

**NEGOTIATING A CAREER IN THE ACADEMY: A
COMPARISON OF DECISIONS, STRATEGIES AND
DEFINITIONS OF SUCCESS AS DEFINED BY FEMALE
AND MALE UNIVERSITY ADMINISTRATORS**

by

Susan Annette Chandler
Bachelor of Arts, University of Victoria
Master of Science, Saint Mary's University

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APPROVAL

Name: Susan Annette Chandler
Degree: Doctor of Education
Title of Thesis: **Negotiating a Career in the Academy: A Comparison of Decisions, Strategies and Definitions of Success as Defined by Female and Male University Administrators.**

Examining Committee:

Chair: **Dr. Geoff Madoc-Jones**
Assistant Professor, Faculty of Education

Dr. Kelleen Toohey, Senior Supervisor
Professor, Faculty of Education

Dr. Cathie Dunlop
Director, Research and Evaluation, Continuing Studies

Dr. Marianne Jacquet
Assistant Professor, Faculty of Education

Dr. Shauna Butterwick, External Examiner
Associate Professor, Department of Educational Studies
University of British Columbia

Date Defended/Approved:

Nov. 21, 2007



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ABSTRACT

The problem of under representation of women in senior ranks of academia persists. The literature posits that at the heart of the issue are masculinist-gendered organizations that remain covertly inhospitable to women, families, and flexible career paths. After 40 years of examination and activism, academic women have not managed to shift the balance of power.

This study asks what we can learn about career negotiation from senior academic administrators who work in places of power. In the first phase of the study, a phenomenological approach was used to interview six academic administrators (three men and three women) about: how their careers unfolded; their experience of negotiating for personal benefit; how they identified career opportunities; how they defined career success; what leadership traits were valued by their organization; what they saw as the rewards and drawbacks of administration; if they had experienced or witnessed gender bias; how they understood organizational power; how they balanced their public and private lives; and, how they saw the problem of under representation being resolved. In the second phase of the study, the experience of an administrative career was viewed through the lens of academic women who were either moving towards or away from such an option.

Three theoretical frames were used to elucidate the research data: 1. Feminist standpoint theory; 2. Charles Taylor's three-axis expansion; and, 3.

Foucault's theory of organizational power. Key findings from the study indicated that although the female administrators differed from their male colleagues in their experience of work/life balance and personal negotiation, in other regards they were remarkably similar. In fact, the female administrators had more in common with their male counter-parts, than with their younger female colleagues. In this study, generation and organizational standpoint influenced perspective more than gender. All the administrators felt that the problem of under representation was largely resolved by virtue of the large number of women entering the academy, and that other more pressing issues, such as how boys are faring in the system, should occupy academic discourse. While the administrative view was that gender equity issues are largely resolved, the literature indicates otherwise.

Keywords: career; negotiation; academic; administrators; gender.

Subject Terms: senior academic administrators; career negotiation; career unfolding; work life balance; gender bias; persistent under representation; gendered organizations.

To Peter

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CHAPTER 1: OVERVIEW

Introduction

I have three university-aged children; all of them are thinking about what career to pursue. My best counsel is to be guided by interest and passion. While I think this is good advice, it also feels inadequate. What I also know, but cannot readily articulate, is that most careers involving people working within some kind of organizational structure take on a complexity that is difficult to describe. The clarity and neatness of the organizational charts reflect nothing of the untidy human interactions that play outside the lines. Human beings vie for power and influence, form alliances, and seek fulfilment.

My curiosity in careers and their unfolding was sparked by own experience as an academic administrator, working in a relatively new organization with a mandate and governance structure oriented towards academic capitalism. At the time of my doctoral research the organization went through significant organizational change and upheaval. What I observed through this change was that the negotiation of position and power seemed to be handled very differently by the women, than by the men. The women seemed unsure about how to negotiate the dance of shifting organizational structures; unclear about position, step, and general choreography. In comparison, the men seemed to move with unconscious ease.

My observations led me to start reading about the persistent under representation of academic women in the senior ranks of the academy. In a 2004 survey sponsored by the Senior Women Academic Administrators in Canada, it was found that women hold only 30% of senior academic positions (Grant, 2005). What one realizes is that it is all too easy to interpret the complexity of under representation through a binary lens of women on one side, and men on the other. The complications of professional life are made more so by the overlay of race, generation, sexual orientation and other aspects of identification. Although it is understood that other aspects of identification may come into play, in this dissertation I am primarily interested in the differences that gender identification¹ produces for senior women and men in the unfolding of their careers in academic settings.

The Problem Stated

In 1885 when Anrie Nathan Meyer (who later became the founder of Bernard College) advised her father that she was intending to pursue higher education, his response was that she would never marry, as “men hate intelligent wives” (Compton, 2005, p. 11). In the past century, attitudes about women and learning have undergone a sea change. From the 1960s to 1980s the debate in the literature revolved around the struggle of professional women to achieve parity (Collins, 1998; DeCastell & Bryson, 1997; Kanter, 1977). The knots of the debate when worried apart identified strands of women’s oppression located in

¹ “Identity is a concept that figuratively combines the intimate or personal world with the collective space of cultural forms and social relations...Identities are a key means through which people care about and care for what is going on around them” (Holland, Lachicotte, Skinner, & Cain, 1998, p. 5).

the structures of patriarchy and capitalism (French, 1994; Harding, 1993); in gendered ways of being and organizing (Maier, 1999; Quina, Cotter & Romenesko, 1998; Tannen, 1995); and in roles and responsibilities related to children and family (Armenti, 2004; Maier, 1999). Women who advocated for change during this time prompted the implementation of maternity and paternity leaves, anti-harassment policies, child support, mentoring programs and so on (Armenti, 2004; Finkel & Olswant, 1996). The increase of women in the academy today is seen by some as proof positive that barriers of discrimination have been removed (Drolet, 2007). According to Statistics Canada (2003), in 2000, 57% of all students at Canadian universities were female. Statistics Canada (2005) also reported that the number of women in full-time university positions increased by 50% between 1990 and 2002. However, these employment figures tell only half the story as most of the women are found in junior positions, with few becoming full professors (Donaldson & Emes, 2000). In 1999, women faculty in Canadian universities constituted 26% of full-time faculty. Of those, 14% were full professors, 31% were associate professors, and 42% assistant professors (Stanley, Robbins & Morgan, 2002). In 2001, the proportion of full-time women faculty had increased to 29%, with 42% in non-tenured positions, 39% on the tenured track, and 22 % tenured (Stanley, Robbins, & Morgan, 2003). Results from a 2004 survey funded by the Senior Women Academic Administrators of Canada (SWAAC) supported these results and found that women still constitute a minority of those holding senior administrative positions at Canadian universities and colleges: women hold approximately 30% of the positions. This

figure has not changed since 2000, when the last SWAAC survey was completed (Grant, 2005).

To get a pictorial sense of the patterns that underlie male and female academic careers we can turn to the work done by Mason and Goulden (2002), who use a human body metaphor to describe employment numbers at the University of California. In their parallel male and female models, the head represents tenure-track or ladder-rank faculty positions, the neck represents the non-regular rank faculty, the shoulders the management, and the torso the staff. The male employment model has a large head, barely any neck, wide shoulders, and a very slim torso. The model for women has a small head, wide neck, sloping shoulders, and large hips.

The problem stated is that after 40 years of examination and activism, academic women have not managed to occupy university administrative positions in the numbers that their undergraduate and graduate participation rates would predict.

Women who are both academics and administrators have been asked to articulate their experiences of working in the academy in various studies (Acker, 2005; Compton, 2005; Aisenberg & Harrington, 1988; Collins, 1981). However, the experiences of men have not been similarly explored. One exception is the work by Currie, Thiele, and Harris (2002) who, in a study of the impact of academic capitalism on the working lives of women, interviewed both sexes. Their work however, is unusual in a field of study that largely brings to the fore the voices of women. What are we to make of this absence of male voices, as

gender roles evolve, and the lines between public and private lives blur? At some points in the past, a line was drawn between one's public and private life; separation was made possible by a clear delegation of roles with men managing the realm of work and women the realm of the domestic. But as gender roles shifted and men are increasingly involved in the day-to-day lives of their families, they are equally impacted by organizational cultures that recognized only the public, at the expense of, the private life. Is it not worthwhile to also understand how men, as well as women, experience gendered organizations?

Gendered organizations are defined in the literature as organizations that have been "created largely by men such that which seems 'normal' and neutral tends to privilege traits that are culturally ascribed to men while devaluing or ignoring those ascribed to women" (Meyerson & Kolb, 2000, p. 563). Gendered organizations are seen as one reason that women, despite equity legislation,² revised recruiting procedures, sexual harassment policies, and mentoring programs, continue to be under-represented in the senior ranks of the academy (Hult, Callister, & Sullivan, 2005). What is rarely noted in the literature is that gendered organizations not only disadvantage women, but also men who have attributes associated with women and femininity (e.g., listening, nurturing, relating), as compared to those skills associated with men and masculinity (e.g., directing, talking, doing) (Meyerson & Kolb, 2000). Although this discrimination is associated with style more than biological sex, the masculine perspective has

² Section 15 (1). Equality Rights. Canadian Human Rights Act.

only occasionally been invited into the debate³ (Currie et al., 2002). The experience of working in gendered organizations has almost exclusively been explored through the voices of women, and I believe we need to broaden that view. There is also value in ascertaining if cultural shifts are taking place in response to current organizational leadership thinking that promotes the benefits of female sensibilities (Mintzberg, 1994; Senge, 1996; Wheatley, 1992). If we talk to both male and female senior administrators who have the benefit of hindsight and experience we can ascertain what it has been like, and is like, to negotiate a career in academic institutions, with long-standing gendered histories (Compton, 2005).

Purpose

The purpose of this research is to explore phenomenologically how male and female administrators experienced and negotiated the unfolding of their careers. Related to this primary question are the sub-questions of how they identified opportunities; defined career success; balanced their public and private lives; understood organizational leadership and power; perceived gender bias in the workplace; understood the persistent under representation of women in the senior ranks, and if, and how, they saw that problem resolving.

This research also explored what we can learn from the perspective of women who are moving towards, or away from, an administrative career. How do these academic women understand career unfolding and negotiation, work/life

³ "In the most basic sense, a feminist is a person – male or female – who believes in equality, especially sex and gender equality" (Ivy & Backland, 2004, p. 39).

balance, career success, leadership, gender bias, organization power, and the resolution of under representation?

Examination of the research results will be guided by three theoretical frames: feminist standpoint theory; Charles Taylor's three-axis expansion theory, and Foucault's analysis of organizational power.

Potential Significance

Christians (2005) claims that the "mission of social science research is enabling community life to prosper – equipping people to come to mutually held conclusions" (p. 151). Christians makes this observation while discussing the ethical theory of feminist communitarianism in which it is argued that moral reasoning is articulated by sharing points of view. "Reciprocal care and understanding, rooted in the emotional experience and not in formal consensus, are the basis on which moral discourse is possible" (Denzin, 1997, p. 277).

The idea of discourse as a vehicle for change is articulated by Zemsky (2001) when discussing the persistent gap between the promise and practice of inclusiveness. The author writes that "telling stories is a way of bringing human experience into the broader realm of institutional culture; it permeates the imaginary barrier that would separate matters of institutional structure from merely personal concerns" (Zemsky, 2001, p. 5). Stories have a way of appealing to us on an emotional level and invite us to empathize with the Other. After reading or hearing a personal story, we return to the debate with an

understanding informed by another perspective, which in turn iteratively changes the dialogue.

It is hoped that this study will contribute to our understanding of: how men and women negotiate careers, how they define career success; how they understand organizational leadership and power; how they balance their public and private lives; and how they understand gender equity issues and discourse. As well, it is hoped this study will shed light on how an administrative career is regarded by academic women either moving away or towards such an option. Ultimately this study will consider how particular organizations are, or could be, structured and encultured so that both men and women can have fulfilling work lives that respect the unique talents and perspectives of each.

The Research Questions

As the focus of this study is on the experience of senior administrators with the phenomenon of career negotiation in the academy, a phenomenological approach was used. As articulated by Moustakas (1994) such an approach: “involves a return to experience in order to obtain comprehensive descriptions that provide the basis for a reflective structural analysis that portrays the essences of the experiences” (p. 13). Consistent with this approach, the research questions focus on the meaning of the experiences of both men and women.

The Key Question and Sub-Questions

From the perspective of male and female university administrators, what is the essential experience of negotiating a career in the academy?⁴

- (a) How did the careers of the administrators unfold?
- (b) What are the administrators' experiences of negotiating for personal benefit in the academy?
- (c) How did the administrators identify and pursue career opportunities?
- (d) How do the administrators define career success?
- (e) What leadership traits or characteristics are valued by their particular organization?
- (f) What are the rewards of an administrative position?
- (g) What are the drawbacks of an administrative position?
- (h) Have the administrators ever experienced or witnessed gender bias in the workplace?
- (i) How do the administrators understand organizational power?
- (j) What have been the administrators' experiences of finding a balance between their public and private lives?
- (k) From the administrators' perspectives, why is it that women are persistently under-represented at the senior levels of the academy? How might this be resolved in the future?
- (l) How is an academic administrative career regarded by academic women either moving towards or away from such an option?

⁴ For the purposes of this study the term "academy" is applied broadly to include post-secondary institutions of higher learning, including: universities, university-colleges and colleges.

Limitations

This study includes male and female senior administrators and academics from the British Columbian post-secondary system. The decision to study a relatively small sample of nine people makes generalization of the results an unreasonable expectation. I do not claim that the experiences of these nine administrators are representative of the Canadian administrative experience. Rather my intention is to contribute to a deepened understanding of how men and women negotiate an academic administrative career, as is consistent with the intent of thick description⁵ and phenomenological methodology. From the perspective of a feminist ethic, the mission of social science research is to “represent multiple voices, enhance moral discernment, and promote social transformation” (Christians, 2005, p. 152). It is hoped this study will fulfil a mission of social transformation, rather than that of generalization.

Organization of the Dissertation

This dissertation is organized into six chapters. Chapter 1 provides an overview of the research problem and questions, the potential significance, and limitations. In Chapter 2 the literature is reviewed and organized into six thematic headings: 1. Family Matters; 2. Career Pipelines versus Pathways (including negotiation styles); 3. Gendered Organizations; 4. The Question of fit; 5. Academic Capitalism, and 6. Organizational Power. In Chapter 3 the method of inquiry, procedure and implementation are outlined. In Chapter 4 an overview of

⁵ A richly detailed report that re-creates a situation and as much of its context as possible, along with the meanings and intentions inherent in the situation” (Gall, Gall and Borg, 2003, p. 639).

each of the participant interviews is provided. Chapter 5 describes the key themes that emerged from the research data. In Chapter 6 the results are discussed in the context of the literature, with implications for practice and future areas of research.

Summary

Prior to undertaking this research, my place of work underwent significant organizational change. Observing how people reacted to, and dealt with, that change, I became interested in how women, compared to men, negotiated their career progression. I began to read about the persistent under representation of women in the senior ranks of the academy, and to wonder why it is that women's increased presence in the academy has not translated into proportionately more women holding leadership positions. This study used a phenomenological approach to explore how male and female academic administrators experience an academic administrative career. The experience of an administrative career is also viewed through the lens of academic women who are either moving towards or away from such an option.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

Thematic Review of the Literature in a Feminist Context

The literature review for this study exploring the perceptions of senior female and male academic administrators has been organized under six thematic headings: 1. Family Matters; 2. Career Pipelines versus Pathways (including negotiation styles); 3. Gendered Organizations; 4. The Question of Fit; 5. Academic Capitalism, and 6. Organizational Power. Some of the studies focus on female academics, others on female academic administrators, and a few on male academic career paths and their organizational experience. For the purposes of this study (which explores the perceptions of male and female academic administrators, and female academics who are either moving toward or away from an administrative career) all perspectives have been included. All of these themes are discussed within the broader context of feminist thinking. The feminist landscape has far-flung horizons and it is not the intent of this study to explore all aspects of its topography. Instead, humanist and gynocentric feminisms are brought to the fore to provide context and perspective for the review of the literature in general, and this study in particular. Following is an overview of humanist and gynocentric feminism, followed by a review of the literature organized according to the six themes stated above.

Humanist and Gynocentric Feminism

Young (2006) claimed that much of the feminist debate of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries was dominated by the idea of humanist feminism, which Young defined as “a revolt against femininity” (p. 175). Humanist feminists argued that women are confined and suppressed by patriarchal requirements, and because of that are denied their full potential. The end goal of equality is to take down the barriers of the patriarchal system so that women have the right to flourish in whatever life they choose. Much of this scholarship is focused on the evolution of patriarchy, comprehensively traced by French (1985) from primal beginnings through ancient Greece and Rome, the Middle Ages and into the present. French argued that patriarchy developed because men and women were faced with different tasks. The role of men was to fight and hunt. The role of women was to take care of children, cook, and build community. Over time, the purpose of the masculine role became associated not just with survival but also with a particular kind of power. Patriarchy, observed French, “holds power (control) to be the highest good, and values qualities that tend to strengthen or sharpen the male image of isolation, individuality, and control” (p. 18). French sketched how life is made very difficult for women living under patriarchy, but also acknowledged that it is a system that also places a burden on men because of the pressure to live up to an iconic ideal of strength, stoicism, and unwavering courage.

De Beauvoir (as cited in Young, 2006), took the analysis of roles one step further and makes the distinction between ‘transcendence’ and ‘immanence’. If

one is transcendent, "one moves out into the world, takes initiative, faces the world boldly, and creates [an] individualized life" (p. 175). In a patriarchal society men with courage, strength and cunning have the freedom go forth and to pursue their lives and goals. Women, on the other hand, are confined to immanence and the designation of "being an object, a thing with an already defined nature lined up within a general category of things with the same nature...women's existence is intended for the reproduction of the species rather than individual existence" (p. 176).

In the context of clearly defined roles, "women's liberation consists of freeing women from the confines of traditional femininity and making it possible for women to pursue the projects that have hitherto been dominated by men" (Young, 2006, p. 176). While de Beauvoir railed against the suppression of women and the squandering of talents and potential of half the human race, she held as a standard masculine attributes valued by patriarchy. In this position are echoes of Plato (1942), who made the case that women were not, by their sex alone, unqualified to be guardians of the republic. For Plato, women, if specifically talented and schooled appropriately, could develop the traits and competencies necessary to become a guardian; but in order to do so they must become like men. Whether or not an individual has achieved full potential is often measured against masculine standards of strength, courage, and 'power over'. To move into patriarchal spheres of influence and activity, therefore, it is argued by Plato that women have to become like men.

Gynocentric feminism views the suppression of women very differently: “Women’s oppression consists not of being prevented from participating in full humanity, but of the denial and devaluation of specifically feminine values and activities in an overly instrumentalized and authoritarian masculinist culture” (Young, 2006, p. 178). Rather than focusing on the barriers that prevent women from fully participating in the bastions of power, gynocentric feminism claims that feminine traditional areas of activity should be equally valued and revered: mothering, nurturing, and fostering community. The gynocentric point of view argues that we must re-think the value we place on societal activities as “the male dominated activities with the greatest prestige in our society – politics, science, technology, warfare, business – threaten the survival of the planet and the human race” (p. 178). The gynocentric perspective assumes that men, just like women, feel the destructive influence of patriarchy in their lives:

In our resentment against feminist criticism, men have missed the vital point. Patriarchy has stolen our hearts and is killing us...patriarchy forces boys into a state of profound emotional disconnection, from self and others. And it is this disconnection that has such tragic consequences for men’s health, their lives and their families. (Sandborn, 2007, p. 5).

In her final comparison of humanist and gynocentric approaches to feminism, Young (2006) claimed that gynocentric feminism, “tends to reject too categorically the value of the activity and ambitions traditionally associated with masculinity” (p. 185). In making the case for the value of traditional feminine spheres of influence and activity (children, community, nurturing) the value of traditional masculine spheres of influence (politics, science, art) are, if not dismissed, downplayed. I would argue that both are equally as important in the

endeavours of humans and the question is not one or the other, but how to do both with greater equality and respect. Yet, in contemporary society, we are still faced with the prospect that activities of the public sphere have the participation of many men and few women. Arguably, this domination is made problematic not by having more of one gender than the other, but by the style associated with the dominant gender. As we will see later in the discussion on gendered organizations, masculine ways of doing things are associated with 'power over' versus 'power to'; self-actualization versus actualization of others; compliance versus commitment; and competition versus collaboration (Maier, 1999). To pick up a point made earlier by Young, as the unmistakable connections are drawn between global competition and exploitation and the demise of the planet, we have to ask ourselves if we need to re-think the imperatives of patriarchy. What then if "feminism turns its back on the centres of power, privilege, and individual achievement that men have monopolized, [if] those men... continue to monopolize them... nothing significant will change" (Young, 2006, p. 185). Feminists cannot bring about change if they do not enter the public sphere and institutions of power. The question becomes how they do so without compromising feminist ontology: "Without being willing to risk such co-optation," concluded Young, "feminism can be only a moral position of critique rather than a force for institutional change" (p. 185).

As we begin to review the literature and what it has to say about the persistent under representation of women in the senior ranks of academic

administration, we will see that while a feminist ethos informs the research and thinking, there is no clear consensus on either the problem or possible solutions.

Family Matters

In 1974, Cosier described a type of organization that makes total claims on the lives of the employees. Cosier depicted these places of work as, "greedy institutions, insofar as they seek exclusive and undivided loyalty and they attempt to reduce the claims of competing roles and status positions on those they wish to encompass within their boundaries. Their demands on the person are omnivorous" (p. 4). One group of theorists have subsequently argued that such organizations are designed around a masculine career model that is inhospitable to women because the need to balance work with family is not accommodated (Aisenberg and Harrington, 1988; Grant, Kennelly, & Ward, 2000; Mason & Goulden, 2002).

Using employment data at the University of California from 1973 to 1999, Mason and Goulden (2002) tested the theory that the workplace structure of the university does not accommodate families with children. Specifically, their research examined family formation and its effects on the careers of both women and men academics from the time they received their doctorates until 20 years later. They found a consistent and large gap in achieving tenure between women and men who have early babies (defined as a baby who joins the household prior to five years after his or her parents completes a PhD). Women with early babies were 24% less likely to achieve tenure than their male counterparts. The authors

hypothesized that women who have their babies early in their careers need to accommodate not only the commitment of raising a child, but also high job demands and high job insecurity. In comparison, women who attained tenure across the disciplines were unlikely to have children in the household. In their study, 62% of tenured women in the humanities and social sciences, and 50% of those in the sciences did not have children (p. 23). In contrast, only 39% of tenured men in social sciences and humanities, and 30% of those in the sciences did not have children (p. 24). Other quantitative studies confirm that behind the numbers is the view held by female faculty that children complicate, if not jeopardize, the opportunity for tenure. Finkel and Olswang (1996) surveyed 124 female assistant professors and reported that children were seen by the participants as a detriment to tenure. Such fears are not unwarranted. A quantitative survey by McElrath (1992) of 300 male and female faculty showed that when women interrupt their careers or change academic jobs, "the effects on tenure are substantial; the probability of obtaining tenure decreases and the length of time to tenure increases" (p. 9).

Some of the results of a study by Nakhaie (2002) ran counter to these findings when 'the number of publications', rather than 'the years to tenure', were used as the measure of career progression and success. The study, which analyzed a large Canadian national survey of professors, found that gender differences in publication (female academics publishing less than male academics) were largely accounted for by differences in rank, years since PhD,

discipline, type of university and time set aside for research (Nakhaeie, 2002). Although female academics did on average publish less than their male counterparts, one interesting finding was that married men and women published more than unmarried men and women. The author speculated that there may be advantages for academic women in having a family. They were of the opinion that female academics, more often than male academics, might have partners who were informed about their research topic and could provide support and feedback.⁶ They also noted that, while “single women may not be able to socialize and establish networks in a male-dominated community of academics, married academic women may socialize and network without being stigmatized or seen as threatening” (p. 173). The author did qualify this perceived advantage with the acknowledgement that her study did not include measures of gendered aspects of family responsibility (Nakhaie, 2002).

The struggle experienced by academic women of balancing children with work is explored qualitatively by Armenti (2004) in a study that involved in-depth interviews with 19 women professors from various faculties and positions at one Canadian university. The research examined the obstacles to stable employment encountered by women professors when they chose to have children. Many of the women told stories about hiding their pregnancies or having their children in the month of May so as not to disrupt the teaching schedules, which they believed would jeopardize their careers. Many of the women also recognized the risks to having children before obtaining tenure, and so delayed pregnancy until

⁶ Arguably, the speculation that female academics required the support of their male partners to successfully engage in research is based on a frame of reference outside of feminist thinking.

after tenure. One of the participants commented that, "if you look through the university you will find very few women who have children. There are women, but they are single or they wait until they're tenured to have their children" (p. 12). From this study, Armenti concluded that expectations for the academic career path neglected to take into account the female life trajectory.

