MASCULINITIES AND LEADERSHIP

STREAM LEADER: MARY CRAWFORD

TUESDAY 22 JULY
10.00am - 11.00am
1. Challenging Heroic Masculinity: Leadership Myths of Nineteenth Century King Shaka Zulu
   Jennifer Weir

2. Leader of the Pack: Modelling a modified leadership style in City Homicide (2007)
   Jane O’Sullivan and Alison Sheridan

11.30am - 12.30pm
1. Focus groups in management training program as an arena for gender con-struction for male physicians (trainees)
   Arja Lehto

2. Narratives of leadership among first level managers – a comparison with the Bem Sex-Role Inventory (BSRI)
   Britt-Inger Keisu, Jenny-Ann Brodin Danell

1.30pm – 3.30pm
Panel Discussion –
“You’ve got Julia – what else do you want?”(Male MP’s comment on the current Deputy Prime Minister)
Personal experiences of Gendered Leadership in Politics and Business.

WEDNESDAY 23 JULY
2.00pm – 3.30pm
1. The Differences of Flight Operations in Creative Contexts between Femininity and Masculinity Culture
   Wen-Chin Li, Hung-Jen Wang, Aurora Chen

2. Women In Crisis: The Need To Consider Crisis Management From A Gender Perspective
   Christer M. Brown; Sophia K. Ivarsson

   Philip Riley

4.00pm – 5.00pm
1. Engendering Leadership In Local Governance
   S.Radha

2. Psychological variable Gender role identity and its function on the development of managerial women in Pakistan.
   Shehla Riza Arifeen

THURSDAY 24 JULY
10.00am – 11.00am
1. ‘Shovel And Shit’: Blokey Cultures And Workplace Change In Sewerage And Water Treatment Plants
   Marian Baird; Sara Charlesworth

2. Flawed Policy, Failed Politics? Managing Diversity in Engineering Organisations
   Rhonda Sharp, Suzanne Franzway, Julie Mills, Judy Gill

11.30am – 1.00pm:
1. Intersections of Leadership and Gender In An Engineering Company In Sweden  
   *Anna Fogelberg Eriksson*

2. Gendered Organisational Cultures, Men’s Networks and Women Engineers’ Career Chances: Results from two European Research Projects.  
   *Felizitas Sagebiel*

3. Leading Positions for Female Engineers through Research and Practice  
   *Susanne Ihsen & Anna Buschmeyer*

2.45 – 3.45pm

1. How do Consulting Engineers interact with their Clients?  
   *Emily Tan*

2. Leadership in Engineering Education: Gradually Establishing Status for Non-Technical Competencies in Engineering Faculties  
   *Sally Male*
Challenging Heroic Masculinity: Leadership Myths of Nineteenth Century King Shaka Zulu
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So called ‘leadership secrets of great men’ of history still endure despite questionable historical accuracy, and ignorance of women’s leadership. The Zulu of southern African have long been held as a particularly strong example of African patriarchy, and the nineteenth century Zulu king, Shaka (b. 1787, d. 1828), as a great leader. Credited with founding the great Zulu state, he has often been described as a brilliant leader, warrior and military strategist conquering all in his path – the ‘black Napoleon’. Theal described Shaka as “one of the most ruthless conquerors the world has ever known”, a man who was able to call up the Zulu’s essential “passion for blood” so that he could rise “to tower in barbarian fame” (Theal 1964: 434). Popular history books abound with ‘facts’ of Shaka’s life. Indeed, at least two books have been published in recent years with the titles, 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). Both ascribe the leadership secrets, or rather the nineteenth century myths, about king Shaka to modern leadership and management practice. 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 to be learned. Yet, 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. 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 still Shaka hold so strongly despite research findings to the contrary.

Research on Zulu chiefly women demonstrates clearly how gender roles are historically and culturally constructed (Gasa 2006). Chiefly Zulu women (and some notable chiefly women in other parts of southern Africa) were not the subordinates of male ‘dictators’ such as Shaka, and their leadership took a variety of forms. There is little to indicate that they acquired their roles as some sort of surrogate or substitute male. Some women were also involved in military activities. James Stuart, a colonial administrator, collected testimonies between 1890 and 1920 and one of his informant’s, Ngidi, said 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). Chiefly women could marry both men and women, which further challenges concepts of Zulu patriarchy and western gender perspectives. In addition, there is evidence that suggests the possibility of chiefs such as Shaka taking on female attributes. 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.

