

GENERATIONAL DIVERSITY IN THE WORKPLACE

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For the first time in history, four distinctively diverse generations are employed in our workforce: Veterans, Baby Boomers, Gen Xers, and Millennials and soon to be entering our workforce are the 23+ million individuals in Generation Z (Schroer, 2010). Depending on the years used to define the Generation Z cohort, soon we may have five diverse generations in our workforce (King, 2010). These cohorts frequently collide in today's workplace, creating environments characterized by individual and generational enmity where attitudes of "Us" versus "Them" and "every man and woman for himself and herself" surface (Zemke, Raines, & Filipczak, 2000, p. 5). The adversarial atmosphere impedes the energies, productivity, teamwork, and collaborative problem solving required by complex and competitive global markets. To foster organizational environments that are positive and productive, employers must be aware of the strengths and assets that each generation as a group brings to their organizations, and become skilled in dealing with individuals from each generation as subordinates, supervisors and customers.

Each generation tends to have different attitudes about work ethics, career development, work/life balance, job expectations, communication styles, training, adaptation to and use of electronic technology, rewards and compensation (Center for Generational Studies, 2006). According to Lancaster and Stillman (2002),

...different generations of employees won't become more alike with age. They will carry their "generational personalities" with them throughout their lives. In fact, when hard times hit, the generations are likely to entrench themselves even more deeply into the attitudes and behaviors that have been ingrained in them. (p. 8)

Demographers agree about the overall profiles of the distinct cohorts in the workforce, but disagree on the years of birth and cohort names.

The workplace behaviors associated with this generation are still evolving but it is known that Generation Z individuals have grown up and been influenced by access to the newest communication tools such as the internet, cell phones, MP3 players, and iPods. This generation uses

- The oldest workers, those 44.2 million born between 1922 and 1943 are termed “veterans,” the “swing generation,” or the “great generation” depending on the social observer. The term “greatest generation” was used by the journalist Tom Brokaw to describe the generation that grew up during the Great Depression and who fought in World War II (Brokaw, 2004).
- The baby boomer generation, approximately 77 million people, has been defined both as those born between 1943 and 1960 and those with births spanning the years 1946 through 1964.
- The 52.4 million generation Xers have been defined as being both born between 1965 and 1980, as well as between 1960 and 1980.
- The Generation Y cohort is termed the Millennials and Generation Nexters. At 77.6 million, they are now the largest generation. Some place their births between 1980 and 2000, others between 1981 and 1999 (Filipczak, 2000; Lancaster & Stillman, 2002; Zemke, Raines).
- The generation that follows Gen Y is called “generation Z,” the “digital generation,” “generation 9/11” and the “iGeneration”; and includes those individuals born after 1994 but before 2004 (*Generation Z*, 2010). Others state that Generation Z includes those born after 2001 (*Working with Generation Y and Z*, 2010).
- Those born within a year or two of the start of a new generation are called “cuspers” because they “stand in the gap between the two sides... [and] become naturals at mediating, translating, and mentoring” (Lancaster & Stillman, 2002, p. 39).

technology and is dependent upon it. Although Gen Zers are well connected, it is predicted that they will be weaker in terms of interpersonal skills and experience more unemployment and downsizing and may distrust corporations and have less loyalty to organizations than previous generations (*Generation Z*, 2010; *Generation Y and Z*, 2010).

As Generation Z individuals begin to enter the workplace, there will be employees from the Swing Generation and the Baby Boom Generation who continue to be in the work force. In an article in *Business Week*, Coy (2005) found that starting in the mid-1980's, older Americans chose to keep working which can be attributed to improved physical and mental health, the desire to stay useful and the need for organizations to hold on to experience. Even executives are making career switches rather than retiring because they become bored with retirement and miss a sense of productivity and intellectual challenge (San Jose Business Journal, Report, 2007). Others remain in the workforce longer because they are not financially prepared for retirement (Moore, 2010) especially with the recession that began in 2008.

Each generation has unique perspectives and values about work and the work environment. In traditional hierarchical organizations, generations tend to be more segregated as experienced individuals rise to higher positions with experience. In general, older employees tend to be in upper and upper-middle management, middle-aged employees in middle management and occasionally in upper management, and younger employees in lower to more central levels. However, as organizations flatten into more horizontal structures, a “mixing” of generations occurs that profoundly influences organizational processes. As teamwork increases, intergenerational differences spark interpersonal conflict, creating issues surrounding collaborative problem solving, motivation, communication, training, and supervision. Thus, because of its impact on organization effectiveness, generational diversity must be added to traditional discussions

diversity in the workplace. The nomenclature and the time frames for the cohorts that follow are those defined by Ron Zemke, Claire Raines, and Bob Filipczak (2000) and Raines (2002).

GENERATIONS IN THE WORKPLACE

The Profile for Veterans: Born between 1922 and 1943

The core values of Veterans include dedication, discipline, sacrifice, hard work, duty before pleasure, delayed rewards, conformity, consistency and uniformity, a sense of history, and an orientation toward the past; respect for authority, adherence to the rules, preference for hierarchy; patience; conservative spending, and a deep sense of personal organizational and national honor.

Veterans were influenced by world events that included the 1929 stock market crash, Dust Bowl, and Great Depression in the 1930s; Franklin Roosevelt's presidency—particularly his optimism and the New Deal which brought Social Security and other social programs; the rise of Hitler and fall of Europe; Pearl Harbor and the United States at war; victories in Europe and Japan; and the Korean War.

Assets of having Veterans in the workplace include their stability, orientation to detail, thoroughness, loyalty, and consistent hard work. Their *liabilities* include their difficulty coping with ambiguity and change, reluctance to buck the system, discomfort with conflict and reticence to disagree with those in positions of authority.

Messages that motivate Veterans include, "Your experience is respected here; it's valuable to the rest of us to hear what has, and hasn't, worked in the past." When communicating with Veterans, employers should use inclusive language, written or face-to-face communication, and more formal language.

In their leadership style, Veterans are directive, use command-and-control leadership, and use executive decision-making. They want to take charge, delegate and make the bulk of the decisions themselves (Aldisert, 2002, p. 25; Zemke, Raines, & Filipczak, 2000, pp. 29–32).

The Profile for Baby Boomers: Born between 1943 and 1960

The core values of Baby Boomers include optimism, team orientation, personal gratification, health and wellness, personal growth, staying young, hard work, and involvement.

Boomers were influenced by: the McCarthy hearings in 1954; victories over polio and tuberculosis; the struggle for Civil Rights from Rosa Parks, through school integration; Martin Luther King, Jr.; the involvement of students in voter registration, bomb shelters, and nuclear power; easily accessible birth control; John F. Kennedy's presidency, including the establishment of the Peace Corps; the Cuban missile crisis; astronauts in space; the assassinations of JFK, Martin Luther King, and Robert Kennedy; the Vietnam War and student protests that culminated in the Kent State University shootings; founding of the National Organization for Women; and the disgrace of Richard M. Nixon.

