadership, and it seems male chiefs did not rule alone. This also dispels details under Lesson 6 (Promote entrepreneurship) that claims, “Shaka had no interest in sharing power” (Kets de Vries 2004:147).

**Lesson 2: Recognise the importance of strategic innovation**

“During his tenure in the military and on the throne, he revolutionized the Zulu army’s weaponry and military tactics …. Before battle, he told no one what his exact plans were. In later years, when he no longer accompanied his warriors on their campaigns, he entrusted only the commander in chief (and perhaps his next in command) with the details of the battle plan …. He breathed, lived and dreamed of war (Kets de Vries 2004:142).

To some extent this section also deals with Kets de Vries’ description under many other lessons as well. Charles Maclean (who spent time at Shaka’s capital) recorded in 1855 that certain women acted as Shaka’s *aides-de-camp* and were the link between himself and his chiefs (although it’s not clear what his specific definition of *aides-de-camp* is) (Maclean 1855:67). Particular women also held leadership positions of influence in the *amakhanda* (Zulu military ‘kraals’) of the successive Zulu kings Shaka (1816-1828), Dingane (1828-1840) and Mpande (1840-1872) (women’s leadership of these military establishments is detailed in Weir 2000b). Like men, girls were organised into regiments (*amabutho* pl) (Webb & Wright 2001:41). Although there is very little written about female *amabutho*, the information that is available suggests something more than simply age-sets, and that they may very well have had a more significant and wider purpose than has previously been recognised.

**Lesson 3: Know the competition**

“He [Shaka] also introduced a sophisticated system of military scouts – brave men who went on missions to locate and evaluate the enemy, and who served as decoys, giving the main army the advantage of surprise…. Placing loyal subordinates in key administrative and military positions, he was ready to snuff out any resistance to his regime at an early stage” (Kets de Vries 2004:144).

I argued previously (Weir 2006) that women had a variety of roles from mat carrying in times of war during the Shakan period and protecting the king, through to combat. It is worth repeating here. According to one early source, Andrew Smith, Shaka had a female *ibutho* [regiment], which also had a female commander who cohabited with Shaka (Kirby 1955:46). It seems then that not all *induna* (army officer, headman) were male, and that an *induna* of a female *ibutho* could have been male or female (Webb & Wright 2001:56). An oral history sources mentions that there were “girls of the king’s *mdhlunkulu*” (Webb & Wright 1979:274) and that a section of a female *ibutho* in the *isigodhlo* [kings private enclosure] were armed (Webb & Wright 1982:328). One informant claims that “Tshaka used to go out to war with the *amakosikazi* [pl. principal wife of chief or head man, female monarch] as well as girls. They cut shields (*izihlangu*) and carried assegais, and had to fight when required to do so” (Webb & Wright 2001:41,56,69).
In pre-colonial southern Africa there are few examples of direct warrior or military activity by women, but what we do have does not fit comfortably with Gluckman’s generalisation of all women were “demonstrating their abject subordination in daily life” (Gluckman 1963:115) especially when we also look beyond the Zulu to groups they engaged with in the region. A female chief named Machibise led two Nqondo offshoots (aba kwa Ngwane and emaHlavuleni) and had her own impi (armed force) who gained a reputation as fierce warriors (Bird 1888 Vol 1:129,137. Bryant 1929:256-7. Webb & Wright 1979:119,137. Webb & Wright 1982:54. Webb & Wright 1986:3). When Macingwane attacked, “Macibise offered so stout a resistance that Macingwane was obliged to give up the idea of capturing her cattle” (Webb & Wright 1979:119. Webb & Wright 1986:3,23). She was not the only woman involved in such activities. MaNthatisi (Mosayane) of the Tlokwa (ca. 1781- ca. 1836), “the famous conqueror” was said to have had the first voice in his [chief Sekonyela’s], council as well as displaying a celebrated “martial genius” and engaging in conflict (Bird 1965 Vol 1:369. Bryant 1929:150-2. Ellenberger 1992: 124). She quickly built her reputation and in 1817, her warriors attacked Ndwandwe chief, Zwide. It seems that in at least one case some of her warriors were women (Ellenberger 1992:127). She led her people westward and fought Moshweshwe and his people. MaMthunzini of the abaLumbi, also came into conflict with Shaka, and the Zulus dispersed her people. Matyatye (or Ssete), another chiefly woman, possibly clashed with chief Mzikazi (Rasmussen 1978:186 n 53). Other military activity involved spying such as when chief Zwide’s sisters acting as spies by seducing Dingiswayo and, in so doing, were able to secretly obtain significant and powerful personal substance (in this case semen), subsequently compounded into a medicine, that Zwide was able to then use to overcome his enemy (Webb & Wright 1979:186. Webb & Wright 1986:279. Bryant 1929:163,164). These variety of roles suggested here is such an interesting aspect of warfare and the role of women, but it has received little attention.

**Lesson 4: Act quickly and decisively**

None of the above on women fits with Lesson 4 that “Shaka teaches us this lesson not by commission but by omission. Empowerment of subordinates did not fit his Machiavellian vision of government. To Shaka, power was a zero-sum game. With a fixed pie of power, he saw giving to others as having less oneself” (Kets de Vries 2004:145).

In contrast it would seem that sharing, delegation or distributed leadership was part of the Zulu approach.

**Lesson 5: Empower subordinates**

“Late in the regime, the combined force of the bureaucracy, the espionage network and the military created and aura of invincibility that was heightened by Shaka’s role as ultimate legal court of appeal and principal representative to the spirit world” (Kets de Vries 2004:146).

Like other chiefs, Shaka did have a very important religious role as the intermediary between the people and the ancestors, but ritual power was also in the hands of women leaders. It was evident in a variety of ways including rainmaking, administering ritual medicine, and as custodianship of sacred objects.

The grave and ancestors of Mnkabayi, for example, were important in purification rituals, and as a place of refuge. Linking ancestral shades to Mnkabayi was in many ways as important as linking to Shaka, Dingane and Senzangakhona (Webb & Wright 1982, 1986). One of James Stuart’s informant said that at the place where Mnkabayi was buried, ‘people might find refuge [because] in the case of a king giving the order that any man was to be killed, and this man escaping into the king’s graveyard, he would not be molested any further’ (Webb & Wright 1986: 360).
Lesson 7: Engage in effective symbol manipulation

“In addition to making the most of traditional Zulu religious symbols, Shaka helped create new ones...he introduced the inkatha – the sacred coil of the nation – which symbolized his sovereignty and the unity of the chiefdom. Building on his father’s idea of creating an object that would magically protect the Zulus from enemies and misfortune ...” (Kets de Vries 2004:149).

Langazana, one of Shaka’s father’s wives, had the key role of caring for the inkatha, the sacred symbol of the office of kingship. The inkatha, was ‘entrusted’ to Langazana and kept in her hut at esiKlebheni. One of Stuart’s informants believed that the inkatha was kept at Nobamba in Shaka’s father’s time, which suggests that although the location may have changed a woman seems to have been custodianship prior to his chieftship (Bryant 1929:56. Bryant 1949: 476-7. Webb& Wright 1986:373. Webb & Wright 1976:40). It is unclear whether Langazana’s was responsible for it, or whether she actually owned it. Because the inkatha symbolised the legitimacy of Zulu rule and was linked to the ancestors, the custodian could perhaps withhold it. If this were possible, she may have been ritually more powerful than the king. Ronald Cohen argues that by being in possession of the sacred objects of kingship, power passes through the “Queen Mother”. She in effect gives power, but can’t take it herself. She is the only one who can access the sacred objects and therefore safeguards succession (Cohen 1977:23). Other Zulu women such as Mkabayi, were leaders but we can’t be sure what role particular women, or the sacred inkatha, might have played but it is interesting when combined with the statement earlier that Shaka was actually “offered the position of king” (Webb & Wright 1976:199).

Lesson 9: Set a good example

“Because he knew what it meant to be warrior, because he ‘walked the talk’, the men could identify with him.... Eventually though, as we have seen, his preoccupation with internal enemies kept him from leading the army into battle himself” (Kets de Vries 2004:150, 151). Similarly, Madi’s (2000) leadership lesson comes from Shaka leading the charge.

In stark contrast to the image of Shaka as the brave warrior and military genius, Lieutenant Francis Farewell said in 1828 that Shaka never led the army into combat, but stayed “five or six days in the rear” (Leverton 1989:12) rather than put himself at risk, and this seems to have been the case with the ihlambo (Webb & Wright 2001:41).

The mourning of Shaka’s mother, Nandi, who died in 1827, can also be linked to military activities. I have argued elsewhere hat rather than being an aspect of Shaka’s ruthless desire to rule by terror, the ceremonies and various sacrifices and taboos that were implemented following her death were related to her status in both the earthly and spiritual worlds and it was not uncommon for kings or people of rank to be accompanied in death. Her ihlambo ceremony, which was to mark the end of the mourning period, involved an attack on the Mpondo rather than the more usual ceremony that consisted of a hunt (Webb & Wright 1976:77,119,136. Webb & Wright 1979:249. Bryant 1929:621-2. Krige 1965:173). Shaka apparently took Mnkabi, “one of Senzangakona’s greater amakosikazi”, on this campaign (Webb & Wright 2001:41). There’s also mention of involvement of other women in the ihlambo campaign against chief Faku’s Mpondo people (Webb & Wright 1979:274. Webb & Wright 2001:56).

Lesson 11: Reward people fairly

“Shaka also distributed the iziQu, necklaces made of interlocking wooden beads, to warriors whose regiment had particularly distinguished itself in battle” (Kets de Vries 2004:153)

Despite the assumption that warriors and military activity were confined to men, there’s evidence that women engaged in military activities as noted above. There were some women who earned
and wore the *iziqu*, which was evidence of having killed an opponent. They “fought like men” (Webb & Wright 2001:69).

Kets de Vries also claims “the most valuable present Shaka could give, however, was an *isigodlo* girl from his harem” (Kets de Vries 2004:153). Chiefs sometimes sent daughters to greater chiefs. However, perhaps women were sent for the chiefly Zulu women as well. It is possible that not all women in the *isigodhlo* ‘belonged’ to males. The accumulation of highly prized cattle (usually seen as male privilege) by certain ‘elite’ women bought additional economic advantages. Such women could be involved in marriage exchange. They could also acquire wives of their own, and in so doing the labour, possibly the *lobola* (‘bridewealth’), and the children of those wives. These arrangements existed among rich or powerful women in various parts of Africa during the pre-colonial period. Several of Shaka’s female relatives were symbolically celibate and I have argued elsewhere that it was a symbol of particular status among ‘royal’ Zulu women that could be altered according to circumstances. It is also interesting to note that celibacy of female warriors was not unusual in other parts of Africa. Celibacy can take different forms and does not necessarily mean total lack of sexual activity. Shaka and Dingane were also symbolically celibate (see Weir 2000a, 2000b, 2006 for detailed discussion).

Several southern African groups, including the Zulu, had non-sexual woman-to-woman ‘marriages’, women-‘marriages’, or ‘female husband’ relationships. These kind of relationships involved obligations around patronage and labour power. Just as with males, additional wives enhanced the labour of a household, or group (Amadiume 1987:72. Struthers 1991:74). Woman-to-woman ‘marriages’ existed among the Zulu (Krige 1974: 29. Gluckman 1987:184). Such relationships would not have been well understood by Europeans, and evidence is scant, but nonetheless it does indicate that overriding patriarchy among the Zulu is a perception that should be reviewed.

*Lesson 14: Guard against hubris*

“... Shaka Zulu, with his despotical totalitarian leadership, was an exception .... In abolishing the traditional, participative decision-making process in not having effective organisational governance, Shaka lost the benefit of the wisdom of the clan’s elders, formerly the keeper of custom and law .... When true feedback disappeared, Shaka lost touch with reality and no longer learned from his mistakes” (Kets de Vries 2004:156). However, in the context of the above description of women, this lesson does not apply to Shaka either.

*Lesson 15: Create a culture of trust*

“Although a terror-based leadership style offers the despot short-term gains, in the long run it results in ritualistic, static behaviour. It froze the Zulu nation in a time warp and precipitated its decline” (Kets de Vries 2004:158).

The explanations for the decline of the Zulu state are significantly more complex than Shaka’s leadership including political, environmental and economic factors, but that explanation is for another day (see for example Guy 1994. Weir 2000b).

**Conclusion**

There is much useful information on leadership in Kets de Vries book including his broader presentation of charisma, and with regard to corporate psychopaths or ‘snakes in suits’ (Babiak & Hare 2006). Kets de Vries argues that Shaka is an example of ‘perverted leadership’. He says we all have a darker side, a violent streak – or a *Shaka Zulu in the attic* (Kets de Vries 2004:166). However, we know very little about Shaka and even less about his personality. Whoever might be in our attic, there’s a good chance it’s not Shaka.

Kets de Vries’ book is a good example of the way in which preconceived ideas about gender, values and ideologies influences approaches. If we examine his sources, it is evident that he has consulted both primary and secondary sources, which is commendable. Many of the same sources were also
examined by Hamilton (1985), Hanretta (1998) and Weir (2000a, 2000b, 2006) but with very different results. Wylie points out that much of the recent research that dispels many of the myths of Shaka has been “relatively inaccessible in academic theses and specialist journal articles” (Wylie 2006:2). While Kets de Vries’ bibliography is extensive, he is “committing a psychologism (the use of individual psychology to explain social and cultural phenomena)” (Gordon 1990:32. Gluckman 1960:167) — a danger that Winifred Hoernlé had warned of decades ago (1885-1960. Social anthropologist in South Africa).

History is about the search, sifting information, putting it together and asking questions. Kets de Vries missed much of the information from the primary sources on Zulu women chiefs during the Shakan period, but perhaps one has to be open to gender to see it. This is an example of why the sources and how they are read are so important when writing history, and why we should be cautious about using examples from history to provide the basis for lessons on how to lead.

References
Bryant, A. (1949). The Zulu People as They Were Before the White Man Came. Pietermaritzburg: Shuter and Shooter.
Walking on the WILD side: Lessons from university women and a university wide leadership program

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Abstract
This paper was prompted by an Australian Universities Quality Agency (AUQA) recommendation in the 2006 Murdoch University audit report, as well as our own perceived inconsistency between espoused equity values, and the realities for women academics. While the sector has had increasing government regulation more broadly, gender parity in governance for Universities has gone largely unnoticed by successive governments. This paper will explore some of these national higher education issues alongside the institutional and move towards a more multilevel analysis.

Introduction
In attempting to explain the lack of progress in raising the representation of women in senior academic roles not only in this particular university, but in Australia more broadly, a number of issues emerge including the importance of gender awareness and appreciation in the full range of professional development programs, the absolute need for cross-institutional coordination/alignment, and systematic approaches to achieving gender parity in universities. A 2007 report in the Times Higher Education suggested that while the number of women academics has steadily risen in the UK and will overtake that of men within two years (ie by 2009), it will be 50 years before equivalence is reached at the professorial level. Professor John Pratt’s analysis showed that “the glass ceiling effect is still evident. Even if institutions stopped appointing male professors, it would be 15 years before there were as many female professors as males because the starting point was so low” (Tysome 2007). Despite the fact that change is needed, we explore whether the main culprit for the lack of women in senior positions is still the glass ceiling, or whether there is more. Alongside institutional and individual issues we begin to unpack some sectoral goals and strategies exploring to what extent targets and approaches align.

Louise Morley’s (2006: 544) three levels of change provide a useful framework for this paper. These are the Macro (national and International), Meso (organisational and departmental) and micro (individuals and groups) levels. In addition, Bolman and Deal’s (2003) structural, political, human resource and symbolic frames are also useful for identifying organisational needs, determining where change may need to take place, and developing appropriate actions, so this will be applied in the Meso section. Emphasis on one frame rather than all four may result in ineffectiveness, but “together, they capture a comprehensive picture of what’s wrong and what might be done” (Bolman and Deal, 2003: 5).

Macro issues
Higher education is lagging in terms of gender equity for women despite commitment to equity, merit, and the education of the next generation of professionals. It is widely recognised that while women are often over-represented in junior positions (clerical and similar), they are grossly under-represented in senior positions (most especially professorial) in universities. Australian percentages for women professors appear to now be on a par with the United Kingdom, but behind the United States. An international snapshot of the low, but varying, number of women at higher academic levels is shown in Table 1 (reproduced from ETAN report 2000, p.10, and modified. Post 2000 data added to original table).
Table 1: Women professors: percentage of full professors that are women

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>% Full professor</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>% Full professor</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>% Full professor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Turkey</td>
<td>1996/7</td>
<td>21.5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Finland</td>
<td>1998</td>
<td>18.4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Portugal</td>
<td>1997</td>
<td>17.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>1997/8</td>
<td>13.8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>1995/6</td>
<td>13.2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Norway</td>
<td>1997</td>
<td>11.7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>1997/8</td>
<td>11.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>1997</td>
<td>11.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Greece</td>
<td>1997/8</td>
<td>9.5</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>UK</td>
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<td>8.5</td>
<td>2005/6</td>
<td>17</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Iceland</td>
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<td>8.0</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Israel</td>
<td>1996</td>
<td>7.8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Belgium (Fr)</td>
<td>1997</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Denmark</td>
<td>1997</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>1997</td>
<td>6.8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Austria</td>
<td>1999</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>1998</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
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<td>1996</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
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<td>5.1</td>
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<td>Netherlands</td>
<td>1998</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>2002</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>10</td>
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<td>New Zealand</td>
<td>1998</td>
<td>10.4</td>
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</table>

Sources

benchmark against others. They can also provide external reference points for quality audits.

**Meso (organisational) issues**

In the latter part of 2006, the Teaching and Learning Centre at Murdoch University (MU) began the academic Women in Leadership and Development (WILD) initiative aimed at supporting academic women at the University, and to ensure a pool of women would be prepared to take on leadership roles (AVCC, 2006: 2). In 2007, we also began an associated research project to identify organisational issues and trends because despite gender equity laws, and University policies, equity does not necessarily translate to the everyday experience and there are a number of factors within organisations that disadvantage or impede women’s career progression. Louise Morley (2006) explains “gender discrimination can take place via informal networks, coalitions, and exclusions, as well as by formal arrangements in classrooms and boards rooms” (Morley, 2006: 543). By examining some of these factors, particular areas for change can be highlighted that may otherwise have gone unnoticed, and our study set out to identify some areas for action at MU. The study included a survey of academic staff within the university to gain an insight into gender perceptions and culture alongside structural conditions. The University’s attention to gender equity was also prompted by an Australian Universities Quality Agency (AUQA) audit recommendation in September 2006, which now requires action.

**Structural frame**

In 2007, sixty percent of FTE academics at MU were male. There are of course difference in the gender balances within the Divisions (now Faculties) with Science and Engineering have the highest proportion of males (70%), while Arts and Health were both just over 50%. However, the University was below the national targets in the percentage of women in the category of staff above senior lecturer (level D/E) in 2005. Murdoch University remained below those national targets in 2007.