In a 2002 biographical study, Raddon used a feminist post-structuralist framework of discursive analysis to explore the ways in which women academics with children were positioned and positioning within the complex and often contradictory discourses surrounding the 'successful academic' and the 'good mother'. Raddon interviewed Susan, an academic woman with a partner and young child, who juggled multiple roles and moved between the public and private spheres of home and work. Raddon used a biographical approach to "highlight the 'discursive reconstruction' that takes place within the interview – the individual's attempt to impose an orderliness, a shape, on a life which is essentially irrecoverable" (2002, p. 389). What emerges from the narrative is a series of conflicted but equally powerful discourses; for example, the 'successful academic' was described as devoting all of their time and energy to the university; establishing and maintaining networks both in and out of work hours; building a reputation through research. A competing, but equally powerful discourse is that of the 'good mother' who is selfless, subordinate, and caring, and who can have a job, but it cannot take precedence over family considerations (Raddon, 2002). The contradictions between these two discourses often collided and created in Susan feelings of guilt when she was not

putting her daughter first; and she was often times fatigued by the constant juggling of roles. At the conclusion of this study, Raddon argued that if women with children were to be better accommodated in the academy, a cultural shift was necessary, and that the best way to bring about such a change was for individuals to “engage reflexively to rework the meanings attached to being a ‘successful academic’ and a ‘good parent’”. Furthermore, this involved developing a reflexive understanding of the multiplicity of ways in which we/others position and are positioning ourselves/others” (p. 399). By surfacing the assumptions about what it is to be a successful academic as a first step, the second step will be to transform the values and cultures of academic life.

Career Pipelines versus Pathways

The “traditional” academic career follows a clearly articulated series of steps that lead from a faculty position to full professorship that in turn leads through the office of the provost to the presidency (Aleman & Renn, 2002; Vaughan, 1990). The straight-ahead career path followed by most male college and university presidents has been documented by such researchers as Green (1988) and Vaughan (1990). In comparison, female college presidents when interviewed describe their career paths as progressive (moving to positions of greater responsibility over time) but serendipitous (not necessarily following a “traditional” academic career path) (Switzer, 2006). In Switzer’s study, the majority of female college presidents, like their male counter-parts, started their careers with a faculty position.

The importance of the faculty position as a key access point is confirmed by Roberson (1998) who surveyed 268 academic women to explore how women access the ranks of senior level administration in higher education. Roberson (1998) concluded that the majority of women followed career paths that resembled a variation of paths rather than a traditional route. Evidence indicated that the path became rocky for women when they attempted to traverse the path from faculty to full professorship. Similarly, a report from Duke University documents that women were blocked both at the assistant professor entrance level, and at the levels of full professor and senior administrative leadership. The author of the report, Nannerl Keohane, concluded that “the appropriate metaphor is of a pipeline that is obstructed at specific points” (2003, p.6).

The pipeline career metaphor has it that increased numbers of female undergraduate and graduate students entering the university system will result in larger numbers of women at the highest academic ranks. However, as the statistics reveal, this theory has not been realized. Instead, women are either being blocked at various points in their career (the pipeline is blocked), or women are choosing to leave academia (the pipeline is leaking). The process by which academic women choose to leave the academy is not well documented in the literature.

A Second Explanation

A second theory as to why women do not progress through the ranks is that negotiation is a critical skill needed to advance one’s career, and women are not effective at negotiating for personal benefit. The research methodology most

typically employed to explore women's negotiation abilities involves samples of male and female university students engaging in some kind of simulated negotiation task (Barron, 2003; Kray, Thompson, Leight, Galinsky, & Eccles, 2001; Solnick, 2001). Generally, these studies conclude that women do not make requests for personal benefit as often, as effectively, or as confidently as men. In these studies, negotiation is seen in a temporal context; a discrete event that takes place between a boss and a subordinate at a specific time and place.

In the more recent literature, the concept of negotiation has been broadened, and theorists now recognize that some of the most important negotiation work takes place before formal negotiations (Thompson, 2006; Rose & Danner, 1990). If we take this idea and place it in the context of a career, we begin to see the importance of understanding how negotiation strategies are used over time, rather than just at specific points. One study that has explored how women negotiate over the duration of their careers was completed by Compton (2005), who used a phenomenological approach to explore negotiation strategies and gendered communication traits of female administrators in higher education. She found that women did in fact use effective negotiation strategies, but often they negotiated for intangibles like challenging and relevant work, to report to someone they trusted and respected, or to work with peers they liked. What is interesting about Compton's study is that when female negotiation strategies are viewed qualitatively and from a feminist perspective, our perception and understanding of women's behaviour changes. Women are no

longer seen as inept and lacking critical negotiation skills; rather, they are seen as pursuing what they see to be of value.

Gendered Organizations

Another approach to the topic of under representation is to examine the ways in which sexism can be embedded in the structures, norms, policies, and culture of the academy. Work in this area begins with the premise that most organizations in western industrialized nations are inherently male gendered: “having been created largely by and for men, organizational systems, work practices, norms, and definitions reflect masculine experience, masculine values, and men’s life situations” (Meyerson & Kolb, 2000, p. 563). Traits culturally ascribed to men are not only privileged, they are also held as the norm:

The positioning of men’s lives as normal and women’s as otherwise is especially prominent as far as sexuality, reproduction, and emotions are concerned. On the face of it, such things are controlled or ruled out of paid work and bureaucratic organizations as they disrupt normal and orderly functioning (Currie, 2002, p. 62).

Acker (1990) argued that the organizational logic which presents the notion of ‘a job’ as gender neutral is fundamentally flawed.

In organizational logic, both jobs and hierarchies are abstract categories that have no occupants, no human bodies, no gender...In organizational logic, filling the abstract job is a disembodied worker who exists only for the work. Such a hypothetical worker cannot have other imperatives of existence that impinge upon the job. At the very least, outside imperatives cannot be included within the definition of the job (Acker, 1990, p. 149).

When the patterns that constitute male working lives are seen as normal (as compared to the pattern of women’s lives) it constitutes men as hitting a standard rather than being advantaged.

Gendered Divisions of Labour

Organizational theorists have uncovered gendered division of labour in organizations that can result in discrimination by reinforcing ideas about who is the appropriate person to fill particular organizational roles (Aker, 1993; Rudman & Glick, 1999). For example, managing money may be gender-typed as masculine, whereas other tasks, such as supporting students, may be gender-typed as feminine. Filling those positions with either male or females serves to reinforce the assumption that certain work is “men’s work” and other work is “women’s work” (Acker, 1995). Johnsrud and Heck (1994) demonstrated the cumulative negative impact of gender on women’s career advancement. They concluded that women are not given opportunities to advance because they were clustered in positions that had a low expectation for mobility, and provided little exposure, visibility, information, or connection to power. In other words, the previous position of an individual had an effect on future opportunities, and the lack of opportunities cumulated over time.

Park (1996), after analyzing faculty workloads, drew an analogy between the division of labour in the home, to that of the university. She argued that “inside the university, as outside it, we find a gendered division of labour wherein women assume primary responsibility for nurturing the young and serving men, but receive little credit for doing so” (p. 55). Park documented that female academics carried heavier teaching loads, bore greater responsibility for undergraduate education, and had more service commitments. Although the case can be made that teaching and service are equally as important to the

vitality of the university, what ultimately carries the greatest weight and value for advancement is research, an area of work traditionally dominated by male academics.

Initiatives for Equity in Gendered Organizations

The covert nature of gendered organizations is described as “embedded male patterns of behaviour in academia that operate beneath the façade of policies and rules put into place to counter inequity” (Kjeldal, Rindfleish, & Sheridan 2005, p. 431). It is precisely because of this gap between policy and practice, between what the organization says and does, that makes the impact of gendered organizations difficult to measure, and difficult to address.

Kjeldal et al.(2005) explicitly stated that their research was politically motivated and that their intent was to make “explicit the impediments to women’s advancement in academia, so they can be identified, challenged and changed” (p. 432). Three female academics were interviewed and their personal histories used to illustrate the embedded male patterns of behaviour in academia that operated beneath the formalized policies and rules put into place to counter inequity. Kjeldal et al. argued that telling stories enabled individuals to expose the ‘shadow side’ of their organizations and to initiate a debate regarding healthier ways of working. The authors concluded that policy changes were not enough to prevent discriminatory practices, and that a multi-focal approach must be used to bring about culture change.

There are some good examples of campus initiatives that have attempted to bring about cultural change through both policy implementation and dialogue. In the late 1990s, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) undertook a comprehensive survey of the women faculty in its school of science in order to gain insights into their job satisfaction (MIT, 1999). In 2002 at Duke University, a Steering Committee for the Women's Initiative was formed and purposed with, "improving the climate for women at Duke, [and] also to improve the experience for all who work or study here" (Keohane, 2003, p. 2). In both cases, the committee work was initiated in response to concerns about the under representation of women on faculty, and the difficulties of balancing work-life demands. Both committee reports are comprehensive and thoughtful, but silent on outcomes or impact.

In comparison, an initiative was undertaken at the University of Western Australia that did yield positive results for gender equity (Stuart, 1999). The initiative is interesting because first attempts were unsuccessful and required a second try. The University of Western Australia, prior to 1989, and the arrival of the University's first female Vice-Chancellor, had one of the lowest proportions of women on the academic staff in the nation's university system. Under the leadership of the female Vice-Chancellor, senior management made a commitment to gender equity. By the early 1990s, the University had removed all obvious structural barriers to women's participation. However, by 1994, the statistics demonstrated only marginal improvement in the overall number of female academic staff, and they continued to be concentrated in junior levels and

clerical positions. In 1994, the Vice-Chancellor announced that there would be broad-based cultural audits that entailed several review committees considering a wide array of background information before engaging in dialogue with male and female staff. These open-ended discussions allowed staff to talk about their own realities of working at the university, and enabled them to reflect on their personal experience in the workplace. From these discussions reports were written and widely circulated and feedback invited. The response rate was high, and as to be expected, the commentary often contentious. On the basis of the dialogue and feedback, the recommendations were modified and presented to the Academic Board, who in turn implemented a series of initiatives to support gender equity. Follow-up surveys indicated positive change: almost 40% of new tenurable positions in 1997 were female appointments compared to 10% in 1990; 40% of academic women believed that the University was a better place for them compared to three years previously; by 1997, there were 16 female full professors compared to only two less than a decade before (Stuart, 1999, p. 10).

The Question of Fit

Another theme running through the literature, and connected to the idea of gendered organizations, is the personal view of what it is like to work in an organization where one's ways are at odds with the larger culture. Women do not typically speak the language of authority and power (Tannen, 1994); feminized leadership style is inclusive and consultative rather than decisive and directional (Denmark, 1993; Frankel, 2004); and women have difficulty negotiating for personal benefit to the extent that they often do not claim what is rightfully theirs

(Babcock & Laschever, 2003; Kray, Thompson, Galinsky, & Eccles, 2001).

Countering these views is the argument that it is difficult to make generalized connections between personal style and gender. "Identity is one way of naming the dense interconnections between the intimate and public venues of social practice" (Holland et al., 1998, p. 270). Women can wear more than one hat, and sometimes more than one hat at one time. The choice of hat can vary over time and be informed by circumstances, position, history and personal psychology. While arguments against essentialism call into question any generalized assumptions about women working in gendered organizations, it is still an area of the research worth exploring as it brings to light concerns about organizational norms and expectations.

At the heart of some of these studies is the assumption that achieving organizational success, as defined by Johnsrud and Heck (1994) as status, responsibility, and salary, is a worthwhile pursuit, and that the glass ceiling is worth shattering. They also take the position that women need to find ways to adapt and fit into organizational structures, even if it means subduing curves to fit into square holes. Advice about using the rules to one's advantage range from the sardonic (Toth, 1997), to the pragmatic (Frankel, 2004). Healthy servings of advice are doled out on how to speak, sit, act, negotiate, dress, and interact in ways that will be looked on favourably by a masculine culture: professional, but not masculine; assertive, but not aggressive; competent but not cocky. The tightrope that must be walked is intolerant of missteps, and from the sidelines are heard the voices of women who speak to the experience of being slightly off-

centre (Caplan, 1993; Collins, Chrisler, & Quina, 1998). The narratives describe what it is to be on the outside, either by choice (not playing by the rules because they are disagreeable) or challenge (the rules remain too oblique for comprehension) (Aisenberg & Harrington, 1988).

It is here, on the periphery, that the issue of gender equity in the academy is debated from a different perspective. Aisenberg and Harrington (1988) questioned if it was ethically sound to adopt the rules of the trade to acquire power in organizational cultures that according to feminist ethics should be changed:

The problem facing all women who hold substantial authority [in institutes of higher learning] is that, for millennia, women have been subject to authority held by men, and those women who now share authority do so in a practice, if not in theory, on the premise of women's inequality. Those women exercising even the modest authority...do so within a system that, if unresisted, would continue to operate in myriad ways that are disadvantageous to women (p. 62).

Almost a decade later, Maier (1998) took the question one step further and asked if occupational success, as defined by status, power and money, is worth pursuing. Maier commented that the rewards of status and power are themselves reflective of male values, and ultimately may not be personally fulfilling.

Male voices, such as Maier's, first entered the gender debate in the mid-1990s, when the consequences of dramatic changes to the demographic composition of the workforce made themselves felt; most notably the growing proportion of employees who were dual-earner parents, single parents, or sharing elder care (Stroh & Reilly, 1999). Increasingly, men, as well as women,

were faced with having to balance work with family, and questioned the virtues of working for organizations dominated by male values (Bearisto, 1997; Greenhaus & Parasuraman, 1999). As an example, Maier (1999) spoke to the frustration of being denied tenure when choosing to take parental leave. As the need to find a balance between work and family becomes an imperative for both sexes, do the virtues of feminine organizational structures grow in appeal?

Organizations informed and influenced by the feminine perspective are characterized by participatory decision-making, rotating leadership, and flexible interactive job-designs (Maier, 1999). Although rarely acknowledged as such, many of the concepts and sentiments *au courant* in today's organizational leadership thinking reflect feminist sensibilities (Mintzberg, 1994; Senge, 1996; Wheatley, 1992). The primacy of traditional masculine styles of management is similarly being challenged and "feminine" styles are seen as more appropriate for the contemporary context. Being a good manager in the 1990s and beyond is less about competitiveness, aggression and task orientation, and more about good communication, coaching and people skills; all more typically associated with women (Cooper and Lewis, 1999). While feminine thinking is prevalent (one might even say mainstream), in current leadership thinking, the focus of the literature is not on how feminist theory is being translated into organizational practice.

Academic Capitalism

An emerging area of research examines how the working lives of female academics are impacted as universities become increasingly business-oriented.

As a way to respond and cope with decreased public funding and increased global competition, many universities are adopting business models for their mode of operation (Marginson & Considine, 2000; Slaughter & Leslie, 1997; Rhodes, 1998). Universities are now seen as “enterprises’ to be managed by business principles rather than collegiality, with students as ‘consumers’ and academics as workers subject to labour processes like increased accountability and work intensification” (Acker & Armanti, 2004). Currie et al. (2002) commented that “in addition to the masculinist culture that has characterized universities for centuries, the managerial ethos has begun to pervade universities in this globalized era” (Currie et al., 2002, p. 2). Universities are entering a new era and are “adopting, almost without reflection, without hesitation, global practices that emanate from neoliberal economic policies that will make the lives of women within them even more difficult than they have been in the past” (p. 2). To empirically evaluate this premise, Currie, Thiele, and Harris conducted in-depth interviews from 1995 to 1998 in three American and three Australian universities with 154 Australian and 100 American respondents (37% female and 63% male), from all levels of the university hierarchies. The interviews revolved around the key question: “Is there any marked difference between the treatment of men and women?” (p. 40). The authors returned to the idea that in masculine gendered organizations masculine practices are held as the norm, in the sense that they are seen to be ordinary, normal and taken for granted. The responses from senior management revealed a valuing of characteristics that typify what Currie et al. describe as *peak male culture*, demonstrated by a working style that

emphasized “performance, competition, conformity to the corporate mission and delivering outputs” (2002, p. 175). But the authors acknowledged that while this was not new, as universities have always been designed for men and by men, what was new was a shift “away from a traditional form of patriarchy, redolent with the establishment club, to a new form of entrepreneurial patriarchy, with all the trappings of the corporate boardroom” (p. 177). The women in the study talked about “the loss of collegiality; the erosion of leisure and community contacts; the threat to children, partners and friendships as time collapsed around them; and the pressure to undertake profitable research far removed from their own interests” (p. 177).

Senior academic women in a study by Spurling (1997) also reflected a shift in patriarchal culture by describing the barriers as “not so much banging your head against a glass ceiling as grappling with a smoke screen” (p. 44). The research by Currie et al. (2002) also suggested a widening gulf between the corporate managers in universities and the workers they managed (2002). Corporate managers, often so focused on achieving the strategic objectives and corporate goals generally had less attention to pay to the well-being and health of their direct reports and the general staff.

As a backdrop for the argument that academic capitalism contributes to the stress of the working lives of female academics, Acker and Armanti (2004) drew from the results of two qualitative studies in which they interviewed academic women about a range of experiences concerned with career, departmental culture, and academic work. Themes that emerged were “high

levels of stress, exhaustion, and sleeplessness associated with combining the building of an academic career with bringing up young children” (p. 11). Women reported working very late, going with very little sleep, and often sacrificing personal well-being and balance. The authors argued that it was not only the overlay of family responsibilities that made for stressful working lives, but also an increasingly competitive working environment: “Academics in the contemporary North American university face the constant scrutiny of their performance through mechanisms of tenure, promotion, and merit reviews which place great pressure on *individuals* to perform (Acker & Armanti, 2004, p. 12). Although the health of the women interviewed was not medically assessed, the authors commented that a common theme emerged of “fatigue and burnout, sometimes related to high workload but often also connected to particular experiences or career stages that seemed to serve as a trigger” (p. 14). The authors recognized that although the women of their study worked in professional privileged positions, they were nonetheless experiencing great stress. These women had, at times, found collective ways of coping with work stress (coming together to lobby and support) but generally, their response was to work harder and sleep less.

Another way to cope with work stress is illustrated by Butterwick and Dawson (2005) who use reflective feminist analysis to interrogate the growth of the audit culture, with specific attention to how “tenure and promotion practices, long upheld as a hallmark of academic freedom and critical integrity, often work to induce conformity and compliance with the dominant – and dominantly non-reflexive – culture of the academy” (p. 52). The authors talk about being

required to engage in non-transparent processes of external validation that run counter to their feminist sensibilities of personal engagement and discourse. The audit culture not only “changes what educators, scholars, and researchers do, it changes who they are...[by reducing] opportunities for genuine creative or cultural agency” (Butterwick & Dawson, 2005, p. 60). It is hoped by the authors that by making explicit their experiences and concerns with the audit culture others will acknowledge that they too have struggled, and that through collective conversation there will be opportunities for change.

The impact of the audit culture on professional identity was also analyzed by Acker (2005), who interviewed 18 women from Britain, Australia, and Canada (six from each country) to explore their experience of being university managers in a context of academic capitalism.⁷ “In all three countries, three major themes related to changing university conditions were apparent in the interviews: financial cutbacks, work intensification, and scrutiny” (p. 105). One of the central themes to emerge was that of compromised professional identity: while the managers previously defined their professional careers through teaching and research, the demands of a management position made it difficult to pursue those interests. Blackmore and Sachs (2000), who interviewed over 50 women in leadership positions in eight universities from 1995-1997, similarly concluded that university re-structuring contributed to compromised professional identities. On the one hand, the female participants reported seeing their academic identities connected to notions of academic freedom, professional autonomy, and the

⁷ In this study a ‘university manager’ included deans, associate or assistant deans, chairs or heads of department or school, associate or deputy chairs/heads, programme coordinators or research centre directors (Acker, 2005).

pursuit of knowledge, while on the other hand they were expected to manage in an environment that emphasized competition, bottom line, external measure, and total quality. The women found themselves working between competing values that ultimately showed up as work-related stress.

Acker similarly identified stress as prevalent and problematic: Struggle and stress seemed endemic and occasionally extreme. Governments and institutions are eager to set targets and measure performance, but who is caring about what happens to the individuals who are sacrificing many aspects of their hard-won careers to manage the madness? (2005, p. 116)

The unhappiest people were identified by Acker as “those in stressful lower middle management roles, where few adjustments have been made in their workloads or promotion requirements while they take on huge responsibilities” (p. 115). As a point of comparison, Acker also identified a group of female administrators, generally in more senior positions, who were what she describes as optimistic and buoyant (p. 115). These women described themselves as ‘half-glass full’ people, who ‘love administration’ and who have found ways to thrive in work environments stretched by intense workloads and limited resources. Acker did not quite know what to make of these particularly optimistic women. Was a process of self-selection at play, where positive rather than critical attitudes were more conducive to an administrative role? Or was the optimism of these women a product of having had more positive work experiences, which in turn encouraged them to continue on as administrators? As Acker did not include men in her sample, there are no points of comparison about optimism as a trait across the genders.

Organizational Power

The theme of power weaves across and through the literature on organizational equity. It is perhaps something of a preoccupation in feminist thinking because of the inextricable link between power and gender: men tend to have greater access to resources and sources of external power (Johnson, 1976), and men tend to occupy higher status roles than women (Ely, 1995). It has been noted that women are still largely excluded from organizational power brokering, but few theoretical explanations are provided as to why this is so (Blackmore & Sachs, 2000, Kjeldal, Rindfleish & Sheridan, 2005). In those few studies where power is the research focus, the theoretical frameworks are typically grounded in what Foucault describes as a *juridico-discursive model*: “The juridico-discursive model of power seeks to limit behavior by imposing rules, prohibiting certain behaviours, and limiting one’s access to forbidden things and ideas” (as cited in McLaren, 2002, p. 36). For example, in the literature, the topic of gender and power is explored by looking at the different strategies that men and women use to either limit others (*power over*), or enhance others (*power to*) (Carli, 2001; Fagenson, 1990; Miller & Cummins, 1992). An example of such a study was conducted by Gruber and White (1986) who asked participants to rate the likelihood of using several strategies to get their way, and to rate the likelihood that the same strategies would be used by either women or men to get their way. Twenty-one strategies were categorized as masculine, feminine, or neutral. The study showed that men reported that they were likely to use a variety of strategies, including male-typed strategies (e.g., arguing and yelling,

convincing, stating a point directly) and female-typed strategies (e.g., pleading, begging, avoiding, acting in subtle ways by suggestions or hints). In the same study, women reported being likely to use fewer strategies overall and that those they would use were female-typed strategies. Gruber and White (1986) concluded that men feel freer to use more types of strategies to get their way, and that women are more constrained by gender-role stereotypes, and avoid masculine strategies. At the heart of this study is the conceptualization of power as *power-over*, referring to domination and control of people, outcomes, and resources.

A 1995 study by Ely troubles the assumption that men are more inclined to use particular kinds of influence strategies and women others. In his study, Ely added the factors of organizational dynamics and structure to portray a much more complicated picture. Ely argued that the strategy to increase the number of women in an organization to create a more egalitarian culture is inadequate, because those women are often segregated to lower hierarchical positions in the organization and have limited power and influence. What needs to happen, Ely argued, is that more women need to occupy senior organizational positions. Increasing the number of women in positions of power will, Ely contended, “affect the social construction of gender difference and the process that create and sustain women’s gender identity at work” (1995, p. 590). In other words, in organizations that have more women in senior positions, gender lines will be less clearly drawn and women will utilize influence and working strategies that are both characteristically male and female. Ely tested this hypothesis by

interviewing women lawyers from both “male-dominated” firms (companies with low proportions of female partners) and “sex-integrated” firms (companies that had a higher proportion of female partners). The results indicated that firms in which few women were in positions of power, the sex roles were more stereotypical and more problematic. Women in these firms, when compared to women in firms with higher proportions of senior women, characterized men as more masculine and less feminine, evaluated feminine attributes less favourably in relation to their firm’s requirements for success, and had more difficulty enacting gender roles that were both personally satisfying and consistent with their firms’ norms and expectations.

Sagrestano (1992), in a review of the research, supported the conclusions of Ely that gender differences in social influence are complicated by issues of power and organizational hierarchy. People in higher status roles can use more aggressive power strategies just by virtue of their position; and men tend to occupy higher status roles. In a recent study by Keshet, Kark, Pomerantz-Zorin, Koslowsky, & Schwarzwald (2006) that examined the effects of gender and status on the use of power strategies, it was found that men in low status positions more frequently used ‘masculine’-typed strategies than did women in similar positions, whereas in high status positions no significant gender differences in power strategy choices were found. Sagrestano (1992) suggested it is not appropriate to label certain strategies as “masculine” and others as “feminine.” Labelling strategies as weak or strong places a value judgement on

some strategies as better than others. Linking this judgement to gender implies that women use strategies that are of less value as compared to men (p. 445).