Assets of having Boomers in the workplace include their service orientation, willingness to "go the extra mile," ability to establish and maintain good working relationships, desire to please, and their team spirit. *Liabilities* include frequent lack of budget orientation, discomfort with conflict to the point of conflict avoidance, reluctance to disagree with peers for fear of harming working relationships, comfort with process frequently overshadowing the need for goal attainment, being overly sensitive to feedback, being judgmental of those who see things differently, and self-centeredness.

Messages that motivate Boomers include, "You're valued here," "We need you," "I approve of you," and "Your contributions are unique and important." When communicating with Boomers

employers should use an open, direct style; answer questions thoroughly; avoid controlling, manipulative language; use face-to-face or electronic communication; and convey flexibility.

In their leadership style, Boomers are collegial and consensual, but sometimes authoritarian. They are passionate and concerned about participation, spirit, humanity in the workplace, and creating a fair and level playing field for all. Because Boomers grew up with conservative parents and worked in their early careers for command-and-control supervisors, they often slip into that style when collegiality fails. Many Boomer managers lack sophisticated communication, motivation, supervision, and delegation skills (Aldisert, 2002, pp. 25–26; Zemke, Raines, & Filipczak, 2000, pp. 63–91).

The Profile for the Gen Xers: Born between 1960 and 1980

The core values of the Gen Xers include appreciation of diversity, ability to think globally, the balance of work and home, technoliteracy, espousing the idea that work should be fun, having a casual approach to authority, self-reliance and independence, and pragmatism.

The Gen Xers were influenced by the following events: the struggle for women's liberation and gay rights, the Watergate scandal, the energy crisis, personal computers, the Three Mile Island meltdown, disenchantment with nuclear power, successive recessions accompanied by massive layoffs, the Iran hostages episode, erosion of America's world dominance and respect, the Challenger disaster, the Exxon Valdez oil spill, AIDS, Operation Desert Storm, and the fall of communism.

Assets of having Xers in the workplace include that they are adaptable, technoliterate, independent, not intimidated by authority, voracious learners, financially savvy, multitask oriented, experienced team members, and creative. **Liabilities** include that they are impatient, have poor people skills, are cynical, have low expectations about job security, are less willing to make personal sacrifices at work, and resist being micromanaged.

Messages that motive Gen Xers include, "Do it your way," "We've got the newest hardware and software," and "There are not a lot of rules around here." When communicating with Gen Xers, employers should use electronic communication as the primary tool, write in short sound bytes, present facts, ask for feedback, share information immediately, use an informal style, and listen.

In their leadership styles, Xers are uncomfortable with bureaucratic rules and procedures and traditional chain-of-command systems. They know that sophisticated and demanding customers expect their needs to be met immediately. The Gen X leader is skilled at supporting and developing a responsive, competent team that can change direction, or projects, quickly. They are egalitarian and not hierarchical in their thinking. In addition, they are adept at accessing information electronically (Aldisert, 2002, p. 26; Zemke, Raines, & Filipczak, 2000, pp. 92–126).

The Profile for the Millennials: Born between 1980 and 2000

The core values for the Millennials include a sense of civic duty, confidence, optimism, achievement, sociability, morality, collaboration, open-minded, street smarts, an appreciation of diversity, respect for community and authority, okay at staying connected to others and the world through communication technology.

The Millennials' sphere of seminal events and trends includes violence such as the terrorism of September 11th, the shootings at Columbine, and the Oklahoma City bombing; the increased use of technology; busy lives; the President Clinton and Monica Lewinsky scandal; and years of service learning throughout elementary and secondary school.

Assets of having Millennials in the workplace include their optimism, tenacity, heroic spirit, multitasking capabilities, technological know-how, collaborative skills, and their being

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with CD and video selections. Many times Ethel is the only sales person on the floor and when asked a question about the other technological equipment in the department, she tells the customers to “come back when the younger people are working—they understand this stuff!” Ethel is pleasant with customers and hard working. She told the upper managers at Everything’s Here Inc. that she wants to work for a few more years because she receives health benefits that cover the secondary insurance under Medicare for herself and her husband, who is in an Alzheimer’s unit in the local nursing home.

Ethel had great difficulty learning the new computer inventory control program that was recently installed in the store to check if items are in stock. She has tested the patience of several people, including the last manager, who tried to teach her how to use the program. She does like the personal attention, and tries hard, but has not been successful. At work, when Ethel watched the customer service training videos supplied by corporate training, she fell asleep. She cannot use e-mail to communicate with Julia from home since she doesn’t have a computer at home and she doesn’t know how to use email or instant messaging. When Ethel is at home, she shuts her phone off so her attention is not interrupted when watching television. “After all... I can’t watch television and talk on the phone!”

Larry, age 20, has been working at Everything’s Here Inc. for two years since graduating from high school. He was told by his parents “get out of the house, get a job and quit playing video games.” On his job application, Larry stated that he was qualified to work in the Electronics Department because he was an avid “gamer” and “an expert at text messages.” Mr. Lee thought that Larry was the ideal employee since “Larry is young and knows about computers.” While at work, Larry gets so caught up in checking his messages and learning to use the newly arrived PDAs and video games, that he ignores customers needing assistance. He perceives that his activities are work related. After all, he must be an expert on the equipment/games in order to sell them.

Larry prefers helping young customers because he believes they are more “techno-savvy” and know what they are looking for in terms of games or technology. He doesn’t have a lot of patience with customers, particularly those who need assistance understanding mobile phones and accessories. Larry is often seen using his mobile “smart” phone to send text messages to friends before ringing up a customer’s sales. “This’ll take only a minute” Larry says to the customers, and quickly enters a message before ringing up the sales. He does not see text messaging as intrusive or time consuming—“Heck! It’s just like talking—it’s quicker and less annoying!” Larry only wants to communicate with Julia through text messaging or emails since he is connected to email and social sites “almost 24/7.” He has told her “Don’t use the phone to contact me... I’m usually texting... that’s the way I like to communicate.”

Rick, age 51, took a job as sales associate at Everything’s Here Inc. when the local appliance store where he worked for 20 years closed. He enjoyed working at the appliance store because he was selling kitchen and laundry appliances, TVs and stereos—equipment with which he was familiar. He liked spending time with customers and hearing their stories. In fact, many of his customers frequently return to make other purchases. Although he lacks experience with sophisticated communication technologies, Mr. Lee wanted to give Rick “a chance” in Electronics. Rick knows the basics of working a computer for word processing, emails, and surfing the net. Mr. Lee was heard saying “At Rick’s age, he probably knows how to use technology—after all, everyone has a computer and smart phone today—even me and I’m 60!” Rick does well selling TVs, but not the other equipment in Electronics. He tends to stay near the TVs and does not rotate around the department.

When Rick is approached by a customer with a technical question, he goes out of his way to find Julia, Larry, or one of the younger part-time associates. He introduces them to customers as “my young knowledgeable colleagues.” He will go online to find the answer or use the computerized “Frequently Asked Q & A” module developed by Julia for the Electronics Department staff only if no one else is around and the customer needs an answer to make a purchase decision.

After completing her first week working the various shifts with the 3 full time employees assigned to her, Julia realizes that there may be generational issues that are affecting customer service in her department.

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Discussion Questions

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WRITING ASSIGNMENT

Generational Issues

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Questions

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EXPLORING THE GENDER GAP: WHAT ARE THE ISSUES?

