CULTURAL PERSPECTIVES ON LEADING

STREAM LEADERS: PAT DUDGEON & DARLENE OXENHAM

WEDNESDAY 23 JULY
2.00pm – 3.30pm
1. Growing Indigenous Arts Leadership
   Michelle Evans

2. The Creators of the Future: Indigenous women, law and responsibility in country
   Ambelin Kwaymullina

3. Developing Indigenous Women as Leaders
   Kerrie Tim

WEDNESDAY 23 JULY
4.00pm – 5.00pm
1. Indigenous Leadership Over the Decades
   Joan Winch

2. The Indigenous Women’s Congress (WA) and Community Leadership (Speaker TBC)

THURSDAY 24 JULY
10am – 11am
   Zanele Ndaba

2. Leadership as “Doing hope”: Transcending Category Politics
   Joan Eveline & Carole Bacchi
WEDNESDAY 23 JULY
2.00pm – 3.30pm

Growing Indigenous Arts leadership
Michelle Evans, The University of Melbourne, mev@unimelb.edu.au

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 – they embrace the paradox of object as economic commodity as well as object as family member. 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, in an attempt to discover key themes and concepts for the development of Indigenous leaders. I will attempt to place this body of knowledge into an arts and cultural context through the 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.

The paper will detail an international arts partnership project that aimed to explore the cultural territory and historical tensions of the site of landing by the first Europeans – Cape York, and how this project was brokered. The cultural broker worked across Indigenous artists, Indigenous councils, Rangers, non-Indigenous councils, a mining company, and a Dutch arts training institution.

Keywords: Indigenous Leadership, Leadership development, Arts and Cultural Development, Indigenous Arts Leadership
WEDNESDAY 23 JULY
2.00pm – 3.30pm

The Creators of the Future: Indigenous women, law and responsibility in country
Ambelin Kwaymullina University of Western Australia;

We are Women. We are not victims. Nor are we merely survivors. We are Women. We have creation powers. We are the Creators of the Future. - Judy Atkinson of the Jiman and Bundjalung peoples

Debates surrounding issues involving women and leadership have historically excluded Indigenous women, themselves victims of oppression by non-Indigenous women within the colonial state. The brutal history of colonialism had, and has, a devastating effect on the lives of Indigenous women, forcing them into servitude and slavery, stealing their children, and damaging the structures within Aboriginal society that gave women authority and power. Today, we as Indigenous women must deal with the legacy of two centuries of oppression. We must also negotiate our way through Western legal and social structures that, by and large, do not reflect Indigenous ways of knowing or being in the world, while at the same time fulfilling responsibilities to family and country. This paper will explore issues of, what does 'leadership' mean within an Indigenous context? What are some of the ways in which Aboriginal peoples define what it is to take responsibility in country, and how can Indigenous women do this within the complexities of a post-colonial state? How does the broader context of country and the terrible legacy of colonialism affect what it is for all women, Indigenous and non-Indigenous, to be leaders today – and how can we all be the creators of a future where women come together to heal and nourish the self in country?


**WEDNESDAY 23 JULY**

2.00pm – 3.30pm

**Developing Indigenous women as leaders**

*Kerrie Tim, Department of Families, Housing, Community Services & Indigenous Affairs; Kerrie.tim@facsia.gov.au*

Individual development underpins community development for Australian Indigenous people because a sustainable community needs sustainable leadership. A community’s informal leaders are the foundation for supporting formal leadership roles and encouraging future leaders. Although relatively few Indigenous women occupy formal leadership positions, many take on informal responsibilities, working for change—unsung, low profile, without support, yet powerful in their actions at the family and local level.

Indigenous Australians often face difficult personal, family and community circumstances, including the consequences of racism. For Indigenous women, add sexism.

Our women’s leadership development program targets emerging women leaders already making a difference in their communities. As a non-accredited program, it has the flexibility to work for women without previous training or formal experience—a need not met adequately by other leadership training. The program combines personal and leadership development with improving practical skills and knowledge. The comprehensive approach to individual development recognises that Indigenous women leaders must bring together cultural, community, family and kinship relations and affinity to country; they must be resilient, self-aware, courageous, committed and capable.

As we develop emerging women leaders, they are empowered to make personal, positive life changes, and motivated to take on greater leadership roles. They will apply and share learnings and continue to develop themselves. Longer-term, they will actively contribute to effective community leadership that fosters community development, represents the community in engaging with mainstream, and catalyses further development of Indigenous leadership capacity within and beyond the community.

Our experience of four years shows early confirmation that we are on track.

**Keywords:** Indigenous women; informal leadership; racism; sexism; development of individual

**References:**


International Re-evaluation Counseling Communities. Re-evaluation Counseling Support Groups. www.rc.org


Kretzmann, J.P & McKnight, J.L., 1993, *Building communities from the inside out: a path toward finding and mobilizing a community’s assets*, Institute for Policy Research, Evanston IL.