Concluding Thoughts on Power

The literature that explores power through a juridico-discursive model presents two challenges. First, the dominant method of exploration is for participants to respond to questionnaires and simulated experiences that are separate from their places of work (an exception to this is the study by Ely, 1995). One wonders if an accurate understanding of organizational power can be constructed from research that studies factors in isolation rather than in context. Second, in this theoretical framework, power is positioned as being negative and repressive. Reflections about how power might operate organizationally to bring about positive social change are only occasionally explored (Deem & Ozga, 2000).

Proposed Theoretical Frameworks

In this study examination of the research results will be guided by three theoretical frames:

1. Feminist standpoint theory;
2. Charles Taylor's three-axis expansion;
3. Foucault's theory of organizational power

Each of these theories has evolved over time and has deep historical roots. I will not explore or explain the roots and evolution of each of the theories, but instead use these theories to provide *perspective*: "A perspective is not a recipe...it acts

as a guide about what to pay attention to, what difficulties to expect, and how to approach problems” (Wenger, 1998, p. 9).

Feminist Standpoint Theory

The basic premise behind standpoint theory is fairly straightforward: proponents argue that people look at the world from different perspectives, and what they see varies (Hartsock, 1998; Tanesini, 1999). Feminist standpoint theorists propose that there is epistemic value in interpreting the world from a female perspective (Clough, 1994). This relatively simple notion however, has caused much debate in the feminist literature about the value and generalization of experience and perspective.

Feminist standpoint theorists argue that the feminine perspective is not only different from the masculine perspective, it should also be privileged. The idea of privilege has its roots in Marx’s concept of standpoint of the proletariat. According to Marx (as cited in Tanesini, 1999), the positions held in society by different classes gave them unique views on social reality. The view of the proletariat in a capitalist system is seen as being privileged because the working class play a critical role in sustaining and supporting the system, but they have no vested interest in its continuation. Marx made the case that a more accurate understanding of the social order can be acquired from people who are at the same time economically central but socially and politically marginalized.

This argument has been taken by some feminist thinkers and applied to the situation of women. Women have a privileged societal view, they argue, because on the one hand, they sustain patriarchies by having children and

running households, but on the other hand, their work is not valued or recognized, and as such they are marginalized. Hartsock's (1983) formulation of a feminist standpoint is based on the idea that women's experience can provide insight into the workings of patriarchal institutions:

Just as Marx's understanding of the world from the standpoint of the proletariat enabled him to go beneath bourgeois ideology, so a feminist standpoint can allow us to understand patriarchal institutions and ideologies as perverse inversions of more humane social relations (p. 284).

Other feminist writers argue against the feminist standpoint on the grounds that female experiences do not have enough in common to constitute a standpoint (Tanesini, 1999). The criticism that women's experiences cannot provide the foundation of knowledge because those experiences are influenced by social relations and conditions is addressed by feminist thinkers such as Harding (1991). Harding suggests an alternative notion of standpoint which claims that, while experience can make a useful contribution to feminist research, the foundation for feminist knowledge are theories and observations that start with women's lives:

For a position to count as a standpoint, rather than as a claim – equally valuable but for different reasons – for the importance of listening to women tell us about their lives and experiences, we must insist on an objective location – women's lives – as the place from which feminist research should begin (p. 123).

Harding regards the lives of people who belong to marginal groups as being structurally different from those in dominant groups. These people are, in the words of Patricia Hill Collins, "outsiders-within" (Collins, 1991). That is, they are people who inhabit a community, but at the margins.

“Outsider-within,” like Marx’s proletariat, can provide a particular perspective on how an organization maintains systems of privilege, because privilege for them is not automatically bestowed. Collins (1991) makes the point that the experience of people on the margins is not just that of oppression and powerlessness, but also a place where oppression is resisted and change advocated. The case can be made that female administrators are, to some extent, “outsiders-within,” as on the one hand, they make a vital contribution to the university, but on the other hand, by virtue of their minority status, can be politically marginalized. In this study it will be explored if female administrators have an outsiders-within perspective on the workings of the academy. And if they do in fact, perceive themselves as outsiders-within, do they see that position as a place to advocate for resistance and change?

In a further evolution of feminist stand-point theory, the case is made by feminists such as Mangena (1994) that gender is relational: “We cannot examine the experience of women in society without taking into account the fact of their interconnection with men” (p. 280). Mangena makes the case for a more inclusive approach to social problem-analysis for two reasons: first, it is too simple to say that all women are victims and all men oppressors. Individuals are both oppressed in some situations and in relation to some people, while at the same time privileged in other situations and in relations to other people. Noddings (2007) similarly articulates a view that possibilities of understanding are best achieved by including all voices that have a stake

in a given matter. “Men and women, blacks and whites, oppressors and oppressed, speak from different perspectives – different standpoints – but each may contribute something valuable to a discussion of the issue that arise in interaction” (p. 218).

For this particular study, one can hypothesize that it would have been suggested by the early feminist standpoint theorists to only include the perspective of female administrators, as their work on the margins of the patriarchy gives them a particular and valued understanding as to how oppression operates. Later theorists however, such as Collins (1991), Mangena (1994), and Noddings (2007) would make the case that people working in a patriarchal system are at times both oppressed and privileged, and that to create a complete picture and understanding of inequitable power structures, both perspectives need to be included and considered.

Taylor’s Three-Axis Expansion Theory

One specific aspect of Charles Taylor’s work (2005) will provide us with a theoretical framework for thinking about how cultural shifts take place, and about how an idea evolves and migrates from theory into social imaginary.⁸ In Taylor’s three-axis expansion theory, an idea is first generated by a small group of specialists who need to find a way to talk about a particular idea or concept (Taylor uses the example of legal theorists who need to find a way to talk about the legitimacy of government). The idea is then picked up by others and migrates

⁸ Social imaginary is defined as “the ways people imagine their social existence, how they fit together with others, how things go on between them and their fellows, the expectations that are normally met, and the deeper normative notions and images that underlie these expectations” (Taylor, 2005, p. 23).

to other niches, whereby it is transformed through the process of discourse: “The idea has gone, as it were, through a series of redactions, each richer and more demanding than the previous one” (p. 5). The richness comes from existing ideas being refined and new ideas being added. This migration and evolution continues until the idea becomes part of how people think about their everyday world and their place within that world. Taylor traces the process of idea migration through a model of *three-axis expansion*: first, the idea is expanded “in extension (more people live by it; it has become dominant) and [second] in intensity, (the demands it makes are heavier and more ramified)” (p. 5); and in the third iteration, the idea makes demands upon us. Here Taylor talks about the expectation that people will strive to fulfil the obligations of the idea, and even though those obligations may be met by only a few, there remains a collective effort.

For this study, Taylor’s model of three-axis expansion is used as a lens to trace the evolution of feminist thought and its impact on organizational culture over the past 30 to 40 years. I went into this research hoping that the participants in this study who started working as academics in the 1970s and 1980s would speak to how feminist ideas have evolved and migrated. Would the more senior administrators have noticed an evolution of equity ideals over time? Are ideas around equity now part of the social imaginary or is there still resistance? Is there a sense of obligation towards the idea of equity, or a setting aside of equity for other interests and priorities?

Foucault on Organizational Power

Foucault (1982) rejected hierarchical and unilateral models of power as defined by a juridico-discursive model, and instead described power as being ubiquitous and dynamic. Although power exists in all parts of a system, it only exists when it is put into action, and prior to that, it does not exist: "In effect, what defines a relationship of power is that it is a mode of action which does not act directly and immediately on others. Instead, it acts upon their actions." (Foucault, 1982, p. 789). As power changes and shifts as a consequence of actions it cannot be possessed. Foucault commented that while "economic history and theory provided a good instrument for relations of production and that linguistics and semiotics offered instruments for studying the relations of signification; but for power relations [there are] no tools of study" (p. 778). Foucault made the case that the best way to analyze power was through forms of resistance. For him, the method

consists of using this resistance as a chemical catalyst to as to bring to light power relations, locate their position, and find out their point of application and the methods used. Rather than analyzing power from the point of view of its internal rationality, it consists of analyzing power relations through the antagonisms of strategies. (p. 780)

Examples of such resistances would be women's power struggles with men, children's opposition to parents, and mentally ill patients' resistance to psychiatry. The main objective of analyzing these struggles was "to attack not so much 'such or such' an institution of power, or group, or elite, or class but [to understand struggle] rather a technique" (p. 781). In this context, power is seen by Foucault as being fundamentally relational; power is "the multiplicity of force relations

immanent in the sphere in which they constitute their own organization" (p. 92).

Because power is continually produced between people, groups, and institutions, it is omnipresent and continually shifting as new relations evolve and are negotiated.

The relational aspect of Foucault's analysis of power has caused some feminist writers to call into question how useful a model it is when thinking about social change. If power is relational and does not reside with any one person or group, then it is not possessed, and if power is not possessed, how can anyone be held responsible? Also, how can change be effected to redress the balance of power relations? In this sense, power is nonsubjective, as "individuals do not have power, they participate in it" (McLaren, 2002, p. 38). According to Foucault (1982), people participate in relational networks, and within those networks, individuals may or may not act. Action or non-action will each produce consequences that are outside of any one person's control or sphere of influence:

The local and specific aims, objectives, and goals interact with other local and specific aims, objectives, and goals, resulting in effects and consequences that are not the plan of any one person, or even any group of people. Thus, because power is neither possessed nor controlled by individuals, it is nonsubjective. (McLaren, 2002, p. 38)

It is here that we see the tension that Foucault creates between two seemingly oppositional ideas: nonsubjectivity and intentionality. How on the one hand, can individuals be making choices that effect change in power relations, but on the other hand the consequences of those choices are beyond their control? Foucault's point is that power is dichotomous and can contain two

seemingly oppositional ideas such as intentionality and nonsubjectivity. Foucault (1976) illustrated this concept with the example of how in the nineteenth century, various instruments of the state (science, medicine and the law) each worked together to develop a common definition of sexual deviance. Although the discourses from these various bodies converged to create common categories and approaches, the consequence of treating particular sexual acts as criminal was not the work of any one person. Instead, the consequences were an amalgam of individual acts. Because Foucault's notion of power includes individual agency (albeit indirect), it holds the possibility of resistance.

Another possibility of resistance within Foucault's power analysis is his different perspective on organizational relations. Power is typically construed as existing with key hierarchical positions, and the power invested from those positions is seen as negative, repressive and limiting (Blackmore & Sachs, 2000; Ely, 1995). Foucault offers an alternative view that the interpersonal relations in organizations can be sources of pleasure and well-being, and can provide a positive way for people to engage in power relations (1976). Again, power in this context is seen as occurring throughout an organization, and is not the domain of any one person, or group. "Under such a rubric, one could surmise that voluntary peer relationships that are pleasurable, mutually satisfying, and instil a feeling of well-being could prove to be more influential than traditional, organizational constructs such as supervisor-subordinate or work groups" (Dixon, 2007, p. 291). This view of power offers us an optimistic view of power being distributed throughout an organization and manifested through positive working

relationships. Again, the possibility of exerting an influence through organizational relationships rather than position, offer a locus of resistance for social change.

In this study, Foucault's analysis of power gives us a way to think about power from both a systemic, and individual, perspective, and a way to explore the power relations within an organizational context.

Summary

The under representation of women in the senior ranks of the academy is a persistent problem that has been studied qualitatively and quantitatively, using both a narrow and wide lens (the individual and the organization), and through a variety of models, hypotheses and theoretical frameworks. The literature reveals that gender inequity is symptomatic of many issues that come together to combine, complicate, and confound. It appears that women are often pulled in different directions: between the demands of work and family; their ways of being can put them at odds with a dominant male culture; often what they do is not valued or recognized; and in turn, all of these factors can limit their access to particular kinds of organizational power. When we think of under representation, it is easy to be discouraged by the complexity and intransigence of the problem; however, it is also important to remember that in the past century, attitudes about women and learning have changed dramatically. As well, there are other social forces at play that could change the complexion of the problem. As the lines blur between public and private lives, as men as well as women choose to be involved in the day-to-day lives of their families, as women re-evaluate their

working lives in the interest of achieving balance, there may be increasing discontent with the demands and expectations of gendered organizations. The three theoretical frames used to elucidate this research are described: feminist standpoint theory; Charles Taylor's three-axis expansion; and Foucault's analysis of organizational power.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This chapter, which focuses on the methodology applied to the study, is divided into three main sections: 1. method of inquiry, 2. procedure, and 3. implementation.

Method of Inquiry

Qualitative Approach

This study is intended to explore the perceptions and perspectives of senior university administrators and their experience of negotiating a career in the academy. I report the personal voices, experiences and reflections of male and female administrators to better understand the unfolding of their careers, and how they regard that unfolding. Qualitative, naturalistic research methodologies were used for this study to explore in detail the lived experiences of senior university administrators, and to make explicit the tacit knowledge and subjective understandings they have about their work experiences. Qualitative studies are chosen for a variety of reasons, including the need to be pragmatic, interpretive, and grounded in the lived experience of people (Marshall & Rossman, 2006).

Creswell (1998) outlined several criteria for selecting a qualitative research method. First, a qualitative study begins with a research question that

starts with “a *how* or a *what* so that initial forays into the topic describe what is going on” (p. 17). The main research topic for this research focuses on *how* female and male administrators view their experience of negotiating a career in the academy.

Second, Creswell suggested it is appropriate to choose a qualitative study when “variables cannot be easily identified; theories are not available to explain the behaviour of participants or their population of study” (p. 17). While the literature is rich with theories and reflections about why competent, well-qualified women continue to be under-represented in the senior ranks of the academy, the problem is typically explored through women’s eyes; an approach consistent with early feminist standpoint theory which argues why some perspectives should be epistemically privileged (Tanesini, 1999). Central to this claim is the view that “women’s circumstances in the material order provide them with experiences that generate particular privileged knowledge that reflects oppression and women’s resistance” (Olesen, 2005, p. 245). However, it has also been argued by writers such as Mangena (1994) that a more holistic approach to research should be sought by including several and different perspectives on a phenomenon: “we cannot examine the experience of women in society without taking into account the fact of their interconnectedness with men” (p. 280). It is here, at the intercept between male and female perspectives that there is an absence of theoretical understanding. We do not understand how men experience the unfolding of their administrative careers, compared to that of women. We also do not know if men

and women understand their careers differently in the context of shifting gender roles, and the blurring of public and private lives.

Third, Creswell (1998) suggested a qualitative approach be used to present a detailed view of the topic. This study illustrates the complexity of negotiating an administrative career in the academy by drawing on the details of administrators' working lives.

A Phenomenological Study

As this research focused on the meaning of lived experiences for several individuals in relation to a particular concept, a phenomenological approach was employed. Patton (2002) described phenomenology as seeking out the meaning, structure, and essence of the lived experience of a phenomenon for a person or group of people. It explores how people make sense of an experience and transform that experience into consciousness. The approach strives:

To determine what an experience means for the persons who have had the experience and are able to provide a comprehensive description of it. From the individual descriptions, general or universal meanings are derived, in other words, the essences of structures of the experience. (Moustakas, 1994, p. 13)

The use of the phenomenological method of research for this study provided a logical, systematic, and coherent resource for carrying out the analysis and synthesis required to arrive at essential descriptions of experience (Moustakas, 1994).

Cresswell (1998) outlined the major procedural steps when using a phenomenological approach :

- The investigator writes research questions that explore the meaning of that experience for individuals and asks individuals to describe their everyday lived experiences;
- The investigator collects data from individuals who have experienced the phenomenon under investigation;
- The data is organized into clusters of meaning that are tied together into textural descriptions of what was experienced and the structural description of how it was experienced;
- The phenomenological report ends with the reader understanding better the essential, invariant structure (or essence) of the experience (p. 55).

Bracketing Preconceived Notions

A further benefit of phenomenological interviewing “is that it permits an explicit focus on the researcher’s personal experience combined with those of the interviewees” (Marshall & Rossman, 2006, p. 105). The impetus for this research comes from my own experience as a female university administrator. Coming to the study with existing views based on lived experience I made every attempt, as described by Moustakas (1994), to “bracket” or set aside all preconceived notions to best understand the experiences of participants in the study. I did not find this particularly easy. The lines of my work and research did not proceed with the neatness of parallel lines; instead, they bumped up against each other and occasionally collided. For example, over the months that I was conducting the interviews my own place of work was going through significant

organizational change. Observing some fairly obvious power plays at work, it came as a surprise to me when, in response to questions about organization power, some of the participants indicated that they had not given a lot of thought to the topic of power. Although at the time I made every attempt not to signal disbelief, it was hard to “bracket” the sense of surprise and not to introduce my own perspective. What I came to appreciate when conducting phenomenological interviews is the plurality of views, and the absence of a single truth.

Something I worried about unnecessarily going into the study was if, as a female interviewer, there would be any barriers when interviewing male participants, especially on issues of gender. What I found was that the men appeared just as forthcoming as the women, and showed no reservations about describing and reflecting upon different aspects of their working lives. It may be, of course, that there were matters that both women and men did not discuss with me.

Procedure

Participants

In phenomenological research, participants are chosen from a group of people qualified to speak to the phenomenon being studied. Since one aim of this type of research is to report on how the essences of a certain experience are structured, rather than on the attributes of a group who have shared a particular event, a small sample is commonly used (Compton, 2005; Gall, Gall & Borg, 2003; Mason, 1996). The sample size was determined iteratively as the

interviews progressed. As pointed out by Mason (1996) when using “purposive sampling strategy, then whether or not the sample is big enough to be statistically representative of a total population is not [a] major concern” (p. 95). Instead, whether or not to collect more data was determined by my sense that I had enough information to make “meaningful comparisons in relation to [my] research questions, [my] theory and the type of explanation [I] wish[ed] to develop” (p. 96). For my study, this meant being able to describe the experience of negotiating an academic administrative career. The sampling was purposeful in that participants were selected because “they know the information required, [were] willing to reflect upon the phenomenon of interest...and [were] willing to participate” (Morse & Richards, 2002, p. 173).

I was also interested in how an administrative career would be viewed by people sitting on either side of the option: either moving towards or away from an administrative career. “Because all observers view an object of inquiry from their own vantage point in the web of reality, no portrait of a social phenomenon is ever exactly the same as another” (Kincheloe & McLaren, 2005, p. 319). To bring those different perspectives into the study, I interviewed two young female academics who, for the time being, had decided not to pursue an academic career, and a woman who had moved from being a senior university administrator to a senior civil servant. Together the interviews provided three perspectives on the experience of a senior academic administrative career: considering, living, and reflecting upon.

The term “senior academic administration” was defined according to the criteria established by the Senior Women Academic Administrators of Canada (SWAAC).⁹ Senior university administrators have been identified as the ideal candidates for this study for two key reasons: 1. By virtue of being senior administrators, they have extensive work experience and are familiar with the explicit and implicit workings of the academy; 2. Senior administrators typically, by virtue of their position, understand the different parts of the institution and how those parts contribute to the overall functioning of the system, and so may be able to comment on whether or not they perceive there to be biases in the system.

Ethics Approval

Following the ethics review process, I received permission to proceed with my research from the Office of Research Ethics of Simon Fraser University on February 27, 2007 (Appendix A).

Participant Recruitment

Participants were identified by using the technique of snowballing in addition to personal networking. Some participants were identified by classmates working at post-secondary institutions, who approached potential participants on my behalf to ask if they would be willing to be interviewed. The second approach

⁹ President, Principal, Rector; Provost, Vice-President, Vice-Principal, Vice-Rector; Associate or Assistant Provost, Vice-President, Vice-Principal, Vice-Rector, or Vice-Provost, and Dean, Vice-Dean, Associate Dean, and Assistant Dean; and Chair of an academic department; and Director of an academic unit or research institute, administrative unit, or equivalent position.

<http://www.swaac.ca>, accessed October 6, 2006

involved asking participants who had already agreed to take part in the study if they could recommend other potential participants. Utilizing this technique brought the total participants to nine (three men and six women), who worked at three post-secondary institutions, and a government ministry.

Characteristics of Study Participants

Table 1 contains a listing and description of the participants by administrative category, age range, and years of academic and administrative experience. To protect the identity of the participants, their names were changed; also for reasons of confidentiality, the names of their institutions, colleagues, and family members have been removed. All the participants were of Euro-Canadian ethnicity.

Table 1 Characteristics of Study Participants

Pseudonym	Age Range	Title	Years of Experience
John	60-over	Dean	20 years administration
Theresa	51-60	Associate VP Research	26 years administration
Elizabeth	60-over	Dean	30 years administration
Sandra	51-60	Associate VP Academic Planning	13 years administration
Patrick	41-50	Dean	3 years administration
David	51-60	Director	27 years administration
Maureen	30-40	Assistant Professor	9 years university teaching
Laurie	41-50	Associate Professor	17 years university teaching
Maxine	51-60	Senior Civil Servant	11 years administration

Interview Process

An interview guide was developed based on a review of the literature and the research questions (Appendix B). At the outset of the study I informally interviewed (not taped) my thesis advisor and a classmate, both who had administrative academic experience. These interviews were used to check if the order and wording of the questions invited open-ended and relevant responses. Following feedback from these interviews, the order of the questions was changed and they were clustered thematically. The data from these two interviews was not included in the study results.

I began the formal interviews (taped) with two participants (one male and one female) with whom I had worked over several years. Because I had an established working relationship with each of these two people, I used their interviews to ensure that the interviews conducted were inquisitive but not invasive, and explorative but not exploitative. At the end of these pilot interviews, I asked the participants how they found the experience, if the questions were clear, and if in their opinion I had missed anything central to the topic. Their responses were positive and I proceeded accordingly. The results from these two interviews were included in the results.

I conducted interviews that ran between 1.5 and 2 hours with each participant. The interviews were semi-structured, which allowed the participants to provide lengthy responses, and for me to change the focus on the topics if necessary (Aisenberg & Harrington, 1988).

To obtain the desired, in-depth information about negotiating a university career, the questions followed the three-step interview process as outlined by Seidman (1998). The first phase of the interview focused on past experience: participants were asked to reflect on how their career had unfolded, how had they pursued opportunities, what was their experience of negotiating for personal benefit, what aspects of their careers they would define as successful, and if they had either experienced or witnessed gender bias in the workplace. In the second phase, the interview questions focused on present experience: participants were asked to describe how they understood power to operate in their institution; what leadership characteristics they felt were valued by their particular organization, and how they experienced balancing work with family. In the third phase, the narratives of the past and present were brought together by asking the participants to comment on why they think women are persistently under-represented in the senior ranks of the academy; and how that might be resolved in the future.

Data Collection and Analysis

Moustakas (1994) suggests that phenomenological interviews begin with social conversation to create a relaxed and trusting atmosphere. Moustakas also indicates that the interviewer is responsible for creating a climate where the participant will feel comfortable and will respond honestly and comprehensively. "Conducting a narrative interview is a delicate task, the interviewer should create a permissive climate and help the interviewee to feel free to relate, relying on the interviewer's promise of confidentiality" (Lindseth & Norberg, 2004, p. 152). My

present experience as a university administrator provided a common understanding with the participants; while my past experience as a psychological counsellor gave me the experience to create the conditions for a comfortable and open conversation.

Leedy and Ormrod (2005) suggest that interviews will be more successful if they take place in a quiet location to minimize distractions and interruptions. Every attempt was made to secure a quiet space for the interviews. Scheduling of the interviews was based on the availability of the participants. Before the start of each interview the participant was asked to read and sign a consent form (Appendix C) and to complete a personal information sheet that captured such general information as how long they have been administrators, their gender and age bracket (Appendix D). Each interview was audio taped. Following the interviews, any information that was ambiguous or missing was clarified with a follow-up e-mail. For one interview the years of service was missing and confirmed via email. The participants also had the opportunity to review the transcript of their interview, if they so wished. Three of the participants reviewed their interview transcripts; with one of the participants requesting a re-phrasing of two sentences.

Research Trustworthiness

Guba and Lincoln (2005) argued that in qualitative research the central question embedded in concerns about data validity are: "How do we know when we have specific social inquiries that are faithful enough to some human construction that we may feel safe in acting on them" (p. 207). In this study the

following verification procedures were adopted to ensure as much as possible, that the inquiry was trustworthy.