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Did you know...? The highly successful investor, Warren Buffett, once attributed his success to the fact that he only had to compete with half (the male half) of the population.

While women have benefited from diversity initiatives, there are still substantial gender gaps in terms of corporate, economic and government leadership. Today, women represent 46.9 percent of the U.S. labor force, (Catalyst, 2013) earn more bachelors, masters and doctoral degrees than men and can now serve in combat. There are three female justices on the U.S. Supreme Court and three U.S. Secretaries of State have been women. Yet, women earn only seventy-seven cents for every dollar that a man earns and only 17.1 percent of the Fortune 500 corporate board members are female. In 2013, in spite of being 51 percent of the population, women held only 20 percent of the U.S. senate seats and 18 percent of the seats in the House of Representatives. Currently, only six women serve as state governors. So, why do these gaps exist?

THE GENDER GAP AND PRIVILEGE

Although gender is a socially constructed characteristic consisting of behaviors and attitudes that are considered proper for males and females and its norms and expected behaviors can differ significantly from one culture to another, it serves as a significant way in which society privileges its members. Many societies consciously or unconsciously set up cultural and legal barriers to provide unequal access to power, property, and prestige on the basis of sex. Privilege means that some people have an advantage just because they belong to a certain social identity group. Usually, privileges are not earned but are more an "accident of birth" such as being born able-bodied, male, and in most societies, white. Examples of gender privilege are: being able to assume that your gender, engagement ring, or status as a parent or caregiver is not a factor in a hiring or promotional decision.

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A HISTORY OF PATRIARCHY

A society is patriarchal to the degree that it is male-dominated and identifies with what are considered to be male values. In a patriarchal society, the majority of political, economic, legal, religious, educational, and military positions of authority are filled by men. Heads of state, CEOs, corporate board members, religious leaders, senior law partners, generals, members of legislatures at all levels of government, etc. tend to be mostly males under a patriarchal system. When women do achieve these positions, like former Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton or Marissa Meyer, CEO of Google, people tend to think of them as the exceptions. Consequently, male dominance creates power differences between men and women and promotes the idea of male superiority. If men occupy more powerful positions, then viewing men as superior is not a stretch. If presidents, generals, legislators, and corporate CEOs are mostly men with a few women as exceptions to the rule, then men as a group become more identified with leadership and power.

CLOSING THE LEGAL GAPS

History provides some insights into how a society comes to value, i.e., grant privilege, to a more masculine style over a more feminine one. In early U.S. society, the second-class status of women was taken for granted. A husband and wife were legally one person: him. Women could not serve on juries, vote, make legal contracts, or hold property in their own name. Because men tenaciously held onto these privileges and used social institutions to maintain their privileges, basic rights for women came only through a prolonged struggle. In 1848 a group of women led by Elizabeth Cady Stanton used the Declaration of Independence as the framework for writing the "Declaration of Sentiments". Among the many inequalities it sought to correct were women not being allowed to vote or to enter the professions.

Women finally won the right to vote in 1920. In 1963 President Kennedy convened a commission on the status of Women, naming Eleanor Roosevelt as its chair. The report documented discrimination against women in virtually every area of American life. That same year, Betty Friedan published *The Feminine Mystique*, a book that acknowledged the oppression that middle class, educated women experienced because of their limited life options. In 1964, Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act was passed. This legislation prohibited employment discrimination on the basis of sex as well as race, religion, ethnicity, and national origin. With the inclusion of Title IX in the Education Codes of 1972, equal access to higher education, professional schools and high school and college sports teams became the law. The number of female doctors, lawyers, engineers, and other professionals grew substantially. Sports participation by women and girls also rose substantially as a result of Title IX.

However, the Equal Rights Amendment to the U.S. constitution languished in Congress for almost fifty years, was finally passed in 1972 and sent to the states for ratification. The legislation simply called for total federal and state equality because of one's sex. When the deadline for ratification came in 1982, the ERA was three states short of the 38 needed to write it into the U.S. Constitution, but it was never passed.

While many women today may be hesitant to be labeled as a "feminist" for fear of being criticized, few would give up the personal freedoms and opportunities that women fought hard to win over the last 150 years.

Global Notes.....Europe**Female Corporate Board Membership: Europe's "Pink" Quotas**

- In Norway, legislation passed in 2003 requires that females make up 40 percent of all corporate boards.
- In Finland, any company without females on its board must explain why in its annual report (Nobel, 2013).
- France is requiring that corporate boards be 20 percent female by 2014 and 40 percent female by 2017 or directors will not be paid their stipends (Lubin, 2012).
- In Italy, one-third of board listed companies and state owned enterprise board members must be female by 2015 (Kanter, 2013).
- As a result of a shortage of qualified European women to fill legally required board positions, and pressure from the European Union to increase female board membership percentages, 96 American women now hold 136 board seats in 12 European countries (Lubin, 2012).

THE GENDER GAP IN WAGES AND EMPLOYMENT

According to the 2010 census 53.6 percent of the U.S. labor force is female (U.S. Department of Labor, 2013), but many factors, including career choices account for the gender gap in pay and career advancement for women. The gap between men's and women's wages in the U.S. has not changed much over the past twenty years. In terms of women of color, in 2011, African American women made 69.5 percent of men's salaries, Asian American women 84.8 percent and Latinas 60.2 percent (National Committee on Pay Equity, 2013). Over the course of a lifetime, this pay gap becomes substantial and eventually even lowers a woman's Social Security benefits.

Many factors including horizontal and vertical employment segregation account for these differences in earnings. **Horizontal segregation** means that many women still tend to work in fields that have been long considered predominately female and traditionally pay less money such as social services, child care, teaching, retailing, and office administration. As Exhibit 3-1 illustrates, even today too few college educated women prepare for jobs by majoring in the STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) fields which are not only lucrative but have

Most Popular College Majors for Women	Majors with the Highest Earnings for Women	Majors with the Lowest Earnings for Women
1. Business	1. Pharmaceutical Science	1. Psychology
2. Health Professions	2. Information Sciences	2. Early Childhood
3. Social Sciences & History	3. Chemical Engineering	3. Theology
4. Education	4. Computer Science	4. Human Services
5. Psychology	5. Electrical Engineering	5. Social Work

Sources: Forbes.com & Georgetown University Center Education and the Workforce on Business Insider.com (2011)

EXHIBIT 3-1

high future employment demands. Between 2010 and 2011, the number of women in computer-related positions actually dropped 8 percent while men's employment in this field increased 16 percent and the number [of] female Chief Information Officers declined from 11 percent to 9 percent (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2012).

Research conducted by Gartner, a high tech think tank, found that technology teams with greater gender diversity exhibited more creativity and better problem solving techniques (Harris, Morello, & Raskino, 2007). Yet, a study commissioned by the National Center for Women in Information & Technology found that 56 percent of women in high-tech leave their organizations at the mid-career level after ten to twenty years experience. The reasons most often given were subtle bias, gender pay gaps, lack of role models or mentors, isolation, and family work-life balance issues (Simard, Henderson, Gilmartin, Schiebinger, & Whitney, 2011).