Key words: women chiefs, leadership masculinities

References:

TUESDAY 22 JULY
Leader of the Pack: Modelling a modified leadership style in *City Homicide* (2007)

Jane O’Sullivan and Alison Sheridan, University of New England, josulli@une.edu.au, asherida@une.edu.au

An analysis of a recent Australian television drama series, *City Homicide* (2007) offers some interesting recommendations about gendered leadership styles. This series, set in the homicide investigation section of a major city, presents multiple models of leadership, each embodied by one of the senior detectives. In essence the character and associated model of leadership which emerges as ‘highly recommended’ is one which manifests a range of positive attributes drawn from the spectrum of gender identities. This extends from a more stoic masculinity to an arguably more feminised form of nurture and empathy. This idealised and multi-faceted model characterised in Detective Senior Sergeant Stanley Wolfe (Shane Bourne) is given clarity of definition in being set in direct contrast to a couple of more traditional and unsatisfactory models of leadership embodied in two of his senior colleagues. One of these men, Detective Senior Sergeant Wilton Sparkes (Marshall Napier), reflects an old style, chauvinist mode of operation whilst the other, Detective Superintendent Tony Jarvis (David Field) is from the Armed Robbery and Drug Squad and characterised as a wiry and rather sly, “hard- man”.

The success of the modified, perhaps androgynous, leadership style of Senior Detective Stanley Wolfe, is apparent in the efficiency and collegiality he models for and is able to develop in his diverse team of young detectives. In contrast to this, the junior sidekicks of the drug squad “bully,” largely operate as young thugs.

While the privileging of a more communicative and compassionate style of leadership is refreshing and points to a positive modification of leadership style which has previously been inflected by negative aspects of hegemonic masculinity, the question remains – can a woman be similarly recognised as a leader and inspire the dedication and confidence of her colleagues? This question directs us to the fourth, and most senior leader in the series, Detective Superintendent Bernice Waverley (Noni Hazelhurst) who, armed only with a clipboard and a clipped dialogue, receives little screen time and even less credibility by the energetic pack of young detectives. This leads us to conclude that in *City Homicide*, the ‘feminising’ of a man’s performance of leadership is endearing, but a female leader leaves the pack cold.

**Keywords:** Modelling leadership; Modelling masculinity; feminising leadership; television drama

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Focus groups in management training program as an arena for gender con-struction for male physicians (trainees)
Arja Lehto. University of Uppsala, Sweden; Arja.Lehto@jamombud.se

The post-bureaucratic organisation is putting more demand on individual employees. In this context the managers (in different levels of the organisation) are expected to take a different stance towards the employees and also towards the organisation itself. How to achieve this transformation within the public sector organizations has been a question of growing interest for both practitioners and scholars in Sweden during recent years. One of the most common questions is how to achieve and act this perceived new leadership style? A myriad of training courses and methods are provided, sometimes even with a gender perspective.

The aim of this paper is to discuss how gender has been constructed during a management/leadership training program for young (practicing) male physicians in two County Councils in Sweden. The central aim of the training program was to become a better leader by learning how to lead oneself to change through reflection in groups. The program had also the ambition of addressing gender equality issues of importance in the work environment of the physicians. In order to make equality issues more interesting for men in health care two questions were introduced: like how do men think about equality between women and men? What are the specific questions the young men (and coming leaders) prefer and think of as important gender equality issues?

The training program was evaluated through a process evaluation method with interactive research approach where the researcher was taking part in the evaluation part of the program with the aim of working together with the groups on gender issues. Focus groups were used as the main method of data collection. In addition to the management training, the interviews focused on how the groups were trained in gender issues. All groups of physicians who were taking part in the program were interviewed twice (during one year), reported back to the groups and discussed with feedback. The focus groups discussions while talking about management and work organization related issues become an arena for constructing gender: the (de)construction of a physicians’ role (as a manager), physicianship and (true) human being was gendered.

In the focus group discussions the process of understanding gender as part of the organizational phenomena became obvious, the hierarchies were discussed, the older male doctors were accused to be inhuman and bureaucratic; the traditional (leadership) masculinity was questioned and criticized. The health care organization was described as greedy, leaving behind employees (men and women) without self-confidence, valuation and family.