1. In *triangulation* “multiple data-collection methods, data sources, analysts, or theories are used as corroborative evidence for the validity of qualitative research findings” (Gall, Gall, and Borg, 2003, p. 640). In this study the participant perspectives on equity were corroborated by a review and reporting of their respective institutional equity policies (Appendix E).
 2. A *negative case analysis* (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) was adopted, and working hypothesis were refined and revisited in light of negative or contradictory evidence.
 3. At the outset of the study the *researcher’s bias was clarified* so the reader understood my ontological position and any assumptions that might impact the inquiry (Creswell, 1998, p. 202).
 4. As part of a process of *member checks* (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) the participants were given the opportunity to review their interview transcript to confirm the accuracy and credibility of the account.
 5. *Rich, thick description* was included in the research results section, which enabled the reader to discern shared characteristics, and to make decisions regarding transferability (Lincoln and Guba, 1985).
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Method Implementation

Data Collection

As described by Marshall and Rossman (2006), “the process of bringing order, structure, and interpretation to a mass of collected data is messy, ambiguous, time-consuming, creative, and fascinating. It does not proceed in a linear fashion, it is not neat” (p. 154). My entry into the field and interviewing was directed by three theoretical frameworks (feminist standpoint theory, Charles Taylor’s three-axis expansion theory, and Foucault’s analysis of power), in addition to a set of questions organized around the following themes: 1. career unfolding, 2. career negotiation, 3. perceptions of the rewards and drawbacks of an academic careers, 4. work/life balance, 5. perceptions of organizational gender bias, 6. perceptions of organizational power, and 7. the administrators’ understanding of the persistent under representation of women in the senior ranks of the academy and how, and if, the problem will resolve.

I modeled my approach to data collection after Marshall’s (1979) dissertation research on women’s socialization in school administration. Marshall developed a process of combining initial transcription with analysis: “following each interview Marshall partially transcribed field notes of audio taped conversations, selected conceptually intriguing phrases that either connected with previous literature or suggested patterns emerging from the analysis of previous data” (Marshall & Rossman, 2006, p. 153). What appealed to me about this approach is that the researcher is actively interpreting and working with the data, rather than turning data collection into a clerical process. What also

appealed to me is the fluidity of the process: the templates and approach can undergo revision as the analysis proceeds.

Analytic Procedures

The seven phases of analytic procedures as outlined by Marshall and Rossman (2006) were followed:

(a) *Organizing the data*. I kept a log of data-gathering activities that tracked the following information:

Table 2 Data log information categories

Name & Pseudonym	Contact Info	Institution	Title	Date of First Contact	Interview Date	Interview Location	Follow-up

(b) *Immersion in the data*. The first four interviews I transcribed myself, and the remaining five of the interviews were transcribed by a professional transcriber. I chose to transcribe the first interviews to understand what it is like to transcribe audio information. Once that experience was gained I utilized the support of a professional transcriber for purposes of time and efficiency. When the transcripts were completed, I read and re-read the data many times so that I felt deeply familiar with it. As I read and re-read, patterns and themes began to emerge.

(c) *Generating categories and themes*. Patton (2002) described the processes of inductive analysis as “discovering patterns, themes, categories in one’s data”, in contrast with deductive analysis where the analytic categories are stipulated beforehand “according to an existing framework” (p. 453). When reviewing the

data I set aside any working hypothesis I might have held, so that themes and patterns, however unexpected, had the opportunity to emerge. I also found it helpful to have a space of time in between interviews (a week or so). Having time to digest and think about one interview, before completing the next, allowed for some thinking and reflecting, and the ability to re-focus the interview on particular themes, or theme, if necessary.

(d) *Writing analytic memos.* After every interview, I would take five to ten minutes to write down some initial thoughts and impressions. I had started a journal at the beginning of the research process and this exercise became part of that reflection.

(e) *Coding the data.* I found writing analytic memos was helpful in thinking about how to code the data. After the first two interviews I generated two codes *Straight Ahead Career (SAC)* and *Career With Divergence (CWD)*, which were added to, and evolved as the interviews progressed (Appendix F). Although coding was initially a useful exercise when starting to organize the data, ultimately I abandoned coding in favour of organizing thematically (see below).

(f) *Offering interpretations.* I used the emerging themes as a framework to cluster relevant quotes and significant statements. When similarly themed quotes from the different participants were organized and read together, the lines of similarity and difference became clear. The participants in some cases clearly shared similar views and opinions about a particular aspect of an administrative career, and other observations were quite divergent. Ultimately, these similarities and differences were interpreted in the broader context of the literature.

(g) *Searching for alternative understandings*. Seeking alternative understandings is a process described by Marshall and Rossman as “searching through the data...for negative instances of the patterns, and incorporating these into larger constructs, as necessary” (2006, p. 162). Interviewing people who were either looking forward to, or back at, an administrative career was helpful in providing alternative understandings. The two young female academics who had thought long and hard about the pros and cons of an administrative career to some extent more clearly articulated why someone might not want to consider such an option. The same holds true for the participant who was looking back on her academic administrative career and could speak, not only to the stresses and strains of such a position, but also how those stresses and strains were often exacerbated by the system.

Summary

A qualitative, naturalistic research methodology was used for this study to explore in detail the tacit knowledge and subjective understandings academic administrators have about their work experience. The perceptions and perspectives of academic women, moving toward or away from an administrative career, were also explored. As this research focused on the meaning of lived experiences for several individuals in relation to a particular concept, a phenomenological approach was employed. In phenomenological research, participants are chosen from a group of people qualified to speak to the phenomenon being studied: in this case senior academic administrators. The term “senior academic administration” was defined according to the criteria

established by the Senior Women Academic Administrators of Canada.

Participants were identified using the technique of snowballing in addition to personal networking. Nine participants were interviewed from four different institutions: six academic administrators (three women and three men); two young female academics who were contemplating administration; and one senior female government official who had moved on from academic administration.

The semi-structured interviews were taped and ran between 1.5 and 2 hours in duration. The data was analyzed using the seven phases of analytic procedures as outlined by Marshall and Rossman (2006): (a) organizing the data, (b) immersion in the data, (c) generating categories and themes, (d) writing analytic memos, (e) coding the data, (f) offering interpretations, and (g) searching for alternative understandings.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

Introduction

The purpose of this research was to explore how male and female administrators experienced and negotiated the unfolding of a career. The research also explored the perceptions of women who were either moving towards, or away from, an administrative option. Interviews were conducted with administrators and academics from four publicly funded institutions (three post-secondary institutions and a government ministry). A review of the human resource web pages for each of the post-secondary institutions indicated comparable equity policies to be in place (Appendix E). From this we can conclude that at least in principle, these three post-secondary institutions have the necessary policies to support an equitable working environment. The human resource policies for the government ministry were not reviewed as the focus of the study was on gender equity in academic settings, rather than equity in the public service.

The methodology used to conduct this study included nine open-ended interviews that were completed in two phases. In Phase 1, six interviews were completed with men and women in academic administrative positions (three men and three women). In Phase 2, three interviews were completed: two of the interviews were with young female academics who, for the time being, had

decided not to pursue administrative careers; and one of the interviews was with a woman who had moved from being a senior administrative academic to a senior civil servant. The latter three interviews were completed to provide different perspectives on the experience of an administrative academic career: that is, how does such a career appear to those either moving toward or away from such an option? The interviews were conducted at the institutions where participants were employed, with the exception of one who was interviewed at my home. Each interview lasted between one and two hours. A general interview guide was used to frame the interviews and to ensure that the research questions were covered, while allowing for free conversation within a topic area (Patton, 2002).

Each interview is presented separately with sub-sections on the key themes that emerged:

1. Career Unfolding;
2. Career Negotiation;
3. Valued Leadership Traits;
4. Organizational Power;
5. An Administrative Career: Dark Clouds and Silver Linings;
6. Women in the Academy; and,
7. Family and Balance.

The exception was for the two young academics in Phase 2, who were not asked to reflect on their perceptions of the positives and negatives of an academic

career (Dark Clouds and Silver Linings), because they did not have the necessary administrative experience.

Phase 1

In Phase 1 six interviews were completed with men and women in academic administrative positions (three men and three women). The profiles are presented according to the chronological age of the participants, as generational differences emerged as an unexpected and prominent theme in this study. The interviews with participants in Phase 1 are presented in the following order: John and Elizabeth (over the age of 60); Theresa, Sandra and David (51-60 age range); and Patrick (41-50 age range).

The interviews with participants of phase 2 are presented in the following order: Maureen (30-40 age range); Laurie (41-50 age range); Maxine (51-60).

Participant #1: John

Pseudonym:	John
Title:	Dean
Years as Administrator:	20 years
Age:	Over 60
Family:	Married with grown children and grand-children.

Career Unfolding

John has a PhD in political science and started his career as an associate professor before moving from associate to full professor, getting tenure, becoming head of the department and eventually Dean. When asked how he arrived at his current place of work John replied that he was “approached about

coming to [name of institution] to develop a program...I came out for the interview...I was offered the job the same day I interviewed, accepted it, and moved to [name of city].”

Career Negotiation

When asked how he identified career opportunities, John replied they more or less happened but probably did have something to do with the type of work that “I was doing, and I suppose in all honesty what I tended to do well or well enough, or put another way, better than other people.” Although John did not see himself negotiating for personal benefits as “there was no negotiating for personal benefits, you got the personal benefits package [that was offered]” he did mention that his advancement to full professor “was a bit of a struggle for variety of reasons...but anyway I won.” He did not provide details about the nature of the struggle or its resolution.

Valued Leadership Traits

When asked what leadership traits are valued by his organization, John replied “honesty and integrity...and of course there has to be the ability to perceive a lack of honesty and integrity, which is not always there.” John went on to talk about the importance of being willing to “think about the well-being of the organization as opposed to a particular part or constituent within it...and there is an appreciation for the ability to make decisions.” Decision-making was a recurring theme for John who also saw decisiveness as being linked to organizational power.

Organizational Power

From John's perspective there was a "practical component" associated with organizational power; "so if for example individuals within an organization who technically are empowered to make certain decisions, but they don't, then there is a natural draining of the power or the authority of decision making to another area." John saw decision-making as key to keeping organizational agendas moving forward because it "powers the ability to influence, and you can't influence unless you direct, and you can't direct without making decisions."

An Administrative Career: Dark Clouds and Silver Linings

When I asked John about the rewards of an administrative position, he returned to the idea of working to advance the position of the institution as a whole: "working to see the big vision achieved and realized...and presumably if the conclusion is reached that it ain't going to happen anymore, is the time that you leave the organization." The idea of working for something larger than individual benefit also came to light when John reflected on the drawbacks of being an administrator: "having to deal with individuals who perhaps don't appreciate the vision, who put their own interests or narrow interests above the broader interests of the university." John also commented that it is difficult "having to deal with people...who are constantly changing direction and opinion...lack of consistency...lack of clarity, consistency, indecisiveness, that is very frustrating. Having to deal occasionally with people who are unprincipled,

even unethical,” and then with a note of irony, “but other than that it’s a great job.”

Women in the Academy

John saw gender bias in the academy as working more against men than women. “I certainly have witnessed situations where someone would hire a woman because she was a woman and the organization needed more representation...and not necessarily the best candidate so that’s to my mind a definition of bias.” John surmised that the bias may be reversed in years to come. “If you look at the number of female and males who are enrolled in undergraduate programs now, the whole demography is going to change in the next 10 years, and you may actually get the situation in 20 years from now where people will be going out looking for males to hire because women are over-represented in the universities.”

John believed that women are under-represented in the senior ranks of the academy not just because “20 years ago when people were in their formative stage there were fewer women, and so you can expect that to be reflected today,” but also because of the “whole socialization bit about how women were expected to be in a role associated with home building, child rearing and the softer side of the socialite scene.” Although John expressed the view that as more women come into the academy there will inevitably be more women in the senior ranks, he also commented that as more options become available, an administrative career in the academy may be less attractive for both sexes.

If in fact you are going to be a career woman, career women I assume, like men will in many respects respond to the imperatives of wealth and

position in society...If I were an ambitious individual with a certain academic bent and had a law degree I think I would prefer to become an outrageously successful lawyer than an outrageously successful academic.

John also talked about his observation that women in the academy are often undermined not by men, but by other women.

I've certainly seen women harassed in the workplace. But in all my years, that's 33 or 34, it's always female to female...I've seen [harassment] in terms of how women in positions of authority have treated non-academic subordinates...I've seen it in terms of instructor to student relationships as well...it's just bullying, absolute bullying, it couldn't be described any other way.

Family and Balance

The topic of balance and how one balances career with family was not an emphasis in John's interview. When asked how he achieves balance, John replied "You can't get me out of the house fast enough...so no problem balancing them. I have a perfectly harmonious balance. How do I manage that? It's quite easy...we both have equal access to the bank account. No questions asked."

Participant #2: Elizabeth

Pseudonym: Elizabeth

Title: Dean

Years as Administrator: 30

Age: Over 60

Family: Married with a grown child and grand-child.

Career Unfolding

Elizabeth was 21 when she was first interviewed for a college position and from that point since has been the chair of several departments and a dean at more than one school. Elizabeth was recently approached by a head-hunting company about a Vice President position but weighed the pros and cons and decided not to apply. "It was a difficult decision and I'm not sure that I made the right one; I think so, but you do have to kind of look at the balance between your life and the opportunity and the timing of the opportunity."

Career Negotiation

A theme that recurred when Elizabeth talked about her career was of being approached by head hunters and peers and being asked to think about applying for positions; "and so a number of people in the department came to me and said 'we'd like you to run to be chair of the [name] department.'" And later on at a different point in Elizabeth's career "some of the faculty from the [name] program came to see me as they were going through a really difficult time...there was a lot of fighting...and there was a big mess and they said 'we'd like you to chair the [name] program.'" Often the position that Elizabeth was asked to consider involved overseeing troubled spots. Although Elizabeth did not explicitly state that she is approached because she is seen as a problem solver, she told several stories in which she brought about amicable solutions to workplace conflicts. Elizabeth said that when navigating a career, one has to have "enough sense to know that that kind of opportunity doesn't always come around."

When Elizabeth is weighing whether or not to pursue an opportunity, she talks to the people who are close to her. "And I went home and I spoke to my

daughter and I said 'you know I've been asked to do this and I haven't said yes.' I said, 'what do you think?' She said 'Go for it Mum.'" Later on in her career Elizabeth felt at an impasse and was unsure about what direction to go in. She talked to a friend who asked "'What do you really want to do?' and I said, 'Well I really want to study [area of study]' and she said, 'Why don't you?' And I thought, 'Well why don't I?'" This was not an easy route for Elizabeth as her chosen area of doctoral study was different from her master's degree and in her words she did not pick the easiest route. But in the end the route was rewarding and led to new areas of work and interest.

Elizabeth reported that she does not have a problem negotiating for personal benefit. "When [name of institution] phoned me and they said that they wanted me, I was sufficiently canny not to say 'Oh yes, I'm coming.' I said 'Oh, that's very interesting and...we'll need to talk about the terms and conditions.'" To learn how to negotiate Elizabeth recommended doing some homework: "You know if you're thinking of position X, Y, Z, then at least figure out what you're worth in that market and like do that before you get too far down the line;" and even taking a course: "I did attend something at [name of institution], it was three evenings and it was quite useful."

Valued Leadership Traits

When Elizabeth thought about what it takes to do well in an administrative position, she said, "You have to do your homework. You have to have some rhetorical skills. Occasionally humour, but you've to be a bit careful with that...one other thing, you try to find allies." Elizabeth

found allies by reaching out to people socially. When a new person arrives on campus,

I tell the person 'you know we're going to be working quite closely...[and] we just want to take you out to lunch to get to know you and get the chance for you to know us and to kind of welcome you to the college.' It works because they're relaxed, we're relaxed, they've had a first point of contact with us and the school and they remember us...I think your fellow managers have to know that you respect them.

Organizational Power

Elizabeth talked about power in the context of how the pendulum has swung between consultation and decision-making in her organization.

At one point in the history of the organization,

The board thought there was too much consultation...that there was like [talk] about co-governance between faculty and management. And so the pendulum had swung very far to the left. So the board wanted the pendulum to swing to the right...none of this co-governance, it's 'management will manage.'

As a result it was Elizabeth's observation that "the executive [in her current position] is extremely powerful. It is very top down." Elizabeth could see the pros and cons of being both decisive and consultative. On the one hand,

There can be so much consultation and collaboration that no decisions are made or no painful decisions are made...on the other hand, you can get decision making that really doesn't respect the fact that your faculty are intelligent people who are, by and large, dedicated and in some cases, a few of them might even be more intelligent than senior management. Novel idea.

An Administrative Career: Dark Clouds and Silver Linings

Elizabeth saw the rewards of an administrative position as "being able to paint with a big brush. You can really effect some changes with respect to

programs and systems and I think you can build bigger changes for the future than you can just in a classroom.” Having said that, Elizabeth defined her own career success first and foremost in terms of the students that she has helped: “There’s some individual students that I’ve really, and I know, I’ve really helped.” Elizabeth also talks about how she has worked to “improve morale” in her faculty. “Not as much as I would really like to because of the sandwich position of senior management and faculty. But I’ve tried and I think they at least know that, and the morale has improved since I got here.”

For Elizabeth, the number one drawback of an administrative position was “the number of hours you have to give to this. There’s also pretty heavy stress. Partly owing to the sandwich position.” The long hours also led to

A lot less control over your time... So it’s long, long days and if you’re a faculty member [as opposed to an administrator], if you want to get your hair done, if you want to take your clothes to the laundry, if you want to slip out and have lunch with a friend, I mean all of that is a lot easier to do.

When asked to clarify what she means by the ‘sandwich position’,

Elizabeth described being caught between senior management and the faculty:

Senior management here decides and it’s, ‘this is the way it’s going to be and we’re telling the faculty to do this’. So the labour relations are much more strained because the faculty feel that they’re being told what to do whether they want to do it or not. That’s when consultation happens, it isn’t always real, it’s sort of like sometimes phony consultation, the decision has already been made and the faculty are sufficiently acute to know that this is the case. So that kind of tension between the two sides is quite difficult and the role of the Dean is you’re kind of like the meat in the sandwich.

Women in the Academy

When asked if she has ever experienced or witnessed gender bias in the workplace Elizabeth replied, “You know something? It’s terrible to say but I think

I've witnessed it more often from women. I've heard cases and on hiring committees of even managers saying 'You know well it would be nice to get a woman in this position.'" Elizabeth went on to say that although "there's probably still a bit of a gender bias for Vice-President and President positions...[but] I think it's shifting...and you're going to see more of that, if only because more women are going into higher education these days than the men are. And in fact, ironically, I'm a little worried about the young men." When asked to expand on this point, Elizabeth reiterated "especially our young men. Some of them seem a little aimless and unmotivated and I do think the women's movement is part of that."

Family and Balance

Although Elizabeth felt that with more women entering academia there will eventually be more women in the senior ranks, she recognized the issue is complicated by family matters. "[Men] have fewer balls in the air...it is still true that they don't get pregnant. That although childcare is become more of a shared domain, the childcare still falls a little more heavily on the woman." Elizabeth also recognized that there are generational differences in how women think about balancing work with family. "The next group of women, the group of women that immediately followed me, really did think that they could have it all and then the younger women are now saying 'no we're making choices...we're going to try to get a little more balance in our lives one way or another.'"

Participant #3: Theresa

Pseudonym: Theresa

Title: Associate Vice President
Years as Administrator: 26
Age Bracket: 51-60
Family: Theresa is a single parent and grand-parent.

Career Unfolding

Theresa began the interview by telling me that the first part of her career “evolve[d] in a gradual and progressive way at one institution” and then when she decided to move and apply for a position at a new university she remembered “walking in and thinking oh shoot, this is a competition.” Theresa began her academic career as a graduate student, was then hired as a research coordinator, which in turn evolved into a variety of research/administrative roles.

Theresa stated:

Sometimes women may end up in where you are doing two jobs or maybe even three...At one point in time I had a full teaching load, 30 grad students at once...and my regular administrative job, which was supervising about 20 people, and I had taken on what was supposed to be a very short term position for the executive officer for the faculty I was in, which is again another full-time job in itself, and I ended up being there for 18 months. It was wicked.

When I asked Theresa if she felt that she was taken advantage of when doing several jobs at one time, she acknowledged that “there were elements of being taken advantage of without a doubt, but also there are elements of interest where I wanted to follow through in a certain manner as well.”

When Theresa eventually applied and won an administrative position, “it came as a huge relief...and I could fully concentrate on the administrative task at hand. So I found that amazingly refreshing.” Theresa went on to say at a later

point in the interview that when she took on a full-time administrative position “it was clear to me, like really clear to me, that I was making a choice that was not reversible. I personally now cannot go back into academia.”

Career Negotiation

Theresa felt that career opportunities came her way because she was a “very stable presence in [her] faculty...so when the next thing came up somebody else would say, ‘maybe Theresa could do that?’” This translated into a career that evolved over time into more senior positions: “I was in the right place at the right time, and I suppose had built a bit of a reputation for being stably in the right place at the right time...they could count on me.”

When asked about her experience negotiating for personal benefits, Theresa commented that she has always been “quite good at the benefit aspect of it, like literally the benefits...for example...I paid for my partner’s PhD and also the first year of my daughter’s undergrad degree. Whereas I was no good at negotiating personal salary.” This led Theresa to recall a story about how she had an unsatisfactory experience negotiating for a salary increase and this led to a change in attitude:

I have no problem negotiating now...there was definitely a psychological change when I realized if I don’t ask for it, and make really clear what I want, then no one else is really going to do it for me. Even nice kind people that I like who in some cases are my bosses, right? It’s not going to happen. I really turned the corner I think, from a personal perspective, when I became a single parent for a second time. And I thought I’m [age], I have a child that I have to bring up for the next 20 years, and I think working twice as much as some people in the faculty, and it’s not fair.

Valued Leadership Traits

Theresa answered the question as to what leadership traits are valued in her organization in two parts. She began by describing a quality of leadership demonstrated by someone with whom she worked and appreciated. "It's the leadership that he displayed in terms of academic understanding. So, it was being able to translate that understanding, truly to understand it, and truly seek to influence his peers, his executive. So I found that to be true leadership." In the second part, Theresa acknowledged that 'academic understanding' is not appreciated by the current administration of her institution, but rather "efficiency in relation to budgeting processes...that kind of leadership has a place, but not necessarily should [it] be dominant. It should be complementary." When thinking back on the leadership styles Theresa had observed over the years, she commented:

A lot of people really admire the traditional leader, the perception of the strong leader, the decisive leader and so on...and then you'll have other [leaders]...[who]...do value the personal focus on relationship and building consensus and all of those things.

Organizational Power

Theresa observed that "power is often related to position and what you're allowed in effect to do. So the higher up you go the more that kind of thing that you can actually do." Theresa made a distinction between power and influence; the latter which she defined as "the power of concepts in order to get the best information out, so that the best decisions can be made. And actually that best information is actually in the form of opinion." Theresa went on to say

that “there are several people in this organization who are not in power positions that have significant influence.”

An Administrative Career: Dark Clouds and Silver Linings

Theresa defined her career success in terms of the “300 graduate students” she supervised, and the fact that many of them still keep in touch.

“Successful and satisfying because...I could follow the careers of those people.”

Theresa also said that in her career she has had several opportunities to create new organizational units. “And I really enjoy that. I love that aspect. And the other reward is I really like people...And I really like a lot of the people at [name of institution]. And the other reward is financial. I like having a decent salary.” For

Theresa,

the downsides of my job are related to those times when I have a lack of control, [a] lack of input into decision making...I can almost live with the decision even if I don't agree with the decision if I've been consulted and I know I've been heard, and often I'll know that if a group is strongly leaning in one direction I'll go in that direction for the sake of the organization as long as I know I had my chance to say what needed to be said. So I find it hard when I don't have those opportunities, very frustrating, and I've been there many times.

Women in the Academy

Theresa talked about her experience of working in a male-dominated faculty in the 1970s (in a faculty of 45 only two were women, and Theresa was a graduate student at the time) and the price that was paid by the two female faculty who articulated a need for gender equity. Theresa described the confrontational style of these two women and how in the end the women ended up not being perceived by anybody “as that pleasant to work with.”

And it was because all of their working lives they had to fight and fight and fight, and without a doubt it was a gender bias. At every meeting there was a gender bias. Talking over the women, they were outnumbered vastly, so it wasn't as if they could even group together...by the time the 80s went by and were coming into the 90s the faculty began to change and there were a lot more women, and there was affirmative action and quotas in our faculty and so on, and the gender balance a much healthier one. But that didn't help these two women because they had to spend their adult growing up years, their academic careers in a male-dominated place that wasn't very kind when they came to women at that time. It's a huge price. And whether their style evolved or whether they were confrontational to start with or what, it probably doesn't matter. It's just that I thought, I hadn't seen them happy for years. I hadn't seen them happy in the workplace for years and years and years.

As Theresa reflected back on this part of her working life she recalls a third woman who was hired into this male-dominated faculty who was "very smart and very beautiful and she continuously slept her way through the faculty." Says Theresa, "I know it sounds like a cliché but that's how she got her position, and that's how she continued to rise within the system and so on. And so that didn't do any of us any good." Theresa went on to talk about how she personally survived by

not challeng[ing] [men] in a way that they often got challenged...I tend on a personal level, personal style, I tend to chip away at things. I'll take the small opportunities while I can. And so, the whole time I was there I chipped away at things. I would try to sort of rectify that a little bit, wherever I could.