Former Harvard President, Larry Summers once publicly remarked that innate differences between men and women might explain why men tend to dominate science and engineering. The furor that followed his remarks led many colleges to re-examine the standing of women in the sciences and eventually contributed to Mr. Summer's resignation! In contrast, IBM took a more active and progressive approach and designed a program to encourage women to enter the STEM fields.

Best Practices

EX.I.T.E (Exploring Interests in Technology and Engineering)

To encourage young women to prepare for careers in the STEM fields, in 1999 IBM developed the concept of a week-long summer camp where learning about science and technology is presented in engaging ways to middle school girls. Since its inception, over 10,000 girls have participated and 85 percent of the graduates said that they were interested in pursuing a career in science and or engineering. Today, the camps are held all over the world. There are even special sessions for girls with handicaps. Instruction is hands-on, fun, and collaborative. Executives from IBM as well as other technology companies and local college professors participate and serve as role models.

Sources: www.pacer.org/stexite/camp.asp; www.ccnmag.com/article/ibm_exite_camps

In contrast, **vertical segregation** occurs in the workplace when both genders are working in the same industries, but men are perceived as being more capable, skillful and qualified for the better paying and more upwardly mobile line positions (like sales, branch management, etc.), than women (Charles & Grusky, 2004).

Vertical segregation reinforces the idea that women are suited for lower level roles with less responsibility rather than professional and managerial roles within the same occupational category because they possess certain innate characteristics (passivity, nurturance, emotional sensitivity, for example) or because they have less cognitive capability or fewer higher-level skills compared to men. (Reeves, 2010, p. 18)

In 2012 the American Association of University Women conducted a study of 15,000 college graduates. This research revealed that even one year after graduation, women were already

making only 82 percent of their male classmates' salaries, even though the women earned higher college grades. Comparing male and female graduates in the same occupations, finds that gaps still exist. Women in teaching earned 89 percent of male salaries, in business 86 percent, and in sales 77 percent. These differences are attributed to discrimination and women's inability to confidently negotiate better starting salaries (Corbett & Hill).

Even in a traditionally female occupation, like nursing, males often earn higher salaries and receive more promotions. The 2010 census revealed that males account for only 10 percent of the total number of full-time registered nurses in the United States. Yet, the average salaries of males were still 9 percent higher than female full-time nurses within the same specializations and 16 percent higher overall. Further analysis of the data revealed that male nurses made some interesting career choices that may somewhat account for these gaps. They tended to be in the highest paying specializations, like anesthesiology, worked more night shifts, and were more apt to obtain doctoral degrees that led to promotions (Casselmann, 2013).

THE GENDER GAP AND LEADERSHIP

Economists at Stanford University and the University of Chicago estimate that between 1960 and 2008 much of U.S. productivity growth could be attributed to removing the legal barriers that prevented women from achieving their workforce potential (Wessel, 2013). Yet, in 2013, only 17 percent of Fortune 500 CEOs were female. Some research concludes that male and female leadership styles do differ somewhat and that males tend more towards a **transactional**, i.e., goal-directed leadership style in contrast to women's tendencies towards a more **transformational**, i.e., relationship-oriented, consensus-building leadership style. However, a 15 year study of gender differences in management concluded that "female managers are no more inclusive or democratic than men when making workplace decisions" (Williamson, 2013, p. 1). Clearly, there are many individual exceptions to these generalizations and "there is little evidence to suggest that one sex or the other is more effective leading" (Powell, 2010, p.142).

Traditionally, women's inability to advance into higher level positions is described as "hitting a **glass ceiling**", i.e., having a career progression that goes only so far, usually to mid-level management positions and then stops. While there are personal and organizational factors that do limit women's careers, and some exceptional women do make considerable progress, it is usually a more complicated process than it is for men. Eagly and Carli (2007) describe this type of career trajectory more as a **labyrinth**, or indirect uneven path that requires women to develop a leadership style that integrates assertiveness with nurturing for career progression.

It is an unfortunate fact of life that women often do not have parity with men in the workplace or in the highest ranks of power. Certainly, there are a few outliers, who are able to break through the barriers, but there are still too many places and circumstances where crucial decisions are made and women are absent. (Guthrie, 2012, p. 1)

In spite of all the progress that women have made, there is still a very real perception by many that women are not as effective as leaders as men. Consequently, women still face considerable prejudice in business and politics. When women's leadership styles differ from men's, it contributes to a perception that women are less qualified when in fact they may be equally or even more qualified.

In her best-selling book, *Lean In: Women, Work, and the Will to Lead*, Sheryl Sandberg, COO of Facebook, argues that the absence of women in economic and political leadership occurs because many women are not assertive enough and willing to take career risks. For example,

*Global Notes.....Asia**Women in Asian Businesses*

- In China, 74 percent of the female population is in the workforce. In contrast, only one-third of Indian women work outside of the home.
- Publically traded Asian corporations with no female board members averaged a 15 percent return on equity for 2007–2009 while those with the highest proportion of female board members, averaged a 22 percent return on equity.
- Women hold a third of the senior management jobs in Southeast Asia. This compares with 24 percent in Europe and 18 percent in North America.

(Chu & Ramstad, 2012).

men will apply for jobs for which they are minimally qualified, while women often will only have the confidence to risk applying when they are 100 percent qualified. In addition, in a patriarchal society, males are expected to be ambitious and assertive and are rewarded for demonstrating these qualities while women often are criticized and/or not supported when they behave in the same manner. She compares these gender differences to running a marathon.

Men and women arrive at the starting line equally trained and fit. You could argue, based on educational attainment, that the women are more trained and fit but at least equal. Think of a career like a marathon: long, grueling, ultimately rewarding. What voices do the men hear from the beginning? 'You've got this. Keep going. Great race ahead of you.' What do the women hear from day one out of college? 'You sure you want to run? Marathon's really long. You're probably not going to want to finish.' (B. Sandburg, p. 100)

Conversational style differences between genders can also reinforce a perception of men as being stronger leaders. Many men have a tendency to talk in a more assertive conversational style that includes tendencies to interrupt, question in an interrogating manner, and be more direct in their speech patterns. In contrast, more women tend to favor a communication pattern where they speak in shorter bursts, ask questions instead of making more positive statements, are more indirect, etc. (Tannen, 1990).

From studies describing gender differences in leadership styles, a number of challenges emerge. If women don't promote themselves, they can be considered as too passive. If women do highlight their achievements, they can be perceived as aggressive and selfish, particularly by other women.

TIME GAP

Only 20 percent of the U.S. households with children now have a working father and stay at home mother. Yet, women are still responsible for more of the household and childcare tasks than men. A high-level career often implies frequent travel, job relocations, and the 60+ hour work week, all of which complicate personal and family relationships, and imply that there is support at home to provide child care, cook, clean, and do laundry. According to the (2012) U.S. Labor Department's Time Use Survey, married men in households with children spent 16 minutes a day on housework while women spent 52 minutes. In the 2010 Women Matter—Women at the Top of Corporations: Making it Happen report issued by McKinsey & Company,

57 percent of the female respondents cited balancing work and domestic responsibilities as the number one barrier to their getting to the top levels of management.