This all seems strange in a university that has had an enduring reputation for equity since it was established thirty years ago. We benchmarked ourselves against other universities in the Innovative Research Universities Australia (IRU Australia) group. While MU is below others, it is not the only one below Universities Australia targets, and it struck us as strange that so few universities received an AUQA recommendation relating to women academic staff (we return to this issue later in the paper). The data presented by Queensland University of Technology’s Equity Section (2007) for 2006 shows a range for the percentage of female academic staff FTE at Level D (associate professor) (excluding Bachelor College) from 9.52 at Central Queensland University, to 50.91 at the Australian Catholic University). At Level E (professor), the range is between 8.77 at Murdoch University (followed by University of Southern Queensland at 10.53 and University of Adelaide at 10.79) to 41.67 at the Australian Catholic University. Of the public universities, the University of Canberra has the highest percentage of women at Level D (47.50), and the highest percentage of women at Level E are at the University of the Sunshine Coast (37.50) followed by La Trobe University (32.08).

Source DEST data Table 7.

Table 2: Percentage of Female Academic Staff FTE at Level D and E, 2006

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AVCC targets (2010)</th>
<th>Murdoch</th>
<th>Macquarie (no longer part of IRUA)</th>
<th>La Trobe</th>
<th>Flinders</th>
<th>Newcastle</th>
<th>Griffith</th>
<th>James Cook</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Level D from 24% (2004) to 35% by 2010</td>
<td>24.66</td>
<td>31.71</td>
<td>30.00</td>
<td>37.25</td>
<td>20.25</td>
<td>30.08</td>
<td>13.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level E from 16% (2004) to 25% (2010)</td>
<td>8.77</td>
<td>21.93</td>
<td>32.08</td>
<td>16.92</td>
<td>18.75</td>
<td>27.40</td>
<td>23.44</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: QUT Selected inter-institutional gender equity statistics (2007). Figure 17, p. 18.

One of the potential confusions from the available data is whether the data refers to the percentage of women FTE at a particular level, or whether it is the percentage of women in a category, for
example, percentage of women professors Level E of the total number of professors as in Table 1. This needs further clarification and investigation.

The Universities Australia Action Plan for Women 2006-2010 recommends the inclusion of “gender equity performance measures in the corporate plans” (AVCC, 2006: 3). As Winchester et al point out, universities in Australia have some way to go in achieving this. “There is not a clear picture of a thoroughly focused or sustained effort to achieve best practice. This is evidenced by the fact that only 5 of the 17 (29%) universities in the groups interviewed have a Key Performance Indicator (KPI) for gender in relation to senior academic positions” (Winchester, Chesterman, Lorenzo and Browning, 2005: 2). Some Key performance indicators for women have been included in Murdoch University’s AUQA action plan, but the University may struggle to reach those targets.

In summary, on a national level, the data shows progress towards greater representation of women at senior academic levels has been slow. However, simply promoting women at MU to senior positions to ‘make up the numbers’ would not ensure sustainability, or address root causes. This is because “the processes which produce such distorted patterns of men’s and women’s employment are embedded in wider organizational structures which may either assist or constrain the opportunities for the advancement of women academics” as Janet Finch, Vice Chancellor of Keele University in the UK points out (Finch 2003:134). Thus, we need to examine how gender is imprinted in practices, and identify what might result in indirect discriminatory practices. If Murdoch University is to realise the vision for equity in relation to its academic women, it is important that we identify the barriers, and understand how they operate in order to remove them. Ideally this would be the case for all women and not just academic women.

Political Frame

The changing higher education environment, and financial pressure, has increased the involvement of non-academic and external influences through university governing bodies, and raises particular issues regarding the power balance between the institution and the female academic. Nationally, there has been a strengthening of executive power and the emergence of senior management groups, which are frequently dominated by men. This section examines (by gender) university governance through the governing council (or governing senate), and the academic board (also known as council or senate ie the peak academic body) as well as university committees at MU. Traditionally, academic culture has seen the role of academics include leadership and policy making – essentially through the firmly entrenched committee system and so we also examined committee membership by gender. There is also an element of symbolism attached to this – or a message of values inadvertently portrayed to the internal and external stakeholders that may be opposite to the intended values of the organisation. It is evident in a variety of forms.

During 2007, MU had 13 male members of the governing body (Senate), but only four female members (excluding secretary to senate). A male member’s term ended in late 2007 and an additional female member was elected. The Academic Council (chaired by a male) had 29 members: 16 male members and 12 female (one position vacant). This imbalance is partly influenced by the appointed positions in Senate, and the ex officio membership within Academic Council with only one of eight senior positions being female- a ratio of 7:1. MU had only one female member of the senior executive in 2007 and that remains the case. From 2008, the senior executive group was comprised of five positions, one of whom is female, making a ratio of 4:1.

In response to government reforms, the size of university governing bodies has been reduced. The Hoare review (1995) highlighted the role of council members as well and their long entrenched tradition of collegiality and internal representation within universities in Australia. It recommended a rationalisation of the size of university councils and memberships of between 10 and 15 [http://www.dest.gov.au/archive/highered/otherpub/hoare/hoare1.htm#summary]. The National Governance Protocols linked to the Higher Education Support Act allows the government to exert
influence through funding arrangements despite the lack of legislative authority. In 2003 the National Governance protocols for higher education were released and universities had to comply with these protocols or risk losing additional funds. Most university councils now average 21 members. The Commonwealth aims to limit internal representation on the councils and external members make up a large component of the membership, unlike the peak academic body – the academic board or academic council. Despite the ‘obsession’ with the size of governing councils, Moodie (2003) claims that there is no relationship between the size of the council and university performance (Moodie 2003:3). Meek and Hayden (2004) argue that the increased focus on university councils is because of the “importance of the decisions they are increasingly being required to make. They are also becoming of considerable political interest, especially to the Commonwealth, because of the considerable delegation of authority to them by the States” (Meek and Hayden 2004:15). While there may be more women on boards in recent times, the overall number has been reduced thereby reflecting little change in gender parity in governance.

The other element to consider is the key committees of both the governing body and the academic board. Service on these senior decision making bodies is often considered an important path to promotion, as well as preparation for leadership positions in universities. Research by Hult, Calister and Sullivan (2005) of a university in the United States of America found that women were more likely to serve on committees. This was reported in somewhat negative terms in that the additional responsibility impacted on workloads and was less likely to be useful in promotion. This result must surely be related to which committees, and whether they are organisational level committees or lower level faculty and departmental committees? At MU, the situation is rather different than the findings of Hult et. al suggest. Fewer MU women serve on University level committees (ie key committees of both the governing body and the academic board) than men, and thus the under representation of women in decision-making continues. In 2007, there were 23 University level committees at MU: 104 male members of committees were listed on the website and only 64 women (some positions were vacant and so not included). More males also served on multiple committees. More than twice as many committees were chaired by men (17), than women (6). Of the six chaired by women, three were chaired by the same senior executive woman, and two by appointed Senate members.

Chairing a program of study is one way in which academic staff can demonstrate leadership in teaching and learning – also an important component in promotion. An analysis of programs chairs by Divisions during 2007 (as listed on Divisional websites) reveals a significant imbalance in leadership by women. Significantly more males chair programs than do females in all Divisions overall. The percentage of women staff that chair is also lower than the percentage of male staff that chair. Arts and Health Sciences have close to twice as many males as program chairs. Not only do the figures indicate gender imbalances in leadership in teaching, but also raise concern regarding the number of programs some individuals are responsible for, and may warrant further investigation.

The low participation of women in governance and leadership more broadly in Australia signifies that most decision-making in many universities in Australia does not include a significant women’s voice. Indeed, if professorial status is a condition for election to chairs of academic board (and it is at MU), this will immediately reduce the number of potential female candidates. In those more traditional universities where professorial status still equals a place on the academic board, it will correspondingly translate into more male places. This indicates that gender parity ought to be an area of governance reform, leadership in all forms – including the nature of leadership by committee, which is distinct to university leadership. These forms of leadership and decision-making

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2 There were some minor inaccuracies as some staff listed as committee members had actually left the University
separates higher education from other businesses and are often overlooked but can certainly block or assist paths to promotion at various levels in universities.

**Human resource Frame**

The Murdoch University Women in Leadership and Development (WILD) is one Meso level initiative that also has a micro level focus. Whether this will constitute a pool of women ready to replace those currently in senior positions depends on many of the political and structural issues identified above. Staff or professional development alone will not generate change to organizational structures, politics or culture to increase women’s representation at senior levels.

In the latter part of 2007, we conducted a survey to gain the perspectives of academic staff – male and female— that should more clearly identify some of the gender issues at MU. This survey was conducted on-line, and an invitation to participate sent to all staff via email. The survey design included both qualitative and quantitative questions. It had four sections to provide context for differences, comparisons, analysis, and possible trends. These areas were staff profile; work responsibilities; work culture; work life balance. It also included some of the questions used by Currie, Thiele and Harris’s survey instrument in *Gendered Universities in a Globalized Economies* (2002) pp. 193-196. The response rate was low— and much lower than we had anticipated, which means we did not learn what we had hoped, rendering our evidence for university culture to inform organisation change strategies unreliable. However, the data is proving useful in other ways. The low response rate, especially from women, prompted us to start asking questions about a ‘sticky floor’.

**Mico-level: individuals and groups**

*A question of a Sticky Floor?*

Rebecca Shambaugh’s (2006) question of whether unconscious behaviours keep women stuck, and why some women don’t build strategic relationships was interesting based on our experience. She says that despite the progress women deserve, some behaviours also need changing. Perhaps one challenge is that women are less likely to allow themselves the time for professional development that may benefit them?

The WILD program runs throughout the year, is supported by the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic), free to participants, open to a wide group of women rather than a select group, focuses the broad scope of academic work (teaching, research and administration/management), and ranges from short half-day sessions to up to 5 days. We endeavor to concentrate longer sessions in particular within the non-teaching breaks. However, participation has been lower than anticipated, although has improved to some extent in 2008. The increase may also have something to do with broadening the scope of the target group to include tutors, and general staff, as well as more sessions, and a new weekly University Events email to all staff.

In late 2007, a coaching program was launched. This was specifically targeted at developing high quality ARC grant applications in early 2008. Successful ARC grant recipients (male and female) from among the Murdoch community were invited to act as coaches, and a small remuneration was offered. Several responded positively, but there was less participation in the coaching program than hoped. Half the number of potential coaches approached did not respond to the initial email, or the follow-up. Only five women applied to have a coach to assist them in developing an ARC application.

WILD has been a success in the sense of positive feedback from female staff, gathered at the end of 2007. We invited feedback from women who had attended two or more sessions. However, again the sample we had to draw from those who agreed to be interviewed was small. Satisfied that we have done our homework in regard to WILD (and the survey), provided a comprehensive high quality program, paid attention to timing issues, responded to need, and reflected sufficiently on our approach and strategies, the important question for us is to what extent we are confronted by
‘the sticky floor’. As Shambaugh recently pointed out, “women have not made the progress we deserve in the executive suite, and the glass ceiling is still the oft-cited usual suspect. But it is not the whole story – and by believing it is, we may be holding ourselves back” (Shambaugh 2006). However, the concept of a ‘sticky floor’ seems to have varying interpretations. Booth, Francesconi and Frank (2003) apply the ‘sticky floor’ to describe the situation where women are promoted to the same rank as men but at a lower level than men are appointed. In other words women are started at a lower level within the rank or scale. Research by Elliot, Dale and Egerton (2001) suggests that the type of qualification (occupational or non-occupational) and not just the level may have an impact on career prospects for women. Currently we don’t have enough evidence at MU to make judgements about a ‘sticky floor’, and will need more research over the next few years.

Individuals’ inhibiting behaviours or motivation aside, programs such as WILD will not significantly change the status quo in higher education overall. More is necessary.

Symbolic frame
We conclude that perhaps MU could pay greater attention to this area in regard to WILD. Executive support does exist but senior structural ‘ownership’ was a sticky point, and as a result the program was implemented ‘under the radar’ to some extent. That has now been clarified, resting with the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic), and more visible executive support for the WILD program and activities through celebratory strategies will assist. For example, a wider senior leadership developmental program, due for launch in August 2008 has been deliberately biased to include a majority of women. These have been selected from active participants in the WILD program and the new program will complement the WILD program for such women. We are optimistic that the specific WILD program coupled with the university-wide leadership program will assist in overcoming any potential ‘sticky floor’ that may exist at MU.

Broadening the perspective on Macro issues which affect Meso matters
Regardless of institutional efforts such as WILD, and on the basis of history, it is doubtful that Universities Australia’s targets will be reached in many universities. As we have seen, representation of women at senior and professorial levels has not increased significantly over the past decade and entrenched skewed numbers of women at higher academic levels continue. Gender equity in governance, and decision-making, alongside positional leadership is an important area for reform in higher education. In addition to staff development initiatives, challenges of what might be a ‘sticky floor’, our study has highlighted areas that MU (and others) can focus on to effect change such as participation in and chairing key committees, as well as teaching leadership though chairing programs of study, which in time should provide a pool of women to take senior roles in the university and attain professorial status. Özkanli and White’s (2008: 59) suggested strategies for senior female academic staff in Australian higher education include improving promotions processes and widening promotion criteria, looking for career development opportunity to also include external committee, staff development, and implementing policies that make professorial promotions more attainable.

We agree with Özkanli and White’s strategies, however, the responsibility for gender parity in higher education is shared by the sector, and many years of directed strategies have produced slow change. Overlaying such strategies is a need for greater attention to change at the macro-level involving for example Universities Australia, Equal Opportunity for Women in the Workplace Agency, and the Australian Universities Quality Agency for a more nationally coordinated and aligned approach. We argue that as long as progress remains dependent on champions, and strategies in individual universities, it will be slow and piecemeal and will not achieve the UA targets set. This argument is supported by the fact that change has been slow globally as shown in Table 1 above. Coupled with this situation, is the well know financial depression of higher education in Australia.
Universities Australia

Universities Australia has set targets for universities on numbers of women in senior positions and the Australian Universities Quality Agency (AUQA) has taken some interest in gender balance as evidenced by the Murdoch University recommendation. Participation is such events as UA conferences and Staff Development and Training programs for women are heavily dependent on available funding (costs ranging from over $1,000 up to about $4,000). As such they can be prohibitive and exclude many women from accessing either. This is compounded for those from afar such as Western Australia when travel and accommodation are added.

If Universities Australia is serious about reaching the targets they have set, it really needs adequate resourcing. Universities simply can not do it alone. A 2006 media release was headlined “Minister supports advancement of women employed in universities” (Universities Australia 15 November 2006), with the announcement of $190,000 of matched funding to support the Action Plan for Women, and advance women’s issues in universities. The funds appear to have been directed for the most part towards the Colloquium of Senior Women Executives in Higher Education, and research projects. While these may be important initiatives, research is not necessarily followed by change, and it is somewhat doubtful whether there has had much impact ‘on the ground’ for women academics. Moreover, initiatives remain dependent on champions and it is suggested that if UA is to take gender parity seriously, then ensuring a clear understanding of responsibilities by members of UA, systemic data reporting and review, along with sharing of good practice will assist in the move to mainstream of the Action Plan for women.

The Universities Australia Executive Women committee made up of senior women in Australian Universities meet annually. The UAEW constitution aims include “to consult with UA in the carriage of the UA Action Plan for Women Employed in Australian Universities [and] to assist, as appropriate, in achieving the objectives and targets in the UA Action Plan” (UAEW June 2008). However, despite being an issue of significant national importance, and having set targets for universities, the status of women in universities does not appear to be a regular item on the UA meeting agenda (eg UA General Meeting of 11 June 2008).

Responsibility for gender equity varies within senior executive portfolios. At MU for example, academic staff development (and the WILD program) is located with the Deputy-Vice-Chancellor, Academic, however equity rests with the Deputy-Vice-Chancellor, Corporate (within Human Resources). Only four universities have a senior executive whose title reflects equity. There are as follows:

- Edith Cowan University: Pro-Vice-chancellor Equity and Indigenous Affairs;
- La Trobe University: Pro-Vice-Chancellor Equity and Student Services;
- University of Melbourne: Pro-Vice-Chancellor Teaching, Learning and Equity; and
- University of Technology Sydney: Deputy-Vice-Chancellor Teaching, Learning and Equity.

While these universities have such portfolios, the responsibility for women staff may not necessarily rest with that office. UA has three committees – academic, research and international- and only one of the above senior executives is included in the UA list in the academic committee. Currently, there is no UA Director for gender equity listed. Such a commitment to women could be an initial starting point, as well as securing significant and sustained ministerial support of the new government, coupled with collaborating and lobbying with Equal Opportunity for Women in the Workplace Agency, and the Australian Universities Quality Agency (AUQA) for appropriate changes to ensure alignment. The UA Action Plan for Women states that leadership will continue to have a leadership role in five areas including “achieving gender equity in Australian Universities [and] working collaboratively with government and other agencies and with universities” (2006: 3).

Equal Opportunity for Women in the Workplace Agency

The Australian Government’s Equal Opportunity for Women in the Workplace Agency (EOWA) has the role of administering the Commonwealth Equal Opportunity for Women in the Workplace Act
1999, through education and assisting organisations. Non-government organisations with Equal Opportunity programs can be recognised by EOWA with a citation as an Employer of Choice for Women (EOCFW) if they have achieved the requirements. Becoming an Employer of Choice for Women is an attractive proposition, and having received a citation organisations can then brand and promote themselves on that basis. In 2007, twenty-three universities had achieved EOCFW status including two Western Australian universities. While some had achieved the UA targets and/or are well on the way for 2010 targets that is not the case uniformly. One university, for example, achieved EOCFW in each year from 2006-2008, yet in 2006 was only marginally over UA, 2004 targets. Another was behind UA, 2004 targets in 2006 but received EOCFW status in 2006 and 2007. These universities serve as examples, but are certainly are not isolated ones.

EOCFW is input-based, some inputs can be problematic for universities (eg could achieve status while still having few women senior managers, above senior lecturer, or HEW level 10 or above), and perhaps it rather needs to be outcomes-based with outputs key performance indicators. It could be argued that for higher education, the EOCFW status provides the organisation with a false ‘sense of security’. It is curious that despite so many universities achieving EOCFW status, higher education is still one of the least gender-balanced workforces (Hugo 2005:20).

Analysis of Audit reports from Cycle One reveals that apart from Murdoch University, only one other received a recommendation directly related to women staff (although two received a recommendation more broadly related to staff equity). Murdoch University has not been cited as an EOCFW. The University of Wollongong, however, has. Yet the audit report says “The University is currently recognised by the Equal Opportunity for Women in the Workplace Agency as an employer of choice for women. The Audit Panel found, however, that the University has one of the lowest rates of participation by women in senior management” (AUQA 2006, Report of an Audit of the University of Wollongong, p.49).