Although Theresa felt that attitudes towards women in the academy have changed for the better, there are, she observed, still undercurrents of gender bias. Speaking personally, Theresa commented that "when I first star[t] working with someone or a group or a team, I feel that I experience gender bias because of the misinterpretation of a softer voice, and not a perception as hard as nails personality." To illustrate Theresa gave an example about how at one point in her

career she made what she felt was a very necessary decision, to fire one of her staff. When she went to inform her Dean (who didn't know Theresa very well at the time) about what she was planning he talked about doing it for her:

He was assuming that I came to talk about it, but that he would do the action...Now sometimes that might be appropriate, but I think if I, you know, weighed 200 pounds, had a rough voice, that wouldn't have occurred. That reaction would not have occurred.

When asked if she thinks women will be better represented in the senior ranks in the future, Theresa replied that when she thinks back on the selection committees she sat on during her university career, "the men were dominant in the faculty...and they tend to choose themselves. So, I think if the selection committees had more balance over time that would lessen because it's just a numbers game, right?"

Family and Balance

When asked how she juggles working with being a single parent and an involved grandparent, Theresa replied that she does not "sleep a lot...I went to bed about 1:00 last night and was up about 5:00." "Single parents," observed Theresa, "in many ways live differently." Couples can split work and responsibilities "like one person can go to the store and get a roll of bread and another can stay at home with the kids...I don't think most couples share work equally, I'm not saying that. But sometimes if you are in a crunch it's good to know that [there is] somebody else." Theresa went on to talk about how she manages both work and family by both compartmentalizing and merging:

I find my time is still very much compartmentalized; I may be multi-tasking but in order to focus I at least mentally need to say, 'I'm doing this at this

time.' That includes family time. So when I go home from now until 9:00 at night I will not even try to think about work.

At the same time, Theresa talked about how work and family are merged in that she is "working as much at home as I am in the workplace. But I really try to protect the family." When asked what price she pays for balancing so many responsibilities, Theresa said:

I'll tell you what the cost is. The cost is in two areas. Between work and family the cost is friends. It's very hard for me to have friends outside the workplace. The other cost is other activity other than family or work. I'm hard pressed to read a novel. On the other hand I may be reading three research proposals you know before I go to bed, that kind of thing.

In some ways balancing work with family is easier for Theresa now that she has less work-related travel:

When I was at [name of institution] I used to have to fly with [name of daughter] because I didn't have family or anyone I could trust to leave her overnight. And so that was a cost, a personal one, I had to pay for her ticket, right, in order to go to the meeting. And once I got to the meeting I would have to pay at the hotel for a babysitter, and then go to the meeting. All at personal cost.

Theresa went on to describe how on one trip the hotel babysitting service that was organized through a centralized system for some reason got mixed up and when she arrived in Newfoundland there was no one available to take care of child. She described how the stress of this situation was mitigated:

It was so amazing. I don't know if you've ever been to Newfoundland? Everybody wanted to mind [name of child.] As soon as they knew this had happened the housekeeper wanted to bring in her daughter, the local people who were organizing the conference wanted [name of child] to stay with them at the desk! I mean it was hilarious. And it worked out so beautifully. It was a highlight.

Participant #4: Sandra

Pseudonym: Sandra
Title: Associate Vice President
Years as Administrator: 13
Age bracket: 51-60
Family: Partner with no children.

Career Unfolding

Sandra began her career as a medical practitioner developing and administering rehabilitation programs at hospitals, and multi-disciplinary out-patient programs that led to the writing of a seminal textbook. Sandra started her academic career as a full professor and then became an administrative director. Sandra's partner is a fellow academic.

Career Negotiation

Sandra said that when she started her career, she "didn't even know it was possible to negotiate...they said 'well this is the salary' and I said 'okay.' I didn't have a concept of negotiation, and I think there was no part of my university training that let me, at all, to have the skills or knowledge about it." However, when working in a hospital setting Sandra "got pretty savvy" in regard to her terms of employment and was "careful never to become their employee and maintained [her] independence as an independent contractor." After that experience and when Sandra came back into the university system, she negotiated carefully, insisting on "full professorship and tenure." Said Sandra, "I just thought 'I'm too old to play this game.' And they accepted that because I think I was bringing something to them that they needed and valued."

Career Success

When reflecting on her career Sandra commented that she feels:

Proud and pleased about the clinical program I've developed...and [also] being able to mount a really solid, very innovative program, and at the same time, put out a lot of highly-regarded peer review research, which I think is unusual. I talk to a lot of clinicians...and everybody says I can't possibly do research because I'm in this clinical environment. We were able to.

When asked how she would define success in her current administrative position, Sandra said that she felt it is important "to form really good working relationships and have people both value your work with them and your judgement and your leadership. I think that's a success, to have people feel encouraged and supported, and actually then to take action to move forward, to empower people, to move forward." Sandra went on to link success with being able to make hard decisions that were also principled. She talked about someone she works with whom she feels does a good job of this: "I've really come to respect him a great deal, because I think he can make some very hard decisions but for really principled reasons and feel good about it."

Valued Leadership Traits

Sandra saw the organizational culture where she works as being highly collaborative such that the leadership traits that are valued are "relationship building, respect, working hard...following through with things, being visionary...I won't say thinking outside the box because it's so clichéd, but you know – thinking about new ways of doing things."

Organizational Power

Sandra's response to the power question was that "it's not a word that really comes to mind very much." She goes on to say that when you are a senior administrator:

Everyone thinks you have power, but I think the higher up you get you realize really you don't have any...you have very little power. Mostly it's a matter of educating and convincing and persuading, and then having, at some level, to prioritize and make your best judgement about where to expend resources.

An Administrative Career: Dark Clouds and Silver Linings

The good things about an administrative position in Sandra's mind were "just the amount of different kinds of information coming across your desk. If you're somebody who likes to read the newspaper because there's all these interesting things that you didn't know about, that's what...constantly learning all sorts of new things and getting exposed to new ideas." Sandra also appreciated the opportunity to understand the organization as a whole:

And it's like 'oh that's how that's made' or 'that's how that would be viewed.' I think when you're in the ranks it's like you have this vague sense of how decisions get made, and then all of a sudden you're there, and you have a better sense...of how this all comes together... you're part of defining the future, you're part of the vision, and I think that is very exciting and interesting and fun to be involved with.

When asked about the downside of the job, Sandra said, "probably the negatives are it feels much more like – I was going to say 'nine to five' but it's more like nine to nine – it's much less individual flexibility." When comparing her current position to when she was a faculty member, Sandra

concluded that, “as a faculty member you’ve got a lot more autonomy, and a lot more...control over your own schedule and your own priorities, you can set your agenda much more easily than you can here, where you’re much more heavily scheduled, you much more have to be available and to be here and be seen and be on.”

Women in the Academy

While on the one hand Sandra felt there are “already many more [women] in academia than there were just a few years ago”, this trend is offset by women leaving academia “for whatever reasons early in their careers.” Sandra thought that this trend is not just limited to academia but many professional areas. One reason Sandra thought this is so is because “strong powerful women are often with strong powerful men, so they have more options...So I think for men they often don’t have the choice to drop out because they’re supporting family, and more often I think have a spouse who’s dependent.” Sandra also surmised that perhaps women “value more a work-life balance, and so find these positions are not to their liking.”

In response to the question about gender bias in the workplace, Sandra said that when she was completing her doctoral work in the 1970s it was “pretty blatant. Every faculty member had been in a relationship with students...when I look back now the whole thing was just a disaster.” To some extent, she felt that the behaviour was symptomatic of the times:

There just weren’t any workplace guidelines around harassment or inappropriate behaviour that I was aware of. It wasn’t on anybody’s radar screen, I don’t think. So I’m not sure it’s fair to say that it was wrong because I don’t think anybody had really articulated that it was wrong.

I asked Sandra if she thought things have changed, and she was clear that today “it just would not happen.”

In thinking about how women fit into the academy, Sandra made the case that in some way, being a faculty member can be good for women as it provides some flexibility to accommodate children. She also observed how one of her younger male colleagues (also a senior administrator) is engaged in the day-to-day care of his children. “It’s interesting to see a man saying ‘No, I can’t come to [meeting] because I’m responsible for the kids on those three mornings. You know, it’s really quite refreshing to see that. I don’t see that very much from men.”

Participant #5: David

Pseudonym: David
 Title: Director
 Years as Administrator: 25
 Age bracket: 51-60
 Family: Divorced and empty nester

Career Unfolding

David has a background in sociology and started at his place of employment “right out of graduate school. I came on a fairly short term project and I’ve stayed 27 years.” David was hired in a technical role and after two years was promoted to management. Although David’s responsibilities have expanded over the years, he has stayed within a general career area.

David described his career progression as being a combination of seeking to work with areas and people of interest, as well as being approached about taking on responsibilities. "About 10 years ago a small group of faculty approached me and said basically that they were looking for a home...we had a meeting of the minds and I did take them on and that has become our [name of group]." David also described how he has developed relationships with his Ministry counter-parts which have resulted in positive provincial relationships for his institution and secondment opportunities for himself.

David described his career on the whole as being successful:

There are very few parts of my work life that I regret or wish had happened otherwise. I really...I mean I love the people I work with and I love the work I do, and I don't see much that's not been successful. I mean I'm not a wealthy man or the president...but within my sphere of activity I haven't seen much that hasn't...that's been a set back.

When asked to think about how he defines career success, David said that for him it is "being accepted in the organization, having entrée to all the doors that I need to. To being relied on and accepted. To being turned to when things are needed, trusted."

Career Negotiation

When asked about negotiating for personal benefit, David responded: "I'm staring at you a little blankly. You mean negotiating for money? Like compensation and that?...I've almost never done that." David then clarified:

Almost never. I think once or twice in the early days I pestered my boss for raises and so on. But pretty much they have sort of come in the course of time. We have a system at the [institution] that your

level of responsibility dictates your pay and so as you take on more responsibility, you get more pay.

Valued Leadership Traits

David saw the administrative environment as being complex and that several attributes are necessary: “communication, consultativeness, openness, honest, trust. Decisiveness is one that we’ve consciously hired for and promoted.” David observed that people have come to grief in the organization when they do not work in a “collegial manner, where they’ve tried to do the command and control stuff and all that. It just doesn’t cut it in a collegial environment. This kind of environment really you need a much more complex set of skills for that.”

Organizational Power

“Anybody who tries to wield power in this environment is headed for trouble,” observed David. “You need to collaborate, you need to bring people in, you need to consult and negotiate, and if you try to do something by fiat of your position, almost at any level you’re just asking for trouble.” David felt that if you need to get something done the best way is through networks. “You want something done, you call up the people that you know can help you...Call up the people you know can help you and bring them on board and in return you answer the call when they ask. And you always thank, always consult.”

An Administrative Career: Dark Clouds and Silver Linings

For David, the benefits of an administrative job are “being accepted, being called on, being brought in, working as part of a team when the chips are down. Or even when they’re not, you have an opportunity...to [be] part of the team.”

David added that he also likes the fact that his days are in “incredible mix of different things” and that the “money is great.” The downside was that he sees himself as “work[ing] too hard and...work[ing] too many hours.”

Women in the Academy

David observed that 20 or so years ago, his place of work was much more male dominated. He sees “more women seeking opportunities in management and more women seeking opportunities in some of those hard skill areas that we didn’t see...before.” Currently, it is David’s understanding that “there is very little” gender bias:

There’s a certain amount of ghettoization that you would find in any modern workplace. So the clerical staff tends to be female and the custodial staff tends to be male and that sort of thing. But I don’t see much evidence of gender bias. For a while we used to laugh because I think like [the majority] of our top admin positions were female...we used to talk about the matriarchy and laugh about it.

David felt that the increase of women in senior positions is “just sort of natural blossoming of women in the academic workforce and in part it mirrors the penetration of women into the workforce in general.”

Family and Balance

David said that for a long time, work “dominated my life and I worked a lot and I worked more than I wanted to and yet I felt that I should work even more. I mean, I had colleagues that were working till midnight and I felt bad that I was only working until 10 and I would work at least part of every weekend and all of that.” Over time, David came to realize:

It just didn’t matter. Like putting in more hours didn’t really have any incremental effect and I got to know...well one man in particular...who

was a great mentor to me in many ways and he had a philosophical attitude about time at work and all that. Very healthy. I mean he put in long hours but he also had a very healthy respect for personal life and personal relationships.

Participant #6: Patrick

Pseudonym: Patrick
 Title: Dean
 Years as Administrator: 3
 Age bracket: 41-50
 Family: Married with young family.

Career Unfolding

Patrick completed his undergraduate degree at a European university. After graduation, he and his girlfriend (later to become his wife) decided to pursue masters' degrees overseas. They received offers from several institutions but settled on a Canadian university. The unfolding of Patrick's career has been a pattern of co-negotiation with his partner, as they worked together to find places of study and employment that would be mutually satisfying. After they had both completed PhDs at the same university, Patrick and his partner were told that the "likelihood of two young PhDs getting academic appointments in the same university in 1985 was just about zero." Patrick and his partner took a strategic approach to finding a place of work:

We made a list of all the places that both of us would sort of enjoy living and working. We agreed that whoever landed the first academic job, we would then sort of work our way up the list from there to see whether...what better job we could attract. Otherwise we would take that job and the other person would simply become entrepreneurial and set up a business or do consulting. And so I think we sent letters of application, I think to 40 different universities between the two of us.

Patrick ended up getting and accepting an offer from the [institution] at which he still works. Patrick started as a tenure track assistant professor and his wife as a sessional. A year later, his wife was also appointed to a tenure track position and later started a new department. Patrick and his wife continue to work at the same institution where he is now a Dean.

Patrick described the process of Dean selection as “a bit like a political appointment...because you have to be so conscious of popularity.” Although Patrick saw the ratification process as being “brutal,” he said he didn’t “mind because actually that’s probably my style anyhow. I mean I believe in consensus and reaching out.” When Patrick was approached about applying for the job he was “quite chuffed that people would ask me to run. So they obviously saw something in me that made them suggest that I should let my name stand.”

When reflecting back on his career, Patrick said

[I take] great pride in those under-graduate students that you get to know well in the latter years and who do honours and who go on to do graduate work...I feel very privileged that we may live in delusions, that you’ve had a little bit of an impact on their career path...I have done a lot of exciting research stuff. A lot of it applied with industry, a lot of it stuff that’s now slated into sort of commercial solutions...but I think the real career satisfaction is the students.

Career Negotiation

Patrick relayed a story about career negotiation that goes beyond personal interest to family matters:

So in 1988, three years into our careers, we expect our first child...and we discover that [name of institution] didn’t have maternity policy for faculty...And my wife had a very unpleasant meeting with one of the then senior administrators who she

overhead saying to another administrator that she was uncooperative for insisting on having a child and giving birth in September at the beginning of the term. As though, this was like a coldly planned strategy, which it wasn't.

Patrick went on to say how he and his wife negotiated with the administration to change policy around maternity leave, "so we then, in I guess a strategic way, decided not to get angry but basically to negotiate with the provost [about] why there was not a maternity policy for faculty women." When Patrick and his wife were expecting their second child, they again became the test case for exploring the creation of a policy to accommodate tenured faculty with children:

We actually tried to explore long-term, part-time, full-time status for people with young children. Making the point that especially women, at a certain age, didn't want to spend full-time on their job. So would really like to look at a reduced appointment and then be allowed to come back into full-time when the kids reached a certain stage in their career. The then administration, the provost thought 'this is great' and went for it.

Organizational Power

Patrick talked about how the culture at his institution has changed and is now much more collaborative and open. "[Name of institution] is an amazingly collegial place." When he first came to the institution, Patrick said the place was

[The place was] basically run around the coffee machine...and if you wanted anything done then you just got to know who was standing around the coffee machine and you lobbied those who stood around the coffee machine. And hopefully either you were invited every now and then to have a cup of coffee or you had your views sort of communicated through those who were at the coffee machine.

An Administrative Career: Dark Clouds and Silver Linings

For Patrick, an administrative career has “been a lot of fun because these are great times in BC...So I’m really enjoying a lot of the opportunities that the Faculty is creating at the moment.” On the downside, Patrick says that he did not

anticipate how much this sort of job cuts into your freedom. Before as a regular faculty member of faculty, I worked really hard, I’ve always worked hard. But I’ve worked very hard to my own tune. So this idea of working off a daily sheet of where I am to turn up to dance, where I really have lost control of my own time, including the evening often. That’s been tough.

Women in the Academy

In thinking about if he has witnessed gender bias in the academy, Patrick responded:

Let me start by taking out the word gender and simply answering with, I have experienced bias in the academy, absolutely yeah. And I am often amazed at things some people will say when they think they’re off the record. So is this place free of bias? I don’t think so.

When commenting specifically about gender bias Patrick saw it working against women, but also: “I think in today’s world, white Anglo-Saxon males don’t have it all that easy anymore either.” At the same time, Patrick remembered “a number of departments, including my own department, that went through such gender imbalances in the faculty that we had to hire preferentially for women. And those have been very interesting times.” I asked Patrick to explain further what he means by ‘interesting’:

The usual, what you’d expect. I mean some people got it and just said ‘fine,’ and fully agreed and fully supported. And other people clearly felt that one should always go for the best candidate and I suspect their definition of the best candidate is probably easy to recognize.

In thinking about what the future holds for women in academe, Patrick was optimistic:

I see a lot of really amazing leadership potential coming through the ranks in our faculty members who are women and I think they're going to make absolutely awesome chairs. We already have women chairs and they're doing a great job, although we don't have enough of them. And I think there is hope.

In his final reflections on women and the gender, Patrick commented:

I think the debate around how do you handle raising children in dual income households is to me what we haven't talked about enough yet...it's tough and how do we create a work environment where if one of the partners becomes a dominant caregiver for awhile, that person doesn't get penalized down the road?

Discussions about family and balance led to some of the participants remembering incidents when they had unexpectedly not been supported by female administrators. Patrick recalled how his wife, also an academic, had negotiated a part-time position at the university that enabled them to balance work with family. This arrangement was working well for them until a new provost came onto the scene and overturned the arrangement. Patrick and his wife were told in essence that "this arrangement is unsatisfactory. It's got to stop. So you're either full-time or you're part-time. Make up your mind." The message was a surprise; even more surprising was that the message was delivered by a woman. There was an expectation that the provost, by virtue of her gender, should have understood the value of flexible working arrangements.

Family and Balance

When asked how he balances work with family Patrick jokingly replied “probably poorly.” He went on to say:

I think by living one of those crazy lives where every minute of the day is planned and where you might scoot off from work at 3 o'clock to pick up the kids. But you're reading something in the car while waiting for them to come out of the school and you're working again at night. Often you're reading something while sitting in the concert hall listening to them playing the fiddle. You just wing it.

Phase 2 Interviews

In Phase 2, three interviews were completed: two of the interviews were with young female academics who, for the time being, had decided not to pursue an administrative career, and one of the interviews was with a woman who had moved from being a senior administrative academic to a senior civil servant. The latter three interviews were completed to provide different perspectives on the experience of an administrative academic career: how does such a career appear to those either moving toward or away from such an option? The questions were adjusted accordingly; for example, the pros and cons of an administrative position were not queried.

Participant #7: Maureen

Pseudonym:	Maureen
Title:	Assistant Professor
Years as A/Professor:	9
Age bracket:	30-40
Family:	Married to an academic and has a young child.

Career Unfolding

Maureen said she started thinking about what career to pursue in high school and decided she was going to be a secretary so she could “be off work by 5:00 and could see [her] friends.” Her dad convinced her to go to university for a while. After completing her undergraduate degree, Maureen was looking for a way to combine specialties when she met a woman who told her about an interdisciplinary program in eastern Canada. Following her master’s degree, Maureen enrolled in a Cordon Bleu cooking school, but her dad intervened again and Maureen instead completed a PhD and went into academia. Maureen described her pursuit of a career “like a dog sniffing around. It’s like oh that looks good over there, let’s go there, this way.”

At one point she was called by the Dean of Graduate Studies and asked if she would be interested in throwing her hat in the ring for a position:

I was like ‘oh my God, [name of dean] why are you calling me?’ And he was saying ‘you know, we’ve got this new position available...and I thought you’d be a good person for it.’ And there’s this real kind of like ‘oh you thought of me’ but once that wears off and then you realize, oh my goodness, there’s a lot of work involved. You realize what people are sacrificing in those positions that are doing a good job. They are really giving themselves over to the institution.

Maureen chose not to compete for the position for family reasons but was nonetheless ambivalent about not exploring “what it’s like on the other side.” Said

Maureen:

Administration appeals to me for the opportunity that it presents to make a difference in what I see as this like completely rule and legislation bound...the business and accountability...[but] I have no kind of desire to like help it along as an institution. Like it’s more an individual thing, to help people who are in the institution.

Later in the interview, Maureen again referred to the idea of 'the other side' when talking about a colleague who was recently seconded:

We've got a fellow who got seconded for this administrative position and...he's still alive but he's not around, you know what I mean? He's over there in that other building and so there is this kind of...it's definitely not an 'us and them' thing. Because they are us, but there's two worlds.

Career Negotiation

Maureen recalled what a neophyte she was when first coming into the academy as a faculty member:

I got totally hosed at the beginning of the job...it really impacted my pay for the first five years. Because the person who got hired after me who had somebody by that time, they put in this kind of mentor thing, she negotiated up to \$4000 from the base pay and from there then, [the pay gap] just got incrementally [wider].

Maureen also told a story about negotiating the culture when first coming into an organization:

Like I remember...I had just gotten here, like 9:00 in the morning or something on July 1st and he was looking at me like 'You don't have to be here till September'. And I'm thinking there's a lot about this place I have to figure out. Like I even went and bought my own stationary and rulers and everything...The secretary goes 'when are you coming down to get your office supplies?' I'm like, I just came back from Staples.

Organizational Power

As an individual with a concerted research focus, Maureen felt that:

Money has a lot to do with power at the university. For people who are researchers who are in with the administration. Like you notice that certain people kind of show up...because they have a higher profile where the university is able to kind of spin what they are doing.

Maureen has some experience with the hidden benefits of heading a high profile research project:

I could just call up anybody and say 'oh hi' and they knew exactly who you [were]...and...now that I've taken a step away from that, to do the family thing, [you feel] like you don't have that currency anymore...you have to be hip and current and I think that that's maybe a necessary evil of the institution.

Maureen concluded her reflections on power by saying that she saw "research differently valued, and power at the university is exchanged on the symbolic as well as monetary value."

Women in the Academy

It was Maureen's view that although maternity and paternity leave policies are in place, the university is not always accommodating to children and families:

It's remarkable how conflicting it is to have a child and be in the academy. And you'd think that it would be an emancipating place that people would be really kind of different thinking. But they're not. It's a closed as ever I think. Like they've got...because they have to, they've got things like mat leave and whatnot. But as you say, like under the clothes, as you're shutting the door, they're like 'and don't get pregnant.'

Although several of the administrators when interviewed mentioned that faculty positions provide the flexibility necessary to accommodate family needs, Maureen felt that having a child and staying on top of one's game is not easy. She gave the example of how she was invited as one of eight academics worldwide to go and present a paper at Oxford for their 100th anniversary of her discipline:

And I decided not to go because at the time [name of child] was just a couple of months old...And then they wrote back and said 'Well you know, we're going to publish all the papers and would you write the paper that you were going to give and we'll publish it?' And I thought, oh good, opportunity not lost. Do you think I could get that paper written...so I defaulted on this amazing opportunity to publish with these top people...and there's this big sense of failure.

Juggling career with family is made difficult by the competitive nature of the academy. Maureen noted that it is difficult to set work aside, even temporarily. She recalled an episode when she made the difficult decision not to spend a summer doing fieldwork, and to instead stay at home with her young daughter. "I decided not to apply for another grant because I felt like it was too much on top of, like committing to be away for two out of four months with a two year old was...I couldn't do it." Having come to terms with her decision, Maureen then received an email from a senior academic woman to say that she was planning a trip to the location where Maureen did her fieldwork and would like Maureen to introduce her to the community.

Maureen's response was unbelieving:

And I'm like, holy smokes, like there is like...I mean first of all this is totally rude and like there's like no respect for the fact that I've decided to take time off...you get an email like that and you realize that you're just putting a bubble over yourself. Like either you're in or you're out and like you're out, then whoever's in who's playing the game, gets to take your spot. And it's so competitive, like it's brutal and yea, like that's it.

There are times when Maureen felt equally unsupported by the administration. Maureen had her child around the time of her sabbatical and this lead to some conflict with the administration:

And she [administrator] wanted me either to teach a full summer course to make up for the time that I would be quote, getting paid for teaching. Or that I was not allowed to come back to my sabbatical because it inconvenienced the university and so that I would have to take the remainder of my sabbatical. And so I had a big fight with the university.

