


JUDITH LORBER

Guarding the Gates: The Micropolitics of Gender

You're proposing your interpretation of the universe, and for that you need to have the recognition of your colleagues. You must assert that this is a good idea, the right interpretation, and that you thought of it, because all three of those things have to be accepted by your colleagues. It doesn't do your career any good to have the theory accepted, without anyone giving you the credit.


Twenty-five years ago, Muriel F. Siebert bought a seat on the New York Stock Exchange, the first woman to be permitted to do so. In 1992, receiving an award for her accomplishments, she said bluntly that despite the numbers of women coming into high finance, the professions, and government, the arenas of power are still overwhelmingly dominated by men. The numbers bear her out.

In 1980 in the United States, only two women were chief executive officers of the largest corporations, the Fortune 500. They were Katherine Graham, chief executive of the Washington Post, and S. Inge L. Hird, chief executive of Golden West, a San Francisco bank. In the 1990s, the number of women at the top echelons of authority and leadership in areas considered male is increasing. Women's advancement into professional and technical fields is occurring at a much faster rate than in the past. However, even with these gains, women are still underrepresented in top positions.

The belief that women will naturally follow if women are permitted to follow the course, and that those coming up will want to pursue the same careers, is a myth. The belief that women will naturally follow if women are permitted to pursue the same careers as men is a myth. The belief that women will naturally follow if women are permitted to pursue the same careers as men is a myth. The belief that women will naturally follow if women are permitted to pursue the same careers as men is a myth. The belief that women will naturally follow if women are permitted to pursue the same careers as men is a myth.

The belief that women will naturally follow if women are permitted to pursue the same careers as men is a myth. The belief that women will naturally follow if women are permitted to pursue the same careers as men is a myth. The belief that women will naturally follow if women are permitted to pursue the same careers as men is a myth. The belief that women will naturally follow if women are permitted to pursue the same careers as men is a myth. The belief that women will naturally follow if women are permitted to pursue the same careers as men is a myth.

When a leader is the first woman in a group, the followers are often impressed by her gender and the challenges she has overcome. Women's advancement into professional and technical fields is occurring at a much faster rate than in the past. However, even with these gains, women are still underrepresented in top positions.

From Paradoxes of Gender, chapter 10. Copyright © 1994 by Yale University Press. Reprinted by permission of publisher. References have been edited.

• 270 •
ecutive of the Washington Post Company, and Marion O. Sandler, co-chief executive of Golden West Financial Corporation, in Oakland, California. In 1985, there were three: Graham, Sandler, and Elisabeth Claiborne of the Liz Claiborne clothing company. In 1990, there were also three: Graham, Sandler, and Linda Wachner of the Warnaco Group, Inc., New York. In 1992, Charlotte Beers became chief executive of Ogilvie & Mather Worldwide, the fifth largest international advertising agency, with billings of $5.4 billion, making her the world’s highest ranking woman executive in that field. Linda Wachner (earning $3.1 million in 1991) was the first woman in Fortune’s “roster of exacerbitantly paid executives.” Thus, in the past decade, in the United States, where women composed between 42.4 and 45.4 percent of the work force, and numbered between 42.1 and 53.5 million, a total of five women were heads of the largest corporations. When Fortune culled the lists of the highest paid officers and directors of 799 U.S. industrial and service companies, out of 4,012 it found 19 women, or less than one-half of 1 percent.

The belief that upward mobility and leadership positions would automatically follow if women increased their numbers in the workplace greatly underestimated the social processes that get some people onto the fast track and systematically derail others. These processes are used by those at the top to ensure that those coming up will be as similar as possible to themselves so that their values and ideas about how things should be done will be perpetuated. The markers of homogeneity are gender, race, religion, ethnicity, education, and social background. The few heterogeneous “tokens” who make it past the gatekeepers first must prove their similarity to the clique in outlook and behavior. The numbers at the bottom in any field have little relation to the numbers at the top, where power politics is played and social policies are shaped.

The gender segregation so evident in the modern work world is exacerbated at the top echelons of business, the professions, and politics by gendered concepts of authority and leadership potential. Women are seen as legitimate leaders only in areas considered of direct concern to women, usually health, education, and welfare. Women’s accomplishments in men’s fields tend to be invisible or denigrated by the men in the field, and so women rarely achieve the stature to be considered leaders in science or space, for example. The U.S. National Aeronautics and Space Administration put twenty-five women pilots through rigorous physical and psychological testing from 1959 to 1961. Thirteen demonstrated “exceptional suitability” for space flight, but neither they nor seventeen women with advanced science degrees were chosen to be astronauts or space scientists, even though the Russians had sent Valentina Tereshkova into space in 1963. As Gloria Steinem said, recalling these invisible women almost twenty years later, women’s demonstrating they have the “right stuff” turns into the “wrong stuff” without the approval of the men in charge (1992).

When a leader is chosen among colleagues, women are often overlooked by the men of the group, and there are usually too few women to support one another. Even where women are the majority of workers, men tend to be favored for positions of authority because women and men will accept men leaders as representing their general interests but will see women as representing only women’s interests. As a result, men in occupations where most of the workers are women,
The Gendered Workplace

such as nursing and social work, tend to be over represented in high-level administrative positions, and women in occupations where most of the workers are men rarely reach the top ranks.

When men choose a woman for a position of power and prestige, she is often considered “on probation.” For example, an Israeli woman physician who was made head of a prestigious department of obstetrics and gynecology where she was the only woman told me that a year later, the men colleagues who had chosen her told her that they were now enormously relieved. She had not made any serious mistakes, so their decision to choose her as head of the department was validated. She was furious that they had felt she had to prove herself; she had been their colleague and friend for seventeen years, and they surely should have known her worth and her leadership capabilities. At that point, she said, she realized that her men colleagues had never really considered her “one of them.”

THE GLASS CEILING

The pervasive phenomenon of women going just so far and no further in their occupations and professions has come to be known as the glass ceiling. This concept assumes that women have the motivation, ambition, and capacity for positions of power and prestige, but invisible barriers keep them from reaching the top. They can see their goal, but they bump their heads on a ceiling that is both hidden and impenetrable. The U.S. Department of Labor defines the glass ceiling as “those artificial barriers based on attitudinal or organizational bias that prevent qualified individuals from advancing upward in their organization into management level positions” (L. Martin 1991, 1).