In the U.S., it is estimated that approximately half of the women who have achieved corporate-level positions do not have children. Interestingly, when men have a family it implies stability while for women it is too often considered by their employers to be more of a distraction. The demands of ambitious careers, the lack of balance within male-female obligations at home, and the stereotypes that still persist may take a personal toll on women's decision whether they will pursue an ambitious career. This choice is a difficult one and may involve giving up some things that are more important to a woman. For professional women, it's unusual not to step off the career fast track at least once. With family demands, many women feel they have little choice but to give up their demanding careers. In order to avoid the waste of educated talent, business leaders and the federal government need to establish new policies to support working parents and assist in improved work-life balance.

Best Practices

McKinsey & Co. the global consulting firm, noticed that they were losing a significant number of highly-qualified new mothers just about the time that these women were eligible for partnership status. In an attempt to stop this talent drain, McKinsey adopted innovative policies and practices to retain these employees. For example, they

- Established a Mother's Network to coach and support new mothers.
- Initiated a "phase back" program that offers reduced work hours following a maternity leave.
- Published a "Laptops and Lullabies" guide with tips for balancing work-life responsibilities.

Fathers are not forgotten at McKinsey & Company either. Their paternity leave policies also earned the organization a place on *Working Mother* magazine's list of the "10 Best Companies for Paternity Leave" (Adapted from mckinsey.com).

THE MENTORING GAP

Having a mentor who can guide and coach an employee to grow and develop has long been associated with achieving career success. However, a 2010 Catalyst study of 4100 1996–2007 MBA graduates from elite universities, found that there were gender differences in the types of mentoring that males and females received. While many women receive career advice and guidance from a mentor, men are more apt to be actively "sponsored" by their mentors, also mostly male, more senior in rank, and willing to actively use their own social capital to further their mentee's careers.

Although women need to cultivate their social capital by networking more with colleagues and finding mentors/sponsors, who can help them achieve success, it is a more complex process than it is for men. Besides the potential of sexual harassment, there are far fewer females in higher positions to be mentors than there are in mid-career positions that need mentors. In addition, 2011 survey of 1,000 working women by the American Management Association revealed that 95% of the respondents said that they had been undermined by another woman at work

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(Drexler, 2013). This behavior is referred to as the "Queen Bee Syndrome" which essentially means that women who have achieved positions of power in male-dominated environments may fear competition from other women and actively work to undermine them.

While white women at least gain some benefit from the unearned privilege of being white, women of color have to deal with the additional difficulties of finding mentors interested in working with them and the intersection of racism and sexism. Latinas often do better than Latino men in the workforce but few are found on corporate boards or on the executive level (Floyd, 2003). Asian American women who exhibit the influences of Confucian values, such as humility and harmony, often do not fit the American business expectation of assertiveness and self-promotion (Eagly & Karu, 2001).

African American women are too different from white women to benefit from their shared gender status and too different from Black men to benefit from their shared race. Hence, women of color who strive for leadership positions are different from those who are also different—white women and African American men. (Sanchez-Hucles & Davis, 2010, p. 174)

CONCLUSION

The percentage of high-powered women in the world remains diminutive compared to their male counterparts and it is not improving as fast as most people imagine. Power requires influence in the global marketplace as well as economic and cultural clout. In its annual power rankings, *Forbes* magazine compares individuals based on global visibility and economic impact as well as the size of the economic area over which they have influence. Only one woman, Angela Merkel, Chancellor of Germany, is listed in the top ten on the 2012 list. Two years ago there were two women in the top ten.

There can be no denying that women have made progress over the last twenty-five years. Women now sit on the Supreme Court, run for president and fight in combat. Overt sexual behavior in the workplace is less tolerated and a small percentage of women have successfully entered corporate management. Concern exists however, that the publicity around these successes leads to an illusion that issues around inequality based on gender no longer exist. While blatant cases of gender discrimination are becoming less prevalent, there is nothing to gain and a lot to lose, by keeping so many women, particularly women of color, out of positions of authority. While the causes are complicated, the statistics make it clear that women still have a long way to go to narrow the gaps in leadership and power. That doesn't mean that gender inequity has vanished. It has just gone underground and become more subtle.

Most organizations have been created by and for men and are based on masculine values. Even though educated women entered the workforce by the thousands in the last twenty years and added great value, the definition of what makes an effective leader is still associated more with male behaviors such as toughness, aggressiveness, and decisiveness and less with what are considered as the more female characteristics of teamwork and relationship building. Perhaps, part of the challenge is in convincing others in management to mentor women and to appreciate the positive elements of their different styles.

The challenge society faces is that gender discrimination has existed for thousands of years. One of the greatest obstacles to change is that dominant groups hardly ever see the issues of the subordinate groups as theirs. Diversity is the engine that drives originality and creativeness and gender is part of that diversity. To be effective in today's global marketplace, business organizations must fully utilize their talent pool and commit to advancing all groups of employees.

WHEN WOMEN DO LEAD: GENDER BIAS 2013 STYLE

Carol P. Harvey
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What challenges do women who make it through the glass ceiling face today and are these worth the price they pay to get there? While it is easy to assume that previous generations of women have broken down the barriers, and that females are now accepted as equals judged only on their competence, the experiences of Dr. Barbara McManus illustrates that gender bias and sexism are alive and well for women in leadership positions.

Dr. McManus had an Ivy League education, was a highly published author, held a full professorship at a major university, and after twenty years of service became the chief of anesthesia in 2000 at a world-class teaching hospital in a major U.S. city. Widowed at a young age, she also raised three children alone. Her achievements defied the statistics for women in medicine. According to the Association of American Medical Colleges, the number of female physicians is steadily increasing with 30.4% of physicians now being female. However, women tend to choose specialties like pediatrics (58%), and obstetrics and gynecology (48%) and are rarer in specialties like surgery (9.9%) and anesthesiology (22%) with very few female physicians serving in leadership roles heading major clinical departments like Dr. McManus (2010).

In 2001 Dr. Thomas Crowley was appointed as Chief of Surgery and Dr. McManus' problems began. Crowley was an excellent surgeon but had a reputation for being sexist, fond of making derogatory comments about female doctors' abilities and was known to be uncomfortable working with strong women. He said that he preferred to hire residents and male doctors who were light skinned, made comments about the breasts of foreign women and said that he felt that women should not be surgeons. When a female surgeon was on maternity leave, Dr. Crowley took away her secretarial support and operating room locker, and then refused to reinstate these when she returned.

Dr. McManus experienced comparable sexist treatment. Dr. Crowley slammed doors in her face, ignored her in staff meetings and even replied to male colleagues instead of to her when she spoke. When she was on a sabbatical leave in 2007, Crowley attempted to have Dr. McManus fired and when that failed, he tried to demote her.

Although Dr. McManus repeatedly complained to the CEO of the hospital, Daniel Harris, about this sexist behavior and the differences between the way that Dr. Crowley treated male and female physicians, Harris dismissed her complaints, telling her that she had "created a culture of whining" and told her that "Tom couldn't help himself." Since the CEO is unwilling to support her, Dr. McManus needs to decide what she will do next.