Maureen researched the human rights code and made the case that:

If you take [sabbatical time] away from me you're essentially taking away a merit driven increment because I got pregnant. That's looking super bad

and then what's going to look really bad is when you say you're giving away a merit driven increment to a pregnant person who's an assistant untenured woman. You know like it just got worse and worse and the woman that I was dealing with just said 'I can't help you. My hands are tied.'

Although the problem did eventually get resolved in Maureen's favour, it left her with the sense that "the [administrators] just don't have the ability to bend to the people. They bend to the institutional needs and I think that's got to change at the administration level."

Maureen later talked about how in her opinion the focus of the institution has shifted from a people to a business focus. "The administration and faculty is based no longer I think on this kind of critical thinking. Like they say it's all about critical thinking and producing knowledge. But it's all based on a business model and people are...it's no longer about how many publications you have. How many dollars was that research grant?" Maureen gave the example of how faculty members are responsible for funding graduate students:

Don't rely on the [institution]. But at the same time the administration says to me 'your department has to have 14 graduate students in order to give TAs.'...It's like you're really on the hook to be getting these big grants and supporting students...like I just see the administration as working towards these really non-pupil centered models of directing and I think that that's just really wrong.

In terms of the persistent problem of female under representation

Maureen did not think it will be easily resolved:

Like you'll see more women over time become full professors because I think that the kinds of research that's being done by women...will be recognized and they'll be promoted on that...but I don't think that there's

ever in my career going to be equal representation of female and male full professors.

The reason that Maureen does not think she will see a change is because of the “whole biology thing.”

Because by the time you get out of grad school you're 30. Then you spend...six years, you're working like a dog to get tenure...and then you're like, what's that sound? It's a clock and it's like oh my God! And then you're 38 with your first baby and you're like 'holy crap!' It's just like weird, that is just insane.

Family and Balance

When asked how she balances work with family Maureen replies “I don't, I have melt downs. I do, I'm totally serious. Like I completely, like implode get up and realize I've got to make dinner.”

Participant #8: Laurie

Pseudonym:	Laurie
Title:	Associate Professor
Years as A/Professor:	16
Age bracket:	41-50
Family:	Single parent

Career Unfolding

Laurie works in the same academic discipline as both her parents and says intuitively she knew she would end up where she is, but tried some other things beforehand. She completed her PhD at an eastern university and then came back to the West Coast when expecting her second child. “I was a single parent by choice, with my first child. I did that very happily, but it's a steep curve

when you don't have your family around." Laurie "taught sessionally through [her] pregnancy with [her] second child and then...applied for and got a tenure track job." Two years ago Laurie stepped into an interim administrative advising role at the departmental level:

It is a big job. And it also became a larger job because of some circumstances within our department which meant that really I was doing something that I would see as being equivalent to, whatever you might call it, an Associate Chair or a Vice-Chair.

Laurie said that she felt as if she agreed to take on the role as an introduction to administration but "ended up far more immersed in administrative work than I thought, when I wasn't particularly prepared for it."

I didn't have the luxury of knowing in advance, or planning in advance, really, for what the impact would be on my family, and certainly not for what the impact would be on my research, or on my teaching.

When asked to describe the impact in more detail, Laurie explained:

I found that I cut back on my office hours. I found that I was mixing up students. Not in any disastrous way, but things like a student would come and talk to me about a topic they were interested in, and then I couldn't identify who that student was...I just felt, like I said, that I was doing this very superficial job, and was distracted, and often came out of class, and rather than feeling 'Wow, that went really well,' feeling, 'Oh my goodness, I got through that...I had so many nights where I was working, where again I would feel 'Okay, I'll go home, I'll get dinner on the table, I will sort of get through supervising homework' and then as soon as my daughter was in bed I was back at the computer working. And it was night after night. I had to arrange with family, sometimes on the weekends, to provide additional childcare so that I could work on the weekends.

Laurie not only recognized the pattern of overwork she was slipping into but also how she got there:

There was a little voice out there saying, you're absolutely crazy, and why would you do this, and this is being so stereotypically female, and

you know better than this, and you don't have to do this... Yet I could hear myself saying 'well, if nobody else will do it, I'll do it.'

When Laurie was considering whether or not to continue the administrative position for a third year, her acting chair asked: "Why would you do this? Really, I want to know why would you do this and I need an answer that is something better than 'nobody else will do it.'...that's not your problem."

Laurie decided to return to teaching and research and is looking forward to reawakening the things that really sustain me, that really drive me about being a member of the university community and that sustain me about being an [discipline], because they certainly got flattened and trampled on over the past two years.

Career Negotiation

Laurie said that when thinking about whether or not to do a third administrative year she felt "backed into a corner" with no opportunity to negotiate:

I just thought 'oh no, we're going to have another year like the past two years.' And I didn't see it really in terms of negotiation, in terms of what it would mean for once again, my research. I really felt, as I say, backed into a corner. And then once I realized I didn't have to be in the corner, then I just said 'okay, fine, I'm not doing it.'

When asked why she felt like she had no choice, Laurie said that she 'didn't like the idea that it [the work] would all sort of dissipate and we'd be without an [administrative position] again...that would be a step backwards."

Valued Leadership Traits

When Laurie reflected on her experience, she observed with some humour that what her particular institution looks for in a leader is "people who can balance everything and who never complain. And who make no demands

that fit outside of the university's strategic plan. Of course that's what they want; they want people who fit with their plan."

Organizational Power

Laurie described organizational power as being the "hidden player":

It's not something that we talk about very often. We use terms like 'mentoring relationships' for senior faculty and junior faculty. We talk the language of collaboration and consensus, and yet much of what we need to do as individual faculty members is very much driven by self-interest, and very much driven at the level of junior faculty by anxiety about going through the tenure process, and doing what you need to do to get tenure and then promoted, and at the senior position, by maintaining the power that you have, and the status that you have. And so at some levels we don't acknowledge power differentials, we pretend they're not there.

Laurie went on to tell a story about how she was put in a position of having to make decisions about faculty teaching schedules, which she perceived as being beyond the purview of her position: "I was made aware through the process that I was the junior faculty member here. Yet we couldn't talk about it at all in terms of, okay, this position has now shifted the power balance, right?" Things were resolved when the Acting Chair simply said:

'This is ridiculous. Junior faculty shouldn't be placed in this position. I'll do the negotiations and then you can take it from there.' Which I gratefully accepted. And it wasn't horrible...it wasn't a terrible struggle in any sense. But I guess that's what I mean about how we sort of pretend that everything is so very collegial, and so it means that when roles shift slightly, and when those imbalances are made clear, we really don't have any way to deal with it. And I just sort of took it on as anxiety. That's where it manifested.

Women in the Academy

Laurie is not entirely optimistic that having more women in the senior ranks will necessarily change organizational culture:

I think it's much more complex than that, and I think there's a certain amount of conservatism that the system builds into its administration as they move through. And people rarely vault from most vulnerable faculty member to person of incredible power who can draw upon that knowledge to bring about changes. As you move through the system, not only are the complexities of your own life changing, and the demands on your life changing, but I think there's inevitably a certain amount of conservatism, a certain amount of compromise that gets built into that person, both men and women, as they take on senior administrative roles.

Laurie presented another scenario about what might happen to the academic profession if it becomes female dominated:

Well, to be perfectly honest, I would be more concerned about what happens when professions become pink, when they become feminized. What happens to the status of that profession, what happens to wages and salaries, what happens to bargaining power in the greater scheme of things?

As an afterthought, Laurie commented that the discussion about gender equity should be broadened to include a range of sexual identities and preferences. "In [our faculty] we are already talking about trans-gendered people in classes."

Family and Balance

With the additional responsibility of administration Laurie felt that she had no balance in her life:

I've always prided myself on not bringing work so much into the home, and I was not able to do that. And it bothers me when my daughter, at the start of a weekend, would say 'do you need to work this weekend mummy, or can we do something?' That just really bothered me, and particularly when I would not be able to say 'I don't have to work this weekend' to

reassure her that she really did have my attention, and that we would do something that was more along her agenda. So, I'm certainly looking forward to being able to put up that barrier again between my work life and my family life.

Participant #9: Maxine

Pseudonym: Maxine
Title: Senior Government Official
Years as Administrator: 11
Age bracket: 51-60
Family: Married, no children.

Career Unfolding

After finishing her undergraduate degree, Maxine worked for a provincial government department but found it frustrating. "I had all these ideas and tried to push them up the system, and they just wouldn't go...so I thought, well, this is not very satisfying. So I actually made up a business card and I passed it around...and started a business...and then I actually took on a partner because it was successful." After a few years, Maxine decided that she wanted to learn French so she sold her part of the business, moved back east and worked for a couple of years until she realized she had stopped asking "why am I doing this," and decided it was time to go back to school. This decision was followed by a masters degree and eventually a faculty position that Maxine held for 15 years. Maxine described getting elected to Senate as a "profound" event in her career, as it "really changed my view of the university, because all of a sudden...I knew people all over the [institution]," and realized "what a fabulous place [the

institution] is, because there are all these resources and interesting people who are doing both important, interesting, strange, bizarre things.”

Career Negotiation

Maxine became the Director of a program until one day the Vice President Academic called and said:

‘You’ve been nominated for Dean.’ I kind of laughed into the phone, almost like ‘what?’ Because I mean, nothing had been further from my mind. And I went into one of my colleague’s office the next day and said ‘some twit has nominated me.’ And he said ‘Yeah, it was me.’

Maxine thought about it and decided that she was already working hard as the Director and may as well work hard as the Dean, as changes needed to be made. In the interview for the Dean position she told the panel, “if you choose me as Dean you are choosing change, because I’m not a good sustainer. I much prefer to be a transformer, not a sustainer.’ So they did choose me.” Over the next several years Maxine implemented a series of innovations that revitalized the Faculty.

In between her first and second term as Dean, Maxine followed the advice of a colleague and took some time off and attended a business school overseas for a month. She found this a helpful way to “assimilate and reflect on what was going on in the Faculty at the time.” She also followed the advice of her husband:

‘What do you want to do next? You should do some planning...why don’t you go and talk to 30 people.’ I don’t know where he came up with the 30, but anyway. ‘Why don’t you go talk to 30 people, just seeking advice on their own experience with career planning.’ It was fascinating...I talked to a ton of people.

Towards the end of her second term Maxine hired a career coach who suggested she create a list of legacies, and to think about how she would feel if she had to suddenly leave the faculty.

And then lo and behold, I had to leave quickly...I was penning my letter to the VP Academic saying...I was ready to move on...and before I even sent it to him I got a call from [title] saying...another one of those calls that I felt like laughing hysterically into the phone "how would you like to be [title]?' Pardon?

Organizational Power

When first asked the power question Maxine replied: "You know, it's kind of funny. I don't think about power." After some reflection, she went on to say that:

The times that I feel powerful are when I have a...community meeting...when I feel like I've engaged them...I'm really passionate about the idea of finding ways to get projects going that will engage academics, business people, and the public service in solving them...and I felt like today they kind of, as a group, we kind of went 'this is exciting.' We're actually going to be able to do some really exciting things here... I'm finding my power I guess in changing the way we do things.

Women in the Academy

When thinking about why women are persistently under-represented in senior roles Maxine surmised that personal balance lies at the heart of the issue:

I really don't know how people do it who have kids. I mean, I think it's really challenging. I look at my colleagues here who are juggling and I don't have that. So that's big. I mean, I've often wanted to invent a child. 'Oh gee, it's quarter past five. If I don't get to day care by 5:30 I'll get fined and Charley won't get picked up.'

Family and Balance

Maxine began the conversation about work/life balance by talking about how she encouraged people who work for her to find balance. In both the academy and government Maxine said she hears similar messages about overwork:

A faculty member comes to you and says 'I'm killing myself. I'm working too much. I've got to teach this, I've got my research project, I've got this going.' So then you offer up and say 'well maybe [name of course] could be offered every second year?' 'Oh, no, no, no.' They couldn't give that up.

A similar strategy at the ministry yields similar results:

I ask them to do a 'keep', 'drop', 'create' kind of analysis of what they are doing in each of the branches. The 'keep' list was this long [demonstrates with hands far apart], the 'create' list was this long [demonstrates with hands far apart], and the 'drop' list was this long [demonstrates with hands close together].

Maxine saw leaders contributing to the resolution of workload issues by being clear about organizational priorities: "finding ways that we can be really clear as leaders about our priorities, and therefore our staff and our colleagues are equally clear."

An Administrative Career: Dark Clouds and Silver Linings

When thinking about personal balance Maxine compared her current and past working lives: "If you ask my [elderly] mother, she will say...and this is shocking to me, and it's shocking to most people that I say it to – this job [in government] is way less stressful, I have more weekends." When asked why this is so, Maxine concluded that the government hierarchy to some extent channels the work so that senior officials deal with strategic oversight and appropriate

levels of issue management. “The culture is that if you’re e-mailing the [title of position] it’s that they really need direction at a strategic level, and that you’ve had permission from your [supervisor].” In comparison Maxine observed that “universities tend to have flat structures anyway because of the consensus model. So the janitor would email me or phone me, ‘Oh, the labs are flooding.’ And students can email, and faculty can email.”

Maxine went on to say that another reason there is less stress in her current job is that when she was Dean a lot of stress came from the appointment and tenure process: “I couldn’t delegate a promotion and tenure letter.” When putting her hat in the ring for a VP Academic position Maxine felt at a deep level that she didn’t believe in the university reward system: “I don’t believe in the fact that you’ve got Associate Professors in [a] faculty who serve their community and students in a huge way, and they’re still Associate Professors because they don’t fill up the research cup.”

Conclusion

In Phase 1 of the study, six interviews were completed with men and women in academic administrative positions (three men and three women). In Phase 2, three interviews were completed: two of the interviews were with female academics who, for the time being, had decided not to pursue administrative careers; and one of the interviews was with a woman who had moved from being a senior administrative academic to a senior civil servant. Each of the participants spoke about how they had, or had not, negotiated the unfolding of their careers; what leadership traits they perceived as being valued by their

organization; how they did or did not manage to find a balance between work and family; what they saw as the pros and cons of an administrative career; how they understood organizational power; and how, and if, they saw the persistent underrepresentation of women in the senior ranks as being a problem, and if so, how that problem might be resolved.

CHAPTER 5: INTERPRETATION

Introduction

At the heart of this research was my desire to explore the persistent under representation of women in the senior ranks of the academy. The narratives of the participants are informed and influenced not only by gender, but also time, organizational perspective and personal connections. Some of the participants started their academic careers decades ago, and others more recently. Some of participants have families with children, and others do not. Some of the participants are clearly what standpoint theorists would describe as organizational 'insiders', and others as 'outsiders-within.' In this study the combinations of gender, generation and standpoint intersected differently with each of the key themes that emerged.

Theme: Negotiation

Several of the women talked about how they started their careers with very little understanding of negotiation; what it entailed or if they could reasonably engage in such a process. Said Sandra "I didn't have a concept of negotiation, and I think there was no part of my university training that let me...have the skills or knowledge about it." There was also recognition that the consequences of not negotiating effectively at the beginning of their career followed them into the future. "I got totally hosed at the beginning of the job...it

really impacted my pay for the first five years,” said Maureen. But with time and experience, the women learned to negotiate to their advantage. Theresa commented, “I have no problem negotiating now.”

The results of this research resonate with findings in the literature: women are typically not effective at negotiating for personal benefit and suffer accordingly in salary lags (Solnick, 2001). Again, as is consistent with the literature, women can and do learn the art of negotiation once they recognize that others will not necessarily have their best interests at heart (Compton, 2006).

The answers from the women stand in sharp contrast to those of the men. When asked about how they negotiated for personal career benefits, the men replied that on the whole they did not negotiate, but just accepted the dictates of whatever compensation package they happened to be working under at the time. Then, almost in passing, the men referenced how they had on occasion negotiated for personal benefit. David commented that “once or twice in the early days [he] pestered [his] boss for raises.” Similarly John acknowledged that things like “travel money, conferences and various things like that...were negotiated.” However, neither John nor David provided details about the negotiations they engaged with, possibly because they regarded negotiation as so commonplace an activity that it did not merit remark.

Theme: The Seduction of Recruitment

Participants responded to the question about identifying career opportunities by describing times they were recruited either by search consultants or peers. Several of the participants talked about how it is important to recognize that an

offer, even if it has come out of the blue, is potentially an opportunity and worthy of consideration. Elizabeth commented “you know you kind of have to seize the day. If there’s something that looks interesting it may not come around again.” This sentiment is echoed by Sandra who talked about how an opportunity became unexpectedly available, and even though she was not looking for a new job at the time, she feels it is important to be open. All the administrators at one point in their career had ‘seized the day.’ For some of the participants opportunities were pursued at the expense of personal balance, so that there were times when they felt they had done more than one job.

The young academics, on the other hand, recognized the price of an administrative career and often chose not to pay it. Maureen, a young academic, remembers that she was initially flattered when asked to take on a new position, but eventually realized that the personal costs of such a position would be too high. Laurie, the second young academic, tells a story of being asked to take on an administrative position and agreeing largely from a sense of wanting to help out in a time of departmental need. The position grew in responsibility and scope at the expense of her research, teaching and family. She recognized that the pattern of overwork she slipped into came from her desire to be helpful.

In this study there are generational differences in how opportunities are viewed and pursued. All of the senior academics acted on the opportunities for advancement when presented, even sometimes at the expense of personal balance. In comparison, the young academics declined offers in the interest of balance and family. At one point Elizabeth commented that with

each generation attitudes shift about work and balance, and that younger women seem to be setting their priorities differently, and putting personal balance before work. Although Elizabeth's comments reflect the thinking of the young academics in this study, a larger sample would need to be interviewed to explore if indeed career decisions are being informed by a desire for balance.

Theme: From Here to There

Several of the participants observed that if one stepped from an academic to a full-time administrative position, the decision was irrevocable and one could not go back. When talking about the decision to go into administration, participants used language like 'crossing the line' or 'crossing the divide.' This line in the organizational sand is also recognized by the young academics who talk about the existence of "two worlds". Standpoint theory comes into play here because although all the participants are members of the academy writ large, their views are informed by the position they hold within the hierarchy. The fundamental premise behind standpoint theory is that people look at the world from different perspectives, and what they see is different (Tanesini, 1999). Feminist standpoint theory takes this premise one step further and argues that women have a privileged societal view because on the one hand they sustain patriarchies through their work, but on the other hand their contributions at times are not recognized or valued, and as such they are marginalized (Hartsock, 1998; Clough, 1994). What I anticipated in this study was that the female administrators, because of their minority status, would have a different view of

their career from their male counterparts. In some instances this was the case (for example, the female administrators openly struggled with work/life balance and negotiating for personal benefit). However, generally the divergence of views occurred between the administrators and the young academics, rather than between the male and female administrators. Although the young academics were fully aware that administrators work hard, they also saw the administration at times losing sight of human considerations in the interest of the bottom line. When beginning this study I anticipated that the female administrators would assume the role of 'outsiders-within' but instead they appear as 'insiders' - their perspectives were consistent with their male counterparts, and occasionally at odds with their younger peers. On particular topics, perspective was less defined by gender than it was by generation and position.

Theme: Conversational Check-Ins

When asked about their experience of negotiating a career several of the women recalled particular conversations they had with someone of personal significance: a parent, a husband a child. While all of the women recognized that it was important to do particular things for career advancement (i.e., sit on certain boards and committees, to do well in one job before advancing to the next) they did nevertheless check in with the important people in their lives to see what they thought. Career advancement was seen by the female administrators as a shared experience. There was recognition that decisions around career affected not only the individual, but also those closely and personally connected.

In comparison, the men described negotiating their career in a much more solitary and systematic way. A position is identified, applied for, negotiated and either accepted or not. The men did not talk about engaging others in a debate about the pros and cons of a position. The exception was Patrick who talked about how he and his academic partner systematically identified and applied to over 40 different institutions. Even in this example, although Patrick's approach to making a career decision included extensive conversations with his partner, the approach was also strategic and systematic.

These results perhaps speak to the blurring of lines between work and family that women, more than men, have to constantly navigate and juggle. Generally speaking for women, work is not separate from family, nor is family separated from work. And because one cannot be hived off from the other, one might as well take the domestic view into consideration when making career choices.

Theme: Contributing to the Whole

When reflecting on career success, all of the participants talked about the importance of making a difference in the lives of students and the life of the institution. Theresa talked about the 300 graduate students she has supervised and how many of them still kept in touch. Patrick also talked about the pride he takes in his under-graduate students. Others defined career success in terms of having positive working relationships. Sandra talked about the value of developing positive working relationships and having people feel empowered "to move forward." The theme of moving an organization forward was also echoed

by John who defined career success as developing “a new approach to learning, new methods of doing things.” The career advancement of these administrators seemed to be more motivated by interest than strategic ambition. The participants are engaged with their respective worlds, interested, and want to make a difference. They see themselves working for, and as part of, the organization. The positive attitudes expressed by the participants are consistent with Acker’s description of senior administrators as positive and buoyant personalities, glass half-full people (Acker, 2005). Like Acker we have to wonder if these people are selected, and self-select, into administrative positions because of their positive outlook and ability to withstand stress.

Even when dealing with professional setbacks the participants seemed to take adversity in stride. Patrick described a particular ratification process as “very brutal.” He then goes on to say that although the process was extremely stressful he actually didn’t mind because he is comfortable with what is essentially a “political appointment.” Sandra was the only female administrator who talked about how she found not winning a position “devastating”. Nevertheless Sandra ultimately treated this “perceived failure” as a transitory deterrent before continuing to advance in her career. All of the administrators demonstrated at various times in their career an emotional resilience, with setbacks regarded as something to learn from, and not be defeated by.

Theme: Leadership Traits

When asked to reflect on what leadership traits are valued by their respective organizations, the participants all spoke about the tension between

the need to be both consultative and decisive. The participants recognized that although these traits are not mutually exclusive it is difficult to hold a balance between the two.

When asked how they resolve the tension between being consultative and decisive, there was some discussion about the need to ensure that people understand how a decision was reached, and if the guiding reasons are sound, both logically and ethically. Sandra talked about the importance of open decision-making, and being principled when making hard decisions. John also talked about the importance not only of honesty and integrity but also the “ability to perceive a lack of honesty and integrity.” John goes on to say that from his perspective it is important to consider the well-being of the organization as a whole, as opposed to particular constituents within it. All of the senior administrators were acutely aware of what leadership traits were demonstrated and valued by the senior administration, and that this could change depending on the strategic direction of the institution. Elizabeth talked about how at one point in time at her institution consultation was the order of the day. But then the board decided there was too much consultation, and in response brought in a president who would be decisive and reinstate the rights of management.

Theme: Work/Life Balance

The question about work/life balance led to one of the most pervasive themes of the study; how difficult it is to work in the academy as a mother. All the women with children had stories to tell about the almost impossible task of

meeting work and family demands in a manner that leaves everyone involved feeling satisfied. The desire to satisfy both work and family demands is for the women a source of extreme stress. As consistent with the research by Acker the personal price is also a lack of sleep (Acker & Armenti, 2004).

In comparison, John and David, both over the age of 50, had very little to say about how they managed to work while raising a family. In the interviews with David and John, family was a background, rather than a foreground topic. In comparison, Patrick (age bracket 41-50) talked extensively about how he and his academic partner juggle career with family. The more active role of men as parents was also commented on by Sandra who has observed one of her younger male colleagues (also a senior administrator) saying that he cannot make early morning meetings as he has to drop the children off at school.

These conversations provide support for Taylor's theory of three-axis expansion (2005), which traces the evolution of a concept from idea to social imaginary. In this study, we can observe in the space of a generation a shift in how men see themselves as being more participatory parents. By taking on a more participatory role, men too experience how uncomfortable it is to fit family within the structures of a male gendered workplace. Taylor (2005) talks about how in the third expansion of an idea from concept to social imaginary, the idea makes demands upon us. There is an expectation that people will strive to fulfill the obligation of the idea. In Patrick's case the idea of equity is met by the obligation of the institution to put a maternity policy in place. Maternity policies became part of the social imaginary; an expectations that is normally met.

What Taylor's theory does not capture is the emotional struggle and energy it takes to bring about changes in thinking and being. Several of the respondents discussed the personal cost of this struggle.

Theme: Gender Equity Initiatives

While all of the senior administrators recognize that since the 1970s the rules of accommodation and engagement have changed for women in the academy, their understanding about why and how this came to pass is divided along lines of generation. The 'older' administrators' (over age 60) see affirmative action as being inherently unfair, especially to men; while administrators in the 41 to 50 bracket see affirmative action policies as a prerequisite for positive change.

Younger administrators (age bracket 51-60) both saw equity policies as making the academy a more hospitable place for women. This view was also expressed by Patrick (age bracket 41-50) who remembers how people reacted differently to the introduction of equity hiring policies. In comparison, Elizabeth (over age 60) felt that the bias towards hiring women was not equitable, and that she is concerned about young men. This point is reiterated by John (over age 60), who said he has witnessed situations where women were hired because the institution needed representation, and not because they were "the best candidate." That, from John's perspective was "a definition of bias." For this administrator equity is a numbers game and women were winning.