The analysis of the construction of gender (as masculinity, as femininity or something else?) as a part of the management training program (together with self understanding in the leadership and organizational context) has further led to an analysis of the concept of gender equality (and equal opportunities).
Narratives of leadership among first level managers – a comparison with the Bem Sex-Role Inventory (BSRI)
Britt-Inger Keisu & Jenny-Ann Brodin Danell, Umeå University, Sweden, britt-inger.keisu@soc.umu.se

In the 1970s Sandra L. Bem developed the Bem Sex-Role Inventory (BSRI), a widely used inventory that treats masculinity and femininity as independents 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 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 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). Trough 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 Bem’s Masculinity Scale, but has little resemblance is 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. The BSRI is a scale operating with masculinity and femininity at a general level and not specifically with leadership and work which is in focus in the narratives. Another limitation is about using a quantitative analysis on narratives.

Keywords: Leadership, Sex-Roles, Bem-Scale, Narrative, Gender.

References:
The Differences of Flight Operations in Creative Contexts between Femininity and Masculinity Culture
Wen-Chin Li, Hung-Jen Wang, Aurora Chen, National Defence University, R.O.C., University of North Alabama, U.S.A

There has been a great deal of research regarding the relationship between culture and aviation safety. Culture is at the root of action; it underlies the manner by which people communicate and develop attitudes towards life. A culture is formed by its environment and evolves in response to changes in that environment, therefore, culture and context are really inseparable (Helmreich & Merritt, 1998). It is the natural and unquestioned mode of viewing the world as national cultural characteristics play a significant role in the aviation safety. Orasanu and Connolly (1993) have argued that a great deal of decision-making occurs within an organizational context, and that the organization influences decisions directly (e.g. by stipulating standard operating procedures) and indirectly through the organization’s norms and culture. Culture fashions a complex framework of national, organizational and professional attitudes and values within which groups and individuals function.

This research examined statistical differences in the 18 categories of Human factors Analysis and Classification System (HFACS, Shappell & Wiegmann, 2003) across 523 aviation accidents in the Republic of China (a feminine culture) and 119 aviation accidents in the USA (a masculine culture). As a result, ten HFACS categories exhibited significant differences (p<0.05) between these three regions. These were related to organizational processes; organizational climate; resource management; inadequate supervision; personal readiness; physical/mental limitations; adverse physiological states; adverse mental states; skill-based errors; and decision errors. The pattern of results was congruent with what would be expected from Hofstede’s (1984, 1991 & 2001) descriptions of national culture. To a certain degree, aviation human factors have been dominated by research into psychological and psycho-physiological attributes such as motor skills, visual perception, spatial abilities and decision-making (Hawkins, 1993). This might crudely be classified as the ‘hardware’ of the human factors. However, for operating hardware, codes and instructions were required that might be referred to as the ‘software of the mind’. This software of the mind was considered to be an indication of culture because culture provided ‘a tool kit’ of habits, skills, and styles from which people constructed ‘strategies of action’ (Hofstede, 1984).

National cultures offered a functional blueprint for group member's behavior, social roles, and cognitive process. Culture indicated rules about safety, the basis for verbal and nonverbal communication, and guidelines for acceptable social behavior. Culture also provided cognitive tools for making sense out of the world. National culture was rooted in the physical and social ecology of the national groups (Klein, 2004). It is challenging to generalize the findings reported in this research. Generally the American culture seems to be superior for promoting aviation safety compared to the Taiwanese cultures. Nonetheless, the Western culture has had an impact on factors such as the design of the aircraft, the management procedures and the nature of safety regulation.

Keywords: Aviation Safety, Cross-culture, Femininity, Masculinity

References

Women In Crisis: The Need To Consider Crisis Management From A Gender Perspective
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As the world becomes an ever more globalized, “tightly coupled” and, thereby, more vulnerable single system, civilian and military organizations, both large and small, are increasingly susceptible to an ever-growing number of “critical incidents”. The list is long, ranging from armed conflicts, natural disasters, terror attacks and technical disturbances to more mundane instances of fiscal impropriety and employee malefeasance, for example. Such incidents can quickly become what are defined in both academic circles (but not without some disagreement) and the public eye as “crises.” Organizations and their leaders will in such instances experience intense pressures and, simultaneously, intense public scrutiny as they attempt to resolve these.