A recent study of the pipelines to power in large-scale corporations conducted by the U.S. Department of Labor found that the glass ceiling was lower than previously thought—in middle management. Members of disadvantaged groups were even less likely than white women to be promoted to top positions, and the upper rungs were “nearly impenetrable” for women of color (L. Martin 1991). A random sample of ninety-four reviews of personnel in corporate headquarters found that of 147,179 employees, 37.2 percent were women and 15.5 percent were minorities. Of these employees, 31,184 were in all levels of management, from clerical supervisor to chief executive officer; 16.9 percent were women and 6 percent were minorities. Of 4,491 managers at the level of assistant vice president and higher, 6.6 percent were women and 2.6 percent were minorities. Thus, in this survey, the higher the corporate position, the smaller the proportion of women; if the numbers of women in the top ranks had been proportional with the number of women in the lower ranks, over a third of the vice presidents, presidents, and executive officers would have been women. There was no separate breakdown of these figures for women of color, but another report cited by the Labor Department indicated that they make up 3.3 percent of the women corporate officers, who make up only 1 to 2 percent of all corporate officers.

Karen Fulbright’s (1987) interviews with twenty-five African-American wo-
men managers found fifteen who had reached the level of vice president, department head, or division director in oil, automobile manufacturing, telecommunications, and banking, or had moved rapidly up the hierarchy. The factors in their upward mobility were long tenure, a rapidly growing company, or a Black-owned or operated company. The others had experienced blocked mobility, despite positioning themselves on career tracks that were known to be the routes to the top.

Similar attrition in the numbers of women at the top has been found in public-sector jobs in the United States. As of 1990, 43.5 percent of the employees in lower level jobs were women, but they were only 31.3 percent of the department heads, division chiefs, deputies, and examiners in state and local government agencies. African-American women were 9.8 percent of the workers at lower levels, 5.1 percent at the top levels.

The ways that most people move up in their careers are through networking (finding out about job opportunities through word-of-mouth and being recommended by someone already there), mentoring (being coached through the informal norms of the workplace), and sponsorship (being helped to advance by a senior colleague). In civil service bureaucracies, where promotion depends on passing a test or getting an additional credential, those who receive encouragement and advice from senior members of the organization tend to take the qualifying tests or obtain the requisite training. In the sciences, research productivity depends on a significant degree on where you work, whom you work with, and what resources are available to you. All these processes of advancement depend on the support of colleagues and superiors, which means that in a workplace where men outnumber women and whites outnumber any other racial ethnic group, white women and men of disadvantaged racial ethnic groups have to be helped by white men if they are to be helped at all.

An in-depth study of nine Fortune 500 companies with a broad range of products and services located in different parts of the country found that despite differences in organizational structure, corporate culture, and personnel policies, the same practices results in a glass ceiling for women, especially women of color. These practices were recruitment policies for upper-management levels that depended on word-of-mouth networking and employee referrals. When “head hunters” were used, they were not instructed to look for women and men of social groups underrepresented at managerial levels. The few white women and men of color who were already hired were not given the opportunity to build up their credentials or enhance their careers by assignment to corporate committees, task forces, and special projects. These are traditional avenues of advancement, since they bring junior members into contact with senior members of the organization and give them visibility and the chance to show what they can do. There was not monitoring of evaluation or compensation systems that determine salaries, bonuses, incentives, or perks to make sure that white women and women and men of color were getting their fair share. In general, “monitoring for equal access and opportunity, especially as managers move up the corporate ladder to senior management levels where important decisions are made, was almost never considered a corporate responsibility or part of the planning for developmental
programs and policies" (L. Martin 1991, 4). In short, none of the white men in senior management saw it as their responsibility to sponsor white women or women and men of color to be their replacements when they retired.

Men in traditional women's occupations report the opposite phenomenon. Their minority status turns out to be a career advantage. Christine Williams's study of seventy-six men and twenty-three women in nursing, teaching, librarianship, and social work in the United States, whom she interviewed from 1985 to 1991, found that the men were tracked into the more prestigious, better-paying specialties within the occupation, and urged by their mentors, mostly other men, to move into positions of authority. Most of these men were white, so they were the most advanced workers. For them not to move up to supervisory and administrative positions was considered inappropriate. As a result, they were on a "glass escalator," Williams says: "Often, despite their intentions, they face invisible pressures to move up in their professions. As if on a moving escalator, they must work to stay in place" (1992, 256). But they sometimes faced a glass ceiling at higher levels. The affirmative action policies of many institutions make the women deans and heads of departments in the women's areas too visible for them to be replaced by men (257).

Although these processes may seem benign, the imbalance of lower-level workers with disadvantaged social characteristics compared to upper-level workers with advantaged social characteristics implies a deliberate, though unstated, policy of hostility and resistance that deepens with each additional mark of disadvantage. Kimberlé Crenshaw presents a graphic analysis of who can make it through the glass ceiling:

"Imagine a basement which contains all people who are disadvantaged on the basis of race, sex, class, sexual preference, age and/or physical ability. These people are stacked—feet standing on shoulders—with those on the bottom being disadvantaged by the full array of factors, up to the very top, where the heads of all those disadvantaged by a single factor brush up against the ceiling.

... A hatch is developed through which those placed immediately below can crawl. Yet this hatch is generally available only to those who—due to the singularity of their burden and their otherwise privileged position relative to those below—are in the position to crawl through. Those who are multiply-burdened are generally left behind." (1991, 65)

Bands of Brothers

Parallel to the formal organization of a large, modern workplace, which is structured as a task-related, bureaucratic hierarchy, is the informal organization, which is based on trust, loyalty, and reciprocal favors. Because the spoken rules are often as significant to the way business is conducted as the written rules, colleagues want to work with people who know what goes without saying: "In order that men [sic] may communicate freely and confidentially, they must be able to take a good deal of each other's sentiments for granted. They must feel easy about their silences as well as about their utterances. These factors conspire to make col-

leagues, with a presence of what Personal disnctions of authority, instein, former men women have to be trustworthiness.

Women have Experience is to be every stance the public's player and respect.

Almost twc conscientious and dle management auocratic response relies on informas other than or to reliable subo (1976, 55, 68). Conformance and of a son's worth has Promising your management by wing and see to ahead. Promisin

Brotherly thtenth century, an enterprise was Credit depends on tragedy. In these ise partners, the trustees. In order together, women t two sisters often brother: "Free devotion in binding to networks, a guarantee and financial affi

In twenties built not through
Guarding the Gates: The Micropolitics of Gender

leagues, with a large body of unspoken understandings, uncomfortable in the presence of what they consider odd kinds of fellows” (Hughes 1971, 146).