Twenty-four universities had no mention of women, female, gender or equity in AUQA affirmations, recommendations or commendations. In twelve audit reports there was no mention anywhere in the report. Only three received commendations related to women staff, and six universities received commendations for equity more generally. There appears to be no discernable pattern that could relate this outcome to panel chairs. This raises the question of whether it might result from the nature of the conversations during discussions, and who is interviewed as to whether the role of women is seen as an audit issue. It is, however, interesting to note that there have been more male AUQA panel chairs (28) than female (11). More men (8) than women (2) chaired 2 or more audits, and four of those males were chairs without having been listed as observers or panel members prior to chairing an audit panel.

In the University of Wolloongong’s audit report “The Audit Panel chose to explore one particular issue, namely gender representation among senior staff. It reviewed a wide range of relevant internal and external reports on staffing and Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) planning outcomes, including the University’s Annual Report to the Director of Public Employment, which sets out the policy environment and provides a range of relevant performance indicators. The Audit Panel also discussed this matter with University management and staff” (AUQA 2006, Report of an Audit of the University of Wollongong, p. 49). Given the focus of AUQA audits has evolved to include external reference points and issues of “standards”, the availability of UA targets may be of value to audit panels in consideration of fundamental quality issues across universities, including equity for female academic staff. In the themed approach to cycle two audits, this may not be appropriate for all universities, however, could be considered for those Universities with themes involving Human Resources or Equity. While AUQA operates independent of government, it is at the same time funded by, and responsible to, the Commonwealth, States and Territories ministers.
Conclusion
The Commonwealth has sought to influence universities for many years including regulation and funding. The National Governance Protocols linked to the Higher Education Support Act allows the government to exert influence through funding arrangements despite the lack of legislative authority. While Australian higher education has been subject to significant government intervention in recent years aimed at transforming both the sector and the institutions within it, the low participation of women in governance more broadly signifies that most decision-making in universities excludes a significant women’s voice. This indicates that gender parity ought to be an area of governance reform on the national level as well. The High Court recently confirmed universities are considered corporations. The Commonwealth has the potential power to legislate on matters concerning corporations (Moodie 2007: 110). Therefore, the Commonwealth, if it so desires, has the power to legislate specifically on matters of equity, governance and quality. While the sector has had increasing government regulation more broadly, gender parity in universities appears to have gone largely unnoticed by successive governments. These issues all interrelate alongside institutional processes and initiatives.

Alongside institutional initiatives, a national approach is necessary with greater alignment between key agencies and for UA to facilitate universities reaching the targets they (UA) have set.

References


Queensland University of Technology (2007). Selected Inter-institutional Gender Equity Statistics. ATN Universities.


Abstract
This paper presents preliminary results of a cross-cultural study of gender and management in universities. Qualitative interviews with senior managers in each country were analysed in relation to key concepts of career paths, support, gatekeeping, management skills, disciplinary factors, gendered leadership styles and organisational cultures, and structural and cultural barriers. The study found that career paths into senior management are still based on the traditional male model; men tend to receive more support in moving into senior roles; women experience gatekeeping on the way up and while in senior management; the skills required to be an effective university manager are not necessarily gendered; disciplinary factors sometimes are played out in senior management teams; women bring a different leadership style and thus strengthen university management; organisational cultures have not shifted significantly in relation to gender inclusiveness; and universities need to pay more attention to policies and practices that continue to discriminate against women.

Introduction
This paper presents findings of the second phase of a multi-country study examining cross-cultural perspectives on gender and management in universities. It compares the experiences of senior managers in four of the nine countries in the Women in Higher Education Management (WHEM) network project – Australia, New Zealand, South Africa and Turkey.

Background and literature review
The first phase of the research by the Women in Higher Education Management (WHEM) Network undertook a quantitative analysis of women in university senior management in Australia, Finland, Ireland, New Zealand, Portugal, South Africa, Sweden, Turkey, and the United Kingdom. It found that their representation was consistently low across most countries, especially at Rector/VC, but also at Dean, level.
TABLE 1 Percentage of female professors 2007

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Full Professor</th>
<th>Associate Professor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finland</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>35*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ireland**</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Zealand</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweden***</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Africa</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portugal</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turkey</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Equivalent category is senior assistant  
** Including the 7 universities supported by the State (and excluding the St Patricks Catholic University, Maynooth; the Colleges of Education; NCAD and RSCI and the Institutes of Technology)  
*** Statistics not available

Significant factors included: the link between low representation of women as professors and senior managers; role conflict; the intersection between gender and discipline and its impact on career progression especially for women in the arts and the sciences; and the divide between old and new universities, including differences in salary scales (Machado-Taylor et. al. 2007).

TABLE 2: Gender profiles of participating countries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Global Gender gap index*</th>
<th>Labour force participation f/m ratio</th>
<th>Professional &amp; technical workers, f/m ratio</th>
<th>Women in parliament, %</th>
<th>Fertility rate (births/Woman)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.95</td>
<td>1.04</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>1.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finland</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.95</td>
<td>1.17</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>1.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Zealand</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0.85</td>
<td>1.08</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>2.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>0.77</td>
<td>1.04</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>1.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0.85</td>
<td>0.85</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>1.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>0.83</td>
<td>1.22</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>1.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Africa</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>0.60</td>
<td>0.89</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>2.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portugal</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>0.85</td>
<td>1.08</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>1.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turkey</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>0.36</td>
<td>0.45</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>2.40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* 128 countries ranked by World Economic Forum Global Gender Report


Table 2 provides a broad gender context for the WHEM project. The global gender gap index shows a wide divergence among participating countries – from smallest gender gaps globally (in Sweden and Finland) to a relatively large gender gap (in Turkey). Large variations between the WHEM countries are found in labour force participation by gender and women’s representation in parliament, whereas in most WHEM countries women are in the majority among professional and technical workers, except in the UK, South Africa and Turkey. Fertility rates are under 2.0 except in South Africa, Turkey and New Zealand.

Methodology
In the second phase investigators in each country conducted up to 20 interviews with both male and female senior managers in old and new universities, including current and former Rector/VCs. The interview schedule was divided into three parts. The first cluster of questions were about getting into and on in senior management. The second cluster focussed on “doing” senior management and explored perceptions of how colleagues regarded them, how they worked with men and women in their management team, and if women had a different management style. The final cluster focussed on the broader management. De-identified summaries were then analysed around the following key concepts: career paths in higher education, support, gatekeeping, management skills, disciplinary factors, gendered leadership styles and organisational cultures, structural and cultural barriers, and policy and practice in higher education.

Results
Getting into and on in senior management
This paper reports on the results from four countries: Australia, New Zealand, South Africa and Turkey. Reasons for comparing these countries are that they have different academic traditions and approaches to improving the participation of female academics which in turn impacts on the representation of women in senior management. Australian and New Zealand universities were traditionally based on the British model, whereas the foundation of Turkish universities was provided by reforms introduced by Atatürk in 1923. Australian and New Zealand universities have had equal employment (EEO) and affirmative action frameworks for 20 years. Similarly, South Africa introduced EE legislation and policy after the first democratic election in 1994, whereas Turkey does not have any specific EEO legislation.

Interviewees were asked to define senior management. Some Turkish respondents considered that the Rector and General Secretary, or the Rector’s office, constituted senior management, while others defined it as the Rector, Vice-Rector and Deans, the Chairman and other members of the Board of Trustees as well as the Rector, Vice-Rector and Deans as constituting senior management. Australian respondents generally described senior management as being the executive team of the Vice-Chancellor, Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Pro Vice-Chancellor and Executive Directors. Several had a broader management structure that included Deans and Heads of Departments or Schools. A few argued that an inner circle - the Vice-Chancellor and one or two DVCs – were particularly powerful. New Zealand respondents tended to see it as those who had substantive pan-university (and usually budgetary) responsibilities. South African interviewees generally defined senior management as including the VC, DVC, Registrar, Executive Directors and Deans, with all but the Deans constituting the Executive Management Team that met on a weekly basis.

Respondents were asked if they experienced difficulty in becoming senior managers and if their careers were planned. Most senior managers in Australia, New Zealand and Turkey had no difficulty and had been encouraged to apply by their Rector/Vice-Chancellor. However, some women in each
country experienced difficulty. Most male and female South African respondents did not experience difficulty in becoming senior managers, and generally had been invited to apply for the position by peers or the VC. As one black male explained: “I was dragged into it”, and added: “If people invite one to do something then there is greater consensus that you will be accepted”. Another related how his mentor rose through the ranks of the university and he followed. New Zealand respondents also talked about often being invited or encouraged to apply for positions.

Interestingly, more senior managers in New Zealand, South Africa and Turkey than in Australia did not plan a senior management career. Four fifths of those interviewed in Turkey and almost all of the South African participants had not planned to be senior managers, whereas in Australia although most respondents did not initially plan a management career, certainly by the time they reached junior management roles they had decided to go further.

Respondents were clear about the factors or people that were most supportive in getting into senior management. Several mentioned support from their Rector or VC, and others academic colleagues and high visibility within the sector. Support from family and friends were also considered important. However, some saw their own management experience and team work as more influential, while for others it was a combination of these factors.

Most respondents considered that senior management affected work/life balance. Several argued that they had gained a different perspective and/or more experience in interpersonal relations since becoming senior managers. Others said that the work load had increased, and still others that their research had suffered. For many senior managers, especially in Australia and New Zealand, a long working week made it difficult to balance work with family life. Several female respondents in Turkey mentioned role conflict between their work and non-work lives. Some senior managers in South Africa regretted the time spent away from their children, while others said it did not significantly impact on their family life because they were married to academics. One female VC commented that: “you lose your private space and lose status as a private individual and become a public figure”.

Senior managers were asked to list advantages and disadvantages of their job. The advantages cited by Turkish respondents were: prestige, financial rewards, being respected and being first among equals. One clear advantage for Australian and New Zealand senior managers was being able to influence the strategic direction of the university and to make a significant contribution, while for South African respondents the advantages were making a difference, the power to get the job done and effect change, to set the direction for the institution, access to resources, and wide international networks. One South African female senior manager said that the job meant she had a very structured life that was positive for her children. Disadvantages for many Turkish respondents were that their research suffered, and for several role conflict between work and non-work life. The main disadvantage for Australian and many New Zealand senior managers was the huge time commitment. One respondent described it as: “the work-life imbalance. That absolutely comes with the job. You have to expect that”, while others stated that they could not hold down their positions if they had a young family. A New Zealand senior manager mentioned the “risk of destroying family life, the constant tension and the 70 hour week”. For South African senior managers the disadvantages included working very long hours, little time for leisure or community involvement, loss of authority “over your own voice”; being isolated and lonely, and the masculine institutional culture.

We asked senior managers where they expected to be in five years time. Most of the Turkish respondents indicated that they hoped to return to research and/or teaching in their university, while a few planned to embark on new careers outside higher education. About half the Australian and New Zealand respondents planned to be retired or semi-retired, while the others planned to remain in senior management roles in universities. About half the South African respondents also
planned to be retired in five years time, several wished to remain in senior management and perhaps apply for VC positions, and a few thought about returning to academia.

**Doing senior management**

The second cluster of questions explored perceptions of how colleagues regarded them, how they worked with men and women in the management team, and if women had a different management style. The first asked respondents how they were seen by male and female colleagues. Most Turkish senior managers considered there was no difference in how male and female colleagues regarded them. However, a few female respondents argued that female colleagues judged them more harshly. One explained that: “most of the time women did not want me as a senior manager”. Australian senior managers tended to focus on how others perceived their management skills. One female manager added: “I would probably be seen here as someone who gets the job done. With female colleagues, it is probably a more collaborative process”. Some New Zealand female respondents also mentioned greater collaboration with other female senior managers. For South African respondents, the question touched on issues of race as well as gender, as the following interviewees explained: “the structure of gender and the structure of race are everywhere in the way that the university is organized. It is still predominantly a white male culture with an overwhelming white male professoriate” and “in our country we first see race, then gender, then ask what does she do and how does she perform”. Another admitted that there were much stronger and more intense relationships “with other boys” (i.e. male senior managers).

The next question explored if senior managers were more comfortable working in a predominantly male or female management team. Most Turkish senior managers argued that it did not matter, although some preferred a balance of males and females. Australian and New Zealand respondents stressed that the focus should be on competencies of the senior managers, but generally added they were uncomfortable with a predominantly male or female team. One male respondent said he actually preferred working with female senior managers: “I probably value working more with teams of women than men. I find them focused and their points of view creative and divergent”. Some South African respondents shared this view. However, some Australian female senior managers in predominantly male executive teams experienced open hostility. One explained: “they have a vision of a female senior manager as someone who does not speak”. One New Zealand female respondent said the problem with a predominantly male team was that “blokes being blokes, didn’t listen to what you said”, while another commented: “they think women will be a push over and can be ignored”.

Interviewees were asked what was different about working with women in senior management, compared to men, and about working for a female compared to a male boss. Turkish respondents generally argued there was little difference, although several said they preferred working with men. Few had worked for female Rectors. However, one female respondent argued that women were more task oriented, while men communicated poorly and were more interested in asserting power.

Responses from Australian and New Zealand senior managers were markedly different. Most believed that women brought added skills and qualities to senior management: they were better communicators, were “much more aware of interpersonal dynamics in exchanges” and they were less likely to adopt the “football club mentality” that characterised some predominantly male management teams. But the question of what was different about working for a female boss brought the most surprising response. Several Australian respondents – both male and female – argued that female VCs had a strong tendency to micro-manage. South African respondents considered that men and women often behaved differently in senior management teams: women were “not in the political dance for leadership that you find with men”, had more empathy, were “more strong and firm”, and were more authentic and consistent.
Respondents generally rejected the notion that women needed to adopt a male management style, and that this might differ according to disciplinary background. Some Turkish interviewees saw little difference in management styles according to gender, while others argued that differences in management style related to personality rather than gender. Several Australian, New Zealand and South African male senior managers also took this view, and others commented that women had moved beyond such paradigms because management culture had shifted. However, female South African participants were divided. A few asserted that women were expected to act like men. As one explained: “The authorisation of culture is masculine and in order to be successful...one has to adopt ...masculine behaviour”. Others believed this culture had shifted.

The final two questions in relation to “doing management” focused on where academic women were most likely to be found in their organization and what they thought women saw as the barriers to promotion. Some Turkish interviewees saw no difference in the representation of males and females in academic disciplines, while others said they were more likely to be found in Health Sciences, Social Sciences and Education. Australian and New Zealand senior managers were clear that women were more likely to be found in Education, Health Sciences, and Arts and Humanities and that these were considered “soft disciplines” that provided training for caring professions such as teaching and nursing. South African respondents noted that women were in Education, Social and Health Sciences, but not in hard science because of “cultural issues and career interruptions”.

Over half the Turkish interviewees believed there were no barriers to promotion for women in their university and several asserted that women can create their own barriers. Some considered that marriage, domestic responsibilities, role conflict, and the culture were barriers to promotion. All Australian and most New Zealand interviewees agreed that there were barriers to promotion of women academics, including lack of mobility due to family responsibilities, interrupted careers, and promotion processes. As one Australian respondent explained: “the traditional research/teaching/community engagement criteria [for promotion]; these are seen to be alienating for women”. Female South African respondents argued that the “boys club” was still a barrier. One commented: “the selection of HODs is where it plays out”. Others considered that lack of assertiveness due to socialisation, difficulty in breaking into established networks, not understanding process, and interaction of all these factors presented barriers.

The broader management culture
The third cluster of questions, on the broader management culture, provided rich material about organisational and management structures. The first question asked interviewees to describe a typical career path into senior management. Most Turkish respondents stated that there was no typical career path, although several saw the usual path as Professor, Department, Chair, and Dean. Australian, New Zealand and South African interviewees considered that the traditional academic career path prevailed – Professor, Course Coordinator, Head of Department or School, and Dean.

Next, interviewees were asked to describe a typical VC in their institution. Some Turkish senior managers thought there was no typical VC, while others stressed that they must be experienced managers and democratic. One female respondent stated: “The typical profile in the university where I work is a man, distinguished-looking, with grey hair, a graduate of the same university, most probably from the school of business or from the school of engineering”. Responses from Australian and New Zealand interviewees varied, but there was a broad consensus that a VC had to have a strong academic research record, and provide strong leadership both internally and externally. One interviewee described VCs as having: “strategic vision and a passion for HE, and are dedicated to hard work”. In South Africa a typical VC is a black male who has at least one qualification from an overseas university. Many were politically active in the struggle against apartheid.

The focus then turned to the characteristics, personal qualities and skills valued in senior management in their university. Turkish senior managers considered that senior managers needed
to be hard working, have broad vision, be respectful, demonstrate team spirit, be disciplined, productive, democratic, and have good communication skills. Australian and New Zealand senior managers mentioned strategic vision, strong research reputation, strong interpersonal skills, openness, transparency, resilience, collaboration and consultation. South African senior managers considered the following as important: a solid academic research profile, a strategic approach, transformational leadership skills, people management skills, emotional intelligence, courage, ability to balance conflicting interests, and financial acumen.

Interviewees were asked to describe the appointment process of senior managers in their university, and if key bodies or individuals influenced the process. The process for appointing Rectors in Turkey is that they are assigned by the Board of Trustees and approved by The Council of Higher Education (CHE) of the Republic of Turkey which proposes three candidates to the President of the Republic. The Deans and Vice Rectors are assigned by the Rector and approved by the Board of Trustees. In Australia, the University Council or Senate has a key role in the selection process for VCs and in a few universities also for DVCs. Recruitment consultants may be involved, and the selection panel represents broad interests across the university. There was a strong perception that the Vice-Chancellor had a critical role in influencing the process.

Tensions about race were played out on selection panels according to South African respondents. Comments included: “Race, meaning blackness, definitely overrides gender in selection processes, our Council is a very political body”; “faculties still try to skew appointments in favour of white males”; “selection is seldom competency based”; and “race plays a very strong role in selection decisions”.

Senior managers were asked about the balance of males and females in senior management in their university and how many of the women were from an academic background. The responses were interesting. Some Turkish senior managers did not know the balance of males and females in their institution, others presumed there were more men, while still others gave exact percentages. The Australian, New Zealand and South African respondents were more sharply focused on the percentages and acutely aware when women were underrepresented. In South Africa, almost all senior managers, including executive directors, have pursued the academic route to the top.

The final question focused on the role of Rectors and Vice Chancellors, their power in relation to faculties, their key contribution to an organization, and what about as regards the gender profile of senior management. Turkish interviewees considered that Rectors were very powerful, almost ‘omnipotent’, often comparing their status to that of kings with only the Board of Trustees mitigating this power. They draw up and allocate budgets and staffing, and determine the vision, mission and goals of the university. There was little response about their power in influencing the gender profile of senior management. Australian interviewees also considered that VCs were very powerful. Generally they did not directly deal with faculties, instead delegating that role to the DVCs. However, some did have a more “hands on” role. Australian and New Zealand interviewees saw the key contribution of the VC to the organisation as providing vision and setting direction, positioning the university externally, and creating a culture in which people can flourish. There was general agreement that increasingly an Australian VC’s focus needed to be external with internal management delegated to DVCs. VCs were described as becoming fundraisers and needing to interact with the corporate and community sectors, as well as with government. Some argued that in South Africa, in some of the ‘older’ universities, power had been devolved to the faculties creating tension between Deans and VCs/DVCs. One interviewee asserted: “Deans are very powerful because you cannot implement things without their support”. Another argued that since Deans were much more powerful than VCs, they needed to demonstrate commitment to improving the gender equity profile in their faculties because “faculties provide the pool for recruitment of women into senior management”.