Leaders, usually working in small-group constellations or “decision units”, face great challenges in making critical decisions under less-than-optimal circumstances during a crisis. These decisions are highly consequential and sometimes necessitate “tragic choices” in the face of great uncertainty and time pressures. Further complicating matters, Boin, et al. argue that “the potential advantages of groups – increased intellectual and cognitive capacity […] – are easily off-set by pathological group dynamics,” including “newness and conformity”, “excessive cordiality and conformity” (groupthink), and “centrifugality and politicking.” The likelihood that some such pathologies might manifest themselves only increases if members of the decision unit can neither trust each other nor their leader, who they expect to act in approximate accordance with their counsel. The same is obviously true of leaders if they lack confidence in their subordinates as advisers or as executers of orders. Thus, successful crisis management demands that organizations establish cultures permitting effective and unchallenged leadership but which at the same time ensure open group deliberations absent the forms of group pathology described above.

As women assume increasingly central roles in key societal organizations, it is clear that they will more often hold equally if not even more central roles in these same organizations in times of crisis. However, evidence from studies of both military and civilian organizations suggests that men and women experience being organizational leaders on a day-to-day basis very differently. Some of the negative experiences reported particularly by women may have serious implications for organizations and the wider society in successfully addressing the growing number of potential crises facing them. Little research has to date considered the experiences of particularly women as crisis leaders. The authors are convinced that such a need exists. The purpose of this paper is to highlight relevant findings from studies of women in both military international conflict and civilian crisis management leadership positions in hopes of providing insights for organizations and their members, both male and female, all of whom arguably stand to gain by the introduction of a spirit of diversity and respect that engenders non-antagonistic, healthily non-competitive cooperation, but particularly in times of crisis.

Keywords: Leadership, crisis management, gender

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4 Ibid., 45-9.

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This theoretical paper provides conceptual arguments for representing the leader-follower relationship as a dyadic attachment relationship and uses the new frame to better explain positive and negative organisational behaviour by both leaders and followers. The foundational nature of John Bowlby’s (1975; 1980; 1982; 1988) attachment theory is used to explain organisational relationship formation and maintenance, and aggressive organisational behaviour. Applying this perspective challenges the traditional view of ‘tough’ or ‘aggressive’ leadership as a deficit-masculine-gendered stance.

In attachment terms, leaders need followers to maintain their professional identity: a leader without followers is not a leader. This makes every leader vulnerable emotionally. However, followers do not always need a leader to provide their professional identity. This affords followers relational power, particularly in organisations where the followers are relatively autonomous. Leaders therefore need to keep close to their followers. However, followers do not always need to be close to leaders, and many prefer to remain autonomous, thus distancing the leader-follower relationship. This can provoke separation anxiety in leaders, prompting aggressive separation protest behaviours that may have been mislabelled “deficit-masculine”. These behaviours are seen in female as well as male leaders providing support for the argument that attachment rather than gender may lie at the foundation of this type of leadership style. Separation protest behaviours are common to all of us in the context of separation anxiety. The argument presented is that attachment theory conceptualises both leaders and followers as care-giving and care-seeking in organisational relationships, and that these needs are largely unconscious expectations by both parties. Bowlby’s concept of the internal working model is outlined in support of this thesis.

In some organisations, such as many helping professions, leaders’ vulnerability can be increased by the organisational structure. Therefore the helping organisation is examined using this new paradigm: specifically Bowlby’s (1982) secure base phenomenon. Schools are chosen to exemplify the complex and changing role of leadership in helping organisations. Teachers carry dual leadership-followership roles. Traditionally, they have been the leaders of their students and followers in the school organisation. However, many schools are moving toward a model of distributed leadership which place teachers along a leadership-followership continuum rather than in one category or another. This type of organisational connectedness and complexity is viewed with reference to adult attachment theory.

**Keywords:** Attachment Theory; Separation Anxiety; Separation Protest; Secure Base phenomenon; Leadership/parenting connections.

**References:**

**Theorists used:**

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All endeavours at attaining gender equality recognized that political power is the strongest tool to eradicate inequality in policy making. After years of debate on the need for political reservation for women, the 73rd Amendment of the Indian Constitution came as a breather; as a first step to political equality of women. Hailed as a milestone, this Amendment set the stage for one-third reservation of total seats for women in every Panchayat (unit of local governance).

This paper, “Engendering Leadership in Local Governance”, which draws from an earlier research conducted by the author for Centre for Development Studies, Trivandrum, looks at the process of incorporation of gender through various stages of local governance in Kerala in South India. The class, caste and gender concerns in local governance were explored as part of the research titled “Political Participation of Women in Local Bodies”.