Personal discretion and reliability are particularly necessary for those in positions of authority because of the uncertainties they face. According to Diane Feinstein, former mayor of San Francisco who was elected to the U.S. Senate in 1992, women have to bend over backward to prove not only their competence but their trustworthiness:

Women have to prove themselves effective and credible time and time again. Experience has taught me that the keys to a woman’s effectiveness in public office are to be “trustable”; to give directions clearly and to follow up, to verify every statement for accuracy, to guard her integrity carefully, and to observe the public’s trust one hundred percent. Most important, she must be a team player and build relationships with her colleagues that are based on integrity and respect (Cantor and Bernay 1992, xv)

Almost twenty years ago, Margaret Hennig and Ann Jardim predicted that conscientious and hard-working women would find it difficult to get out of middle management because their performance was geared to formal training and bureaucratic responsibilities. They felt that if women knew that senior management relies on informal networking, gathering extensive sources of knowledge from areas other than one’s own, planning, policy-making, and delegating responsibility to reliable subordinates, they would be able to move up corporate career ladders (1976, 55, 68). Career mobility, however, does not depend only on competent performance and other efforts by the ambitious individual. To move up, a young person’s worth has to be recognized and encouraged by those in the upper echelons. Promising young men of the right social characteristics are groomsed for senior management by “godfathers” or “rabbis”—sponsors who take them under their wing and see to it that they learn the informal organizational rules for getting ahead. Promising young women are left to fend for themselves.

Brotherly trust among men who are business associates goes back to the nineteenth century. Before the creation of the impersonal corporation, each partner in an enterprise was personally responsible for raising capital and making a profit. Credit depended on personal trustworthiness; bankruptcy was a personal tragedy. In these transactions, the active players were all men. Women were passive partners; their money was used by kinsmen and men friends who acted as trustees. In order to cement the brotherly bonds among men who were in business together, women were encouraged to marry cousins or their brothers’ partners; two sisters often married two brothers, or a brother and sister married a sister and brother: “Free choice marriage controlled in this way provided a form of security in binding together members of the middle class in local, regional and national networks, a guarantee of congenial views as well as trustworthiness in economic and financial affairs” (Davidoff and Hall 1987, 221).

In twentieth-century business, professions, and politics, trust and loyalty are built not through kin ties (which is considered nepotism) but through homosociali-
ty—the bonding of men of the same race, religion, and social-class background (Lipman-Blumen 1976). These men have the economic, political, professional, and social resources to do each other favors. Women with the same social characteristics may be included in men’s circles when they have equivalent wealth, power, and social position. Most men and women, however, relate to each other socially only in familial or sexual roles.

Homosociality starts early. In childhood play, boys separate themselves from girls and become contemptuous of girls’ activities in their efforts to keep themselves apart. This segregation, attributed to boys’ needs to establish their masculinity, makes friendship between girls and boys difficult because it is discouraged by same-gender peers. Gender grouping is not perfect in mixed gender schools but is broached by social class and racial ethnic currents and sometimes by the organizing activities of teachers. In adulthood, whenever men and women come together as equals, in coed schools and workplaces that are not gender-segregated, cross-gender friendships are undermined by intimations of sexual attraction. One study of white middle-class young adults found that the women preferred same-gender friendships more than the men did because the men were more interested in them sexually than as companions. The men invested more time and attention in their friendships with men than they did in their friendships with women, while the women gave as much emotional support to their men friends as they did to their women friends. Letty Cottin Pogrebin (1987, 311–40) feels that the main reason that women and men are rarely intimate friends is that they are rarely true equals.

Many working women are expected as part of their job to smile be cordial, sympathetic, agreeable, and a bit sexy. Men workers are supposed to display masculine emotions—coolness under fire, rationality, and objectivity, which are part of the performance of power. The qualities men want in women in the workplace as well as in the home—sympathy, looking out for the other person, understanding the nuances and cues of behavior, carctaking, flattering them sexually—keep women out of the top ranks of business, government, and the professions. Such qualities are gender-marked as “womanly”; they are also subordinating.

Much of men’s workplace small talk is about sports or sex. Replaying the weekend’s games gives men the chance to compete and win vicariously. Sexist jokes establish the boundaries of exclusion, and if the men are of the same race or religion, so do racist and anti-Semitic or anti-Catholic jokes. Sexist joking also keeps men from revealing their emotional bonds with each other and deflects their anger from their bosses onto women. Women who can talk and joke like men may be allowed entry into the men’s brotherhood, as honorary men, but then they cannot protest against sexism and sexual harassment, even if they themselves are the victims.

Although men or women may be “odd fellows” in their workplace or job, the pressures of being a woman in a man’s job and a man in a woman’s job are quite different. Men nurses can talk cars and sports with men physicians. In doing so, they affiliate with a higher status group, affirm their masculinity, and gain a benefit from these informal contacts in more favorable evaluations of their work. Men physicians’ status is treated like the white medical students; these men may not be the senior men who call them as protegés.

Because men have been raised to believe that women do not treat them as equals, they often approach their male colleagues as if they are nothing as an equal. They often approach women as if they are there to serve them. Once might see the relatively few women physicians as being “in the back seat.”

Women officers were expected to turn to sports, which they did as it is among men. The football and baseball teams were created by the men to serve as, to use the men’s words, “a great way to get away from work.” These men were excluded from the “right” groups at the expense of the men who were excluded from the “wrong” groups. In a direct and implicit way, this is how America’s privileges of their men in the workplace were maintained.

These men do not view these women and female nurses and doctors and other women and a culture in
physicians' status is too high to be communalized by chatting with men nurses (or flirting with women nurses). Men who are openly homosexual, however, may face discrimination from men supervisors. Women physicians socialize with women medical students, interns, and residents, but not with men nurses. Women physicians' status is more tenuous, and they end up in a bind. They need to get along with the women nurses so that their work proceeds efficiently, yet they lose status if they bond with a lower-status group as women. Women physicians need to build colleague relationships with the men physicians who are their peers, but these men may not treat them as equals. They also need to seek sponsors among senior men who can help them advance their careers, but these men may not want them as protégées.

Because men know the power of homosocial bonding, they are discomforted when women do the same thing and often accuse such women of lesbianism, particularly because women's attentions are turned to each other and not to them. As Carol Barkalow said of the military:

They often appear to possess an irrational fear of women's groups, believing that, in their midst, men will be plotted against, or perhaps worst of all, rendered somehow unnecessary. If women soldiers do try to develop a professional support network among themselves, they are faced with the dilemma that something as simple as two women officers having lunch together more than once might spark rumors of lesbianism—a potentially lethal charge, since even rumored homosexuality can damage an officer's career. (1990, 167-68)

Women officers who want to bond without innuendoes of homosexuality often turn to sports, which is as legitimate a place to build trust and loyalty among women as it is among men.