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Australian and New Zealand senior managers, unlike their Turkish counterparts, generally considered that VCs can influence the gender profile of senior management by fiat and by supporting leadership development programs for women. As one Australian interviewee explained, “The VC has an important role in the gender balance of senior management in trying to make sure there is active searching for women to be on short lists, and around leadership training”. Male as well as female respondents had strong views about how a Vice-Chancellor could change the gender balance on senior management and discussed interventions by both male and female VCs that had led to a better gender balance on senior management teams.

**Discussion**

Analysis of data from interviews with senior managers in Australia, New Zealand, South Africa and Turkey indicates that historical and cultural factors shape attitudes to gender and university management. As Table 2 above demonstrates, each country is at a different stage of economic and social development, and has differing rates of female participation in the workforce and in political decision-making. It is therefore not surprising that there are some marked differences – as well as similarities – in relation to women in university senior management in each country.

Some initial observations are that in South Africa issues of race and gender intersect with the former taking precedence over gender. A second observation is that some of the data suggests that men in senior management in Turkey seemed unwilling to engage in discussion about gender and university management. A third observation is that the academic workforce in Australia is ageing. Therefore in future universities will need to look more widely to recruit top managers.

It is clear from these interviews that career paths in higher education management are still based on the traditional male academic model of lecturer, professor, HOS, Dean and senior manager. While some senior managers have a broader background, the traditional model applies for both males and females. This model impacts on the orientation of university managers and differentiates them from leaders in other sectors. Many attempt to juggle vast university wide portfolios and remaining research active.

The research suggests gendering in the support received in moving into senior management. Men are much more likely to mentored and groomed by VC’s and other senior managers, whereas for women the support was generally likely to come from further down the organisation and from family.

Gate keeping is a factor in moving into senior management positions. In Australia this was more likely to be along gender lines than in South Africa where race is the primary consideration. It is not just the gate keeping on the way up, but the continuing gate keeping once women are in senior management that is of concern. Women are often not equal partners around the table. Some are clearly told not to speak, others spend time trying not to offend male colleagues by the way they dress or behave, while still others are excluded from core decision-making. Gate keeping is less likely to apply where there is a gender balance or at least two to three women on a senior management team. However there are instances of sole women in management teams being treated as equals. As Husu (2004) noted in another context gate keeping has the dual function of exclusion and control and at the same time facilitates the distribution of reserves, information and opportunities.

The skills required to be an effective university manager are not necessarily gendered. They include hard work, strategic vision, strong research reputation, strong interpersonal skills, transparency, resilience, collaboration, consultation, emotional intelligence and courage. However, when considered in conjunction with gendered leadership styles (below) some interesting gender differences emerge.
Disciplinary factors in scientific areas have been a strong theme of the work of WHEM. The impact that Science, Engineering and Technology have on what kinds of knowledge are valued within senior management has been an underlying theme and certainly some interviewees in Australia and South Africa saw disciplinary factors being played out in senior management teams.

Women do leadership differently (Sinclair 1996), especially in a university environment. They provide a different leadership style that is mostly valued by male and female senior managers. Women bring creativity, communication and interpersonal skills, authenticity, consistency and focus. Their one negative characteristic, according to some Australian senior managers, is micro-management, particularly in VC roles. The strong skills that women bring to management teams are generally regarded as strengthening university management and producing improved outcomes, and are therefore a strong argument for gender balance.

Despite the participation of males as well as females in this research, there was strong evidence that organisational cultures had not shifted significantly in relation to gender inclusiveness. Men tended to cite deficit models to explain women’s under-representation in senior management – interrupted careers, family responsibilities, and lack of internationally recognised research. Women, on the other hand, talked about the overt and covert discrimination that they experienced. Gendered organisational cultures are in turn linked to gendered knowledge. O’Connor (2008) argues that the kind of knowledge that is most valued by the Universities and the wider system of stakeholders is that which reflects hegemonic masculinities.

The role of Rectors and VCs in shaping the organisational culture of their university is a clear finding of this research. They were described as very powerful with only the Board of Trustees/University Council mitigating that power in Turkey and Australia. However, the devolution of power to the Deans of Faculties in some older South African universities made VCs less powerful. The masculine organisational culture operating within many senior management teams can prevent women participating as equals in discussions and decision making processes. There is sometimes the sense that women are at the table as observers. Often Rectors/VCs are happy to have some representation of women in senior management, but not for them to participate in meetings on the same basis as the men.

Clearly universities need to pay more attention to policies and practices that continue to discriminate against women at various levels in the organisation, including in senior management. These include selection processes for top jobs that are either not transparent or in which the VC had too much influence, and closed internal promotion processes. The less open the process the more it is likely to benefit men (Rees 2005).

**Conclusion**

While the representation of women in senior management in Australia, New Zealand, South Africa and Turkey has improved in recent years, there are still broad barriers to their full participation in university management teams. This research found that career paths into senior management are still based on the academic model; men tend to receive more support in moving into senior roles; women experience gatekeeping on the way up and while in senior management; the skills required to be an effective university manager are not necessarily gendered; disciplinary factors are sometimes played out in senior management teams, women’s different leadership style strengthens university management; and organisational cultures have not shifted significantly in relation to gender inclusiveness. Clearly universities need to pay more attention to policies and practices that continue to discriminate against women.
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This paper was first presented at the World Dance Alliance Global Summit in Brisbane, Queensland, Australia, on 14 July 2008, and subsequently presented at the Engendering Leadership Conference in Perth, Western Australia, on 23 July 2008

Audio excerpts from the album, ‘Once In A While’, referred to on the following pages are accessible at: www.music.artsmedia.com.au

Abstract:
This paper examines the creation, development and implementation of an artistic process termed by the author ‘Blind Collaboration’. The process involves musicians collaborating on an album of contemporary music where they, the collaborators, do not see or hear each other nor record in the same studio at the same time as their fellow musicians.

The notion of musicians recording separately or indeed remotely is not new, however what is new is the ‘blind’ aspect of the process. Each musician is completely unaware of any others’ contributions, and is therefore uninfluenced by what the others might play. None of the musicians hears the overall result until the final mix.

The principal focus of this case study lies in the analysis of specific aspects and outcomes of the creative/artistic process - how it evolved, how it was managed, how it was influenced by the particular artists involved and how the Blind Collaboration process ultimately shaped the final musical work.

Keywords: Blind Collaboration, Music Collaboration, Collaborative Creativity, Contemporary Music, Recording

It turned out not to be the same experiment for any one of the six of us...that’s actually where the great collision comes from - the creative collision of everybody pushing as hard as they can, in a slightly different direction - creates this stretched envelope...this slightly defocused and quite rich and densely interconnected thing...called a record.

(Brian Eno 1999)

Introduction:
This paper refers to and describes aspects of the recording of an album of original contemporary music, titled ‘Once In A While’, which forms part of my practice-led Doctoral research (audio excerpts from the album, ‘Once In A While’, referred to on the following pages are accessible at: www.music.artsmedia.com.au).

The recording process began in 2006, with the bulk of the collaborative components recorded over the period November 2006 to March 2007. The album was completed in April 2008, and became a ‘feature album of the week’ on ABC Radio within two weeks of its completion
In testing this unusual, if not unique, artistic/recording process, I was not looking for ‘perfection’. My purpose was to explore a ‘tantalising possibility’. It was a case of ‘throwing my songs to the wind’ and seeing what came back to me.

What did come back to me was quite remarkable.

‘Blind Collaboration’ - the Concept:

Collaboration is a committed, engaged process.

(Banfield - interviewed by Collins 2005)

The concept of ‘Blind Collaboration’ was that I, as originating artist, would collaborate with other musical artists by way of providing the base material – i.e. songs recorded in basic form - and then send those songs to a variety of musicians representing a variety of musical styles. Each of the musicians was to choose, from the 14 tracks provided, two pieces which appealed to them. These musicians were then to add their own musical ideas and input to those recordings. No interference or influence would be exerted upon them by myself as originating artist – they would be entirely free to interpret each work in their own way and contribute in their own unique and individual style.

One of the most fundamental, interesting, and artistically risky aspects of the process was that the collaborating musicians would contribute and collaborate without hearing any of the other musicians’ contributions – hence the term ‘Blind Collaboration’. They would literally be flying blind (or perhaps flying ‘deaf’ would be more appropriate). The term ‘blind’ is used here in the typically scientific sense of a ‘double blind’ experiment – uninfluenced by prior knowledge, in order to achieve an unbiased outcome.

In the artistic context this is quite unusual as most collaboration, by definition, suggests that the collaborators communicate with each other directly - and generally in an ongoing fashion over a specified period of time.

Music performance is an interdependent art form. Musicians’ real-time gestures are constantly influenced by the music they hear, which is reciprocally influenced by their own actions. This interdependency is true not only in group playing but for soloists as well, for example, a violinist who is listening to the music she is playing and constantly modifying her actions with correlation to the auditory feedback stream.

(Weinberg 2002)

The concept of ‘remote’ collaboration is not that new. As I recall, the 1983 Paul McCartney and Michael Jackson song, ‘Say Say Say’ (from the ‘Pipes of Peace’ album), was recorded by sending tapes back and forth across the Atlantic and each recording in turn. Since then, given the advent of the internet, there are currently examples of collaboration over geographic distances for particular musical projects. For instance Weinberg (2002) in his paper on Interconnected Music Networks, describes using the internet to facilitate collaboration between musicians through, “live performance systems that allow players to influence, share, and shape each other’s music in real time...allow(ing) a group of performers to interdependently collaborate in creating dynamic and evolving musical compositions”.

One of Weinberg’s main points is, to restate, based in the notion of, “Music performance (as) an interdependent artform. Musicians’ real-time gestures are constantly influenced by the music they hear, which is reciprocally influenced by their own actions”. By utilising the internet it is possible for remote collaboration to take place in real-time - unlike the McCartney/Jackson instance.
The operative word here is **interdependent**.

Whilst I in no way disagree with Weinberg’s suggestions, what he describes does not reflect the process which I have instigated, developed and utilised for this project. Neither is it reflected by that of Jones (2005) who describes his ‘cyber’ collaborative process for video games music where his collaborator, “would stay online and listen to what I was coming up with and add comments like, ‘more accents on the rhythm parts,’ ‘less whole chords and more power chords’ and so on.”

My process in fact takes entirely the opposite approach – it is an **independent** process rather than an **interdependent** one. It is a process where the musicians cannot influence each other because they neither see nor hear the other musicians – their collaborators – so they cannot be influenced by what their collaborators play. Therefore, their respective musical contributions, their ‘collaborations’, are indeed ‘blind’ – neither influenced by, nor influencing, their fellow collaborators, nor influenced by myself as producer, composer and collaborator. However this independent, blind, remote process has produced a remarkably cohesive, musically consistent, yet stylistically varied work. All of which suggests that whilst one would assume that yes, ideally, collaborators would need to be in each other’s presence (even cyber-presence), it is not an essential requirement. In fact I have, through this project, arrived at the view that there may be distinct advantages to actually avoiding physical (and/or cyber) proximity.

What I am referring to here is the artistic ‘magic’, the unpredictable, the serendipitous – which makes one forget that these musicians are indeed not in the same studio, at the same time, playing the same song. Yet they have still, collaboratively, produced a work of significant artistic merit.

Such mutual benefit requires the **relinquishing of individual control of the creative process** and different, but complementary, roles appear to be best suited to achieving that end (emphasis added). (Mamykina, Candy, Edmonds 2002)

‘**Rules-of-Engagement**’:

To apply and test the concept of ‘blind collaboration’... Chris Willems, as originating artist, will collaborate with other musical artists by way of providing material, recorded in basic form, which is then sent to a variety of musicians representing a variety of musical styles. Each of whom chooses one or perhaps two pieces which appeal to them musically. These musicians then add their own musical ideas and input to those recordings. **No interference or influence will be exerted upon them by the originating artist (CW) – they are entirely free to interpret each work in their own way and contribute in their own unique and individual style.** (emphasis added)

The above description extracted from my Doctoral Project Plan (2006) describes accurately the nature of the process I was proposing to undertake. A process which was, in the event, followed quite closely - both in spirit and actuality.

Whilst the ‘**Rules-of-Engagement**’ outlined above were indeed adhered to throughout the project, I had anticipated the very real potential problem of having all of the musicians choosing the same two tracks - instrumentally overloading those tracks - and no musicians playing on any of the other tracks – leaving them instrumentally incomplete or lacking. Whilst I had devised a ‘Plan B’ to cover that eventuality, it caused me some initial anxiety. However in the event the problem only manifested itself to a very limited extent (refer below).

So, in the spirit of, and consistent with, the best creative/artistic processes, there were evolutionary (and the odd revolutionary) changes as the project progressed, none of which took the project so far away from its initial concept as to significantly alter the Blind Collaboration principle. These
changes were determined by one or more: logistical; practical; opportunistic; creative; financial; time; curiosity; and exploratory factors. Most importantly, because I myself had arbitrarily devised the project’s Rules-of-Engagement, when I needed to break (or at least amend) those rules to serve the project and/or the art, I had no qualms or hesitation in doing precisely that – certain in the knowledge that I was remaining faithful in principle to the overall process.

Whilst frameworks, plans and guidelines are crucial to good planning, there is nothing more stifling for the creative process than unbending rules and slavish dedication to a plan which has been, even in part and perhaps temporarily, outgrown.

Art (and Research) has to be allowed to develop, evolve and ultimately find its own path, rhythm, and outcomes.

The Challenges:

1. Getting the right Musicians

It’s always difficult to give your songs to somebody and know that they’re going to take it to places where you can’t take it, because they…play guitar and piano, and arrange music. If they do a good job then it’s great…if they don’t, then it’s not great - then you wish you hadn’t given it up, or you wish you’d been more involved or you wish you’d been there more…or something goes wrong…

(Nicks 1997)

My plan was to invite as wide a cross-section of musicians as I could in terms of musical backgrounds, styles and instruments. Even though I was writing music for a contemporary album, I wanted to cover the range of musical possibilities from classical to jazz to rock – this could only happen if I invited the broadest possible range of musicians to which I had access.

Wherever I sourced them and whatever individual styles they might represent, I knew that I had - like Donald Fagen (1999) for Steely Dan’s 1977 album ‘Aja’ - to select, “musicians who had a larger palette of things they could do…because they were coming in cold”. Not only were these musicians coming in cold but because of the nature of the process they would also have to be very confident in themselves and their musical skills/styles, given the process and that they would be playing in a collaborative vacuum.

A crucial prerequisite was that I had to have musicians who could improvise (refer below - The Process). Unlike Steely Dan, who sought out musicians, “who were also good readers” (Fagen 1999), I did not provide charts, for two very good reasons; a) I do not read music so could not prepare charts myself, but more importantly, b) I did not want to dictate what my guest musicians played – there was no point. Rather, I wanted to invite them into the process and simply make the offer, not unlike Phil Collins (1999) that, “I’d like you to do something - can you find a hole for yourself”. It would have been artistically arrogant and musically stupid of me to dictate to them what to play, when they are all better musicians than I, and doing so would inevitably have closed off artistic opportunities rather than opened up new ones. As Sting (2003) has said of his own musical processes;

I’ve made a habit throughout my career of hiring musicians that are way better than me

(Sting 2003)

What I wanted was a group of musicians who would, to echo the words of Fleetwood Mac’s Stevie Nicks (1997), be able to, “take my songs and make them wonderful”. I believe that, ultimately, that is precisely what I got.
The musicians chosen were as follows (in chronological response/recording order):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Musician</th>
<th>Instrument(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ceri McCoy</td>
<td>Saxophone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeff Usher</td>
<td>Piano</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Steve Reinthal</td>
<td>Guitars</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Briony Luttrell</td>
<td>Cello</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stuart Day</td>
<td>Violin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rob Phelan</td>
<td>Electric Guitars</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mark Hilton</td>
<td>Bass</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Other musicians/instrumentalists were also approached but declined for a variety of reasons such as lack of time; availability; or they were simply not interested.

2. Getting the right Engineer

There was always going to be the need for someone who technically knew substantially more than I in terms of not only ProTools recording, but also specialised microphone placement – particularly for instruments such as cello and grand piano. Yanto Browning was one of the names put forward and I eventually contacted and subsequently commissioned him.

In the evolution of the process, this professional relationship developed well beyond just someone who knew the recording studio setup to push the buttons. Yanto, consciously or otherwise, became one of my collaborators – involving himself increasingly in the creative and Blind Collaboration process, not as a musician, yet bringing to it his own (youthful) musical sense, sensitivity and sensibility. This, together with his extraordinary skill in driving the recording technology, meant that I increasingly treated (and trusted) Yanto as one of my collaborators and would very happily and deliberately encourage him to bring his own musical perspective and suggestions to the recording and mixing process – indeed ultimately handing over the mix to a very large extent.

Something which I found particularly interesting was that someone as young as Yanto could work with someone twice his age and that we could maintain such ease of communication in a contemporary music context. One might have expected that different generations would bring conflicting approaches to the music but the opposite proved to be the case – our respective approaches complemented each other completely.

Ultimately though, whatever the professional relationships, whoever places the microphones, pushes the recording buttons, does the singing or the playing, the most fundamental aspect of this project is the base material – the songs themselves.

3. Getting the right Songs

Over more than three decades of professional artistic experience I have developed the view that bad art cannot be made good art through technical means alone. There has to be a fundamental quality to the art – in this case the songs - because, a) they need to appeal sufficiently the guest musicians to want to contribute to them – and enjoy the process, and, b) they need to touch the listener – who is bombarded with music from myriad sources, virtually every moment of the day.

The songs chosen were a mix of newly composed (9 of 14) and previously recorded. The re-recording of a minority of previously recorded songs was something of an experiment in different treatments, approaches and instrumentation applied to the same songs in order to discover just...
how differently (or not) they might turn out. As Sting (2003) suggests, “if they’re good songs they will transmute their meaning into different situations”. And, quite apart from any technical reasons, there were particular of my songs chosen simply because they are personal favourites, for a variety of reasons - musical, emotional, historical - which justified their inclusion.

The rationale behind recording the basic Draft tracks as just Voice, Acoustic Guitar and Percussion – “the lowest common denominator of arrangement” (Miller 2003) - was, on the one hand, that they were the instruments I happen to play, on the other hand the recordings of the songs had, in arrangement terms, to be complete enough to stand on their own in the event that none of the collaborating musicians chose a particular track or tracks to contribute to – at that stage an entirely unknown quantity. Whilst I was keen to keep the process open, and curious to see if others disagreed, there were indeed at least one or two tracks which I had already decided would not require any guest instrumentation at all. As it turned out this proved to be the case and there are indeed tracks which attracted no guest musicians, so I happily decided to leave them with more space.