Kerala is a highly patriarchal and politically motivated State. While statistical indicators like sex ratio, health, education etc. give the State a pseudo status as ‘developed’, the social development indicators such as crimes against women, access to power structures, self-image of women etc. all speak differently. The research found out that male political leaders were blatantly gender insensitive and were most unwilling to relinquish power after the first round of elections. Women relatives of men in power were elected as representatives. For that matter, women themselves could not mainstream gender concerns in policy making. Through rigorous training, the women elected in the successive elections succeeded in laying focus on gender issues. The Women Component Plan (WCP) is a clear indication of this struggle. While this set apart 10% of funds for women development programmes, the sanctioned projects only contributed to reinforcing women stereotypes; as mothers and care givers. The strategic gender needs of women took time to surface.

There were many causes for this. One patriarchal influences and the lack of political will to understand gender relations in society. Inequality in the public arena often has a precedence in discriminatory attitudes and practices within the family (power relations between men and women are unbalanced in the family). Unequal division of labour and responsibilities within the household based on unequal power relations also limits women’s skill development that will transform them into effective decision makers in the public arena. Equal sharing of responsibilities between women and men not only endows women and their daughters with better quality of life but also enhances their opportunities to shape and design public policy, practice and expenditure. Non-formal networks and patterns of decision-making at local community level, which predominantly reflect a male ethos, also restricted women’s ability to participate equally in political, economic and social life.

The attempt at assessing the role of women in local politics, to evaluate women’s representation in the three tiers of local bodies, to analyze the impact on women’s empowerment in the face of opposition and influence of reservation and rotation of constituencies on women’s empowerment, all form revealing lessons in political leadership.
Psychological variable Gender role identity and its function on the development of managerial women in Pakistan.
Shehla Riza Arifeen, Lahore School of Economics; shehla.arifeen@gmail.com

The purpose of this paper is to explore the gender identity of managerial women in Pakistan in the private sector and to investigate if there is a relationship between gender identity and success. A successful manager is one who meets his/her organizational goals by asserting influence on subordinates to accomplish tasks. This means that successful managers must exhibit leadership qualities. A successful manager is usually rewarded in the workplace by promotions. Successful managerial women were identified in our study based on the rate of progression in their organizations. Self-perceptions on success were also measured.

An extensive review of literature on sex and gender identity in predominantly male organizations was undertaken. Most literature in the developed world pointed to successful managers being perceived as possessing masculine traits. This perception held true for both male and female managers. Women saw themselves as masculine gender identity and then successful as managers. It was therefore assumed that the Pakistani women managers who saw themselves as successful managers would also be masculine oriented. To test this hypothesis 152 companies (who were registered with the Placement Offices of two business schools of Lahore) were contacted, in Pakistan’s three major cities, 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. All managerial women were requested to complete a questionnaire packet containing the BSRI scale to measure gender identity of the managerial women.

Response rate was 29.19%. 207 women completed the questionnaire. The sample though small could be considered as representative of the total population keeping in mind the few numbers of managerial women in Pakistan. A preliminary analysis revealed that all the Pakistani managerial women did not fall in the “masculine” manager model. This warranted further exploration. The psychological and social factors influencing the gender role orientation in the managerial women were examined. Psychological factors included need for achievement, self-efficacy, and locus of control. Social factors included ethnic backgrounds, age, marital status, particularly as women have difficulty in shedding the ‘female’ side of themselves in Pakistan;the role of a mother and wife. As women have to work within the socio-cultural domain, they manage to retain the feminine side while also continuing to build certain traits i.e the masculine side that would afford acceptability in a male dominated work environment. The paper then goes on to explore the relationship between the gender identity and successful managerial women and the implications of these findings on the development of managerial women in Pakistan.

Key words: Gender role, Pakistan, success, women managers.
An extensive literature has accumulated about the pervasiveness of masculine and gendered organisations and the difficulty of leading gender equitable change efforts (Acker 1990, 2000; Lewis 2007). In this paper we propose that one variant of the masculinised workplace is manifested in the ‘blokey culture’, a term used widely in popular discourse to describe the particularly male orientation of many Australian workplaces. However, the ‘blokey culture’ concept remains largely absent from the scholarly literature and has not been interrogated to any great degree. We suggest that a ‘blokey culture’ reflects deep, historical roots embedded in the male breadwinner ideal, but today also reflects a certain organisational stasis, a resistance to change and an antipathy to alternative conceptions of the ideal worker (Williams, 2000), whether they be male or female. In this environment, initiating and leading gender equitable organisational change may be highly contentious, drawing resistance from not only employees, but managers and unions as well.