For the most part, as colleagues, friends, and wives, women are relegated to acting as audience or sex objects for men. According to Kathryn Ann Farr (1988), who studied a group of upper-class white men whose bonding preserved their race and class as well as their gender privileges, wives and girlfriends were needed to serve as foils for the men's exclusive sociability. The women listened as the men talked about their exploits. When the men went off on an escapade, their women warned them against getting into too much trouble, prepared food for them, and stayed behind. The men defined the boundaries of their homosocial world by excluding women, just as they maintained its racial and class exclusivity by keeping out the "wrong" kind of men. The irony is that they built their superior status in a direct and immediate way by denying their own wives and girlfriends the privileges of their race and class. In this way, the domination of men over women in their own social group is sustained, and the women collude in the process:

These men do not view themselves as sexist, and they do not appear to be viewed by the women with whom they interact as sexist. In their choice of wives and girlfriends, the majority of these men seem to value independent and intelligent women. Yet their socialization into a male-dominated environment and a culture in which male sociability is highly valued causes them to think
The Gendered Workplace

...and act in ways that conflict with their intellectual assessments of the worth of and the value of social relationships with women. (Farr 1988, 269)

By excluding women who share their social characteristics from their social space, these men never have to treat women as equals or as serious competitors for positions of power.

THE "MOMMY TRACK"

If they could not exclude women completely or relegate them to subordinate positions, men have reduced competition and encouraged turnover by refusing to hire married women or mothers and by encouraging women employees who get married or have children to quit. Marriage bars were used against women schoolteachers, stewareesses, and other occupations in the United States well into the twentieth century and are still used today in other countries. When the marriage bar fell out of use in the United States in the late 1950s, partly because there was a dearth of young single women workers, it was replaced by what Claudia Goldin calls "the pregnancy bar" (1990, 176). The ideology that children need full-time mothering produced turnover not at marriage but at first pregnancy.

Discriminating against women workers and job applicants who are married, pregnant, or mothers is now illegal in the United States; informally, however, these practices have been replaced by a tacit or openly acknowledged "mommy track." Ostensibly intended to make it easier for married women with children to continue managerial and professional jobs, the "mommy track" offers flexible working hours and generous maternity leave to women but not men in dual-career marriages to ameliorate the pressures of family and work. But women are penalized for taking advantage of these policies, because once they do, their commitment to advancing to top-level positions is called into question. The secondary result is, I would argue, latent function of these "mommy tracks" is to derail women who were on fast tracks to the top. As Alice Kessler-Harris says: "To induce women to take jobs while simultaneously restraining their ambition to rise in them required a series of socially accepted constraints on work roles. Unspoken social prescription—a tacit understanding about the primacy of home roles—remained the most forceful influence. This is most apparent in professional jobs where the potential for ambition was greatest" (1982, 231).

Until quite recently in many Westernized countries, the more prestigious professions, such as medicine, law, and the sciences, and the upper-level managerial sector of business were thoroughly dominated by men. Men were easily able to keep women out because they were gatekeepers in several ways: They determined admissions to professional and managerial training schools; they controlled recruitment to and from such schools; and they determined promotion policies. With the advent of affirmative action in the United States, many women have become doctors, lawyers, scientists, and administrators, and they have become formidable competition for men. The "mommy track" keeps women professionals and managers in lower-paid, lower-prestige ranks. This exclusion from top-level positions is that and the response is never given the others, will super force and legitimize justifying stereotypes.

Paradoxically, professionals and executives in their lives are the interviews with several rank and file, while the difference in the married and single women. A woman with a married four times husbands, but there were no changes in the scientists depended on projects. The women and mothers not both marriage are leisure-time activities.

When women's ing to a general role from their husband. These men, according to women peers:

Some of the career of her of her dominant were present, the no substitute the norm of men's opportunity in virtue.

These inconsistencies careers but not the women for taking them as professional equals. Her husband of peers. African American and expectations from white men...
top-level positions is considered legitimate because they are mothers. The assumption is that women could not possibly handle the responsibility of leadership and the responsibility for their children's welfare at the same time, but they are never given the chance to try. It is also taken for granted that mothers, never fathers, will supervise their children's day-to-day care. "Mommy tracks" thus reinforce and legitimate the structural glass ceiling, the processes of exclusion, and the justifying stereotypes.

Paradoxically, "mommy tracks" are not the way most married women professionals and executives with children organize their careers. Such women order their lives so they can be productive. Jonathan Cole and Harriet Zuckerman's interviews with seventy-three women and forty-seven men scientists, eminent and rank and file, who received their doctorates between 1920 and 1979 found little difference in the rates and patterns of publication of the men and women, the married and single women, and the childless women and those with children (1991).

A woman with an endowed chair in a major department of behavioral science was married four times, divorced three times, and had four children by three different husbands, but the largest dip in her publication rate came in a year when there were no changes in her personal life (167). The rate of publication for all these scientists depended on stage of career, extent of collaboration, and the completion of projects. The women they interviewed were successful scientists as well as wives and mothers not because of a "mommy track" but because they carefully timed both marriage and childbearing, had child care and household help, and cut out leisure-time activities that had no professional payoff.

When women put their families before their careers, they are often responding to a generalized cultural mandate that is mediated through direct pressures from their husbands at home and other women's husbands in the workplace. These men, according to Mirra Komarovsky, have inconsistent ideas about their women peers:

> Some of the revealed inconsistencies are: . . . the right of an able woman to a career of her choice; the admiration for women who measure up in terms of the dominant values of our society; the lure but also the threat that such women present, the low status attached to housewifery but the conviction that there is no substitute for the mother's care of young children; the deeply internalized norm of male occupational superiority pitted against the principle of equal opportunity irrespective of sex. (1976, 37)

These inconsistencies are resolved by rewarding men's efforts to move up in their careers but not rewarding women's efforts, and both rewarding and punishing women for taking care of their families—rewarding them as women and punishing them as professionals, managers, and politicians. Should any woman not make the appropriate "choice" to put her family before her career, both she and her husband often face subtle and not-so-subtle harassment from their men colleagues. African-American women and men may have more egalitarian norms and expectations about women's ambitions, but these women face discrimination from white men on two counts and may be competing with African-American
men for the same few “minority” positions (Fulbright 1987). Women may feel it is their choice to stay home with their small children and to limit their career commitments, but their choices are constrained by real and direct social pressures.

THE SALIERI PHENOMENON AND THE MATTHEW EFFECT

What happens when women can’t be excluded from the workplace and don’t choose to put family before career, but instead become men’s competitors? The unspoken practices of the informal organization of work make women particularly vulnerable to the covert undercutting I have called the Salieri phenomenon, after the highly placed composer who allegedly sabotaged Mozart’s career. In Peter Shaffer’s play Amadeus, Salieri never openly criticized Mozart to the emperor who employs both of them; he simply fails to recommend him enthusiastically. Salieri also suggests that Mozart be paid much less than the musician he is replacing. Mozart later thanks Salieri for his help in getting a position; he blames the emperor for the low salary. Salieri’s damning with faint praise is one way women are undermined by their men colleagues and bosses, often without being aware of it.