THE PARADOX OF MALE PRIVILEGE: TOWARD A GENDER DEMOCRACY & DEMOCRATIC MANHOOD

Steven D. Farough
Assumption College

How could it be that men continue to have such economic success in an era where women now outnumber men in college and have substantial achievements in the business world? How could it be that despite their continued success, men wind up with a shorter life span and a higher rate of depression than women? In short, it is the paradox of male privilege. Men maintain their advantages in an era where women appear to be outpacing men, but men ultimately lose from a system that has allowed them to win unparalleled wealth, power, and prestige. Of course, paradoxes are confusing. They leave people baffled at the appearance of two seemingly irreconcilable trends. In the absence of an explanation, paradoxes often polarize us into one camp or the other, creating a dynamic where people angrily talk past one another with no hope of resolution: "Men are privileged! Men are victims, too!" However, when one can understand the underlying logic of this paradox it can lead to not only greater insight but to new ways of living our lives as men and women. It is the goal of this article to highlight the paradox of male privilege and offer men (and women) a different way to approach gender, work, and identity in the 21st century. Despite the advantages men generally possess, it is in their best interests to give them up.

Being caught between advantage and disadvantage often leaves men unsure what to think. Although less pervasive, there still is an expectation that men should be the primary breadwinners for their families and climb up the occupational ladder. On the other hand, women continue to succeed in high-powered jobs that challenge the belief that men should be the primary income earner. For some men, it might feel like the tables have finally tipped in favor of women. During the Great Recession, men were at first hit harder than women, where from 2007 to 2009 men lost almost 75% of the total number of jobs (Cauchon, 2009). In fact, at one point the front page of *USA Today* read, "Women Gain in Historic Job Shift."

This trend has motivated intellectual Reihan Salam (2009) to call the economic downturn a "he-cession," and make the bold proclamation that we are now going through an epochal shift in gender relations where men will no longer dominate the US economy in the 21st century. As Salam (2009) points out, the greatest areas of job loss in the recession lie in finance and home construction, two occupations where men have been dominant. However, it goes deeper than that, according to Salam: characteristics like risk and overconfidence were keys to driving the success and massive failure of Wall Street and the housing bubble—and these attributes

are strongly embedded into the identity of masculinity. Risk and overconfidence have sent the economy into the worst recession since the Great Depression. Many of us now look back at the brazen use of sub-prime mortgages and seemingly endless leveraging by brokers and financiers with contempt and bewilderment. Have the implicit macho ethics of risk and overconfidence left men in the dust of wild, laissez-faire capitalism as our economy continues to trend toward a more feminized service economy and a more careful, regulated system? For some like Salam, the answer is yes.

As many of us know, women are just as capable as men of taking risks and being overconfident, but such practices are so strongly associated with masculinity that they create a palpable feel that these are things only men do. If both men and women can engage in such behaviors, then why are these behaviors so strongly linked to men in the work world? The answer to this question lies in how gender impacts our occupational structure.

DOMINANT MASCULINITY

Although in every culture there is a variety of ways one can be a man, some forms of manhood are perceived as more legitimate or "real" than others. Sociologists who study masculinity would argue that culturally legitimate forms of masculinity should be seen as dominant masculinity, a gender identity that allows those men who abide by its behaviors to have greater access to power and wealth. In the United States, dominant masculinity is defined by its ability to excel at competition and risk, be self-assured, withhold emotions, possess physical strength, have control over the situations men inhabit, be the breadwinners of families, and not act feminine or be gay (Connell, 1995; Kimmel, 2006; Messner, 1997). Embedded in all of these characteristics lies the expectation that in the US, masculinity needs to be consistently proven, which, according to sociologist Michael Kimmel (2006) is rooted in the competitive, capitalist ethos and frontier mentality of the nation in the 18th and 19th centuries. Whether in the emerging industrial economy or on the frontier, manhood was deemed successful in the US when men could master tough terrain and accumulate wealth. Anything less than that left men grasping for this masculine ideal. Of course, the idealization of American masculinity in this nascent country was only for white men. African American men were either enslaved or oppressed through Jim Crow segregation; Native American men were killed or concentrated into reservations; and Mexican American and Asian American men were segregated into menial labor.

What is particularly striking is how the history of a competitive, frontier-based masculinity plays out even today. Indeed, it correlates strongly with some of the key strategies for success in American enterprise today: competition, risk, confidence, and withholding of emotions are all practices that many in the business world expect of their employees. The outcome of this widespread use of masculinity results in the gendering of work, where the key jobs and strategies for success are deeply linked to manhood (Hochschild, 2003; Pierce, 1995; U.S. Department of Labor, 2006). For instance, to achieve financial and professional success, lawyers are expected to be intimidating and aggressive (Pierce, 1995). Bill collectors are expected to deflate the status of truant clients through intimidation (Hochschild, 2003). Car salesmen are supposed to use their wits to get customers to purchase an automobile for more than it is really worth. Stockbrokers' confident and assertive sales pitches are designed to hide the reality of substantial risk to clients and are imbued with a culture of dominant masculinity. This dominant form of masculinity has provided untold wealth, power, and prestige for men as a group, and it is clearly woven into their identities. Men prove their masculinity by acting competitively and forcefully in the business world, just as they did on the frontier and in industry.

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Rhode, 199

In defining masculinity so strongly with work, this cultural norm also did something else: it created an environment that is hostile to women entering the workplace, as masculinity in the US is defined in strict opposition to femininity. The growth of the industrial economy and the development of the frontier organized the ideal family structure in a new way. Prior to industrialization, the US economy was largely agricultural, where both men and women were involved in economic production. As industrialization emerged, economic production left the family farm for the factory, and masculinity followed. Men were expected to work outside the home while women were expected to work within it (Coontz, 1992). The net result is a cultural definition of manhood that links it to work, and views women's progress in the work world as an attack against masculinity itself. The ideological rationale is simple: women entering a space so strongly associated with masculinity threatens manhood itself. Although the anti-women attitude is changing and many individual men are not threatened by the progress made by women, this ideology of dominant American manhood creates a situation where men continue to receive both economic and psychological advantages. Dominant masculinity may be a stereotype, but it is a very powerful one that has perpetuated the history of American manhood.

Despite some who have called the emerging era one where women will have greater power than men, there are three key structural issues that continue to benefit men in the Great Recession and into the foreseeable future: workplace segregation, continued discrimination against women, and the structure of the American family.

PRIVILEGES OF DOMINANT MASCULINITY

The success of women in education and the economy has not prevented men—particularly white men—from maintaining disproportionate access to power and resources. Men continue to earn more than women, whether they have a high school degree or graduate degree (U.S. Department of Labor, 2007). Men are also overrepresented in the decision-making processes of business and government. Men constitute over 75 percent of chief executives, 70 percent of surgeons, and 73 percent of computer and math occupations (US Department of Labor, 2006). The same holds true with elected officials. In 2008, 84 percent of Congress and Senate were men and almost 77 percent of state legislatures were men (Center for American Women and Politics, 2008). The data clearly demonstrate that men continue to be disproportionately represented in key positions of power. As for the “he-cession,” men are faring far better than women during the recovery (Kochhar, 2012). Still, these data tell us nothing about why men are overrepresented in high-ranking positions.