The acid test for whether a song is a good song or not is whether you can break it down into just a simple rendition. If it still works like that it’s a good song as far as I’m concerned (Sting 2003)

The Process:

The practical aspects of the process are perhaps best articulated via my response to some very specific, unexpected and useful questions which came in the form of an email (3 February 2007) from one of my Listening Forum participants. The questions are reproduced/paraphrased below:

Q: Are all the compositions and lyrics your originals?
A. Yes they were/are. Some tracks I have recorded before, in different contexts.

Q. Was there any over-dubbing?
A. Some overdubbing of vocals (and some instruments) here & there - as well as vocal harmonies of course - but generally we have used one whole single take wherever possible (and done a bit of cutting & pasting across takes to fix the odd suspect note) - as it achieves more musical consistency/integrity. Track 3 (‘Just The Same’) is the only track on which we consciously decided to ‘double’ the lead vocals.

Q. Did the participating musicians read from charts?
A. No - they all improvised (which is why I chose them - because I knew they could). The only ‘charts’ some (particularly bass) had were just a lyric sheet (as a guide) sometimes (but not always) with the basic chord structure noted at the 1st verse & chorus - so they could work out what key to play in. Most of the musicians had no charts at all - not even lyric sheets. The idea was that they brought to the songs their own melodic ideas based on how the songs affected/appealed to them - I did not tell them what to play (or even what instrument to play) or which songs to select. It was entirely up to them individually.

Q. Did they have prior hearing of the piece before the recording?
A. Yes - all the musicians were sent a draft album (acoustic guitar/voice/percussion) from which to select the tracks they liked/wanted to play on.

Q. Was there just one “take” for each piece?
A. It varied amongst musicians - some did their bit in one or two takes, some chose to develop their ideas over 8 or 9. It was entirely up to each musician individually (and fascinating to watch
their different approaches in situations when I could). It is important to remember (and I have to remind myself constantly) that the musicians, whilst they heard what I played on the basic drafts, at no stage were able to hear what any of the other ‘guest’ musicians had played on the same track - so they were totally in the dark other than for my basic instrumentation - hence my term ‘blind collaboration’. The role of serendipity has, as it turns out, been quite crucial throughout the entire process.

Q. Were any synthesized effects used?
A. Depends on what you mean by ‘synthesized’. Certainly in the mix Yanto has utilised effects like reverb, chorus, delay etc, but in the fundamentals of the recording there have been no ‘artificially generated’ sounds. The closest I can think of at the moment, would be the ‘wah-wah pedal’ on the electric guitar in “Siam”. However I would personally not classify that as a ‘synthesized’ sound as such. There has been no ‘sampling’ etc if that’s what you are referring to – I personally detest that kind of approach/sound and am much more comfortable with ‘proper’ instruments - hence the instrumentation on this album is pretty basic: guitars (acoustic & electric); bass; cello; piano; saxophone; percussion (all acoustic); vocals and backing harmonies.

The process indeed ran very closely to how it was intended and produced the kind of outcomes one might expect – with the caveat that within the overall process there were certainly unexpected outcomes both artistically (refer below) and logistically. I remained true to my rules (mostly) and did not tell the musicians which tracks to choose, what to play or indeed what instrument to play – instead, like Banfield (interviewed by Collins 2005), “allow(ing) the poetry to dictate and suggest what the instrumentation was going to be”.

The one exception was right towards the end of the process where most of the guest recording had been completed and I then had the chance to step back, assess what we by then had, what the work still needed in terms of necessarily filling musical gaps. The album overall needed some Bass in some of the tracks on which the Cello had not played – in order to give those songs the required bottom end. My final collaborator, Mark Hilton in Melbourne was in some sense ‘standing by’ to fill those gaps.

Whilst the nomination of specific tracks that this required fell outside my rules-of-engagement, the actual process itself of recording Bass on those tracks still retained the ‘blind’ aspects of the process from the point of view that Mark did not, at any stage, hear the other musical contributions while he was recording his.

The fact that Bass was essentially left until last, brings us to another interesting aspect of the process, the Chronology.

Chronology:

The usual chronology of recording is to begin, based on a guide track, with Drums and Bass – the rhythm section – setting the foundations for the other instruments and voice to build upon, “…like building a building, the foundation; next (indicates layers); then you put in the furniture in the end” (Lanois 1999). In this case the chronology of the process was almost totally reversed - with Bass and some of the Drums/Percussion actually being the final components, rather than the first, to be recorded. These final recordings of Bass and Drums also complied with my ‘rules of engagement’ and were done blind, simultaneously, some 2000 km apart (Brisbane and Melbourne).

So from the point of view of the fundamentals of the album the Rhythm Section was essentially the last major component - rather than the first.
Further to this, as can be seen in the case of ‘Intoxicating’ (track 2), discussed elsewhere, the chronology of the recording of the respective instruments quite clearly and definitively (consciously or otherwise) determined and shaped the style – in that particular case as a quite distinctively jazz flavour - which virtually precluded a different stylistic treatment. In other cases neither of the guest instruments determined the style to the exclusion of another instrument or style, they merely complemented each other without actually imposing a definitive ‘style’ on the track. However it is worth noting that despite where any or all of these songs could potentially have gone stylistically, based on particular instruments/players, there has indeed developed an overall ‘feel’ or style of both the individual tracks themselves and the album as a whole - by virtue of, or perhaps despite, the process.

So in terms of the establishment of the sound and/or style of each track, this ‘reverse chronology’ in one sense simultaneously both supports and conflicts with the notion proposed by Listening Forum participant David Tilburey (2007) in his ‘Overall Comments’,

Do some instruments collaborate better than others and do some have more influence on a piece? The experience here would suggest that a saxophone would be mixed earlier into a track than a cello and therefore dictate the direction of the song. However, even though the cello seemed to have a delayed introduction it is suggested the cello had a greater influence in the mood of a piece, whether the rest of the music was produced differently to allow for it or directly influenced it is unclear. What is interesting though is you may never know. (emphasis added)

The ‘never knowing’ has, by default, become a feature of this album and this process.

In the final analysis I would defy almost anyone who was not actually part of the process to determine, from a first (or indeed subsequent) listening, which instruments were recorded in which order and whether or not those instruments were indeed recorded at the same time in the same studio.

The Listening Forum:

The problem that every artist faces, in creating any kind of art, is that one can never get a ‘first impression’ of one’s own work. Having created it, lived with it and developed it over time, the final manifestation of that art has inevitably been a process of gradual evolution. Whilst the Blind Collaboration process presented the artist with some sense of first impression at the addition of each guest instrument, there remains a familiarity with the material which precludes a true first impression.

What I wanted in the Listening Forum was representation of divergent musical backgrounds (and also a mix of age and gender) in order to harvest the broadest possible range of opinions and feedback. The great value of the Listening Forum therefore was, in casting the work to a wider audience - who were themselves possessed of a significant level of musical knowledge, expertise and experience - and garnering their feedback, that I was able to achieve a kind of vicarious ‘first impression’.

So the purpose of the Listening Forum was ostensibly to introduce, or reintroduce, a level of objectivity into the mixing process at a stage where reasonably significant changes could still be implemented prior to the final mix. In the event, all the comments harvested were referred to, discussed in detail, and incorporated - to some degree or other.

The Listening Forum actually became two, slightly different, Listening Forums.
The principal Listening Forum consisted of people who had not heard the songs in any shape or form – therefore bringing completely ‘fresh ears’ to the process. The second Listening Forum consisted of the Guest Musicians themselves – who obviously had heard the Draft album, and of course their own contributions to it, but significantly, had not heard the contributions of the other collaborators, even within the songs to which they themselves had contributed. This was indeed the first time that anyone, apart from myself and recording engineer Yanto Browning, had heard all the instruments come together within each of the tracks.

I fully expected, and welcomed, diversity of views and feedback. This is precisely what I got.

The reason that I long ago ceased trying to predict audiences for my own, or any other, theatre performances is that there are no two audience perceptions precisely the same – this cannot be more clearly demonstrated than in the Listening Forum. Certainly there is generally a confluence of overall opinion as to the quality of a work, and one has a broad sense of which particular songs are likely to appeal more than others, however there is a delightful diversity in the opinions, perceptions and suggestions coming back from people listening to the work.

The reasons for this are perhaps best articulated by Jonathan Miller (1995) who argues that,

> the whole point about perception is that it is not...the experience that is delivered by the structure of the work that is in front of the eye...it's a negotiation between the creative viewer and the object that is in front of the eye - and that hunches, guesses, prejudices, preoccupations, interests and so forth, alter the experience so that what you know, what you think, what you imagine, what you anticipate, have an irreversible effect on what you experience. And this isn't a sign of the fickle instability of the character, it's a sign of the structure of perception in general. That's what perception is like...it's a process of guessing as well as seeing what is out there. (emphasis added)

(Miller 1995)

Based on this view articulated by Miller, and as discussed further (in a different context) in previous writings, whatever the artistic context,

> art exists partly in the mind and imagination of the artist and partly in the mind and imaginative skills of the beholder...each of us draws upon our own personal experience and from that experience we the beholder invest the art work with properties that the person next to us may not - or may invest a different experience or set of experiences, and which, for each of us in a different way, allows the artist's emotion embedded within and emanating from the work to resonate within ourselves in our individual way’. (emphasis added)

(Willems 1997)

It is abundantly clear from the diversity, confluence and conflict of opinion across the Listening Forum(s) that the above holds true.

If one uses the analogy of a ‘gravitational pull’, where the centre path is the line that Yanto and I took in the mixing process - based on our own hearing of the music - and either side of that line are ‘dots’ of other opinions, feedback and suggestions. More often than not our straight centre line might deviate slightly, gravitationally pulled towards these dots at a particularly useful suggestion, but rarely if ever did we deviate totally or indeed significantly – rather a case of incremental adjustment rather than amendment. This reflects neither arrogance nor any dismissal of others’ suggestions or comments – quite the contrary – we took notice of everything everyone said and
then decided, based upon our respective fundamental aesthetic, musical and/or technical sense, what was the most appropriate musical decision, for the sake of the album - for the sake of the Art.

There inevitably comes a time in the development of any solo artistic process when, “the artist becomes the Ensemble” (Willems 2004) – where as an individual artist, one surrounds oneself, willingly or otherwise, with collaborators, technical support, funding authorities, private investors, the media etc – all of whom have an opinion about the artist’s work. However, ultimately, the artist has to remain faithful to their own vision and make their own determination as to the final shape and detail of that work.

As guest musician Steve Reinthal (2007) affirms, “don’t be afraid to edit other people’s contributions, it is your album”.

The Role of Serendipity:

In listening to the album right from the Preliminary Mix through to the final Mastered Mix, I continue to be astounded at the role which Serendipity has played in this artistic process. It is almost like having another collaborator, a musical arranger - an invisible ‘George Martin’ – sitting off to the side and becoming involved when there is an opportunity to enhance the art.

Celebrated Australian author Jon Cleary speaks of the crucial role of serendipity in his own work, citing, “Serendipity (as) one of the things that keeps alive my interest in writing” (quoted by Bantick in the Weekend Australian Review 2007 p. 10). Whilst not being the sole ingredient to ‘keep it alive’, Serendipity has certainly added life to this project – unpredictably, unintrusively and certainly not unwelcomed. Its contribution really has been quite extraordinary and cannot be overstated – and that influence is not just musical.

Indeed, despite having myself devised the ‘rules’ for the process, in listening to the mix it is very easy to forget – and I have to constantly remind myself - that the guest musicians did not hear any of the other players’ contributions while they were recording theirs. They were, with the exception of course of hearing the basic tracks (voice/acoustic guitar/percussion), essentially playing in the dark, blissfully (or perhaps frustratingly) unaware of the other parts – literally playing and collaborating ‘blind’. Yet even a cursory listen to the mix reveals unintended harmonies, musical phrases unintentionally echoing, reflecting and complementing one another, and unintended unisons across instruments, which is quite extraordinary.

It is worth noting that each musician had a blank canvas to work on yet, consciously or otherwise, did not assume themselves to be the only guest instrumentalist in the track – even though it may have ultimately transpired that they were. It is this leaving of room, of ‘breathing space’ within the songs that seems to have allowed other musicians to come in and inadvertently utilise those spaces – even though they could not hear them – and they themselves choosing to leave different spaces.

...both Phil (Collins) and I had this feeling of loving to listen to music that had space in it...we tried very hard to not put too many instruments onto the record.

(Padgham 1999)

This sense of complementary space and complementary playing is very much a feature of the collection of songs on this album.

One could no doubt argue (and it has been – Kidman 2007) that musicians playing in the same key in the same song would do that inevitably, however in my view, it goes well beyond that. There is a confluence of musical taste, of a musical aesthetic and stylistic approach from musicians broadly
diverse in age, background and experience, which determines the notes and musical phrases which one selects (or not). Which is not to say that the results are predictable – quite the contrary - there are musical and stylistic surprises in this work which still catch me unawares. But there is a consistency, a cohesion which fools the ear into believing that all these musicians were in the same studio at the same time listening to each other and indeed playing together.

Serendipity manifested in many forms, degrees and instances. Across the album we find examples of: ‘general’ musical serendipity; very specific musical serendipity, and what I refer to as, ‘extra-musical’ serendipity – which extends well beyond just the musical aspects of the work. Whilst there are indeed examples of serendipity right across the album, I have chosen three specific tracks to illustrate the role that serendipity played in shaping the final work.

**General Musical Serendipity.**

‘INTOXICATING’ (Guest Instruments: Piano; Cello; Violin)

This track is a good illustration of the unplanned coming together of complementary instruments. The piano, cello and violin work remarkably well together. There is a confluence of instruments, sound and styles. The rule of my not dictating what tracks, or instruments, to choose is illustrated on this song with Stuart Day – whom I know principally as a guitarist – choosing instead to play violin.

This song is the only one to present me with the anticipated problem of having a lot more musicians wanting to add to it than the song could musically accommodate.

At one point I had four musicians proposing to record into this song and in the end I had to suggest to the chronologically most recent one – in contravention of my self-imposed rules (refer above) – that the song already had three musicians recorded into it (I did not indicate what instruments they played) and that it might be more useful, in the interests of not wasting his time or mine, to choose another track instead. It reached the stage where there was no point in trying to squeeze any more instrumentation into the song.

In analysing why this song in particular had been so attractive to the other musicians (and indeed several members of my Listening Forum – “great track”; “a beautiful song”; “very nice track – it’s intoxicating!”; “ethereal; atmospheric richness…my favourite” - various theories came to mind – including the one that it might be the song with the most ‘space’ in it, hence providing opportunities for other instruments. Another theory to emerge was that it was simply an aesthetically appealing song and people just liked it. Whatever the actual reason or reasons, the dilemma I had to resolve was how best to serve the song at the same time as serving my guest musicians and respecting their musical input and efforts.

This demonstrates precisely the point discussed in general terms by Tilbury (2007), correctly suggesting that because one particular instrument “would be mixed earlier into the track”, it would, “therefore dictate the direction of the song”, exerting, “greater influence on the mood of the piece’. The result in this case is, according to Jenkins (2007) a, “good mix of instrumentation…the way the different tones bleed in and out of each other constructs a multi-faceted construction through space”. Bassist Mark Hilton (2007), who did not play on the track, regards this as an, “excellent arrangement…good use of strings”, with Cullen (2007) describing, “the delightful layers and grace notes of cello and violin contrasted against a soulful bottom end…exquisite performances”.

The guest musician whom I had encouraged (but not insisted) to choose another track, was blues guitarist, Rob Phelan. Who, after some time and consideration, did indeed choose another track, and I am very glad he did. The track he chose as a substitute was ‘Satisfied’.
Specific Musical Serendipity:

‘SATSIFIED’ (Guest Instruments: Saxophone; Electric Guitar)

In various discussions over the brief period of time that Rob Phelan and I performed as an informal, occasional duo, he had once mentioned that his approach to playing/phrasing lead guitar was significantly influenced by the kind of phrasing generally favoured by Saxophone players. It was therefore quite remarkable that he chose this track, because, unbeknownst to him, I had, some months previously, recorded my first guest musician, Ceri McCoy – who happens to play saxophone.

As Weinberg (refer above) suggests, when musicians play together they play in a complementary way – they will influence, and be influenced by each other. They will listen to each other’s notes, the will leave spaces for each other; they might play harmonies; or in unison from time to time. They will often play ‘call-and-response’ type phrases. That is when they can hear each other. In this case they could not hear each other, and yet there are instances on this track where the saxophone and electric guitar unwittingly, unknowingly and unheard by each other, indeed do play ‘call-and-response’; they do play harmonies to each other’s melodies, and in at least three instances, play virtually the same notes, in the same phrases, in the same parts of the song - bringing to the song a melodic and harmonic richness which may not necessarily have been improved by having these musicians in the same studio together at the same time – as distinct from the actual reality of them recording their respective contributions, ‘blindly’, some 50 km, and three months apart.

This is a coming together of the two instruments which, according to Hansson (2007), provides a, “Gentle feel – sax adds nuance to melodic appeal interweaving with vocal line and background guitar lines/chords – juicy sound”.

As indicated earlier, I would defy just about anybody to pick that these two musicians were not playing in the same studio at the same time, listening to each other’s notes and watching each other’s fingers.

‘Extra-Musical’ Serendipity:

‘SIAM’ (Guest Instruments: Acoustic Guitar; ‘wah-pedal’ Electric Guitar)

This song was one originally recorded on a previous album and re-recorded for this album.

The song was - unintentionally - written about the journey of my parents from their meeting in Indonesia prior to WWII, their incarceration as POW’s under the Japanese, and their subsequent re-meeting, marriage in Siam (Thailand) and eventual emigration to Australia in the early 1950’s (I say ‘unintentionally’, because I had absolutely no intention of writing about my parents’ journey, but as so often occurs with art, the creative process comes to one more often, and generally more successfully, than when one goes in search of it, or attempts to impose creativity onto an artistic ‘problem’).

There have been some comments (Cullen 2007) in Listening Forum feedback about the obscurity of the lyrics, “the wordplay is intriguing and the setting sinuous. A mood piece, the point of which is not immediately clear (and which causes the brain to wonder and wander)”, but once one knows what the subject matter is, the lyrics lose their obscurity.

For this recording, virtuosic guitarist Steve Reinthal, took this track away and returned it some weeks later with a beautifully melodic, mournfully evocative electric guitar ‘voice’ (one-take only)
which is, in my view, both unpredictable and brilliant. The use of a wah-pedal is entirely unexpected but (surprisingly) entirely appropriate in this context – giving the guitar an almost ‘wailing vocal’ quality - described by bassist Mark Hilton (2007) as, “inspired, sweetly majestic and lush”. This song holds a very significant place on the album.

But, quite apart from the purely instrumental manifestations of Serendipity on the album overall, its role could not be more clearly, convincingly, or more personally illustrated than with this track, ‘Siam’.