David similarly saw more women in the academy as "mirror[ing] the penetration of women into the workforce in general." The administrators are

strikingly similar in their collective nod to the pipeline theory (Keohane, 2003). Even at the end of the interviews when it was again pointed out that in fact the number of female senior administrators had not changed, despite there being more women than men in the ranks, all the administrators returned to the idea that with time, the under representation of women would cease to be a problem. The pipeline theory has entered our collective thinking like an urban myth. And like many good collectively shared stories it is taken at face value, rather than analyzed critically.

Theme: Shifting Discourse

Both Theresa and Sandra began their careers in the 1970s and both talked about the prevalence of sexually inappropriate behaviour, and how that has changed with the passage of time. Theresa talked about the hostile working environment female faculty were faced with on a daily basis, and the price they paid for having to “fight and fight and fight”. As a graduate student in the 1970s, Sandra commented that gender bias in the academy was “a disaster.” Sandra saw this behaviour as symptomatic of the times, as there were not “workplace guidelines around harassment or inappropriate behaviour.” But with time those policies did have an impact and the inequities witnessed in the 1970s “just would not happen [now]” (Sandra). While Theresa agreed that the academy is by comparison a more hospitable place for women she nevertheless sometimes still feels the subtle hand of discrimination. Theresa describes what Currie et al. (2002) define as “organizational micro-processes” (p. 178). While the *macro*-process of an organization may be supportive of gender equity (i.e., maternity

and paternity leaves) the day-to-day behaviours and practices are patterned after masculine ways of being, which are held as the norm. Theresa's quiet voice and gentle ways do not always fit the normal expectations of the assertive leader, and sometimes her ability to lead is underestimated. For example, when Theresa informed her boss that she had made a decision to fire a staff member, he assumes that he would be the one to do the firing; which was not Theresa's intent. Theresa stands apart from her peers in her description and recognition of exclusionary gender practices at play. When asked questions about gender equity, the other administrators tended to focus on macro-processes like equity hiring and maternity/paternity leaves, which they felt have led to the resolution of inequity issues. It is fair to say that for the majority of senior administrators gender equity is not a burning issue; if anything the conversation focused on the potential alienation of young men (John, Elizabeth, Patrick). With the exception of Theresa, the senior administrators do not see the cultural patterns of the academy as discriminating against women.

The discourse around gender equity is different again for the young academics. The same themes are visited, only with greater nuance. Laurie (like Patrick, Elizabeth and John) also considered what will happen if gender in the academy is tipped in favour of women. After attending a recruitment day at the university, Laurie noticed that the potential students for her faculty were overwhelmingly female. Laurie wondered what would happen if the professions become overly feminized? Do the wages and salaries decline? Is the profession less highly regarded? Laurie also framed the theme of equity in much broader

strokes: “[in our faculty] we’re already talking about-trans-gendered people in classes.”

Maureen also regarded the issue of equity from a perspective not considered by any of the administrators. Maureen sees a discrepancy between organizational theory and practice. On the one hand, the university claims to be about “critical thinking and producing knowledge” but in reality the focus is on the bottom line and “how many dollars was that research grant” (Maureen). Maureen went on to talk about how difficult it is to hold her ground as a young academic when she not only has to focus on teaching, research and service but also paying attention to business support. Laurie also talked about what it is like to work in a highly competitive environment. The impact of academic capitalism on the working lives of female academics is identified by researchers such as Currie et al. (2002) and Acker (2005) as being a relatively new strand of research in the literature:

What is new is that universities have entered a new era. They are adopting, almost without reflection, without hesitation, global practices that emanate from neoliberal economic policies that will make the lives of women within them even more difficult than they have in the past (Currie et al., 2002, p. 3).

While the young academics speak directly to the impact of academic capitalism on their lives, it is not even a topic of conversation for the administrators. Again, we see alignment of understanding about women and work more defined by generation than gender. For many of the administrators the issues of gender inequity have been resolved by equitable policies and the force of numbers (i.e., the pipeline theory). In comparison, the young female academics although not experiencing overt discrimination, are finding their

working lives complicated by a focus in the academy on maintaining a competitive edge and bottom-line economics.

Theme: Working Hard

All of the academic administrators talked about the requirement to work both hard, “working nine to nine” (Sandra); and according to the dictates of an unrelenting schedule. Most professional people if asked would describe themselves as hard working, which makes it difficult to gauge exactly the intensity of the hard work undertaken by the administrators. Interviewing a person who had changed from being a senior academic administrator to a senior government official was helpful in providing perspective. Maxine’s comment that her current position, although greater in scope and responsibility, “is way less stressful,” resonates with the claims of the senior administrators. They do work long hours and their work is stressful. Several of the administrators wistfully recalled the flexibility they had when working as faculty members. Although all of the administrators commented on the demands and stress of their working lives, all of them accepted the long hours with a degree of equanimity. Long hours were seen as part and parcel of the job; a necessary burden to be dealt with. None of the administrators questioned if their working lives could be made more sustainable or reasonable.

Some feminist writers make the case that long working hours are a subtle way of excluding women from senior positions (Currie et al. 2002; Acker 2004). When a clear demarcation existed between public and private lives men were typically able to work long hours because they had wives at home to take care of

hearth and family. The expectation of long hours has possibly become engrained in working consciousness and ultimately is seen as normal. "The male norm constitutes men's lives as normal vis-à-vis women's lives but that it constitutes men as normal, rather than advantaged. The often-understated power of the male norm is that it works to make men's advantage and its own operation invisible" (Currie et al. 2002, p. 63). As we think about the uncomplaining and overworked senior administrator, Laurie's wry comment comes to mind; administrators are those "who can balance everything and who never complain. And who make no demands that fit outside the [institution's] strategic plan." From a standpoint perspective the female senior administrators, when thinking about hours worked, did not offer an 'outsiders-within' perspective (Collins, 1991). Like their male counterparts they saw long hours as being a necessary part of the job. The 'outsiders-within' perspective was instead provided by the young academics who had both critically evaluated the demands of an administrative role and decided against it. When thinking about returning to academic life full-time Laurie commented that she was "certainly looking forward to being able to put up barriers again between my work life and my family life." Maureen had similarly decided that to be an administrator you must give yourself "over to the institution" and that for the time being, this is not a price she is prepared to pay. Interviewing two young academics who had considered (and in one case tried) administration and then decided against it, makes one wonder if a self-selection process is taking place, as suggested by Acker (2005). Are those more accepting of excessive work demands more inclined to become, and

continue as, administrators? This could be an interesting area for future study. If it is indeed the case that those less likely to be critical of organizational practice are recruited into administrative positions, the likelihood of shifting the system away from male-patterns of behaviour is reduced. As Acker (2005) claims, the people who end up in administration are “half-glass full people,” who work within, rather than outside, organizational boundaries. This is generally the case for both the male and female administrators in this study, who saw their role as working for, and contributing to, the greater good of the organization. There were two exceptions to this rule: Patrick had actively and successfully worked to have maternity policies put into place; and Theresa who sees herself as making change subtly by “chip[ping] away at things. I’ll take small opportunities [to make change] while I can.”

Theme: Bad Girls

Discussions about family and balance led to some of the participants remembering incidents when they had unexpectedly not been supported by female colleagues. Patrick recalls how his wife, also an academic, had negotiated a part-time position at the university that enabled them to balance work with family, which was reversed by a new provost. There was an expectation that the provost, by virtue of her gender, should have understood the value of flexible working arrangements.

Maureen also recalled how she made the difficult decision not to spend a summer doing fieldwork but instead to stay at home with her young daughter. Having come to terms with her decision Maureen then received an

email from a senior academic woman to say that she was planning a trip to the location where Maureen did her fieldwork and requested that Maureen introduce her to the community. Maureen was incredulous that another woman would so actively undermine her research agenda.

The theme of women competing unfairly was also expressed by Theresa who talked about her experience in a faculty in the early 1970s where the majority of faculty members were men. Theresa talked about an attractive and talented woman who joined the department and continuously slept her way through the faculty as a way, Theresa felt, to advance her career. Theresa expressed a sense that the behaviour of this woman ultimately reflected badly on the other female faculty.

Among participants who touched on this subject there was an expectation that it is important for women to support one another, and when that does not happen there is a greater sense of violation than when a male colleague is demonstrably unsupportive. Unsupportive women are more readily noted, more easily commented upon, than their male counterparts. John spent some time talking about how on several occasions he has observed women in positions of authority treating other women badly. John described this behaviour as “bullying, absolute bullying” and that he had not “seen it overly practiced between male to male.”

It is worth noting as a point of comparison, that in the interviews not one of the participants described any of their male colleagues as behaving badly. No mention was made of male bullying, undermining, or belittling. So what are we to

make of this? Clearly in any institution uncooperative and domineering behaviour is not the purview of one sex or the other; and yet it is the bad behaviour of women that draws comment. Is female bullying being used as a peculiar kind of justification for why there are not more women in the senior ranks; because ultimately they do not behave well? Or is it that women are held to a higher standard? Or is there an expectation of a 'sisterhood,' that when not observed (as in the story told by Theresa) there is a deeper sense of betrayal (hooks, 2000)? Or perhaps all of these factors and expectations are at play. Either way, it would seem that women, just by virtue of being women, are closely observed and possibly held to a different standard than their male colleagues.

Theme: Perceptions of Power

Generally the participants found the question 'how do you see power operating in your organization?' the most difficult. For this question more time was taken to think before responding. Several participants commented that they had not spent much time thinking about how power operated in their organization. When prompted further the answers consistently revolved around the idea of power exercised through influence. The exception was John who saw power as being linked to position and decision-making.

The other participants saw power as being linked less to decision-making and more to influence and persuasion. Sandra, like Theresa, saw power falling indirectly from persuasion and education. Maxine also saw power as being linked to influence and making change; acknowledging that she feels most powerful when she can engage colleagues in conversations

and persuade them to change the way things are done. Patrick made a clear distinction between influence and power; describing power as being exerted from the top down, and influence as an act of persuasion.

The male and female administrators in this study generally did not talk about, or view, power differently. Much of the feminist literature on power casts women as being more closely associated with using power to achieve a common goal (*power to*) versus domination over others (*power over*), (Blackmore & Sachs, 2000). Such categorical conceptualizations of power did not materialize in this research. Both male and female administrators said that at times they felt powerless despite their position, and both saw influence as being central to power, and not necessarily linked to position.

Two of the participants who both worked at the same institution gave divergent opinions as to the operation of power. David felt it was unwise for anybody to wield power, and that it was consultation that was key to bringing about change. In comparison, Elizabeth saw the senior administration as being extremely powerful and “top down.” These two commentaries serve to remind us that organizations are not fixed entities and homogenous spaces, but better understood as places of “discourse through which individual subjectivities are constructed” (Halford & Leonard, 1998, p. 2). Although David and Elizabeth work at the same place and at comparable levels of seniority, their understanding of the anatomy of power at their organization was individually informed and shaped.

While gender differences were not discerned on the topic of power, generational differences emerged. The two young academics had a different understanding of power; seeing it as emanating not from individual style or position, but as an energy in the system, omnipresent and relational. The “multiplicity of force relations immanent in the sphere in which they constitute their own organization” (Foucault, 1976 p. 92). Laurie talked about organizational power as being a “hidden player”; an influence at play but rarely discussed or even acknowledged. Laurie felt that on the one hand the university uses the language of collaboration and consensus to describe how people operate and interact, but on the other hand the competitive nature of the tenure process introduces elements of self-interest. Laurie’s perception of organizational power is illustrated by her experience of being put in a position of having to make decisions about faculty teaching schedules, which she perceived as being beyond the purview of her position. Laurie’s view reflects the Foucaultian view that power is relational, and constantly produced among and between persons and groups of persons. In this regard power is not possessed; but dynamic and unstable.

Maureen talked about power in a different context, but similarly sees it as being dynamic and unstable and operating system-wide. Maureen described power in terms of organizational currency, and how that changes depending on the profile and prominence of one’s research agenda.

Maureen felt that she lost some of her currency when she stepped back from her research agenda to attend to her family. Maureen’s observations are

linked to her sense that the university is increasingly concerned with an entrepreneurial mandate, and because of the importance of bringing in research dollars one's academic currency rises and falls in direct relation.

Conclusion: More Alike, Than Not

Each interview began with participants reflecting on how their careers had unfolded. The ensuing stories from the administrators were alike in that the careers described were uninterrupted, and progressive in their unfolding (by this I mean moving to more responsibility and seniority over time). For all of the administrators having a career had been an important part of their lives, a focus of their time and energy, and a source of satisfaction and personal development. These are also individuals driven by a sense of greater good. While several commented that they feel well compensated for their efforts (Theresa, David, Sandra), they all talked about the importance of working for a larger cause, a public service. Reading between the lines, all of the participants have throughout their careers demonstrated a capacity and willingness to work hard, and to deal with high levels of stress and competing demands. For all of the participants, long hours and hard work are seen as a necessary burden and not something that could be re-defined. While there were gender differences (the women talked extensively about the difficulties of balancing work with children and their self-described ineptitude at negotiating when starting their careers) on the whole the administrators were more alike than not. On ten of the 12 themes that emerged, the male and female administrators gave similar answers. As a point of comparison, the female administrator's responses were more similar to

their male colleagues, than to their younger female colleagues. Generally speaking, differences emerged more along the lines of generation than gender.

CHAPTER 6: DISCUSSION

Introduction

A colleague and I are team teaching a course on student support. Although gender issues are not ostensibly part of the curriculum, one day during class my colleague begins a thread of conversation about shifting post-secondary demographics. "There are now more females than males in undergraduate and graduate programs" he points out. "And how does that compare to 30 years ago?" he asks. "Right," he confirms, after hearing some opinions from the class, "30 years ago the majority of undergraduate and graduate programs were populated by males. And what are the consequences of this shift in demographics?" The students surmise that gender differences will need to be taken into consideration when thinking about student support systems. They also conclude, as an after-thought, that eventually there will be just as many women running post-secondary institutions as men, and that this will lead to institutional culture change. This classroom conversation is a microcosm of our current thinking about the status of women in the academy. As women participate in ever greater numbers in the academy, the persistent problem of under representation at the senior levels is essentially resolved, right? And if it's not resolved now, it will be in the very near future, right? Or have we

been too quick in our inclination to turn the page on the debate around representation in the academy.

Career Unfolding

Earlier researchers drew a distinction between male and female administrative career paths; with male administrators characteristically following an intentionally systematic path, and female administrators, a more serendipitous journey (Aleman and Renn, 2002; Green, 1998, Vaughan, 1990). In this study the career paths taken by the men and women were not differentiated by gender. All of the administrators, with the exception of two, had progressed through the academic ranks into increasingly more responsible and senior positions. One exception was Sandra who had moved from private clinical practice into the academy, and the other exception was Patrick who had started his career in an administrative role and continued in that vein. All of the administrators had approached their careers with a concerted focus, contributing significant time and energy to the running of their respective institutions. As observed by one of the young academics, administrators “give themselves to the institution” (Maureen). All of the administrators talked about their desire to contribute to the greater success and prominence of their respective organizations.

Several of the administrators observed that stepping from academia to administration was a one-way journey. This was also recognized by the young academics who saw moving into administration as crossing into a very different world. The basic concept of standpoint theory holds true in this instance, as organizational perspective is in large part, informed by position or place in the

hierarchy. For example, Elizabeth and Sandra, when thinking about work/life balance, both expressed the view that working as an academic offers more flexibility than working as an administrator, and therefore being an academic is more accommodating of family needs. A very different point of view is presented by Maureen and Laurie, the two young academics, who find the struggle to balance the demands of academia with those of family, extremely stressful. In this example, perspective as defined by position, seems to override perspective as defined by gender. At several points in the study, the female administrators shared perspectives and opinions that were more consistent with their male counterparts than with their younger female colleagues.

Identifying and Pursuing Opportunities

What I anticipated going into the study was that the administrators would have strategically pursued career opportunities. What emerged as more common, however, was that the administrators were approached and recruited for various positions. Each of the administrators talked about being actively recruited, surprised, flattered, and discerning about what was an opportunity, and what was not. All of the women spoke about consulting with family and friends about the pros and cons of different career opportunities; even children were asked for their opinion. Career advancement was seen by the female administrators as a shared experience. There was recognition that decisions around career affect not only the individual, but also those closely and personally connected. In comparison, the men gave no indication of having conversations with external parties about what career steps to take next (one exception was

Patrick who worked closely with his academic partner to locate career opportunities).

Generally speaking, the inclination of the administrators was to accept opportunities that were offered, sometimes at the expense of personal well-being and balance. Theresa, in particular, talked about taking on additional responsibilities, and then finding herself doing more than one job at a time. The response of the administrators stands in sharp contrast to the reaction of the two young prospective administrators, when similarly approached about administrative opportunities. While on the one hand, the young academics acknowledged feeling flattered that they were seen as worthy; both chose not to pursue administration as it would mean too much time away from family. There is a sense that the young academics are setting their work priorities differently from their female administrative colleagues, and making different choices around work/life balance. It would be interesting to study a larger sample of young academics who are contemplating administrative options to see if this is a widespread choice.

Negotiation for Personal Benefit

Struggling to negotiate effectively for personal benefit at the beginning of their careers was something experienced by all the women (of all generations) in this study. Over time the women came to recognize that there was no one watching out for their interests, and that if they were going to receive equitable pay and benefits, they would have to develop more bargaining savvy. In comparison, the men reported having had no problem negotiating for personal

benefit, and hardly thought it worth mentioning that they had done so at various points in their career.

It was difficult to ascertain why women, when starting their careers, seem so uninformed about the process of negotiation. Several of the women came from academic and professional families (Elizabeth, Sandra, Maureen, Laurie) and had parents and partners who supported and encouraged their careers (Maureen, Laurie, Elizabeth). And yet, they reported a deficit in their understanding about how to negotiate a starting position. This study is consistent with the literature in its finding that women do not negotiate as effectively for personal benefit as men (Compton, 2005; Babcock & Laschever, 2003). Although this study illustrates a difference at play, it does not shed light on why, or how. My recommendation to anyone interested in the topic of negotiation as a future area of research would be to consider a methodological approach that includes collecting data through observation as well as narrative. My hunch is that when I asked the male participants about negotiation I was perhaps not getting the full story, and to get a more detailed account of the dynamics at play the researcher would need to watch, as well as listen.

Defining Career Success

Although the administrators used different criteria to define success (supporting students, gaining the trust of colleagues, setting new directions for the institution), all talked in one way or another about how important it was to contribute to institutional advancement. The administrators saw themselves as being key decision makers, influencers and organizational contributors. From a

standpoint perspective, they all see themselves as being 'insiders-within'; sitting at the organizational heart of the institution, rather than on the periphery. And when, for whatever reason, the administrators were not able contribute to the decision-making process, some of them expressed frustration, and even a sense of not wanting to continue in their role. Theresa talked about how she feels disenfranchised when she is shut out of decision-making processes. Similarly, John talked about how it will be time to leave when he no longer has a say in shaping future directions. It was here, when the administrators talked about their need to contribute to institutional directions, that we understand these people to be active participants in organizational power processes (consistent with Foucault's notion of power being circulated and as linked to knowledge). Although the administrators recognized that institutional decision-making is a complex process that can result in decisions beyond their sphere of influence, they still felt entitled by virtue of their position to have input. They see themselves as being and feeling successful, not when they are acting "immediately on others" but rather when they are, in turn, acting "upon their actions" (Foucault, 1982, p. 789). In this sense, career success in this study is closely linked to Foucault's concept power.

Valued Leadership Traits

In the literature there is a traditional view of the leader as strong, assertive and decisive (MacGregor Burns, 1995), compared to a more contemporary version of the leader as caring, collaborative, and consultative (Wheatly, 1992; Bearisto, 1997). Both of these stereotypes are at play in practice, with the

administrators in this study finding themselves obliged to sometimes be one, sometimes the other, and sometimes both; depending on the political inclinations at the time. The administrators can be, as described by Elizabeth, the organizational 'meat in the sandwich.' On the one hand, there is an expectation from faculty that they demonstrate their leadership through fair and transparent processes; but on the other hand, what they hear from those above them is the need to be both expeditious and decisive. As described by Theresa, even in these times when consultation is seen as the order of the day, there is still the expectation of the strong assertive leader. While the administrators spent time talking about how to resolve the tension between being consultative and decisive, no one particular approach emerged. Sandra found resolution by making sure that hard decisions were ethically based; Theresa by staying true to her low-key leadership style and making change by slowing "chipping away"; David by gaining the trust of those around him. The administrators were acutely aware that expectations about leadership style could shift depending on the expectations of their superiors. Sometimes consultation was highly valued and other times, crisp decision-making. While on the one hand, the administrators regarded the capricious shifting of leadership expectations with a degree of cynicism, on the other hand they were tuned into what was required at the time; which again showed them to be organizational insiders.

Rewards and Drawbacks of an Administrative Position

Silver Linings

Being engaged in interesting work that challenged and changed on a daily basis was seen by the administrators as a key benefit of their position. The administrators appreciated understanding the inner workings and big institutional picture. The administrators saw themselves as organizational “insiders”, knowledgeable about what was going on, and about how decisions were made. In comparison, the young academics when thinking about university administration appear more as “outsiders-within”; often questioning directions and decisions. Maureen talked about being motivated to take on an administrative role as a way to support students through a complex system that does not always work in their interest.

Dark Clouds

Overwhelmingly, the number one drawback of an administrative position was cited as excessive working hours and a relentless schedule, described by Patrick as: “working off a daily sheet of where I am to turn up to dance.” How hard the administrators were required to work was verified by Maxine, who as a senior government official, works less now she did as a senior university administrator. None of the administrators questioned the long hours, or even if there were alternative ways of working. Rigorous and rigid schedules were seen to be part and parcel of the job. The young administrators recognized the long hours required, and cited this as one reason why they had decided against

moving to administrative positions. Acker (2005) talks about self-selection as playing a role in who ends up assuming administrative roles. In this study, it was those people who had an enormous capacity to work and sustain stress who were administrators. While this has its advantages for the institution, is it a way of working that should necessarily be perpetuated? As Currie et al. (2002) argue, long hours can act as a subtle form of discrimination by discouraging those people (like the young prospective female administrators in this study) who choose to make their families and their academic careers their priority. If one believes that senior administrators set the tone of the organization, is it a good idea to put up barriers to recruiting individuals who value family and balance? This is not to say that the administrators in this study did not value family, but often they had to go to extremes to make room for both in their lives.

Work/Life Balance

The women in this study, as in other studies, found balancing work with family an almost impossible task (Acker, 2004; Armenti, 2004). The female administrators with children talked extensively about the challenges of juggling work and family, and responding to the demands of each by sacrificing sleep, friends, and work/life balance. Despite the perception that universities have become more accommodating of women and families with the adoption of equity practices and policies, the day-to-day burden of juggling family and work remains challenging. The female administrators went to great lengths to make themselves fit the form, and at no point did they seem to question the form. Here we see a subtle form of discrimination at play. There is no doubt that

academic administration involves a complex and demanding work, but the assumption of long hours should be questioned. Cannot shorter hours be accommodated through job sharing or redefining position responsibilities? There is no obvious reason why this cannot be so, other than expectations for academic administration are patterned after male working norms (Currie et al. 2002), and we unquestioningly view 'the job' through that lens.

The two young female academics interviewed for this study see the expectations of administration as being incompatible with their family and research lives, and as a consequence have decided not to take on administrative responsibilities. In this example, these women are not being overtly discriminated against; in fact they are being actively recruited and encouraged to pursue administrative options, but they are choosing not to. It is important to keep in mind that only two young female academics were interviewed for this study, and so it is difficult to reach definitive conclusions about how processes of self-selection are at play. An examination of self-selection processes may prove an interesting and fruitful area for future research. Critical to the topic is whether or not the people you might most want to recruit into administration, because of their emphasis on balance and human values, might be the very same ones who are deciding the price of admission is too high.

The Father Factor

While long working hours presented a particularly acute challenge for women with children, it was in fact a point of contention for all of the administrators interviewed. In this study both male and female administrators

stated that the requirement for long working hours was the thing they liked least about their job. There is also some indication that as men become more participatory parents, they too will experience the tension between work and family as closely as their female counterparts. Patrick is an example of this, when he talked about having every minute of the day planned and living a “crazy life”. It is Patrick who commented that the debate needs to shift as to “how [one] handle[s] raising children in dual income households.” When we think about the gender debate in the context of Taylor’s Three-Axis Expansion theory, Patrick has probably correctly identified that one of the directions equity dialogue needs to evolve is around the accommodation of family needs. Optimistically, as parenting becomes a shared responsibility, and as men, just as much as women, feel squeezed by work obligations, one can hope that a more critical analysis of system requirements may take place, and that a new way into the equity debate will be through the topic of family.