THURSDAY 24 JULY
10am – 11am

How Do Maori Women Experience Moving Into Senior Management? A New Zealand Perspective.
Zanele Ndaba, Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand; Zanele.ndaba@vuw.ac.nz

Indigenous women’s voices are silent in the literature about women in leadership and management. Research investigating women in leadership and management chiefly focuses on the experiences of white women (Hite, 1996), and most studies obtain their research samples primarily from white women (Bell, 1990) in western societies. The research on women in leadership and management that focuses on minority groups tends to be located within the USA and embedded in an historical context of slavery. By contrast, this study contributes to the literature about minority and indigenous women in leadership and management, outside the USA, particularly in countries where there are commitments to change. As an African woman from South Africa, I am attempting to understand whether there are similar or different experiences among different indigenous women globally and whether it is possible to share learnings.

The purpose of the research was to explore the experiences of Māori women advancing into senior leadership positions in New Zealand in both public and private sectors. The research focused on aspects of the “glass-ceiling”, and identified factors that contribute to career success, as well as carrier barriers entering senior management. A qualitative research methodology using a snowball sampling strategy was used for the scoping project. Maori women from both public and private sectors were interviewed individually to collect data using semi-structured and open ended questions. The data was analyzed using thematic analysis. Contrary to expectations, the participants did not strongly emphasise career barriers, but rather factors which have contributed to success in their careers. The role of mentors and hard-work were identified as career enablers. Other career enablers that were identified were people skills, willingness to take risks, determination, establishing positive relationships and taking up opportunities. Of note, Maori women at senior leadership level tended to be “headhunted” into their positions. Interestingly, some of the participants did not have a tertiary qualification. However, this did not seem to affect their movement into senior management as their respective organizations recognized their knowledge and experience without formal qualifications.

In addition to prominent career enablers there were some issues which Maori women identified as needing careful management and negotiation. Some participants encountered negative experiences from business associates who made wrong assumptions about their status and positions within the organization. For example, when meeting someone for the first time, people sometimes assumed that they were not the decision makers and disregarded them. Other participants stated that they have encountered stereotypes and that family care is one of the issues they have to manage.

The value of this research to the conference is the application of the “glass-ceiling” concept in a different context (i.e. Māori women) and bringing awareness of the experiences of other female groups who are often ignored in literature that focuses on women in leadership.

Keywords: Glass ceiling, Maori, Indigenous women, Career barrier, leadership

References:

1 The term “Māori” defines the indigenous people of New Zealand, descendants of the indigenous nations or tribes, and includes all those who identify themselves to be Maori.
Leadership as “Doing hope”: Transcending Category Politics  
Joan Eveline & Carole Bacchi, University of WA & University of Adelaide, joan.eveline@uwa.edu.au

This paper highlights a question of leadership that we rarely examine as a leadership question – can government policy successfully validate and endorse how marginalized women, in this case Indigenous women, solve a policy problem? Rather than situating gender as the primary category of identity, we interweave data with intersectionality theory (Crenshaw, 1991) to show how the marginalizing effects of the gender category can be transcended when women whose culture is socially marginalized take policy in a direction appropriate for them.

With intersectionality as our theoretical starting point we need to clarify the ethics of our speaking position as non-Indigenous women. Can we, as authors of this paper, converse in culturally appropriate ways about our methodology of examining the policy interventions made by Aboriginal women into a gender mainstreaming project? In response, we do not claim that our attempt to respect and validate a culture of which we have had little or no experience is more than partially achieved. Nonetheless, we shape the paper’s direction and content so that we do not claim to speak for Indigenous women. Rather, we use an appropriate cultural lens to share and analyse some solutions they injected into our research project. Our second strategy is to clarify how and why we came to see the potential for cross-cultural teamwork in our use of the leadership concept that we develop in this paper. The leadership we investigate here is not only eminently social, and therefore enacted in context, but also usually invisible - because of how it is seen (or not seen) in mainstream cultures (Eveline, 2004). As Eveline and Booth (2004) show, collaborative leadership works invisibly via coalitions and alliances whose members attribute their actions to group decisions. This paper seeks to clarify two questions begged by that concept of leadership: a) why and how such collaborative networks can be construed as ‘doing leadership’? and b) can such anti-individualistic framework of leadership facilitate culturally appropriate research insights and policy solutions?

To help theorise what we see in our data we borrow the Dalai Lama’s recent definition – ‘a leader is someone who gives us hope’. Further, we try not to privilege the gender category over other identities. We could, for example, highlight gender by referring to the leadership we wish to investigate the double meaning of ‘engendering hope’. Instead, we try a concept that highlights the action of doing leadership (Sinclair, 1998) in context - that of ‘doing hope’. Based on our findings we suggest that such a contextualised concept - doing hope - can help us portray how women from a marginalized identity group can lead others to a culturally appropriate gender analysis by starting from their own experiences and viewpoints.

The paper begins by suggesting that the ‘category politics’ (Bacchi, 1996) situating ‘gender’ and ‘race’ as separate fields of policy means that either or both can be captured by identity conflicts that take them in an anti-progressive direction. Our strategy for avoiding such a trap is to attend to the detail of how the work of policy is done, including by whom it is led. To put flesh on our thoughts and concepts we examine two case studies of ‘doing hope’, analysing the interventions led by Indigenous women when the hope is to transcend inequitable and marginalizing policy practices.

The source and substance for our questions and findings is an ARC Linkage project, led by the authors, designed to provide gender analysis guidelines for public sectors in South Australia and Western Australia.

Eveline, J. (2004) Ivory Basement Leadership: Power and Invisibility in the Changing University, Nedlands: University of Western Australia Press  