Clearly, musically, Reinthal’s guitar weaving exquisitely through it is an appropriate addition to the song, but the extent of its serendipitous role was not made clear until Saturday 3 March 2007 when, having invited my 85 year-old mother to lunch, I mentioned to her that I had re-recorded the song. I hesitantly put the track on the CD player – almost apologising for the contemporary treatment, updating the previous recording of the song which featured a violin solo instead of the ‘wah-pedal’ electric guitar. I had assumed my mother would dislike it intensely for generational as well as simply musical reasons, and I was genuinely surprised – perhaps flabbergasted would be more accurate - when she responded, that, no, she “liked it a lot”.

It was the ensuing conversation which reminded me that the reason she had always liked what she describes as ‘Hawaiian Guitar’ (a guitar style which I personally detest) was that as a POW under the Japanese in Batavia for some four years, when the allied forces finally arrived to liberate the British, Dutch and other POW’s, they brought with them a Navy band. My mother has a very clear recollection of this band playing songs which featured Hawaiian Guitar – the very particular sound of which induced uncontrollable floods of tears of relief and release in POW’s who had not allowed themselves to cry in four years of living in unspeakably cruel and harsh conditions with their lives constantly under threat.

Steve Reinthal had no idea about this connection (indeed I had completely forgotten it myself). Whilst he had quite correctly assumed that the lyrics, referred in part to the infamous Burma Railway (on which my father worked as a POW), he did not realise that the song was written specifically about my own parents’ journey when he chose to play the kind of guitar he played. Whilst I was certainly aware that my mother had always liked Hawaiian Guitar, the significance of the connection to the POW liberation had long been parked in the deepest recesses of my own memory so it never occurred to me - hence I was certainly in no position to ‘brief’ Steve Reinthal as to the background, in order to influence his choices.

Indeed, as demanded by my own self-imposed ‘rules’, like the other musicians, Steve independently chose the song; chose the instrument; chose his melodic journey; and chose what effects to apply to his guitar. It has to be said that in no way would I ever describe what he plays as anything like ‘Hawaiian Guitar’ – but the sound is obviously reminiscent enough of that sound to evoke instant, deep and profound recognition (and a significantly positive response) – from an 85 year-old woman - to what can only be described as a very contemporary guitar treatment.

Another 85 year-old Dutch woman who likes the song ‘Siam’ is a woman by the name of Jan Ruff-O’Herne.

Literally the same week the album was being pressed in Melbourne, I happened to be watching ‘Australian Story’ on ABC Television. This particular episode – coincidentally - featured Jan Ruff-O’Herne, who is internationally recognised, and indeed awarded, for her tireless quest to extract an apology from the Japanese government for the ‘comfort women’ atrocity of WWII. As her story unfolded it was clear that there were many parallels between her family’s story and mine, so I had
decided, even before the end of the program, to send her a copy of the album, containing the song ‘SIAM’ – which I did via the ABC.

I heard nothing for a couple of weeks and then in the post arrived a beautifully hand-written note, on a postcard featuring the photograph of the cover of Jan’s book: ‘50 years of Silence’. The note read, amongst other things, “…I love the song Siam – and ode to your parents’ love and wartime survival”. The other things she wrote made it clear that there were even more parallels between our respective families journeys than I had imagined.

More coincidences, more serendipity.

By way of post-script, just recently, I mentioned the song to the Netherlands Consul in Brisbane. Coincidentally, this conversation occurred just prior to the Liberation of Indonesia Memorial Day on 15 August 2008. I was therefore deeply honoured when he invited me to play the song and share some words about its making - in the presence of the Dutch Ambassador to Australia - on the very special occasion of the dedication of a new plaque on that day in Brisbane.

So, although ‘SIAM’, was originally written as an expression of my own very personal thoughts and reflections, inspired by my own parents’ journey, it has, through various serendipitous coincidences, become clear that this song carries a much broader relevance for those many Dutch, as well as other people, who lived through similar experiences.

As an artist one can hope for nothing more, or better, than that one’s art touches many more people than for who it was originally intended. Serendipity has been the mechanism through which this art has grown, beyond its creator; beyond its music; and beyond its intended audience.

Conclusion:

The most fundamental question thrown up by the creation, development, implementation, achievement and evaluation of this Blind Collaboration process is:

Does Blind Collaboration work?

A more sharply focussed question might be: Has the Blind Collaboration process informed or deformed the artistic process? Or indeed vice versa – has the artistic process informed or deformed the Blind Collaboration process? Through actually living the experience one would probably have to answer, ‘all of the above’. The evidence garnered from Listening Forum feedback suggests, overwhelmingly, that in this case. As one would have hoped, Blind Collaboration did work - in both principle and actuality.

This is not to suggest that the process was without its dilemmas and challenges. From a composer’s point of view there were certainly times of anxiety and uncertainty – artistic and other. The first thing the process requires is letting go of control of the art, and the creative process.

As opposed to the European movements that emphasized the composer’s control over almost every aspect of the composition, “Process Music” came from the belief that music can be a procedural and emergent art form and that there are many ways of handling form other than constructing structures... In such procedural process-based music, the composer sacrifices certain aspects of direct control in order to create an evolving context by allowing rules (in closed systems) and performers (in open ones) to determine and shape the nature of music. (emphasis added)

(Weinberg 2002)
Whilst I was responsible for both the nature of the process and the basic material that would be subjected to that process, the guest musicians certainly ‘determined the shape and nature of the music’ to a significant extent by virtue of their contributions - their work ultimately determined the style and direction of the songs. However successful these contributions proved to be in the final analysis, they were largely an unknown quantity at the start of the process and that required a significant leap of faith. Letting go of one’s art, of one’s creations, and handing them over to others to ‘do with what they will’ is not always easy, particularly when those others are not that well known to the artist - as suggested in a more personal way by Sting:

Songs are a little bit like children in a way, you give birth to them and you do the best you can for them, give them the best start in life, and then you watch them grow and carry on growing…other people adapt them, change them…and you can only feel pride that your song has gone into the world and now exists as an entity…they’re almost humans

(Sting 2003)

Song writing, like any other art, is indeed a very human and personal activity and whilst I had the artist’s own confidence in the songs themselves – a confidence ultimately justified by Listening Forum comments (2007) such as: “a strong album...songs that are well crafted and stories that are well expressed”; “a very self-assured set of songs”; “a very polished set of songs”; “a really well-balanced set of songs”; “range of song writing styles evident in this strong collection”; “skilfully crafted songs” - artistic self confidence is invariably tempered by the artist’s inherent insecurity, an insecurity which is often the actual driver or motivator of the art and which is equally a very human and personal thing.

Art, any art, by definition is fundamentally a very human process – it is full of human conflicts, human contradictions, human instincts, human achievements, human imagination, human skill, human insecurities, human fallibilities and human frustrations.

Whatever the particular nature of the artistic process, we can plan, prepare and organise within and around all the constraints of time, budget, logistics, resources, technical limitations etc. Whilst these factors are important in influencing the artistic process, they are ultimately peripheral considerations. Equally, we can tweak and fuss and polish the technical details to within an inch of their technically perfect lives. But, ultimately, what is it that reaches an audience? What is it in art to which people relate? In the final analysis, on a very personal and individual basis, human beings relate to the imperfections of other human beings – as expressed through their (imperfect) art. I concur with Phil Collins (1999), who poses the question, “…what is ‘good’? Does it reach you, does it touch you?...that’s the most important thing”.

What is important in art, the fundamental driving force behind the art, is not achieving technical perfection. Whilst I am professionally immensely proud of this album and indeed, “delighted with both the process and the product” (Willems 2007), I have not attempted to make an album which is ‘perfect’ - quite the contrary. I have in fact deliberately retained some of the minor imperfections inherent in the work - work whose focus was the exploration of a tantalising possibility, rather than the attainment of some impossible definition of perfection.

Imperfections in art are what make that art human and ‘relatable to’. I have not sought to process and process and refine the work into ‘white bread’ - grinding the humanness and nutritional value out of it completely. I want to celebrate the ‘perfection of imperfection’.
Blind Collaboration is a process which fits this notion beautifully and (im)perfectly.

There is an inherent individual and collective humanness to the guest musicians’ contributions - the fact that they could not see, hear, or record with each other in the same place or at any time, virtually guarantees that. And yet the artistic cohesion and quality embedded in the final product belies the logistical and musical context in which the artists worked and created. The mixing process could potentially have extended for months – continually revisiting the work and remixing, re-editing reworking, but, like Phil Collins, I prefer to acquiesce to the limitations, constraints and idiosyncrasies of a process and let that process find its own life, identity and rhythm – literally.

My attention span is kind of limited in terms of...‘let’s do this and let’s move on’...as opposed to ‘no, let’s do this until we’re really sick of it’...but it’ll be perfect...Nothing is laboured over, nothing is laboured over...on my records.

(Collins 1999)

Nothing has been laboured over on this record either. If any labouring was involved it has been a ‘labour of love’ by all involved - or perhaps more accurately, a ‘labour of trust’. As noted in my album notes,

Unlike my previous solo album which was titled ‘Trust No-One’, for this album I essentially had to ‘trust everyone’, however when you surround yourself with a bunch of world-class musicians, the risks are minimal - the rewards magnificent.

(Willems 2007)

Ultimately, you have to trust the art; you have to trust your artistic instincts; and you have to trust the artistic instincts of those artists that you trust. You also have to trust the, “process essentially of throwing my songs to the wind and seeing what came back to me” (Willems 2007). Trust to the fates, and see what the fates provide.

To (perhaps rather arrogantly) quote the lyrics of one of my own songs (‘Got No Clue’) from that previous album, rather paradoxically titled; ‘Trust No-One’, you have to,

trust your angel to provide guiding light...
till the Universe, for just once, gets it right.

(Willems 2005),

I have stated that with this album I was not looking for ‘perfection’. I wanted to ‘explore a tantalising possibility’. In exploring that tantalising possibility, many unexpected and truly wonderful things occurred and emerged. All of which confirmed that, as artists (and indeed researchers), we have an obligation to continue to: take risks; to explore the unexplored; but most of all, to relish the unanticipated – it can prove to be the best part of your art.

Because - once in a while - the universe really does get it right.

Christiaan Willems Grad.Dip.ArtsAdmin, MA
15 October 2008

If we hadn’t been given the chance to at least be working for this kind of ethereal project...we would have just gone into the studio with the demos and just recorded the way all our other albums were recorded, whereas this album is a real organic album.

(Daltrey 1999)
References:


‘What’s Mime Got To Do With It?’
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ABSTRACT

As a professional Mime artist on both stage and screen for more than 25 years, the author has been adapting and applying the techniques of Mime to the corporate communication context over a number of years, coaching corporate CEO’s, Executives and Managers, representing both public and private sector corporations and organisations. This unusual inter-contextual skill transfer is the subject of both a book and series of VODCasts by the author (currently in the final stages of completion), which form part of the author’s Doctoral Research and from which this paper is substantially drawn.

The author’s professional background is multi-disciplinary – encompassing theatre, television, media, music, tertiary education and corporate training contexts. It is also inter-disciplinary – concerned with the commonality of different artistic mediums and forms and how, where and why these professional disciplines: intersect; interact, and inform each other – and therefore how they support each other - rather than losing creative/professional opportunities because of areas where they might conflict.

This paper examines in particular the physicality of presentation and communication – beyond ‘generic’ body-language analysis. It involves the analysis, manipulation and stylisation of human physicality to support and enhance individual inter-professional communication, and how mime performance skills specifically, inform that process.

This paper discusses:-
• how mime skills clarify and enhance inter-professional communication.
• what adaptations need to be applied in that context
• getting a ‘performance’ from ‘non-performers’

Keywords: Body Language, Mime, Multi-disciplinarity, Inter-disciplinarity, Corporeal, Physicality, Stylisation, Corporate Communication, Leadership, Corporate Coaching, Professional Communication

Introduction:
In contextual terms, my professional background is multi-disciplinary – encompassing theatre, television, media, music, tertiary education and corporate training contexts. As such it has inevitably been extremely diverse - my professional focus has been and continues to be ‘specialised multi-skilling’, enabling me to sustain a viable professional arts career over some 30 years. It is also inter-disciplinary, and much of the evolution of my professional activity and career has been concerned with the commonality of, and across, different artistic mediums and forms. These inter-relationships manifest themselves, consciously and unconsciously, through a range of ongoing professional activities in which I continue to be involved, and which I inevitably bring to both the tertiary context, currently as a Lecturer in Performance and Design in a university, but also across various other tertiary/professional environments including actor training, television presenter coaching, corporate communication coaching etc.

Renowned Australian author Peter Carey (2006, p. 14) has suggested that, “you follow your life, you choose the thing that energises you at the time”. Consistent with that philosophy, that which currently energises me and has held my professional attention for some time, is how my
performance skills - particularly Mime performance skills - and experience, apply to Corporate, or inter-professional, communication, because, in professional terms, as both a mime artist and corporate coach, that is precisely what I do.

But, applying mime to the corporate sector, is not necessarily as straightforward, as one might imagine. Having worked across a diversity of professional/artistic contexts, there is, in my experience, some cynicism, perhaps some ‘fear of the unknown’, a jaundiced view of those ‘other’ professional fields. This manifests in the corporate view of those working in the arts and creative industries, being somewhat glibly described as, ‘Arty Wankers’. Conversely, the arts’ view of the corporate sector, can sometimes be summed up by an equally dismissive, ‘Commercial, Crap’. However, where there is almost unanimous agreement, is in the case of those of us who work in universities, who are universally regarded by both of the above professional sectors as, ‘Academic Wankers - with no professional credibility whatsoever’.

Whilst there may be an element of truth to ‘all of the above’, rather than getting bogged down in name-calling, I find it much more useful and productive to examine and exploit how and where, these disparate and diverse professional fields:

- intersect
- interact
- inform

each other, and therefore how they support each other, rather than where might conflict.

Definitions & Context:
Now the term ‘corporate’ can present some difficulties of connotation these days. What with the recent proliferation of high-profile corporate collapses - (in)famous Australian and international examples of corporate incompetence, dishonesty, and corruption – apparently (judging by media reports) underpinned by a complete lack of ethics, morals or integrity in senior management – with the result that the term ‘corporate’ has become tainted in the minds of many.

However, I use the term ‘corporate’ in a different sense.

The Macquarie Dictionary (1992, p. 99) lists the words Corpsoreal – defined as, of the nature of the physical body; Corporate – defined as, pertaining to a united body, as of persons – and Corporation – defined as, an association of individuals, adjacent to one another. One would like to think that this is more than mere alphabetical coincidence – that the words actually bear some significant connection to one another. Indeed they do, and it is in this sense – the association of individuals, together with the nature of the physical body – that my work, and research, resides.

Therefore, I am suggesting that the negative perceptual definition of the word ‘corporate’ – i.e. large, uncaring, corrupt multinational - can be jettisoned for the time being and the title applied in a broader, and indeed truer sense; in its ‘corporeal’ sense.

But firstly, let us briefly examine the notion of corporate ‘Leadership’.

Corporate Leadership:
There seems to be some divergence of views about what constitutes ‘leadership’.

Parry & Hansen (2007, p. 282) for instance, suggest that leadership is more about the ‘Corporate Story’, of the organisation, that the ‘Story becomes the Leader’ – because “people follow the story more so than they follow the person who composes or tells the story”. By contrast, Helen Besly (2004, p. 1), Managing Director of ‘Rowland’, a company specialising in high level corporate
communication, suggests that the very opposite of the Parry & Hansen view is the case, that, "despite the proliferation of communication channels, the individual’s voice is still the most credible and relied on...that makes corporate storytelling an essential part of the CEO's job" (emphasis added).

Whichever of these views is correct, and it may well be a bit of both, I suggest that the person telling the story needs to do so in a confident, credible and convincing manner, otherwise ‘the story’ itself, will have neither initial impact, nor ongoing life. Ultimately, the fundamental requirement, is clarity and quality of communication.

But, are corporate leaders always familiar, or indeed comfortable, with that notion?

I have observed, in my corporate work over a number of years, a certain insecurity in some of those, ‘getting to the top’. And, whilst unconfirmed by any quantitative research, the empirical evidence certainly suggests that this is not a function of gender, appearing to afflict both male and female executives equally - although some might be more reluctant to acknowledge it than others. What some new CEO’s do not immediately recognise, and can be unpleasantly surprised to learn when they finally reach their sought-after high-ranking position, is that being the leader of an organisation is a fundamentally different job to being the outstanding accountant, lawyer, engineer, or whatever they had been up to this point. Their ‘new job’ is not just a ‘new job’, but a different job – entirely. The new position is no longer about being technically proficient, it is suddenly much more about communication.

This view is supported by Mike Hanley writing in the (12 April 2006) Australian Financial Review’s Boss Magazine (e-version), who noted that there is increasingly, “an explicit recognition that leadership is a skill distinct from technical management ability”. Hanley further cites Chip Macfarlane - “director and master coach at the Institute of Executive Coaching” – who suggests that:

many lose their sense of self in the struggle to get to the top... (they) went through the workplace with a certain set of norms, and now they are being asked to do something different – not just from what they were doing before, but different from their predecessor (Macfarlane, cited by Hanley, 2006).

It is indeed no longer about being technically proficient, about doing what one did previously, it is now about: imparting information; it is about communication; and it is about shaping perceptions.

In this context, Helen Besly (2004, p. 1), suggests that, “every interaction...is an opportunity to influence perceptions, both of the CEO and the organisation...it’s the moment of influence and it’s precious...the moment when the CEO and the company are judged” (emphasis added). So it is about representing, not only oneself, but an entire organisation - and doing so comfortably, confidently and credibly. Whether they want to or not, the CEO has suddenly become the ‘personification’ of their organisation, and this demands an entirely new set of skills – communication skills. And it demands those skills at the very highest professional level, and it demands them immediately. Yet, these are the very skills, in which they may have had little experience or training. They are essentially ‘non-performers’, thrust onto the Stage to perform – some more willingly than others, but often inadequately equipped, or trained, to do so. And, whilst assumptions may be made about a CEO’s ‘natural ability’ or ‘charisma’ to get them through, as Hanley (2006) quite correctly observes, “the right traits don’t always appear automatically in those at the top”.

So, if these communication skills do indeed not always appear automatically, then Corporate Coaching comes into the equation.

Corporate Coaching:
In broad terms, corporate communication coaching is not particularly new. If one scans the available professional literature, it is clear that bookshop shelves are groaning with any number of books and publications (as well as consultancies) extensively covering the topic of Corporate Communication. Many of these are typically generalist in nature and deal with the broad scope of the field – written communication, presentation, inter-office communication, meeting procedures etc - yet reasonably detailed, in a general kind of way, within those respective areas of focus.

My own approach is somewhat different – it is certainly more specific. It brings the application of mime performance skills to inter-professional communication, with particular and detailed emphasis upon the ‘physicality’ of presentation and communication, beyond generic body-language analysis. And whilst Alan Pease (1981/94) has become justifiably famous for his excellent books on Body Language – writings which may indeed be useful “to obtain a better understanding of life’s most complex event – a face-to-face encounter with another person” (p.3), my approach, whilst informed by the broad principles proposed and generally accepted by Pease and others (including Desmond Morris in various highly credentialed publications over the decades such as ‘The Naked Ape’, ‘The Human Zoo’ and ‘Manwatching’ etc., about ‘species-specific’ physicality of interaction), is less general and more specifically tailored - ‘individualised’ - introducing and applying the notion of the ‘physicality of performance’.