The paper explores these propositions drawing on a case study of the introduction of more flexible work arrangements in sewage and water treatment plants. Work in these workplaces was, and still is, characterised as ‘shovel and shit’ jobs - and certainly no place for a woman. Yet, technological change has automated many of the processes. Furthermore, contemporary pressures to recruit and retain a more diverse and inclusive workforce prompted management to investigate alternative working arrangements. A research project was initiated by a female manager in response to one of her female employees, who requested part-time work on return from maternity leave. This interest grew out of previous research on the ‘dual agenda’ (see Charlesworth and Baird, 2007) undertaken in the organisation - research which set up a gender awareness and which, in this instance, became a catalyst for change. The subsequent research, presented in this paper, adapted the Collaborative Interactive Action Research method of Rapoport et al (2002). Extensive interview, observation and documentary data were collected from the employees and managers. This was then reported back to them for their input and comment. In this way, an iterative understanding of the consequences of the ‘blokey culture’ for work organisation was developed. The research process and findings highlighted the need for alternative working time arrangements, not only for women but also for men with a variety of home and personal circumstances. However, efforts to lead such change met with resistance because they challenged the fundamental ‘blokey culture’ construction of working hours and rosters.

**Keywords:** blokey culture, collaborative interactive action research, masculinities, ideal worker, work organisation

**References:**


Flawed Policy, Failed Politics? Managing Diversity in Engineering Organisations
Rhonda Sharp, Suzanne Franzway, Julie Mills, Judy Gill, Hawke Research Institute for Sustainable Societies, University of South Australia; rhonda.sharp@unisa.edu.au

Engineering is an area of work that is relatively highly paid but employs few women. In most OECD countries, women constitute less than 15% of the engineering profession (OECD 2006). In Australia engineering has been subject to feminist campaigns and policies for equity and diversity for at least two decades. Yet the gains have been slim. Whether we look at education and training, engineering workplaces, seniority and partnerships in the profession, or high income earners, the proportion of women remains low (Roberts and Ayre 2002; Mills et al 2006; Lewis et al 2006; APESMA 2007). Only their quit rates are higher than men’s.

Over the past decade, shortages of skilled engineers has led to the management of engineering workplaces internationally adopting the discourse and policies of diversity. A central rationale for ‘managing diversity’ is that increasing the employment of women engineers will also improve the competitive position of the organisation. While this ‘business case’ for diversity policies is widely accepted by management, managing diversity is a highly contested discourse and strategy for addressing the issues of difference in organisations within the feminist literature (Bacchi 2000; Jones 2004; Smithson and Stokoe 2005; Sharp et al 2007). What is at stake are power relationships and whether the current politics around gender issues in the workplace are challenged or not.

This paper reports on research carried out into the workplace cultures of three large engineering organisations in Australia facing significant skills shortages in engineering and market pressures to be internationally competitive. It analyses how management in these organisations understood the problem of ‘why so few women engineers’ and what their views were on managing diversity as a strategy to resolve the issue. We adopt the concept of ‘sexual politics’ (Franzway 2001) to analyse the underlying assumptions that frame management’s approach.

The concept of sexual politics is used here to talk about the everyday denial of gender. This takes place within the complex gender relationships of power as domination, resistance, alliances and pleasures that are central to all social institutions, including engineering organisations. We argue that in the absence of making sexual politics visible and effective in promoting workplace change, managing diversity will remain hollow in terms of its claims of enabling management to ensure organisational competitiveness hand in hand with employment equity.

References:

Always Masculine And Always Hegemonic? Intersections Of Leadership And Gender In An Engineering Company In Sweden
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It is a fact that men continue to dominate on management positions and researchers report on a strong analytical connection between the concepts of leadership and masculinity. But what kind of masculinity is connected to leadership – is it always hegemonic masculinity? And is masculinity always masculine? 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 main research questions asked in the paper are: How do leaders discuss and talk about their work, leadership, women, men, feminine and masculine? What are leaders doing and together with whom, i.e. actions and interactions? How does the organizational context in which the leaders find themselves contribute to the construction of leadership and gender? 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 paper draws on the theoretical framework of Joan Acker (1990). Different analytical entries are used that highlight individual sense making, interactions, symbols and structure in the analysis of how leadership and gender is constructed in organizations. The empirical findings are also discussed in relation to the concept of hegemonic masculinity (Connell, 1995; Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005) and global business masculinities (Connell, 1998; Connell & Wood, 2005). Research on men and management are used to further analyze the topic (Collinson & Hearn, 1996).