Upon closer examination of these generalized patterns, the data unequivocally demonstrate that men, particularly white men, possess a whole set of advantages when compared with equally qualified white women and people of color. Research shows that people envision successful managers as men (Willemssen, 2002). Men experience greater upward mobility than women (Glass Ceiling Commission, 1995). Men have greater access to and control over networks for employment, and they also have better access to mentoring relationships (Lorber, 1994). Federal government data on employment discrimination note that white men are the least likely to experience discrimination in the workplace (Reskin, 1998). In higher education, where it is noted that women now earn the majority of bachelor's degrees, men continue to earn more after graduation in part because of this continued discrimination.

The inequality in earnings of men and women also has to do with the structure of the American family and sex segregation in the workplace (Cohen, 2004; Cohen & Huffman, 2004; Rhode, 1997). Although changing, men's family roles continue to place men in positions as the

primary income earners, whereas women continue to be forced into work that is more compatible with family life (Cohen, 2004; Rhode, 1997). This gender role assignment contributes to the gender segregation of the workforce. As seen above, men constitute the overwhelming majority of CEOs and physicians, as well as engineers (U.S. Department of Labor, 2006). In more “family friendly” occupations like elementary school teachers, nurses, and secretaries, women constitute over 80 percent of those employed (U.S. Department of Labor, 2006). Men are clustered into high status jobs and women into lower status occupations.

Women have made significant inroads into the work world, but they still run into the glass ceiling. This results in greater difficulty in gaining access to higher paying jobs dominated by men (Glass Ceiling Commission, 1995). In male-dominated occupations, women experience sexual harassment (Andersen, 2006). Also, it is more difficult for women to move up into higher positions due to an alienating “male culture,” because of a lack of network contacts, and/or fewer mentoring relationships (Lorber, 1994; Pierce, 1995). Women can face the “mommy track” as well, which is the practice of not hiring or promoting women during their childbearing years (Lorber, 1994; Stone, 2006). Even in women dominated occupations such as teaching, social work, and library sciences, men are often pushed up into better paying administrative jobs (Williams, 2004).

In addition to the glass ceiling problem, women continue to be the primary caregivers of children, making it more difficult for women to move up the occupational ladder than men (Stone, 2006). Even with passage of the 1993 Family and Medical Leave Act, legislation designed to allow workers to take unpaid time away from their jobs, only full-time employees working for organizations with more than 50 employees are covered. Ironically, more men are capable of taking advantage of this legislation because they are more often in full-time positions. Still, only between one and seven percent of eligible men take advantage of the legislation (Rhode, 1997).

Some might argue that men and women freely choose family roles and occupations. However, the choices men and women make are the result of gender inequality, not a cause. Discriminatory practices and structural constraints limit women’s chances for upward mobility and occupational choice. As one prominent philosopher said, “[People] make history, but they do not make it just as they please” (Marx, 1999/1882: 42). Such data also fly in the face of Affirmative Action critics who claim white men are the “new minority” and experience “reverse discrimination.” Even though there is variation in terms of race, class, and sexuality, when it comes to access to power and resources, white men continue to do very well when compared to women. They are not the “new minority” and experiences of reverse discrimination are extraordinarily rare, although highly publicized (Reskin, 1998).

Men have lost big in the Great Recession, but the economic downturn has yet to alter the gendered patterns of the economy and family structure. In a world where masculinity is so strongly associated with work and so opposed to femininity, one should not assume that men would want to give up these advantages. This is not because all men are power hungry; it is because masculine identity is so strongly connected to work and so opposed to femininity. Although the machismo of dominant masculinity clearly has its shortcomings, dominant masculinity is something familiar to men and has provided many a sense of connection to something larger than themselves. To break up the paradox that surrounds American manhood there needs to be both a case made for why men should step away from something that feels like a fundamental part of their identity and a viable alternative that will still allow them to have a sense of self worth. Without an alternative, men who are asked to leave behind dominant masculinity will likely balk.

NEGATIVE CONSEQUENCES OF DOMINANT MASCULINITY

Given the privileges of masculinity already mentioned, some men might ask themselves why on earth they would want to give up such a wide range of advantages. These structural benefits are no doubt seductive to many men.

Accompanying these advantages comes a range of negative consequences for men who invest in dominant masculinity. Public health data clearly show some of the problems. The average life span for men is 71.3 years, but for women it is 78.3 years (Sabo, 2004). Men are more likely to develop heart disease, have accidents, and be victims of violent crime and homicide than women (Sabo, 2004). There are multiple reasons for these differences, but one key factor is the investment in dominant masculinity. Men who buy into it must engage in elaborate techniques of withholding their feelings and engage in behavior that puts them at greater physical risk (Sabo, 2004). To be a "man" is to deny physical pain, which can result in a failure to notify doctors of potentially life-threatening ailments. If one desires to be a "real man," one should be prepared for an early death.

Men who withhold their feelings suffer psychologically. They experience higher rates of depression and suicide than women. They also have more emotionally shallow relationships with families and friends—and they run the risk of watching their children grow up from a distance (Sabo, 2004). Men who cannot fit into dominant masculinity also suffer. Often denied access to living wages or control over their environment, working class men, men of color, and gay men often cannot fit fully into dominant masculinity, leaving them subject to critiques of their self-worth. Dominant masculinity works as the underlying rationale for men bullying other men who do not conform to this norm. This harassment leaves significant numbers of men marginalized from and scarred by dominant masculinity, which is often white, middle class, and straight. Dominant masculinity makes it more difficult to have a variety of legitimate masculinities in our society. Because dominant masculinity is defined as being superior to femininity (Connell, 1995), men who invest in it suffer from being unable to have more egalitarian and emotionally open relationships with women. It also can result in creating discriminatory work environments. Dominant masculinity can even undermine democracy. Because men receive unearned advantages for being men in the workplace and in political life, it is more difficult for equally qualified women and people of color to be rewarded for their hard work. Clearly, dominant masculinity has negative consequences, leaving men with shorter lives, higher rates of physical ailments, less emotionally fulfilling experiences, and contributes to the undermining of democratic principles. Greater access to power and resources may seem attractive, but when compared with the negative consequences, dominant masculinity becomes more problematic and less desirable.

TOWARD DEMOCRATIC MANHOOD

Although it might be intellectually rational for men to give up their privileges, it may not feel right on an emotional level. Dominant masculinity is not just an abstract concept and its privileges are not merely vague, structural advantages; masculinity is also personal because it gives many men a sense of self-worth and connects them to something larger than themselves. It provides men with a moral bearing and a sense of purpose. Without an alternative to dominant masculinity, calls for change will continue to be met with resistance. However, the culturally viable options to dominant masculinity that exist in our culture lie somewhere in between nonexistent and clichés. Casual analysis of the alternatives in American culture often leaves

many men uncomfortable with what they see. Images of “sensitive New Age guys,” “metrosexuals,” and “girly men” are peppered across the mass media landscape. These images likely evoke the idea of silly men who are overly concerned with their appearance and themselves in general. Think of the 1990s men’s movements such as Robert Bly’s mythopoetic men or the Promise Keepers. In these groups, men headed to all-male retreats in the deep woods and filled football stadiums where they bonded, searched for some primal inner male essence, evoked essentialist gender differences, cried, and professed their commitment to becoming better men who are different from women (Messner, 1997). However, these groups were either too focused on finding some inner male essence or taking back “their” families in the context of patriarchal marriage. The combination of self-absorption and exclusive male bonding did little to realign men in a more democratic trajectory with women (Messner, 1997). The move was inward and left the critique of male privilege largely unchallenged. The great turn inward also left these alternative masculinities ripe for critique and comedy.