What this refers to is that whilst we’ve all been living fairly comfortably in our bodies for the past 20, 30, 40 or 50 years - we very rarely think about what our bodies are expressing. We assume that by default, our body will reflect our words, emotions and attitudes - and generally it does. But there are times when we don’t want our body to reflect the fact that, whilst giving a presentation, we are crippled by fear and we just want to run away - we need to find a way of ‘physically lying’ in order to create a different yet, paradoxically, ‘truer’, perception of who we are, and the information we are trying to impart.

Given that as a performance artform, mime (well-executed) enables one to clearly create a character, impart a narrative, and engage the audience, my approach in the corporate context similarly involves using that same mime technique to achieve comparable communication outcomes – albeit in a ‘softer’ style. Having analysed and assessed the nature and manifestation of an individual’s particular physicality, we are then in a position to utilise that to advantage to enhance their inter-professional communication.

The word ‘individual’ is very much the operative word here. The reason I often find myself telling corporate clients that mine is not a ‘sausage factory’ approach, is because it is not. It is entirely tailored to each individual person. And, as Hanley (2006) points out, “the demand for coaching has been boosted by a corporate culture that increasingly embraces the twin concepts of leadership and the self…it’s you that will make people follow or not” (emphasis added).

So, in the new position in which executives find themselves, there is a danger of that executive not communicating sufficiently clearly and/or not communicating at all. In this context, Hanley cites Frank Francis (Chief Operating Officer at insurance company Vero), who refers to his own experience of having created a misperception about his professional self where:

the people who worked with me directly...understood me well, but I wasn’t always portraying that same image to others outside that circle...you might just have a 15-second window...in which to make an impression...(the coach) made me aware that people have different perceptions of me that differ from who I really am” (emphasis added) (Francis, cited by Hanley, 2006).

So it is indeed about shaping perceptions. Or, at the very least, not allowing erroneous misperceptions to be created and perpetuated. But what constitutes perception?
Probably the best definition of the nature of perception is by renowned polymath, Dr. Jonathan Miller, who, in addition to enjoying an outstanding reputation throughout the world in the performing arts and television, has also “held academic posts in neuro-psychology, on both sides of the Atlantic” (Bragg. 1995). Miller describes ‘perception’ in the following terms:

the whole point about perception is that it is not...the experience that is delivered by the structure of the work that is in front of the eye, that it’s a negotiation between the creative viewer and the object that is in front of the eye - and that hunches, guesses, prejudices, preoccupations, interests and so forth, alter the experience so that what you know, what you think, what you imagine, what you anticipate, have an irreversible effect on what you experience. And this isn’t a sign of the fickle instability of the character. It’s a sign of the structure of perception in general. That’s what perception is like, it’s a process of guessing as well as seeing what is out there (emphasis added) (Miller, 1995)

So, whoever our audience is, and whatever perceptual filter they bring to our presentation, if they are indeed guessing as well as seeing, then we need to be as clear, and unambiguous, as possible – in order to create the perception (not mis-perception), that we want to create in the audience - whether that audience is 500 people in an auditorium, or 5 people in meeting room. However, before we can shape, or ‘influence perceptions’ we need to know: what kind of perceptions we are creating; how we are creating them; and, if necessary, how to change them.

Corporate Coaching & Mime:

If we are to believe Albert Mehrabian’s (1981, p. 76) oft quoted figures, then in terms of creating perceptions, those ‘first impressions’ of people we meet, and they of us - whether a ‘15-second window’ or a 30 minute presentation – then these figures are very telling:

- 55% Visual/Body Language - how we look, how we carry ourselves
- 38% Vocal - how we sound, the tone of our voice
- 7% Words - the actual words we say

So, if the visual, the physicality, the body language impression is the most important, then we need to make certain that, whatever perceptions are formed, they are informed, by body-language, by physicality, by movement, which is both clear and concise. To achieve that, it needs to be choreographed. And, in terms of choreographing our physicality in order to clarify our communication, in whatever context, then it comes down to the techniques of Mime.

What’s Mime got to do with it? Just about everything.

Because, in terms of the essentials of Communication, there is nothing clearer; nothing more precise; nothing more concise, than Mime, and there is therefore, an inescapable logic in applying that to professional communication.

The parallels are these:

- **Mime** is about using clarity and definition of movement to create illusions, and shape perceptions
- **Professional Communication** is about, if not ‘creating illusions’, then certainly, it’s about shaping perceptions.

Many people associate Mime with, and indeed often define it as, ‘exaggerated gestures’ and ‘facial expressions’. Nothing could be further from the truth. Mime is in fact, entirely the opposite. It is about clarity of movement; it is about uncluttered movement, and it is about well-defined
movement. It is not about ‘exaggerated’ movement, it is all about selective movement. Leading British Mime exponent and teacher, Desmond Jones, refers to:

pure mime...that does not need to interpret words by exaggerated gesture and facial expression...an art that...reflects thoughts and states of being through controlled movement of the body (emphasis added) (Jones, 1980, p.1).

And through that controlled movement of the body, mime can take a moment, hold it, control it, define it and draw the audience into infinitesimally tiny detail within it. This is the great subtlety and infinite power of mime. Mime provides the capacity for “exquisite physicalisation (which) achieves as much...from absolute stillness as (it) does from frenzied movement” (Evans, 1986). This is a product of mime’s “compelling sensitivity” (Evans, 1986), a sensitivity which by utilising, manipulating and contrasting that ‘absolute stillness’ with selective movement, provides unparalleled performance clarity, precision and concise communication with the audience.

In mime you have to make sure you don’t present anything extraneous, that’s not precisely required to impart information (Willems - Sydney Morning Herald, 1986).

To restate the words of my original Mime teacher, Desmond Jones (1980), “If it moves, control it”. It is about control of what the body is doing, and therefore, saying; it is about control of that 55% of a first impression; it is about control of the audience’s focus and attention; and equally, it is about being in control of:

- our physical Presence
- the Props that we use
- the Space that we occupy

Just because someone walks onto a stage or podium, in front of an audience, it does not necessarily follow, that that audience is going to take any notice of them for more than about 5 or 10 seconds. As a presenter or performer, you have to make the audience look at you. Not only do you have to make the audience look at you, but you have to make them look at whatever part of your body, or the surrounding environment, you want them to look at, and/or engage with.

This is ‘performance’. This is managing audience perceptions. This is making the most of our ‘Physical Personality’.

‘Physical Personality’:

Just as each of us has a unique personality, we equally have a unique ‘Physical Personality. This is what we see, interpret and relate to, before any words are spoken. I am not referring here to ‘species-generic’ Body Language so often referred to and analysed. Whilst that of course contributes, what I refer to here is the utterly unique combination of factors – genetic, physical, historical and emotional - that manifest as our uniquely individual Physical Personality. Natural physical build, childhood injuries, cultural influences, ballet or sports training, illnesses, self-confidence, genetic inheritance – all these and more, contribute to our physical personality and make up the unique person that each of us is and that others recognise and relate to, even from a distance.

Given that, my coaching approach is similarly highly individualised, personalised and adapted for each person in particular – based on their existing, inherent, individual physicality - adapting the principles of mime performance, not to avoid or ignore, but on the contrary, to utilise, that set of utterly unique individual physical attributes, habits and idiosyncrasies. This unique physical personality is the base material with which I work, in order to develop a credible presentation
performance - *without changing the fundamental way the corporate presenter moves* - without losing the essential ‘them-ness’ of being physically who they individually are. As with the analysis, manipulation and stylisation of body-language in a mime stage performance, we are equally applying the detailed *analysis, manipulation and stylisation* of individual human physicality to support, clarify and enhance the non-verbal aspects of communication in the professional context.

Therefore, in answer to that most commonly asked question ‘*What do I do with my hands!?*’ – there are indeed as many answers to that, as there are people asking the question.

This diagnostic aspect, this analysis of how an individual uniquely moves and physically is, is the most crucial aspect of my individualised, tailored approach. And, if it is the most crucial, then it is equally the most gratifying aspect of my work – finding that unique answer, to a unique problem, of how that unique physical personality manifests itself in the presentation context – and how to maximise its benefits, rather than ‘pretend it’s not there’.

This leads us to the overarching concept of the ‘Stylised Version of You’.

**The Stylised Version of You**:  

One often hears in the theatre or television performance context, reference to ‘naturalistic performance’. I maintain the view however, based on more than 30 years of professional performance experience, that in any kind of public performance or presentation, there is no such thing as ‘naturalism’, only ‘degrees of stylisation’. Simply by virtue of the consciousness required to be applied to any performance – ‘*where is the spotlight?*’; ‘*which camera is on me?*’; ‘*hold that moment a bit longer for the audience response*’. There is, and certainly always should be, that element of consciousness, that element of ‘performance’.

However for many CEO’s and executives, the whole notion of ‘performance’ may be something quite foreign. Indeed some seem to regard the notion of ‘performance’ as ‘faking it’ and being insincere. However, as ‘non-performers thrust onto the stage to perform’, their situation demands that they acquire ‘performance experience’ – immediately. It is pointless to expect that this ‘performance experience’ will simply descend upon them or instantaneously emerge organically. So, in the immediate term, they need guidance, direction, performance confidence, and most of all, they need some degree of ‘choreography’. Because they are not actors, they are not trained to be actors and if they try to ‘act’, or be someone that they are not, they simply do not come across as genuine – because they are not genuine, they are not being ‘authentic’.

And therein lies the very essence of my approach. Ultimately, the corporate presenter has to remain *fundamentally themselves*. As a ‘corporate performer’ they have to perform yet still retain the essential ‘them-ness’ of who they are. However, what they need to develop is *performance awareness*. And making the corporate ‘performer’ aware, is about developing a consciousness, in and of performance.

The very basics of directed or choreographed performance teaches us how to walk across a stage; how to take command of the space; how to engage an audience; how to clearly tell a story - how to embody that internal ‘performance awareness’. One of the most effective ways of developing that ‘performance awareness’ is by applying the principles of mime - to stylise one’s own, unique, individual Physical Personality, to develop what I refer to as **‘The Stylised Version of You’** (this is both a trademarked professional training concept/principle, and also the title of my Doctoral Book).

Specifically in the corporate context, whilst we can remain our unique selves, there are degrees of stylisation we can apply to our unique selves, which enable us to:
• control our physicality
• clarify our body-language
• communicate accurately that 55% of a ‘first impression’, and...
• create the perceptions, that we want to create

But how do we determine what specific degree of stylisation is appropriate? The appropriate degree of stylisation is determined, essentially, by two things: Content and Context.

**Content & Context:**
If, as discussed above, there is indeed no such thing as naturalism, only ‘degrees of stylisation’, then I also maintain that the degree of stylisation appropriate for any given presenting situation, is determined by both the content of the material being presented, and the context in which that material is being presented – whether in a theatrical play, a film, television, or a corporate boardroom. Whatever kind of audience it is, they will have certain expectations of you and your presentation. As Collins (1998, p. 12) suggests,

the audience may come to the proceedings feeling either ambivalent or goodwilled towards the speaker. Most of them know why they are there and what they want to get out of the event: some clear insights and ideas on some points at issue delivered in a clear, interesting and enjoyable way (emphasis added).
(Collins, 1998)

A formal presentation to an audience of 1000 in an auditorium is different from a semi-formal presentation to an audience of 10 professional colleagues in a meeting room at lunchtime; is different from a presentation to the Board of an organisation in a Boardroom; is different from a performance in a music venue; is different from a hostile public meeting of local residents with issues, resentment and revenge in their hearts! Whilst all of these situations (and many others) call, in fundamental terms, for information to be imparted and the opportunity for questions to be asked and answered, each represents a very different presenting context. It is that context which will determine how one approaches the presenting situation – in both substance and style.

**The Performance of Presentation and the Presentation of Performance:**
By way of example, if we take the situation of the performing artist.

Whilst the artist is in the act of performing, they are, hopefully at least, communicating closely and effectively with their audience, “it’s your job, really, (to) take people on an emotional journey so you have to really throw yourself into that” (Blunt 2006), however in those non-performance moments, when the artist (performing or otherwise) has to communicate to other interested parties such as investors, interviewers, sponsors etc., they may become a mess of inarticulate babbling, simply because they are not in ‘performance’ mode and are thus ill-prepared, unprepared and unconvincing – potentially sending out an entirely inappropriate message.

Upon recently discussing this notion with a group of executive workshop participants, one observed that perhaps this was the reason ‘why so many award-acceptance speeches are so incredibly awful’, and the performing artist comes across so badly. This might, on observation, be difficult to refute, supporting the argument that - if we apply the notion of the individual artist as a ‘mini-corporation’ - then this is a perfect example of how in non-performance mode, that mini-corporate executive might have ‘blown it’ in that crucial moment of influence; when applying a modest amount of performance-awareness and effort might have dramatically improved the situation and created a very different ‘first impression’.

Given the above, it might at this juncture be opportune to revisit that possibility of a nexus between the aforementioned, ‘Arty Wankers’ and ‘Commercial Crap’ – because, it is important not to lose
sight of the fact that the application of performance principles to professional communication is not all ‘one-way traffic’.

One-Way Traffic?:
Contrary to popular belief, there is nothing inherently ennobling about living the cliché of the ‘starving artist’. This is a reality. Besides that ‘reality’, valid or not, earning money also creates the perception, that one is a ‘successful’ artist.

- money legitimises one as a professional artist.
- money liberates one as a professional artist.
- money actually defines one as a ‘professional’ artist.

It is a fairly safe assumption that most artists would not immediately associate themselves with the term ‘corporate’. However, as a business – SME or micro-business – the individual artist (or indeed collection of individual artists coming together for a project) has to deal with many of the same issues, such as:

- sourcing investment/funding
- project planning and monitoring
- creating their product/service (art)
- promotion and marketing
- attracting significant numbers of audience/consumers
- hiring staff/technical support
- costs of doing business
- managing sales
- dealing with suppliers and other business entities
- financial reporting
- dealing with media, etc, etc

This view is supported by Craig Mudge (2006, p. 16), Director of Macquarie University’s Institute for Innovation, who recently wrote with reference to executives ‘making meaning’ – that, “frequently artistic people do not have the skills to fully capitalise and exploit their talents”, also that, “Artists and other creative people can learn how to be enterprising without sacrificing their integrity. They can learn the skills that will empower them to make meaning”.

Not only can Artists learn about, and have much to learn from, Business, but it is absolutely crucial for their professional survival that they must, whether they want to or not, or whether they believe they can or not, because - leaving out those aforementioned ‘corrupt multinationals’ - no-one does ‘Business’, better than Business does Business.

As Mudge observes, “many creative people, especially when young, may believe enterprise and innovation are categories that more properly belong to the suits - the business types and their bean-counters”. No matter how philosophically unpalatable the notion of ‘business’ and entrepreneurship might appear - at the time when they just want to get on with the art - in the interests of simple survival as an artist, one reaches the point of literally being forced to become “the entrepreneur you are, when you’re not an entrepreneur” (Willems & Hughes-Lucas 2004) and to regard one’s work – or at least the promotion of that work - as a business. Artists may not regard themselves as ‘corporate’ but any differences are, in my view, essentially just a matter of scale, and possibly style of approach.

What, fundamentally, is the difference between a corporate ‘beancounter’ (as Mudge refers to them) seeking investment in a business project; and a professional artist seeking investment in their creative project? In terms of survival, business or artistic, it is about professional interaction. It is
about any kind of professional interaction, in any kind of professional context – the consistent underlying requirement being that of effective communication, of:

- an idea
- a concept
- a business plan
- a film script
- an artwork

So, there is a definite symbiosis between Art and Business. They can, and indeed, do: intersect; interact, and inform each other, and therefore they do support each other.

Whether we are referring to:

- Actors
- CEOs
- Executives
- Board members
- Politicians
- Sportspeople
- Television presenters
- Musicians
- Scientists
- Educators

There is much to be gained, across these disparate, diverse disciplines, dealings and contexts, from the notion of the ‘performance of presentation’ and the ‘presentation of performance’. There is the fundamental need to communicate.

**Conclusion:**

In conclusion then, it would appear that the ‘Arty Wankers’; and those purveyors of ‘Commercial Crap’; might actually have something to offer each other. And, one never knows, in the overall scheme of things, even we; ‘Academic Wankers with no professional credibility whatsoever’, might have a role to play, in the analysis and research, of this symbiotic process.

**So, what has Mime got to do with Corporate Communication?**

In answer to that question, I earlier defined Mime as the; Analysis, Manipulation, and Stylisation of body-language. In my experience, that applies equally to both the performance, and corporate communication contexts. The only difference, as outlined above, is simply a matter of the ‘degree of stylisation’:

And by utilising mime techniques to determine, control and apply that stylisation, one is able to achieve:

- Clear
- Concise
- Credible
- (Choreographed)
- Communication
So, next time we pack our Corporate Briefcase, we should not forget to also pack our ‘Manual of Mime & Movement’. Because the performance principles embedded therein, might just prove to be our best Corporate Coach and Colleague.

References:
Abstract
Designed for a panel discussion, this paper builds bridges between two streams in the exploration of engendering leadership – Developing Leaders and Leading in Creative Contexts. Viewpoints expressed draw on the author’s experience as a change management consultant, leadership coach, and author of Leading with Passion: Change Management in the 21st Century Museum. Based on an international doctoral research project (University of Western Sydney), Leading With Passion tracked directors managing change in creative contexts (museums). While museums are used as case study organisations, substitute the name of any other organisation and the insights are applicable. Leadership is defined through four roles: representing the organisation’s story, creating a context for others to give their best, acting as an ethical entrepreneur, and nurturing trust relationships with key stakeholders. Creativity is explored through the business case for emotional intelligence and psychological preferences. Gender differences are explored with reference to neuroscience. Cross-industry sabbaticals are explored through stories shared by leaders in creative contexts (museums).

Key Words:
Sabbaticals, leadership development, gender, neuroscience, emotional intelligence

Introduction
Designed for a panel discussion, this paper builds bridges between two streams in the exploration of engendering leadership – Developing Leaders and Leading in Creative Contexts. Questions raised in the conference précis for Developing Leaders included how to apply leadership research into development practice, defining leadership, the plethora of development options, and whether gender and culture influence the process. Issues raised in the précis for Leading in a Creative Context included an argument that ‘artists’ require a different type of leadership style and organisational environment than ‘ordinary people’ to foster peak performance, implications for leading so-called ‘creatives’, and whether gender makes a difference.