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 where women and men, as well as femininity and masculinity, are horizontally and vertically/hierarchically segregated. Other organizational processes may be understood as gaps in the pattern of a persistent gender order, and not least the observations show the variation of different masculinities in this particular context. One paradoxical conclusion is that male managers are allowed to be mutually different as individuals – but at the same time form the entirety. 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 ‘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, the constructions of leadership and masculinity are reinforced by each other. The leadership masculinities may be read as constructions that function both metaphorically and as processes to describe the notions and practices displayed in the empirical material. The leadership masculinities also convey the hegemonic position of certain masculinities, while others are interpreted as silenced or kept implicit in the organization.

Keywords: doing gender in organizations, leadership, managers, men, masculinity

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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) (2002-2005) and from PROMETEA “Empowering Women Engineers in Industrial and Academic Research” (website: www.prometa.info) (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 research.

Different research and theoretical fields will be presented for understanding gendered career of women engineers: Gender studies, gender in academia, critical men’ studies, studies on feminist technology, organisational studies and studies on gendered career and profession.

Hypotheses about genderedness of professional culture and career for women engineers and a short description of methodology of WomEng project form the basis for presenting results on: Dominance of men’s working culture (masculine culture, minority situation, coping strategies), women engineers’ career definition and barriers, women engineers’ priorities (part-time working culture, work-life-balance with children, women managers’ leadership style), and men’s networks. Engineering is still defined as a men’s field based on a masculine image of engineering in society. Women engineers are conscious of working in a male domain and talked about discriminating situations connected with dominant masculinity culture, but the ones who did their job in the company, did not define those as problems. Only women engineers who left their prior job complained about this working culture. Most asked women engineers were satisfied with their job, but sceptical about combination of career progression and preferred work-life-balance, viewing this as a decision between two not compatible choices. 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.

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. The qualitative methodological design included interviewing women engineers and doing focus discussion groups with men and women engineers separately.

Results focus first on genderedness of organisational cultures, analysed by gendered division of labour, gender stereotypes and gender awareness. Second, networks will be described from the perception of women and men engineers in research. Genderedness of networks are analysed by definition, functions, processes, activities and evaluation and women’s integration or exclusion in different engineering research organisations (industrial, academic and governmental). Characterisation and function of men’s networks will be presented in the perception of women and men engineers in research. They will be described and analysed in a comparative perspective of different cases (industrial, academic and governmental) as well as different partner countries. Norms and values of gendered organisational cultures will be characterized as they influence careers of women engineers.

As conclusion a dilemma of women engineers between reification and tabooing of gender differences is posted, reducing chances for changing genderedness of organisational cultures and leadership.

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7 The author has been coordinated this work package in both European projects Womeng and PROMETEA.
Leading Positions for Female Engineers through Research and Practice
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In Germany – as in many other European countries – the combination of career and family is a problem, especially for women working in leading positions. Our recent study of VDI, Association of German Engineers, the biggest engineering association in Germany with approximately 135,000 members and Gender Studies in Engineering at Technische Universität München (TUM) shows 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).

At the same time universities – especially technical universities – are still very masculine institutions in their education, student and academia structures. European research in science has shown that there is a so called “leaky pipeline” (European Commission 2001) when it comes to academic careers among women, which can be due to the fact that they have to decide between family needs and career opportunities much more than their male colleagues. The next step of the study shows whether women in leading positions decide consciously for or against children and are influenced by a family friendly surrounding. A decision against children contributes to low birth rates and a demographic change in Germany.

The research results of Gender Studies in Engineering support the implementation of family friendly structures: 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 well educated experts with family responsibilities. With an intelligent family policy TUM can underline its status as role model for other universities and companies searching for engineers.

The first steps to contribute to a strategy of TUM as women and family friendly employer have been made during the past years. Through the German excellence initiative TUM’s aim to become Germany’s most attractive technical university for women got new resources. A Gender Consulting Position was created and a Dual Career Centre funded together with Max-Planck Society. The following funds were invented: the 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).

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. More details will be presented in the full paper.