Njole Benokraitis and Joe Feagin (1986) describe other ways men subtly undercuts women: condescending chivalry, where a boss protects a woman employee from what could be useful criticism; supportive discouragement, where a woman is not encouraged to compete for a challenging position because she might not make it; friendly harassment, such as being joshed in public when visibly pregnant or dressed for a social occasion; subjective objectification, or being grouped with “all women”; radiant devaluation, when a woman is given extravagant praise for doing what is considered routine when men do it—the “dancing dog” effect; liberated sexism, such as inviting a woman for an after-work drink but not letting her pay for a round; benevolent exploitation, where a woman is given all the detail work so she can learn the job, but a man takes credit for the finished product; considerate domination, such as deciding what responsibilities a married woman can and cannot handle, instead of letting her determine how she wants to organize her time; and collegial exclusion, thoughtlessly scheduling networking meetings for times women are likely to have family responsibilities. These practices undermine a woman’s reputation for competence in the eyes of others and her abilities in her own eyes, making it less likely that she will be visible to gatekeepers or considered a legitimate competitor for a position of power.

Once out of the fast track for advancement, it is very difficult to accrue the necessary resources to perform valued professional activities. Those who have access to personnel, work space, and money have the opportunity to do the kind of work that increases their reputation, brings the approval of superiors, and garners additional rewards and promotions. The circular proliferation of prestige, resources, and power is the Matthew effect. As attributed to Christ in the Gospel according to Matthew, those who have faith become more and more favored and those who do not sink lower and lower: “For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance: but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath.” (Bible, King James version, 25:29).
The Matthew effect in science was first described by Robert Merton (1968) and Harriet Zuckerman (1977) to explain the “halo” that winning the Nobel Prize confers. The process of accumulating advantages in science, however, starts with the scientist’s working at a prestigious university or laboratory that encourages the kind of research and productivity that wins Nobel Prizes. Women scientists are disadvantaged by positions that give them fewer resources and less encouragement to do high-quality work and by a lesser payoff for their achievements in recognition, rewards, and additional resources. Citations of published papers by others in a field are a form of visibility that adds to the researcher’s or scholar’s reputation. According to Marianne Ferber (1986, 1988), women tend to cite other women more than men cite women, and the fewer women in a field, the greater the citations gap. As a result of the accumulation of disadvantages, women often have stop-and-go careers that may start out well, but then founder.

Two brilliant twentieth-century women scientists who were loners had totally different fates that had little to do with the value of their scientific work. One of them, Rosalind Franklin, was a well-born Jewish woman scientist who launched a productive career in England in the 1950s. Her crucial contribution to the discovery of the double-helix structure of DNA was minimally acknowledged in the initial announcement by James Watson and Francis Crick in 1953. She herself was denigrated by Watson in his widely read book, The Double Helix (1968). His description of her and her work is a classic example of the Salieri phenomenon: “Rosalind… spoke to an audience of about fifteen in a quick, nervous style. . . . There was not a trace of warmth or frivolity in her words. And yet I could not regard her as totally uninteresting. Mournfully I wondered how she would look if she took off her glasses and did something novel with her hair. Then, however, my main concern was her description of the crystalline X-ray diffraction pattern” (68–69).

What Franklin was describing was nothing less than a clear X-ray picture of the DNA molecule that actually showed its helical structure! Watson paid little attention to what she had reported for over a year. Working alone, Franklin tried to envisage the three-dimensional structure her photographs of DNA suggested; she alternately played with and rejected a helical model. Watson subsequently was shown her best picture without her knowledge by the man who ran the laboratory she worked in, Maurice Wilkins; to Watson, “the pattern shouted helix” (Judson 1979, 135).

Wilkins could have been the collaborator Franklin needed to help her make an inductive leap, but according to Franklin’s biographer, they “hated one another at sight. . . . Only too evidently the antipathy was instant and mutual” (Sayre 1975, 95). Horace Freeland Judson calls the conflict between Wilkins and Franklin “one of the great personal quarrels in the history of science” (1979, 101), noting but underplaying the gendered overtones. Wilkins insisted he hired Franklin to do the X-ray diffractions on DNA; Franklin’s friends insisted that she had been given control of the project and “was profoundly angered” by being treated as an assistant rather than a colleague by Wilkins (148). At thirty-one, she was eight years older than Watson and a little younger but “much further along professionally than Crick” (148). Yet Wilkins, Watson, and Crick regularly corresponded, conversed, and ate together (159); Franklin’s only associate was a grad-
The Gendered Workplace

... and as a woman, "she was denied the fellowship of the luncheon club organized by the senior common room" at King's College, London, where her laboratory was located (148).

Franklin died of cancer in 1958, at the age of thirty-seven; Watson, Crick, and Wilkins were awarded the Nobel Prize in physiology or medicine in 1962. Only in a contrite epilogue to his book, published in 1968, did Watson pay tribute to Franklin:

The X-ray work she did at King's is increasingly regarded as superb... We both came to appreciate greatly her personal honesty and generosity, realizing years too late the struggles that the intelligent woman faces to be accepted by a scientific world which often regards women as mere diversions from serious thinking. Rosalind's exemplary courage and integrity were apparent to all when, knowing she was mortally ill, she did not complain but continued working on a high level until a few weeks before her death. (225-26)

Another woman scientist, also a loner but luckier because she lived to see her work rewarded with science's highest honor, was Barbara McClintock. She published a landmark paper in 1931 that established the chromosomal basis of genetics and, in 1945, was elected president of the Genetics Society. In the 1950s, the field became dominated by the Watson-Crick model of genetics, in which DNA produces RNA, and RNA produces protein. The research that McClintock published in that decade, which showed that the process was not so straightforward and that genes could "jump" or transpose, was ignored: "In spite of the fact that she had long since established her reputation as an impeccable investigator, few listened, and fewer understood. She was described as 'obscure,' even 'mad'" (Keller 1983, 10).

In 1960, McClintock described the parallels between her own work and that of other scientists, but these scientists did not reciprocate and cite her work. Except for two other women scientists, she was ignored at Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory where she had worked since 1941 (Watson became director in 1968), but she had nowhere else to go. McClintock lived long enough to see "starting new developments in biology that echo many of the findings she described as long as thirty years ago" (Keller 1983, x), and she was awarded the Nobel Prize in medicine in 1983, when she was eighty-one years old. She died on September 2, 1992, at the age of ninety, her work "widely celebrated as prescient" (Kolata 1992b).