What is more, these images of men likely make many people think of men who are overly emotional, undesirable, self-absorbed, and effete. Whereas men were once too macho, they are now seen as too sensitive and self-involved. Although being in touch with feelings can be psychologically healthy, it does little to address the structural inequities that exist between men and women. It also does little to address some of the good parts of dominant masculinity, such as a public commitment to service and sacrifice. The alternative forms of manhood sent men inward to address their feelings instead of also maintaining some kind of useful connection to the public sphere. Alternative manhood also did little to create an egalitarian space with women and men marginalized by dominant masculinity. These outcomes are why criticisms against new men drew from an unlikely partnership between macho men and feminists. From a macho point of view, men like these “new men” are wimps, and from the point of view of feminism, these “new men” are reacting negatively to the gains of women.

Where do men go to find a gender identity if all that appears is polar opposites? I believe that a good starting point lies in what Michael Kimmel (2006) calls democratic manhood. The perspective of democratic manhood envisions “men who are secure enough in their convictions to recognize a mistake, courageous enough to be compassionate, fiercely egalitarian, powerful enough to empower others, strong enough to acknowledge that real strength comes from holding others up rather than pushing them down and that real freedom is not to be found in the loneliness of the log cabin but in the daily compromises of life in a community” (Kimmel, 2006:255). Although seemingly utopian, Kimmel’s democratic manhood imagines a new type of manhood for the 21st century, where men are emotionally connected to others and draws from the belief in equality from the American nation state. Democratic manhood addresses both the psychology and structural privileges of men. Democratic manhood envisions men who are emotionally engaged and yet strong, who are self-reliant but still connected to the community, and who see women as equal partners in the struggle to make the American dream of a more perfect union a reality. In this milieu, masculinity is something men have, but it is not defined in strict opposition to femininity and being gay. Nor does masculinity have to be constantly proven. Under democratic manhood, men are men, period.

In democratic manhood, men are partners who work with women to make the world a better place; that work means being flexible about the roles and tasks men and women take in the world of work and family. In a sense, democratic manhood asks men to be more secure about being men. From this perspective, manhood is recentered from rigid gender roles to a more flexible definition, but a definition that clearly focuses itself in the public sphere and as working with others.

This more flexible and democratic form of manhood will also help to resolve this paradoxical anxiety that some men feel in our gender order. Men who feel threatened by women's success in the labor market see women's success as a threat to their manhood. From this perspective, men are hard-wired to be the breadwinners. However, when men look upon gender relations over the past forty years, they see clear gains by women. In the back of men's heads, they might privately wonder how women can be so successful in the work world when it is supposed to only be for men. And this female success comes while there are clearly still notable disadvantages for women moving up the occupational ladder. If men believe that they are genetically suited for the business world, then they will be unable to resolve the contradictory reality that men are privileged as a group and yet women are gaining fast. Men will be unable to overcome the reality that the privileges of masculinity come at the expense of a fuller human experience.

Democratic manhood breaks through this impasse by realizing that masculinity, and for that matter gender, is largely a social construction, a humanly-created cultural norm that is changeable. Manhood changes along with history and varies across cultures. If masculinity is not a fixed, immutable thing, but something that is changeable, it can then be altered for the greater good. But what would Kimmel's (2006) democratic manhood look like in the real world of gender relations? Democratic manhood's foundation would be centered around egalitarianism and empowerment. The locus of manliness can move from aggression and control to aggressively working toward equality in the American nation-state. This locus shift means focusing on strategies and social policy designed to eliminate the glass ceiling, concentrating on how unequal family obligations lead to gender inequality, and recognizing that occupations are unfairly sex segregated. Democratic manhood is outwardly public in its orientation, but it correlates well with traditional masculine virtues like strength, responsibility and taking care of one's family. Instead of following the logic of strict gender differences and the belief that men are more suited for work than women, democratic manhood asks men to envision being strong, independent providers through the rubric of egalitarianism.

When going to work, men who embody democratic manhood would see women as colleagues who have the potential to make the workplace better. Men would not look at women as impediments to other men who want to provide for their family. Men would see women as partners who are working not just for maximizing profits but to create a better work climate where people get promoted for merit. Because manhood is not defined in strict opposition to anything feminine, democratic manhood would also free up men to feel comfortable with employment that allows men to be with their families more and even put family-centered goals above career goals.

This is where democratic manhood takes egalitarianism into the family and friendships. Despite all the bluster about men being self-reliant under dominant masculinity, these self-reliant men rely heavily on women to take care of them. In marriage, men have and continue to rely on their wives to cook, clean, take care of their children, and massage their egos. This reliance on women allows men to go out into the workforce unencumbered by the significant challenges that are required to take care of a family. In turn, the overreliance on women to take care of families makes it more challenging for women to move up the occupational ladder. The egalitarian aspect of democratic manhood frees up men to take care of themselves and their families while still bringing home a paycheck. If men embrace the idea that families should be equal partnerships, it will free up both men and women to pursue their desired employment, lessen the stereotyping of working-women being a liability due to child-care commitments, and allow both men and women to share in both the joys and challenges of family life. The virtue of self-reliance is merely expanded from the domain of work to include being self-reliant enough to take care of a household and children without a "honey-to-do list."

Clearly, the case for democratic manhood sketched out here only scratches the surface. Some might say that this seems too utopian. Indeed, democratic manhood is utopian—but it is precisely utopian dreams that mobilize people from what haunts them in the here and now to acting on what could be. Moreover, the move toward democratic manhood is already happening; more men are wary of the traditional breadwinner role because they know it keeps them away from their families, and fathers today are far more involved with their children and family life than in the past (Coltrane, 1996; Gersen, 2002). In order for there to be true equality in the workforce between men and women there needs to be a transformation of the relationship between work and family life, and this means that men must work against a social system that has benefitted them for so long. Men do not have to become effete wusses or “sensitive New Age guys.” They do not need to give up sports or hanging out with the guys. But men do not have to define themselves in opposition to women either. They need to become real men who take pride in that longstanding American Dream that we were all created equal. Democratic manhood holds that promise. What kind of man do you want to be? What kind of man do you want to see?

Discussion Questions

1. How do the key characteristics of dominant masculinity privilege men? How do these characteristics hurt men?
2. What other characteristics could be included in dominant masculinity?
3. If dominant masculinity is defined through such characteristics as physical strength, competition, control, and emotional distance, what does this say about femininity?
4. How does democratic manhood encourage men and women to work together against sexism?
5. How viable is democratic manhood as a starting point in helping men and women work together to overcome sexism?
6. If the structure of the traditional family contributes to gender inequality, what can American businesses do so that women have the same chances for upward mobility as men?
7. How could democratic manhood be implemented in American businesses?
8. What can be done to reduce the glass ceiling in American business?

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