Keywords: Gender at Universities, Work-Life-Balance, Female Engineers

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Förderung herausragender Leistungen durch Gender Mainstreaming; Bericht der ETANExpertinnenarbeitsgruppe „Frauen und Wissenschaft“
Leadership in Engineering Education: Gradually Establishing Status for Non-Technical Competencies in Engineering Faculties
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Fletcher (1999) and Acker (1990) have provided the necessary awareness to recognise the marginal status of non-technical competencies in the male-dominated discipline of engineering. Studies have found indications of gendered cultures in engineering faculties (for example, Godfrey 2003) and traditionally engineering education at universities focussed on scientific theory and technical knowledge and skills. It appears likely that non-technical competencies were “disappeared” in engineering curricula due to gendering of faculties. This paper draws attention to the progressive achievement of leaders in engineering education as they have gradually edged non-technical content into engineering curricula despite its low status in engineering faculties.

In a culture where non-technical competencies are invisible, and recognition is given to research output above teaching, leaders in engineering education have needed to find ways to gain credibility for their teaching efforts and for the idea that non-technical competencies should be developed in engineering programs. Further they have needed to motivate others academics, whose values have been instilled by gendered faculties and who have little time to change their teaching practices, to follow the lead. I suggest that the people who have overcome these challenges have been “tempered radicals” (Meyerson 2001): leaders who have gradually changed a traditional culture without sacrificing their jobs. How?

I will describe examples of academics taking small brave steps to include languages, writing, and even Philosophy in their teaching. These academics broadened the perspectives of multiple students, and caused their academic colleagues to question traditional practice. However, one of the most powerful approaches of the leaders in engineering education has been to research engineering education. Through research, leaders in engineering education have achieved two goals. First, they have focussed on teaching and learning while satisfying the need to publish. Second, their research has provided credible evidence of the need for engineering students to develop non-technical competencies. Results of the research have persistently confirmed that non-technical competencies are important to engineering work. Additionally, studies found that academic achievement in traditional engineering programs was not a predictor of success as an engineer.

In the mid 1990s non-technical outcomes were finally stipulated in engineering program accreditation criteria. Today, after multiple small achievements made by many leaders, project-based learning, teamwork and various forms of expression are part of many engineering courses. Studies, including my surveys, continue to confirm that non-technical competencies are highly important to engineering work. However, recent UK research found that, although employers rated teamwork as more important than theoretical understanding to graduate engineers’ work, they continued to place theoretical understanding above teamwork skills in the selection of graduate recruits (Spinks, Silburn et al. 2006). Such results raise questions about how future leaders in engineering education might continue the cultural change they have begun.

Keywords: gender, competencies, engineering education, communication, teamwork

References

How do Consulting Engineers interact with their Clients?
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The annual Profession Report (Beaton, 2007, 2008) has always ranked the standard of client service of consulting engineering firms the lowest among other professional firms such as the lawyers and architects. While the relative low ranking is a cause for concern, there is, however, insufficient literature that would help us to understand the reasons why. Generally, the consulting engineers look after the interest of the clients, accountable for the safety of the community, among environmental and sustainability issues. They have to cope with the ever-changing engineering codes of practice and legislative requirements, and operate within the constraints of contract, specifications and allocated cost. The characteristic of a construction project is of a complex human relationship, it involves many different stakeholders. They are the client/owner, architect, engineers, quantity surveyor, project manager, main contractor, subcontractors and suppliers. 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? The fundamental issue here is the different ways in which clients interact with different kinds of consultants. Besides technical expertise, non-technical competencies are important to the engineers as well. In addition to design, supervision and checking, engineers coordinate and communicate internally and externally to gain cooperation so that others are willing to work for them to get the project completed. What consultants do with the project team and the client is commitment and relationship building. The collaborative work and the relational skills engineers employ in this kind of project work are not recognised or rewarded at work (Fletcher, 1999). Leadership in consulting engineering means listening, educating, guiding and advising the project team and the client, which is different to the usual perception of leadership of tough decision making and the like. However, engineers and their engineering teams get no credit for their contribution to the development and completion of the projects. Furthermore, men and women performing this type of activity and their style of leading are influenced by social expectations of correct behaviour for each gender. Does it make a difference that engineering work is performed by a male or a female? On the other hand, does this form of leadership results in greater client satisfaction than the traditional style of the professional engineer making the decisions with limited consultation or communication? Or rather, are architects, lawyers and other professionals, better at relationship building than engineers? Hence, this study investigates the interaction between engineers and their clients in the construction industry. This research conducts in-depth interviews with engineers and their clients in June and July, 2008. The objective is to explore their concerns, issues, dilemmas, difficulties and possibilities in the construction projects. This is to help focus on the possibility of engineers, whether they can 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.

Keywords: Leadership, gender, interaction, engineers, client satisfaction.

References