The Salieri phenomenon and the Matthew effect are two sides of the same coin. Those who benefit from the Matthew effect receive acknowledgments from their colleagues for good work, which builds their reputation and brings them financial and professional rewards. The work of those subjected to the Salieri phenomenon is not recognized; they do not get credit for good performance, and their careers are stymied. But reputations must be constantly maintained; even those who have built up social credit can lose it, and reversals of fortune are not uncommon. Because women do not have a protective "status shield," they are easy targets for jealous, threatened, or hostile Salieri. Certainly, not all women are future Mozarts, but even those who are may never be heard. 

* 282 *
INNER CIRCLES, FRIENDLY COLLEAGUES, AND TOKENS

The discriminatory aspects of the sorting and tracking that occur in every occupation and profession with long career ladders are obscured because colleagues who are not considered for the top jobs are not hired. They simply fail to make it into the inner circle. Colleagues are organized, informally, into three concentric circles—inner circles, friendly colleagues, and isolated loners. Power is concentrated and policy is made in inner circles, which are usually homogeneous on gender, race, religion, ethnicity, social class, and education or training. Friendly colleagues usually have some, but not all, of the social characteristics members of the inner circle have. Although they are not totally excluded from the informal collegial network, they are rarely groomed to be part of the inner circle. Women with excellent credentials and work performance in occupations and professions dominated by men tend to end up friendly colleagues if they are of the same race and social class as the men of the inner circle and do similar kinds of work; otherwise, they become loners. Women professionals have formed their own separate colleague groups or professional networks, but many ambitious women do not want to be professionally segregated. They often try to fit in with the men or work on their own and hope that their worth will eventually be recognized by the gatekeepers of their profession or occupation.

Although inner circles tend to be homogeneous on gender, religion, race, ethnicity, education, and class background, a few people with different social characteristics may be accepted if they have a respected sponsor and demonstrate that in all other ways, they are just like the others. They are the true “tokens.” They are actively discouraged from bringing more of their kind into the inner circle or from competing for the very top positions in the organization. Tokens usually are eager to fit in and not embarrass their sponsor, so they do not challenge these restrictions or the views, values, or work practices of the inner circle. Indeed, they may outdo the others in upholding the prevailing perspectives and exclusionary practices. That is why token women tend to be “one of the boys.”

In order to get support from senior men, a senior woman may end up in the paradoxical position of making a stand for women by proving she is just like a man. A woman physician I interviewed was passed over by one set of gatekeepers in favor of her younger brother for the top position in a hospital department. She went over their heads to more powerful men, who vouched for her “manliness.” She said:

I do give a hoot about titles and I’m enough of a feminist not to let them promote my brother over me. I have put in many years more of service, and I’m a far better dermatologist than my brother. They tried to do this to me because I’m a woman. Those, excuse the French, assholes, said to me, “Do you mind us promoting your brother over you? He needs the income.” And I said, “For the sake of the women who follow after me, I mind.” . . . And they said, “Well, if you come to our meetings, we can’t tell dirty jokes, and we can’t take off our shoes.” I said, “Bull to that one. I know just as many dirty jokes as you do, and

- 283 -
The Gendered Workplace

I always take off my shoes.” All the board of trustees laughed like hell when they heard about it. They all said, “For God’s sake, promote her.” Most of them were patrons of mine anyway. It’s a stupid thing to say to a woman doctor. I don’t care for me, but I want to make sure that the next generation gets a fair shake and doesn’t get it in the eye. (Lorde 1984, 61–62)

Unfortunately, token junior women cannot afford to be so outspoken.

In 1977, Rosabeth Moss Kanter predicted that as the number of workgroup peers with different characteristics significantly increased, they would lose their token status and characteristics and be better integrated into the group. They would be able to express individual differences and sponsor others with similar social characteristics for leadership positions. When they became almost half of the group, they could become a recognized subgroup, with alternative views and work practices that would arise in the organizational structure. Because they lack the protection of a sponsor that tokens have, they may be subject to open and covert harassment. When the occupation is symbolically masculine, such as police work or the military, additional numbers of women rarely break down the interactional barriers, and they continue to be loners. Being few in number, therefore, may result in more favorable position than a more balanced gender mix, since an increase may be seen as a threat to those in the majority.

Why are men professionals and managers reluctant to allow substantial numbers of women into elite inner circles or to support the ambitions of more than a select few for leadership positions? Competition is one reason. Yet other men are competitors, too. Catholic and Jewish men physicians, once also subject to discriminatory quotas in American medical schools, are more successfully integrated than women into the prestigious ranks of the medical profession. It could be that men feel their profession will “tip” and become feminized if too many women are in high-paid, high-prestige, and high-power positions. Just as one group seems to fear the neighborhood will go downhill when too many of a devalued group move in, men professionals may be afraid that if too many women become leaders, their profession will become women’s work, and the men in it will lose prestige, income, and their control over resources.

People from subordinate social groups do not become half of the work group unless the occupation, profession, or job specialty loses its prestige and power. The leaders, however, tend to stay on and continue to choose successors to the top positions who are like themselves, not like the new people who outnumber them. The men in collegial groups of mostly women and the whites in groups of mostly people of color (at least in the United States) tend to remain the supervisors and administrators. As administrators, dominant white men need to keep productivity high and costs low. If the members of formerly excluded groups can be relegated to the necessary lower-paid and less prestigious jobs (such as primary care in medicine), administrators can continue to benefit from the presence of women.

Are men so much more powerful? Some women are even more powerful than men. How women or any subordinate group react in situations they see as threatening to their interests is of concern to all. Women are in labor unions, they are in the military, they are college presidents, they are physicians. They are part of the profession and they have power, influence, and authority. How does the situation shape how those in power address the situation? How do the subordinates handle the demands of the situation? How do they meet the demands of the weaker position? Do the weaker women rely on the help of others to meet their needs? How do they find their own strengths to meet the demands of the situation?

Authority and tokenism are found in the military and in nursing, but are they found in the police or in the military? In the military, there was a tokenism of sorts among white women, but the military was not primarily a tokenism of women in the military. The military and the police are both men’s domains, and the tokens are men, but women are found among the social groups. In the military, there were many white women who were co-opted into the military, and their presence was not well known to the general public. In the police, there were many white women who were co-opted into the police, and their presence was not well known to the general public.

Authority and tokenism are found in the military and in nursing, but are they found in the police or in the military? In the military, there was a tokenism of sorts among white women, but the military was not primarily a tokenism of women in the military. The military and the police are both men’s domains, and the tokens are men, but women are found among the social groups. In the military, there were many white women who were co-opted into the military, and their presence was not well known to the general public. In the police, there were many white women who were co-opted into the police, and their presence was not well known to the general public.