Perceptions of Gender Equity and Bias

Administrators interviewed in this study, like the students described above, similarly concluded that the academy was an uncomfortable place for women 30-40 years ago. Administrators who had been working since the 1970s lived through the height of the equity debate, which was not without rancor and conflict. As Theresa described: the academic women “had to fight and fight and fight, and without a doubt it was gender bias.” And John talked about working in a ‘chilly climate’ in the 1970s. The academic women of that time who argued hard for change had a profound impact on the system, and current equity policies

have greatly improved how women are regarded, accommodated and represented and we can see that the academy is a much more hospitable place for women to work than it was in the past. From the point of view of practice, it speaks to the importance of having people in the system who are willing to go against the grain, and of having administrators who take a long view and implement policies that at the time may be unpopular. Although, as this study showed, the fairness of equity policies is still being questioned by some administrators, it is clear that for most of the academic women in this study, times have changed for the better.

Some administrators in this study believe that women will soon be equally represented in the senior ranks. Some administrators even felt that equity issues for women are so much resolved that we should perhaps be turning our attention to how young men are faring in the system. The latter view reflects not just a genuine concern for the predicament of young men, but also perhaps a degree of fatigue with 'women's issues. However, despite flagging interest in women and the groundwork being laid for equal representation at all levels of the system, there nonetheless remains the persistent under representation of women in the senior ranks in the academy (Grant, 2005). It is Keohane's (2003) metaphor that more accurately reflects the reality of the day: while there are many women coming into the academic pipe, "the pipeline is obstructed at specific points" (p. 6).

What are the points of obstruction? As discussed previously, the challenge of women to meet the demands of family while fulfilling an

administrative role can act as a deterrent. There is also, as described by Theresa, a devaluing of “softer” leadership approaches that are often associated with women. The results of this study also speak to the importance of aligning policy with practice if an institution is going to be seen and felt as an integrated workplace where differences are respected. On occasion the participants talked about how it felt to find yourself caught in a gap between what is said and what is done. Maureen described how officially her institution supports children and families, as evidenced by formalized maternity policies. But off the record there are comments made encouraging female academics not to get pregnant. Patrick also experienced a lack of accommodation for family when a policy was interpreted by the letter, rather than by the spirit; disrupting the expectation that gender is necessarily linked to a particular understanding or leadership style.

Expectations of Essentialism

At several points in this study, participants talked about how, at various times in their career, they had been undermined by female colleagues. There was clearly an expectation on the part of the participants, about how women should conduct themselves: they should be kinder and gentler, display a particular understanding of women’s issues, and not engage in institutional power plays. Women who proved exceptions to those rules generated a sense of surprise, even shock, and inevitably comment. This finding speaks to the risk of essentialism. When one explores the world of gender and gendered organizations, it is tempting to attach qualities and virtues to a specific sex (Aisenberg & Harrington, 1988; Frankel, 2004). Clearly there is a case to be

made for the archetypes of patriarchy and how it has pervaded our expectation for organizational behaviours and structures (Maier, 1999). However, when we look more closely at how people conduct their working lives, it is important to take an individual's worldview into consideration. What we see in this study is that gender per se was not the big or only differentiator in how administrators viewed the topics of career, negotiation, equity, or power. Although the female administrators did have different experiences of negotiation and work/life balance, on the whole they seemed to have more in common with their male-counterparts than not. It was the young female academics who stood apart in how they viewed the price of admission: power, family, and career. It is hard to know what is going on here. Is it, as Acker suggests (2005), that individuals with particular characteristics choose to go into administration, or over time does the experience of being an administrator exert an influence on identity on par with that of gender? What happens to women who begin their administrative lives governed by a strong feminist philosophy: are the edges of their advocacy worn smooth by the demands of administration? Some preliminary lines of research exploring if and how feminists can remain as activists when in an administrative role offer an interesting line of future inquiry (Deem & Ozga, 2000). On the whole, the administrators in this study did not see themselves as harbingers of change, but rather as orchestrators of support for the institution. Two exceptions to this assessment were Theresa and Patrick, who both talked about how they had at times challenged the status quo and brought about change. As a woman,

Theresa clearly felt that she had to be careful in her activism, and we are left to wonder if academia welcomes the administrative dissenter.

Organizational Power

The reaction of the senior administrators to the question about organizational power was surprising, both in terms of their answers and response times. Several of them explained their delayed response by saying that they generally had not given much thought to the topic of power. One of the administrators saw power as being tied to position and decision-making authority. The second more popular view was the idea of power being connected to an individual's ability to influence. Several of the administrators felt that they did not hold any kind of power, but affected organizational change by persuading others through cogent thought. If the administrators' commentary is viewed through a juridico-discursive model, it is the case that they would not be seen as powerful, as by all account they were not in the habit of using their positions to wield power in a manner negative, repressive or limiting (McLaren, 2002). But if we instead view their narratives through a post-modern lens we would come to a different conclusion, and instead see the administrators as powerful by virtue of their capacity to influence through relationships. It would seem that when the administrators' think about organization power, their frame of reference is a juridico-discursive model. And while the administrators may not see themselves, according to the criteria of this model as organizational power players, in fact they are. This is perhaps why it took them so long to respond to the power question: positioned as powerful, power is not problematic for, or salient to, them.

Their point of reference is a juridico-discursive model, but their actions are more aligned with Foucault's power analysis. As is consistent with a juridico-discursive model they also see power as linked to individual position and practice, rather to system-wide dynamics.

In comparison, the young academics viewed organizational power more systemically. They both understood power to be an energy in the system that shifted around depending on the play and the players. For Maureen, the waxing and waning of one's power was linked directly to the profile of one's research agenda. Laurie saw power as an invisible player that was never named, but that did influence how people interacted and reacted. It is interesting that the young academics understood the operation of power from a more systemic perspective. Again, this may be tied to their position as outsiders-within; observing how academic decisions unfold, and not always being happy with those decisions: Maureen having to bring in money to support research assistants; Laurie having to teach large classes at the expense (she felt) of sound pedagogy. It is perhaps because the young academics are the recipients of administrative decisions that they are aware that academic capitalism has become an organizational imperative. In comparison, the senior administrators, by virtue of their roles and positions, are expected to implement those organizational directions and, at least in these interviews, gave no indication of questioning those directions or priorities. Again, we can see the administrators as organizational insiders, supporting, rather than questioning institutional directions and purposes.

Academic Capitalism

Currie et al. (2002) begin their book on gendered universities by stating that as feminists and senior academics, they are upset with the dominant managerial ethos that is pervading their places of work. "We are not passively witnessing this. We are struggling with the institution to resist the worst excesses of hegemonic, patriarchal management" (p. 1). What they are referring to is the drive for universities to introduce a business ethic into the academy for the purposes of improving the bottom line to compensate for reduced public funding. They make the case that academic capitalism is an emerging threat to gender equity because it reinforces masculinist patterns of socialization: "individualist rather than collective, competitive, rather than cooperative, based on power differentials rather than egalitarian, and linked to expert authority rather than collegial support" (p. 1). While academic capitalism has been widely discussed in the literature, there has only recently been a focus on how this shift in organizational philosophy will impact the lives of academic women (Currie et al., 2002; Acker, 2005). Of concern is that hidden under the cloak of academic capitalism sits patriarchy. "The traditional form of patriarchy, redolent with the establishment club, [is being replaced] by a new form of entrepreneurial patriarchy, with all the trappings of the corporate boardroom" (Currie, 2002, p. 177). Academic capitalism with its emphasis on efficiencies, competition, performance and corporate conformity introduces a new kind of working norm that is again much more conducive to masculinist patterns of working than to feminist. The feminist debate of the 1970s and 1980s may have helped put a

knife to the throat of patriarchy, but the “monster” it turns out has grown a new head, that of academic capitalism.

Suggestions for Future Research

The two young female academics interviewed in this study both saw administration as being incompatible with family life, and for that reason had chosen not to pursue administrative options. As only two female academics were interviewed it is difficult to draw conclusions about whether or not this is a generalized attitude. Future research could explore if young academics are indeed making career decisions informed by the desire for greater work/life balance. Is it the case, as suggested by Currie et al. (2002), that a process of self-selection is at play, with academics who place a premium on balance, not choosing to pursue administrative career options?

Research exploring the possibility of self-selection processes could also look at whether or not organizational dissenters are encouraged or dissuaded from throwing their hat in the ring to be considered for administration. What is the role of the organizational dissenter in the academy? Has the role changed over time? Do the imperatives of academic capitalism change institutional attitudes about challenge and discourse? Are feminist women who enter administration, with the intent to bring about organizational change, able to do so? What challenges do they meet? How do they foster a dialogue of equity in the academy?

Tracing the discourse around gender equity would be another area for further research. Clearly the dialogue has shifted over the past 40 to 30 years

from resistance, to acceptance, to a kind of “benign” indifference. Will other issues, such as the plight of boys in the system, take precedence as an organizational issue that needs to be attended to? Or, will equity re-emerge as a priority as men as well as women, advocate for work/life balance.

Implications for Practice

In this study a disconnect was identified between theory and practice. On the one hand, the research is clear that although women are entering the academy in greater numbers their representation at the senior levels is not increasing; while on the other hand, the administrators in this study saw equity for women as an issue that has been largely resolved. There are more women entering the academy, there are institutional equity policies in place, and women are being recruited into administrative positions. In this study, as far as the administrators are concerned (with the exception of one participant) the role of women in the academy is not problematic. It is the young female academics who identified subtle discriminatory practices to be at play: maternity policies are in place but sometimes not administratively supported; balancing the demands of an academic career with family is highly stressful; and institutional inclinations towards academic capitalism create pressures to produce more with less. Only two female academics were interviewed in this study, and a larger sample would need to be interviewed if more definitive conclusions around self-selection are to be reached. However, both the young academics in this study had declined opportunities for administrative advancement because of perceived institutional barriers. Are individuals who value balance self-selecting out of administration?

And if people who value balance do not become administrators, how will the case be made for different ways of working? The young administrators in this study were also more critical of institutional directions and policies than were their administrative colleagues. Both the male and female administrators could be described as organizational insiders, who offered no overt criticism of directions, policies or institutional initiatives; in comparison, the young academics who were positioned more as outsiders-within, freely questioned some institutional practices and directions, especially strategies in support of academic capitalism. How well is the institution served if individuals given to critical thinking do not see administration as a reasonable career option?

If academic administrators are going to reflect the diversity and plurality of the student populations they serve, greater attention needs to be paid to how academic administrators are recruited and retained. Although the focus of this study was on gender, it is worth noting that all of the administrators interviewed were of Euro-Canadian ethnicity. While all of the administrators expressed the view that with time the ranks of post-secondary administration would be reflect greater gender balance, no mention was made of the potential, or need, for other kinds of diversity. What are the explicit and implicit criteria for identifying future leaders? What traits are identified as valuable to the organization: Academic record? Administrative abilities? The willingness to work long hours? The inclination to provide different, and perhaps, unpopular opinions? Diverse views and perspectives?

If administration is going to be seen as a valuable and reasonable career path some of the underlying assumptions about how administrators work will also need to be examined. In this study all of the administrators expressed resentment around the rigidity and rigor of their working schedules, and yet none questioned if there were other, more sustainable, ways to work. Are excessive hours really a critical component of the job, or an artifact of masculine-gendered organizations? To attract greater diversity into the administrative ranks it may be worth exploring flexible working arrangement, and assumptions about what constitutes reasonable working hours.

In this study, as is consistent with other research (Compton, 2005; Babcock & Laschever, 2003), none of the women negotiated effectively for personal benefit at the beginning of their careers. For administrators it may be worthwhile paying attention to this difference when recruiting faculty, and taking into consideration that young female academics may not understand how to negotiate, or even that such an exchange is possible. Making allowances for this difference could prevent wage disparities from being entrenched at the beginning of an academic career.

Conclusion: A Personal Perspective

For the past several years I have worked at a university that was founded on an entrepreneurial mandate. I would say that, generally speaking, the organization did manage to strike a balance between paying attention to student needs, creating and disseminating new knowledge, and being fiscally responsible. The point of balance was not a central point agreed to by all

organizational parties; it was, as is typical of most pluralistic organizations, a weighing and playing of different agendas. The dynamic interplay of power and priorities between the academic and operational sides of the house shifted dramatically however, when in a matter of months there was an exodus of senior academic management. Democratic collegiality was set aside in the interest of centralized decision-making, long-term and well-respected staff were clumsily dismissed, the lines between public and private lives blurred with expectations of long working days and heavy workloads; and critical dissent was not tolerated. In response, an effort was made to organize the mid-level professional staff. The composition of the professional staff was largely women (90%), and the case could be made that this particular drive for academic capitalism came with a gender bias; however, some of the male managers who arguably fit less well the rigid strictures of patriarchal practice, were equally as disenfranchised.

What I now believe to be true is that it is not the mandate of a business ethic per se that is damaging; it is the commandeering of that mandate to centralize power and undermine democratic collegiality. I have spent time thinking about how one can re-adjust the power equation to create a working environment that is equitable, respectful and ultimately sustainable. Collective organizing is one response to hegemonic management. Another response is to have academic leaders who "pursue social goals that work toward greater justice and caring communities, both within the academy and outside of it" (Currie et al. 2002, p. 191). The sentiment behind this quote of course reflects a feminist ethic; which, as indicated by this study, does not at this point in time hold a

central place in the halls of the academy. I would like to make the case, as we continue to see the face of academic administration remain essentially unaltered, that a return trip to the sentiments and principles that ignited the feminist debate of the 1970s and 1980 be revisited. However, like any return visit to a place of the past the view may be different. This time round the feminist debate could focus on the need for plurality and inclusion as a way to sustain democratic collegiality, critical dissent, and the promotion of the public interest. To conclude with the whimsical title of bell hooks' 2000 book, *Feminism is [could be] for Everybody*.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: SFU Ethics Approval

SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY

OFFICE OF RESEARCH ETHICS



BURNABY, BRITISH COLUMBIA
CANADA V5A 1S6
Telephone: 778-782-3447
FAX: 778-782-6785

February 27, 2007

Ms. Susan Chandler
Graduate Student
Faculty of Education
Simon Fraser University

Dear Ms. Chandler:

Re: Negotiating a Career in the Academy: A Comparison of Decisions, Strategies and Definitions of Success as Described by Female and Male University Administrators - Appl. #38158

I am pleased to inform you that the above referenced Request for Ethical Approval of Research has been approved on behalf of the Research Ethics Board. This approval is in effect until the end date of February 25, 2010, or only during the period in which you are a registered SFU student.

Any changes in the procedures affecting interaction with human participants should be reported by email (dore@sfu.ca) to the Office of Research Ethics as a request for an amendment to the original protocol. In all correspondence relating to this application, please reference the application number shown on this letter and in all email. The "Subject Line" should be (example): Appl. #12345. Significant changes will require the submission of a revised Request for Ethical Approval of Research.

Your application has been categorized as "minimal risk" and approved by the Director, Office of Research Ethics, on behalf of the Research Ethics Board in accordance with University policy R20.01, <http://www.sfu.ca/policies/research/r20-01.htm>. The Board reviews and may amend decisions or subsequent amendments made independently by the Director, Chair or Deputy Chair at its regular monthly meetings.

"Minimal risk" occurs when potential participants can reasonably be expected to regard the probability and magnitude of possible harms incurred by participating in the research to be no greater than those encountered by the participant in those aspects of his or her everyday life that relate to the research.

.../2

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Please note that it is the responsibility of the researcher, or the responsibility of the Student Supervisor if the researcher is a graduate student or undergraduate student, to maintain written or other forms of documented consent for a period of 1 year after the research has been completed.

If there is an adverse event, the principal investigator must notify the Office of Research Ethics within five (5) days. An Adverse Events form is available electronically by contacting dore@sfu.ca.

Please continue to check your SFU email address for notices from the Office of Research Ethics regarding this ethics application.

Best wishes for success in this research.

Sincerely,



Dr. Hal Weinberg, Director
Office of Research Ethics

c: Dr. Kelleen Toohey, Supervisor

/jmy

Appendix B: Interview Guide

Name of Participant:

Study Overview and Key Question:

Thank you for your willingness to participate and be interviewed. In my study I am comparing the experience of male and female university administrators and what it is like from their perspective to negotiate a career in the academy.

Before we begin do you have any questions?

Sub-Questions:

1. Can you please tell me about your career and how it unfolded?
2. Can you please tell me how in your career you identified and pursued career opportunities?
3. What is your experience of negotiating for personal benefit in the academy?
4. When you reflect back on your career what aspects would you define as successful?
5. Can you please tell me what leadership traits are valued in your organization?
6. What do you see as being the rewards of an administrative position?
7. What do you see as the drawbacks of an administrative position?
8. How have you found balancing family with work?
9. Can you please tell me if you have ever experienced or witnessed gender bias in the workplace?
10. How do you see organizational power operating in your academy?
11. As you are probably aware women are persistently under represented in the senior ranks of the academy (30%). Do you have any thoughts or theories as to why this is so?

Appendix C: SFU Informed Consent Form

I am a doctoral student in the Faculty of Education at Simon Fraser University. For my thesis research I am interviewing male and female senior academic administrators to understand and compare their experience of negotiating a career in the academy. The interviews will run between 1 and 1.5 hours and will require answering a series of open ended questions. The interviews will be tape recorded. You will have an opportunity to review a transcript of the interview after the fact, and to make any changes you feel are necessary to ensure that your perspective has been appropriately and accurately captured. The analyses of the interview data will involve looking for common themes and points of comparison.

I do not foresee any potential risks or discomfort to you as a result of participating, and participation is entirely voluntary. I will take the following steps to guarantee your rights as a participant in this study:

1. You have the right to review all of your data at any time.
2. Names will not appear in the study results. You will be assigned an alias.
3. If data from this study is used in future studies, I will seek your consent first.
4. The audiotapes will be safeguarded during the period of the study, and once my thesis has been accepted the audiotapes will be erased.
5. You always have the right to withdraw at any time without penalty or prejudice.

I will be happy to share the research findings with you. If you would like the research results please contact me at the information below. Beyond the requirements of doctoral research, the results of this study may be presented at professional conferences and submitted for peer review and publication in professional journals and/or newsletters.

In order for you to participate, the university requires that you understand the nature of the study in which you have agreed to participate. After reading this document, please sign below if you agree to participate.

Thank you for considering this request.
Sincerely,

Susan Chandler
EdD Candidate
SFU Faculty of Education
Phone: 250.655.3378
Email: schandle@sfu.ca or
Susan-chandler@shaw.ca

1. Please make sure you understand and agree to the following statements before giving consent to participate.

- (a) I understand the purpose of this study and know about the risks, benefits and inconveniences that this research project entails.
- (b) I understand that I am free to withdraw at any time from the study without any penalty or prejudice.
- (c) I understand how confidentiality will be maintained during this research project.
- (d) I understand the anticipated uses of data, especially with respect to publication, communication and dissemination of results.

(a) Please indicate below if you agree to participate in the study.

_____ I agree to participate in an interview that will take between 1 to 1.5 hours to complete.

Name (please print)

Signature: _____ Date:

SFU maintains an Ethic Review Board for studies using human subjects. Any complaints or problems may be reported to Dr. Hal Weinberg, Director, SFU Office of Research Ethics (604-291-3447).

Appendix D: Participant Personal Information

Participant Personal Information

Researcher: Susan Chandler

NAME:

ADDRESS:

WORK PHONE:

EMAIL:

TITLE:

HOW MANY YEARS HAVE YOU BEEN AN ACADEMIC ADMINISTRATOR?

AGE:

30 -40

41-50

51-60

60- over

Appendix E: Institutional Equity Policies

The participants for this study came from three post-secondary institutions in British Columbia. Following is a summary of the equity-related policies adopted by each of the institutions.

First Institution	
Name of Policy	Example of Wording
Flexible Work Arrangements Policy	[Name of institution] supports the concept of flexible work arrangements with the goals of enhancing service levels and individual employee satisfaction in the work place.
Harassment and Discrimination Policy	[Name of institution] is committed to providing its employees with a work environment that is free of discrimination on the basis of race, colour, ancestry, place of origin, religion, family status, marital status, physical disability, mental disability, sex, age, sexual orientation, political belief or criminal or summary conviction unrelated to an individual's employment or intended employment. Harassment or discrimination of any employee is strictly prohibited and will not be tolerated by the University.
Maternity Leave Policy	[Name of institution] shall grant maternity leave to the employee consisting of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) a maximum of seventeen (17) consecutive weeks of maternity leave, without pay, which may commence no sooner than eleven (11) weeks prior to the predicted birth of the child; and, (b) if, for any reasons related to the birth of the child as certified by the doctor, the employee is unable to return to work, a further unpaid leave of absence not exceeding six (6) consecutive weeks.
Parental Leave Policy	[Name of institution] shall grant parental leave to the employee consisting of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) a maximum of thirty-five (35) weeks of parental leave, without pay, which may commence no sooner than ten (10) weeks prior to the predicted birth/adoption of the child; (b) the mother and father, if both employed by the University, may each apply for leaves up to a combined duration of thirty-five (35) weeks parental leave; (c) the mother and father may take their leaves at the same time or at different times.

Second Institution	
Name of Policy	Example of Wording
Human Rights Policy	<p>[Name of institution] is committed to providing a working and learning environment that is free of discrimination, supportive of academic achievement, and one that upholds the dignity, self-esteem and fair treatment of all members of the community. [Name of institution] seeks to create a climate that encourages each person's contribution to the development of the well being of the community.</p> <p>...Discrimination is defined as refusing to employ or to continue to employ a person, or refusing to provide an opportunity, benefit with respect to employment, or any term or condition of employment, on the grounds of: race, colour, ancestry, place of origin, political belief, religion, marital status, family status, sexual orientation, physical or mental disability, gender or criminal or summary conviction unrelated to employment or intended employment where there is a bona fide occupational requirement.</p>
Harassment Policy	<p>Harassment is defined as any remarks, behaviour or communication which are known to be unwelcome based on race, colour, ancestry, place of origin, political belief, religion, marital status, family status, sexual orientation, physical or mental disability, gender, or age, which cause offence or humiliation to any person.</p>
Sexual Harassment Policy	<p>Sexual harassment is defined as one or a series of comments or conduct of a sexual nature that is known or ought reasonably to be known to be unwelcome, offensive, intimidating, hostile or inappropriate.</p>
Job Sharing Policy	<p>The purpose of this policy is to allow two permanent full-time staff to enter into a formal employment partnership which produces a temporary, more flexible working arrangement that facilitates work with other commitments.</p>
Maternity Leave Policy	<p>Specific to particular collective agreements.</p>

Third Institution	
Name of Policy	Example of Wording
Equity Policy	<p>[Name of institution] is committed to providing an environment which protects and promotes the human rights and affirms the dignity of all persons, including those of diverse backgrounds and needs, and which provides equitable access to employment opportunities.</p> <p>Designated Groups – as defined in the Employment Equity Act and Federal Contractors Program, are aboriginal peoples, persons with disabilities, persons who because of their race or colour are a visible minority in Canada, and women.</p>
Policy on Human Rights, Equity and Fairness	<p>[Name of institution] vision is to be [an institution] of choice for outstanding students, faculty and staff from British Columbia, Canada, and the world. This vision requires an active commitment to human rights, equity, fairness, and enhanced diversity.</p>
Equity Policy for Female Faculty Members	<p>[Name of institution] supports the principle of equity in all area of University life. In order to achieve equity, for female faculty, the [institution] will take measures to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Substantially increase the proportion of all female faculty members at all ranks. (b) Substantially increase the proportion of female faculty members in the governance of the [institution]. (c) Continue to ensure that salaries and benefits remain equitable between male and female faculty members. (d) Recognize the validity of career patterns that differ from the norm. (e) Ensure that policies encourage gender equity. (f) Ensure that [institution] provides a safe and supportive environment for women. (g) Recognize that feminist scholarship within disciplines is an important focus for scholarly work.
Discrimination and Harassment Policy	<p>[Name of institution] is committed to providing an environment that affirms and promotes the dignity of human beings of diverse backgrounds and needs. This Policy prohibits discrimination and harassment and affirms that all members of the community – its students, faculty, staff, and visitors – have the right to participate equally in activities at the [institution] without fear of discrimination or harassment.</p>
Maternity and Paternity Policies	<p>Specific to particular collective agreements.</p>

Appendix F: List of Codes

SAC	Straight Ahead Career
CWD	Career With Divergence
AGB	Acknowledgement of Gender Bias
GBAW	Gender Bias Against Women
GBAM	Gender Bias Against Men
GBPP	Gender Bias a Past Problem
NSW	Non-Supportive Women
BAWF	Bias Against Women and Families
JAF	Juggling to Accommodate Family
HtFam	Hostile to Families
P-Pos	Power as Position
P-Inf	Power and Influence