In response to the first set of issues, Yes—it is possible to transfer leadership theory into practical programs incorporating a number of development strategies, including the use of emotional intelligence competencies to harmonize gender differences. Leading With Passion described how this was achieved using the business case for emotional intelligence (emotional self awareness, intentionality, integrity, resilience, constructive discontent, intuition, trust, personal power, and creativity) to enact four roles of leadership:

- Representing the organisation’s story internally and externally.
- Creating an organisational context where others can give their best.
- Acting as an ethical entrepreneur to ensure the organisation’s financial future.
- Nurturing trust relationships with key stakeholders around the organisation.
In response to the second set of issues, Yes—leading in a creative context has a different set of challenges compared to banking or manufacturing. Directors of creative organisations, such as art museums, described ongoing tussles between the so-called ‘creatives’ and ‘others’ (administration) with constant threats of organisational fractures. As directors, they invested a great deal of energy into creating a context where all staff (artists, curators, educators, marketers, and administrators) could give their best—and be valued for it. This meant learning how to manage and corral creative passion toward collaborative outcomes that had economic and psychological benefit for the organisation as a whole.

This paper is designed to build bridges between different domains of expertise based on experience as a change management consultant, leadership coach, and independent scholar. Originally trained as a social worker with a major in psychology, my doctoral research at the University of Western Sydney tracked directors leading change in creative contexts (museums) across four countries. The project used an action research model for collaborative diagnosis that engaged leaders directly involved in what was described in the late ‘90s as a leadership succession planning crisis in the museum sector. The directors’ active research participation through the ‘first-person-method’ broke the taboo around and celebrated the value of subjectivity. Their lived leadership experience highlighted the importance of passion as an anchor and guide for the four-roles of leadership. Their stories highlighted the benefit of cross-industry sabbaticals. They described gender differences and the influence of psychological preferences on organisational culture.

**Defining Our Terms—Leadership and Creative Contexts**

In Leading With Passion, 315 different ways of defining leadership were acknowledged. After coaching hundreds of leaders for executive development, succession planning, and expatriate postings, I concluded that the essence of leadership is developing positive ways of energizing and influencing others toward a shared vision. The co-founder of Cambridge Leadership Associates in the United States said his favourite definition of leadership is disappointing your own people at a rate that they can absorb. However we define leadership, it takes about ten years to develop the skills to competently inspire and disappoint.

The ten-year period needs to include creative cross-industry sabbaticals as one of many tools for leadership development. A quote from a previous art museum director in Melbourne builds the bridge between leadership, creative contexts, and the case for cross-disciplinary sabbaticals: “We are in the business of creativity and business is creative.” That particular director’s career path started in the visual arts. A segue into commercial banking in London helped leverage a position as an assistant museum director based on a keen understanding of investment management. This led to a museum director’s role in Melbourne, which was a stepping-stone to the directorship of one of America’s largest art museums in Texas. The director described cross-industry sabbaticals (arts into business into arts) as the most critical factor in his leadership trajectory.

In a recent review of a publication on museum marketing, it was refreshing to see once-held perceptions that arts and business cannot work together have all but disappeared—bringing together a business mindset in creative contexts is standard practice. Although this may require coaching, according to a psychotherapist in San Francisco who specializes in helping ‘creatives’ develop personal strategies to succeed in business, Maisel was a contributor to my PhD research, busting the myth that ‘creatives’ need a different context and leadership style to perform well. His strategy with ‘creatives’ focuses on the mechanics and metaphysics of art as a business: designing a business plan, having a marketable product, dis-identifying from the product, demystifying the business
process, acquiring advocates, preparing for business events, conducting ongoing audience analysis, and ongoing financial support analysis. His strategies are sensitively similar to any business development process in any industry sector. Maisel acknowledges love (passion) is the spirit that motivates those who work in creative contexts. To succeed, love must be followed by knowing what you do well and doing it.

A member of DEMOS, a U.K. based think tank characterized creative contexts as the arts, museums, libraries, and heritage institutions that receive public funding as well as commercial arts and activities that are partly publicly funded. The International Council of Museums (ICOM) has enshrined creativity in their 2008-10 Strategic Plan. The first of five values, human creativity contributes to our way of understanding the past, shaping the present, and planning the future. The need to build bridges between leadership and ‘creative contexts’ was emphasized in a recent study of innovation in the Australian Capital Territory:

While innovation is the successful exploitation of new ideas, creativity involves the development of original and novel ideas that have commercial application. Leadership is the capability that ensures the translation of ideas into practical application through management and organisational frameworks. Businesses build innovation capability through interactions and relationships with other businesses along the value change, with research and teaching organisations, and in the context of the ‘creative’ economy, with arts and cultural institutions. Creativity is linked to innovation through design as well as research, teaching and experimentation in art and creative practices. Cultural institutions, such as libraries, galleries, and museums, also have a role in the ‘arts and creative practices system’. Science, art, and information technologies come together in what are referred to as the ‘creative industries’ – a sector that includes advertising, marketing, architecture, design, visual arts, film, television, radio, music, performing arts, software development, writing, publishing and print media.

Creativity is one of six leadership attributes described by researchers advocating the business case for emotional intelligence. It is defined as an ability to tap multiple non-cognitive resources to envision powerful new ideas, frame alternative solutions, and find effective new ways of doing things. Einstein experienced his creativity as visual images, feelings, and something he called combinatory play—combining discordant or contradictory ideas. Cross-industry sabbaticals for leadership development are most effective when the experience includes opportunities to create and manage discordant and contradictory ideas.

Psychological Preferences and Creative Contexts
In Leading With Passion, research on psychological preferences described by the Myers Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) was used to highlight leadership challenges in creative contexts. The Myers Briggs Type Indicator is based on Carl Jung’s research on sixteen different ways people view the world, take in information, and make decisions through what is now called psychological preferences or type. The MBTI has been used internationally to help organisations appreciate the influence of psychological preferences on individual performance, teamwork, and organisational culture.

Leading With Passion described museums with an organisational culture that may attract staff with strong preferences for what the MBTI describes as intuition (N) and feeling (F). Individuals with an NF preference in their overall personality type profile work by describing what could be, future possibilities, ideals worth striving form, empowerment, growth for self and others, employ a facilitative leadership style, and have a strong desire for their teams to give encouragement to others. There is a high correlation between intuition (N) and pure creativity. Individuals with an intuition (N) preference in the general population are not common. Estimated frequencies in North
America describe 65-80 percent of the population with a sensing (S) preference and only 30-35 percent with a preference for intuition (N). Research suggests that leaders with an intuition (N) preference have a strategic advantage but organisations face two challenges in successfully attracting and engaging staff with an intuition (N) preference. First, there is a workplace bias toward staff with a sensing (S) preference: taking in information through the five senses, noticing what is actual and practical in a step-by-step way. Secondly, three-quarters of any given population have a sensing approach, which puts intuitive (N) types in the minority. Most people spend a lifetime learning logical approaches through education processes that are reinforced in business cultures. Leaders who recognise that staff with intuitive abilities communicate and contribute in unique ways will be better prepared to manage the impact of psychological diversity on leadership development and design cross-industry sabbaticals accordingly.

**Creative Cross-Industry Sabbaticals**

While there are many ways to develop a pool of potential leadership talent, a cost effective option is a cross-industry sabbatical. A director in Leading With Passion reflecting on his own career path said cross-disciplinary sabbaticals (arts>business>arts) provided unique opportunities to learn skills that may feel unnatural at first but they paved the way for successful enterprise development. Cross-industry sabbaticals are a less expensive, more intensive hands-on development option if an organisation can afford the time to release or exchange emerging talent. It is essential to offer leadership development opportunities before the predictable fork in the career path—the choice between functional or general management. Professional development prior to leadership appointments helps prepare people for leadership roles so we avoid the old trial and error approach. People in leadership roles with out the benefit of prior professional development often inadvertently end up damaging themselves and the organisation. Sabbaticals are one way of ‘testing the water’ without significant economic and psychological costs.

Sabbatical technically means a period of rest. In my experience, sabbaticals are anything but restful! Traditionally, a sabbatical is associated with university academics or theologians who take a year off to do research. It offers a period of freedom for study or travel. In the cultural industry context, directors suggested short break sabbaticals were essential for mixing with and learning about business functions through business relationships. Short-term sabbaticals (3-6 months) used to be organized by the Australian Commonwealth Public Service for leadership development. They became less frequent from 1986 onward due to a shift in focus from national coordination (shared resources) to agency responsibility.

The Australian based museum director whose quote opened this paper said he sensed in the early 90’s that business and lateral thinking skills were going to be essential to survive government cuts to cultural institutions. He made a deliberate move into investment banking as the director of media and telecommunications with a firm in England. The commercial world gave him insights into sponsors, financial stewardship, and investment. Another museum director in Chicago described similarities between banking and running a cultural institution—both require an analytical process to set goals and achieve objectives. He learned this by creating a 12-month sabbatical to complete an Executive MBA, where he mixed and learned with leaders from other domains of expertise (finance, hospitality, and health care).

A director for a regional museum in the Washington State said, marketing, accounting, and legal experience was essential for any leadership role. Marketing deals with demographic data and audience analysis. Accounting requires statistical skills. Legal work relies on disciplined thought, tight deadlines, and being able to write a contract. Each one of the skills had been developed during what
she called ‘sabbaticals’ while raising her children. She also said that having children was her most profound sabbatical. It prepared her for the stresses and strains of juggling a number of competing priorities—multi-tasking as a parent presented the same demands as leading a multi-faceted cultural organisation. She attributed the rest of her success to mentors (men and women) who acted as sounding boards along the way.

Mentoring is a relationship that gives people the opportunity to share professional and personal skills and experience, and to grow in the process. It is usually a one-to-one relationship between a more experienced and less experienced staff. It is based on encouragement, constructive comments, openness, mutual trust, respect, and a willingness to share and learn. An art museum director in Boston described how useful it had been, prior to coming into the arts sector, to work with a State governor who pushed her to think in policy ways. She also described how much she treasured a mentoring relationship with the director of a science museum in Chicago. The cross-disciplinary (science>art) mentoring relationship was unique. According to a past president for the Council of Museum Directors in Australia, the split between art and science tends to be an issue despite the fact both are collection-based institutions.

Mentors may encourage prospective leaders to take a flying leap into very unusual cross-industry sabbaticals! For example, a museum director in Los Angeles described how a mentor’s suggestion led to his decision to join the Forty Niner’s grid-iron football team in San Francisco for a season to explore game theory. In the process, he also learned about succession planning. Professional football teams talent scout young players ten years before they’re ready to move into the major league. Ten years is the same length of time advocated by human resource managers for effective succession planning.

**Gender, Neuroscience, and Emotional Intelligence**

My background in human resource development and organisational change spans nearly 30 years of practice across many different industry sectors: culture, health, architecture, banking, insurance, public utilities (telecommunications and electricity). It is ironic that an opportunity to share ideas at the 2008 conference on engendering leadership hosted by the University of Western Australia came exactly twenty years after facilitating workshops in Sydney on the benefits of androgenous leadership skills for the Electricity Commission of New South Wales (ELCOM).

In 1988, as the 12th most senior woman in an organisation of 11,000 employees, ELCOM’s EEO manager asked me to design and present a program for supervisors about the value of diversity in management. The program aimed to change attitudes about recruitment and promotion based on demonstrated capability regardless of gender, cultural background, or disability. Raising consciousness and shifting mindsets was hard work in a predominately male engineering sector. Sargent’s 1981 book, The Androgenous Manager, was used as benchmark in the workshops to describe how competent leaders for the 21st century needed a new set of skills to navigate shifts from hierarchical to participative structures, short-range goals to long-range management, economic coercion to consent with the managed, and management by other to self-management. Self-management required what was then called ‘emotional maturity competencies’. By 1994, emotional maturity was called EQ or emotional intelligence and acknowledged as an essential leadership skill through writers such as Goleman, Cooper and Sawaf. EQ became a very useful tool for recognizing the importance of empathy, intuition, creativity, constructive discontent in leadership effectiveness, regardless of gender.

An emotional intelligence map was integrated into the leadership development program piloted and described in Leading With Passion. In 1999, a potential client in the banking sector wanted to
know what passion (which they defined as ‘sex’) and emotions (which they thought was ‘touchy-feely women’s business’) had to do with leadership in business? In 2008, a content analysis of leadership development programs available in Canberra alone revealed the consistent inclusion of emotional intelligence skills in all program designs.\textsuperscript{xxiv} It has taken twenty years for emotional intelligence to become an essential tool for engendered leadership. What was initially regarded as “women’s business” has evolved into a business case for leaders with high EQ.

While the business case for EQ has helped harmonise gender differences, engendered leadership is also served with a nature-based philosophy grounded in biological research. Primary research in neuroscience changed the way I think about gender and leadership development. Whether talking, thinking, remembering, or relating, the female and male brain differ, according to pioneering research confirmed by scientists internationally.\textsuperscript{xxv} Gender refers to the way a person expresses their sexual identity in a cultural context: how we reach out and how social norms shape and impose expectations on our behaviour. Masculine and feminine refers to dominant distinguishing traits expressed by most females and males.

Brain-sex-hormone differences influence those traits and are played out in a range of behavioural differences along a continuum similar to Sargent’s work on androgenous management in the ‘80s. The bell-curve has extreme feminine and masculine behaviour at each end and a statistical ‘average’ in the middle. Brain sex and hormones determine distribution. Brain sex organisation is set in the womb by sex determining hormones. For example, I now accept that girls exposed to male-typical hormones in vitro have better spatial skills than the ‘average’ girl, are better at higher maths, more career-oriented, competitive, and self-assured. To counter balance this biology based behaviour, ‘average girls’ who become women fund managers outperform male colleagues because they are six times more likely than men to be risk averse. To counter balance this, men can and do co-operate but they work best when competing with another team. In a leadership context, biology appears to prepare men and women for competition in different ways—men (winning or losing) and women (performing well).

In Leading With Passion, an ex-museum director in Washington D.C. described the difficulties men have trying to nurture trust relationships with key stakeholders. He described his organisation through the theory of family dynamics with male leaders susceptible to the temptation of trying to please or compete with the president of the board of trustees based on the ‘father image’. He said women have less antagonistic relationships with their board of trustees because they invest more energy in relationship management using EQ skills. A seasoned director in Ottawa described how she overcame challenges representing her leadership story to staff and trustees (mostly men) when she was old enough to be their mother—they finally listened! Several male directors described listening to their ‘feminine side’ or intuition (an EQ skill) when making complex decisions impacting the organisation’s far-distant future. Acting as ethical entrepreneurs meant learning how to balance male risk taking with female risk management and using intuition to sense investment decisions (economic, social, or environmental) with five to ten year time horizons.\textsuperscript{xxvii} Recognise and value ‘feminine skills’ such as intuition and compassion by using the business case for EQ.

It is interesting to see how gender and EQ are being played out in the 2008 presidential candidate race in the United States. Hilary Clinton has been described as a tough justice leader who learned to play the man’s game of politics and now can’t afford to own feminine leadership traits without being diminished in the public eye.\textsuperscript{xxviii} Pundits have said that her best chance of catching the front-runners position would be to start acting like a potential president, not a good old boy.\textsuperscript{xxix} Barak Obama has been ascribed qualities and values women traditionally bring to organisational life: a commitment to inclusiveness in problem solving, deep optimism, modesty about knowing all the answers, the
courage to deliver uncomfortable news, not taking on all the work alone, and a willingness to air dirty linen." One observer reflected on the ‘gender-bending styles’ displayed by Obama and Clinton with complimentary reference to McCain’s manner of exercising leadership -- “an androgynous and rare activity.”

On the Australian front, an article in the Canberra Times described ‘smart companies’ finally realizing that an environment friendly to women makes good commercial sense." Attracting women to senior leadership positions and executive directorships relies on women being allowed to be their gender rather than feeling like they have to behave like an ‘alpha male’ to succeed like men. Although there have been many encouraging changes over the last two decades, we have to stay vigilant about backsliding. For example, during a recent coaching contract, a client (female) working on a corporate culture project with a public service organization shared the following story. The team she was working with was headed by a 29-year old director (male) who continually referred to my client as an “alpha-male with a strong personality” because she refused to play the pecking order game initiated by another male manager in the team. The ‘pecking order male’ came to my client on the side to explain that since he and his wife could not have children, his work projects were his children and she was threatening ‘his children’ with her wide-ranging creativity. She resigned from the project because she was not prepared to waste energy on what the director described as his ‘dysfunctional family-team’.

Conclusion
The benefit of cross-industry sabbaticals for leadership development was reinforced in a recent conversation with the state manager of the Australian Business Arts Foundation in Perth. He described a number of private sector companies (law firms, accounting, and prestige car firms such as BMW) who have sent staff to work with orchestras to learn about playing as a team. He also described how essential it is for the board of trustees to understand that creativity is core to any business—in any industry sector. It is the only way a company can answer the question: How do we move our organisation forward? It takes creativity. And, it also takes astute business acumen.

Creative cross-industry sabbaticals work in stages. Successful small businesses usually look for a way to earn a living by finding a niche in the market where they can use their creativity to provide a service or product for an audience. Creative types with a passion for creating (dance, visual arts, music, fashion) usually find themselves forced to look for ways to make money from their passion. This process can be a very challenging. Leading the shift from kitchen bench to studio to retailing requires a passion for creativity and business. Each stage would benefit from a tailor-made leadership sabbatical. For example, Peter Thompson, the ABC-TV host of Talking Heads, recently engaged Australian fashion designer Collette Dinnigan in a discussion about passion, obsession, and being “driven” to create in the fashion industry. Dinnigan attributed her international success to a cross-industry sabbatical at a time when she had to learn about the “art of business”. With an Australian based head office, Dinnigan’s business now includes international outlets in New York, Hong Kong, and London. A leader in the fashion industry sector, Dinnigan said she finds it difficult to take holidays due to an obsession with creating brand value in a competitive industry.

Audience development and brand value are hot leadership topics, according to a cultural industry sector client in the ACT. Finding cost effective ways to develop leadership skills in branding in the shortest possible time is one of the sector’s current challenges. For example, Museums and Galleries New South Wales recently launched a Mentorship and Fellowship Program aimed at providing opportunities for staff working in regional and remote areas to access expertise on branding and marketing through larger state/national cultural institutions. The initiative focuses on funding two-week mentoring placements.
From my perspective, a two-week placement is not mentoring or a sabbatical but a fieldwork visit. Mentoring is the development of a relationship over an extended period of time through a program that matches mentor and learner around an agreed leadership development need. The most enriching sabbaticals are cross-industry, not intra-industry, for a minimum of three months, not two weeks. It takes at least three months to sense, shape, and shift behavioural change. In the case of museums and branding, I wonder if we could ask: “What could leaders learn through cross-industry sabbaticals with branding experts such as the Fred Hollows Foundation, Virgin Airlines, Red Cross, the Body Shop, Harley Davidson Motorbikes, and the International Olympics Committee?” Let’s open the discussion!

ENDNOTES


iii Suchy 2004.


x Suchy 2004. 188-201.


xiii Culhan, T. 2007. ‘The leaders role in cultivating intuition in the workplace’. Leadership:

Boston, H. 2008. Phone conversation with Henry Boston, state manager for the Australian Arts Business Foundation office in Perth on February 27.


Hodge, S. 2008. Interview with Su Hodge, director of Canberra Arts Marketing on May 15.