A woman’s work is never done, and attuned to the editor’s note, I have been publicly flayed even though I have a high status as an author of internal open criticism.

On the other hand, women colleges and their managers in the upper and at the same time in the undergraduate classroom often do appear “masculine.” Their approach is high line profession.
Guarding the Gates: The Micropolitics of Gender

medicine), administrators can keep costs down and use the increasing numbers of white women and women and men of color who are highly trained professionals and managers without disturbing the status quo.

GENDER AND AUTHORITY

Are men so much more acceptable in positions of authority because women "do power" differently? There tend to be two models of women's leadership styles: women are exactly like men, and women are different, but equally competent. How women or men act does not give the whole picture; women's and men's leadership styles are socially constructed in interaction and heavily influenced by the situational context and how others perceive them. If women in positions of authority tend to be more accessible, to grant more autonomy, but also to more demanding of subordinates to perform well, the reason may be that they are in weaker positions in the organization and have fewer resources. They need subordinates' help but may be unable to reward them with raises or other perks. As a result, they ask more of subordinates but are also more likely to give concessions to those who are loyal to them, which may be perceived as contradictory behavior.

Authority in a woman is granted in a woman-dominated situation, such as nursing, but questioned where authority is defined as a masculine trait, such as in police work or the military. In 1986, 10.4 percent of all uniformed U.S. Army personnel were women, but they have been underrepresented in the higher ranks. In 1988, there were nine women who were one-star generals in the U.S. military, 1.2 percent of the total, and none of higher rank. Women constituted 2 percent of the colonels, 3.5 percent of the lieutenant colonels, and 7.1 percent of other officer ranks. In 1991, a woman, Midshipman Juliane Gallina, was chosen the U.S. Naval Academy's brigade commander, student leader of 4,300 midshipmen. Ironically, her appointment came six months after a survey found that a "considerable segment" of students, faculty, and staff believed women had no place in the Naval Academy.

A woman leader is expected to be empathic, considerate of other's feelings, and attuned to the personal. If she is not, she is likely to be called "abrasive." As the editor of the prestigious Harvard Business Review, Rosabeth Moss Kanter has been publicly faulted for her confrontational management style by her colleagues, even though her predecessor, a man, had similar problems in his first year. Her high status as a Harvard Business School professor, corporate consultant, and author of internationally known books on management did not protect her from open criticism by her colleagues.

On the other hand, a more conciliatory style may be criticized by men and women colleagues as insufficiently authoritative. Despite the increase in women managers in the past twenty years, men and women at all career stages, including undergraduate and graduate business students, stereotype the good manager as "masculine." Nonetheless, there are situations where a nonconfrontational approach is highly appropriate. In medicine and police work, quintessential masculine professions in American society, being able to listen and take the role of the...
other person may be more productive than a distancing, authoritative stance in eliciting information or deflecting conflict. Conciliation and using the other person’s views can be threatening to men in police work who have learned to rely on physical force and to men doctors for whom medical expertise is the ultimate authority.

If the goal for women in men-dominated situations is to be treated as if they were men, they are in a double bind, and so are the men. If the women act like men, they challenge men’s “natural” right to positions of power. If the women act like women, they don’t belong in a situation where they have to take charge (that is, act like a man). As Susan Fehrlich Martin says of policewomen on patrol: “The more a female partner acts like a police officer, the less she behaves like a woman. On the other hand, the more she behaves like a woman, the less protection she provides, the less adequate she is as a partner—although such behavior preserves the man’s sense of masculinity. The way out of the bind is simple: keep women out of patrol work” (1980, 93–94).

PRODUCING “FACE”

All these processes of legitimation and validation that build the reputations of stature and ability needed by a competitor for a position of power and prestige take place in face-to-face interaction. In everyday encounters, people present themselves the way they would like to be responded to—as powerful leaders, cooperative colleagues, deferential underlings, more or less intimate friends, possible sexual partners. The ways people dress, gesture, talk, act, and even show emotion produce social identities, consciously or unconsciously crafted for different arenas and a variety of occasions. Ritual behavior, such as bows and handshakes, and the rules of protocol—who goes through a door first, who sits where, who calls whom by their first name—reproduce status hierarchy or create status equality. Ordinary conversations become covert battlegrounds: Who talks more, who interrupts, whose interests are discussed, who gets sustained attention or short shrift, all indicate who has the social upper hand. Whom one walks with or stands with—or puts space between—demonstrates affiliation, hostility, or respect, as does eye contact, touching, and other forms of “body politics.” These “face” productions are such delicate balances of power and deference that they can easily be disrupted by rudeness or embarrassment. Secret stigmas, such as deviant behavior in the past or present, or even by members of one’s family or by intimate friends, can contaminate a seemingly upright identity as revealed. In face-to-face interaction, accidental attributes, such as beauty or height, may add to social status, and obvious physical deformities often detract from it.

These presentations of self take place in social contexts, and the responses of others validate, neutralize, deny, or subvert them. Status signals, whether they are verbal or nonverbal, practical or symbolic, can be understood only in the social context and only by people who have learned their meaning. You need to know the symbolic language of everyday social interaction to be able to tell who is the boss and who is the employee, who are friends and who are enemies. Signals can be manipulated adequately in open rituals.

These status, religion, or “men are also that is, in fact, is the society’s and men, and greater or less reenacts the status character the situation. We say seriously, have low status, and their bids or grants the belief prove their claim.

The pattern characterizes the rank, it is not as interaction, occupation, characteristics, there is usually one person in a great characteristics present. The social mix endures the patterns are right to lead; the building up frontonts rather power.

The week I started Committee he Judge Clarence emphasized status play a role in order with evaluation of the same race. “The men. It was also 1991.”
be manipulated to shore up or subvert the status quo, or they can be used deliberately in open resistance or rebellion.

These status productions are part of "doing gender" (or of doing race, ethnicity, religion, or social class). In doing gender, as West and Zimmerman point out, "men are also doing dominance and women are doing deference" (1987, 146). That is, in face-to-face interaction, what is being produced, reinforced, or resisted is the society's whole system of social stratification. This system endows women and men, people of different racial ethnic groups and religions, and those with greater or lesser economic resources with different social worth. Everyday interaction reinforces these power and prestige differences because people with different status characteristics are seen as legitimately superior or inferior by the others in the situation. When people are evaluated highly, the others take what they have to say seriously, follow their suggestions, and defer to their judgment. Those who have low status in the eyes of the others are not listened to, their advice is ignored, and their bids for leadership are simply not acknowledged. Status superiors are granted the benefit of the doubt if they make a mistake; status inferiors have to prove their competence over and over again.

The pattern of structured power and prestige in face-to-face interaction replicates the ranking of social characteristics in the larger society because people are seen not as individuals but as representatives of their race, religion, gender, education, occupation, and so on. If everyone in a group has the same social characteristics, then natural leaders and followers emerge; in a group of friends, there is usually one person who is the ringleader. But when the social characteristics of people in a group differ, the social characteristics have more salience than personal characteristics—the woman who leads other women follows when men are present. The solo man does not dominate in a group of women, but he is listened to more than the solo woman is in a group of men. The size of the group, its status mix, endurance, and purpose determine its structure of power and prestige, but the patterns are constant: Status superiors lead because others feel they have the right to lead; they don't have superior status because they lead. Most of the time, the building up and tearing down of "face" goes unnoticed, but conflicts and confrontations reveal that the vital subtext is the social production of prestige and power.

**PRODUCING POWER**

The week I started to write this chapter was the week of the U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee hearings on Professor Anita Hill's allegations of sexual harassment by Judge Clarence Thomas, nominee to the Supreme Court. These encounters dramatized status production and destruction, and the interplay of race, class, and gender with evaluations of performance and social worth. They laid bare the social processes of upward mobility, and how these differ for women and men of the same race. "The scalding contest was not only about race and sex, and women and men. It was about power, and who knows how to use it more effectively" (Dwyd 1991).
Both Clarence Thomas and Anita Hill are African Americans who were born into poverty and segregation, and both received their law degrees from Yale University, one of the most prestigious law schools in the United States, during a time of nationally approved and implemented affirmative action. They met when they worked together in the administration of President Ronald Reagan. Judge Thomas, then thirty-three years old, was at the Department of Education and then head of the Equal Employment Opportunities Commission (EEOC), the body set up to implement the civil rights laws against discrimination. Professor Hill, then twenty-five years old, worked for Judge Thomas in both organizations for several years.

Professor Hill contended that on and off during this time, at both workplaces, she had been subject to Judge Thomas’s repeated requests for dates, as well as descriptions of the sexual acts in pornographic movies he had seen, the size of the breasts and penises of the actors in those movies, the size of his own penis, and his own sexual prowess. She had told few people of the incidents—two women friends, a man she was dating who lived in another city, and the dean at a school considering her for an appointment six or seven years later. They testified before the Judiciary Committee that she had been very upset and uncomfortable talking about it, although she had offered none of the graphic details that she was asked to make public at the reconvened hearings.

Judge Thomas denied the allegations categorically and made his own charges that he was the victim of a particularly ugly brand of racism, the stereotyping of African-American men as nothing more than sexual animals. He called it “high-tech lynching,” but it was Anita Hill who was verbally lynched by the senators who supported Judge Thomas. The judge’s supporters on the Judiciary Committee accused Professor Hill of being a vindictive scorned woman, the tool of anti-Thomas political interests, a fantasizer, and a schizophrenic. The members of the Judiciary Committee who were against confirming Judge Thomas were circumvent when they questioned him, and rambling and disjointed with his witnesses. They did not ask him anything about what was rumored to be his well-known interest in pornography. They called no experts to testify on sexual harassment, its effects, or common responses, but listened respectfully to the rambling, self-serving account of a man who had met Anita Hill at a large party.

Professor Hill’s accusation of sexual harassment by Judge Thomas was called into question because she had followed him from the Department of Education to the EEOC and had kept in touch with him professionally after she left the EEOC for a teaching position, once asking him for a needed reference, once to come to her campus as a speaker, and at other times requesting help for others or materials for seminars and grants. She had telephoned him about ten to fifteen times in the decade after she left Washington, D.C. When he came to speak at the school where she had her first teaching job, she participated in the social events around his visit and drove him to the airport. A witness to their interaction said it was very friendly and relaxed.

Judge Thomas’s supporters on the Judiciary Committee said over and over that they could not understand why Anita Hill had followed him from one organization to another after he had harassed her. She said that for several months before he took the for dates, and he EEOC, she said he was also going to explain why they could no longer.

Professor Hill said she could not of law. Although had said had subject to Thomas, the evi Time of President Roberts University an African-American large federal agencies and continued reliance on positions for on her work activities, such association, she could not.

The women women and the called Anita Hill “tough,” “ambition she resented no grant of Education.

As a profes Thomas was me to be helpful she left EEOC this career. She did not. She had nothing would not have Committee, which in sexual harass.

The Judicial men. The Senate eighty men, a
fore he took the new position, he had not engaged in lewd talk or pressured her for dates, and he had started seeing someone seriously. After they both moved to EEOC, she said he harassed her again. His relationship had not worked out, and he was also going through a divorce. Professor Hill's witnesses tried to explain why by talking about her own experience, which included "touching," and said that as a Black woman you learn to "grit your teeth and bear it" so that you can get to a position where you do not need the support of your harasser any longer.

Professor Hill said she had followed Thomas to EEOC because she was afraid she could not otherwise find employment commensurate with her credentials and abilities. She had been a corporate lawyer and did not want to return to that sector of law. Although this motivation for continuing a relationship with someone she said had subjected her to disgusting talk was challenged by witnesses for Judge Thomas, the evidence of her career path bears out her restricted opportunities. At the time of the alleged incidents, Professor Hill was an African-American woman professional in her twenties, a graduate of a highly prestigious law school, just beginning her career. The position she went to after she left EEOC was with Oral Roberts University, a small low-status school (now defunct). Judge Thomas was an African-American man in his thirties, appointed by the president to head a large federal agency. He was being groomed for future appointments in Republican circles and was described by one witness as "a rising star." Professor Hill's continued reliance on Judge Thomas for reference letters, speaking engagements, positions for others, and materials on civil rights enhanced her career and standing at her workplace and in the profession. Despite a high level of professional activities, such as research and attendance at conventions of the American Bar Association, she could not afford to alienate an important professional contact.

The women who testified for Judge Thomas lauded him for his respect for women and the help he gave them; except for one, none was a professional. They called Anita Hill "stridently aggressive," "arrogant," "opinionated," "hard," "tough," "ambitious," and "aloof." They suggested that her motivation was that she resented not being his main assistant at EEOC, as she had been at the Department of Education, or that she "had a crush on him" and was scorned.

As a professional woman, Professor Hill realized too late that Clarence Thomas was more interested in her sexually than professionally and was not going to be helpful in advancing her career at EEOC. She said that he had said when she left EEOC that if she ever talked about what he had done, it would ruin his career. She did not talk about it publicly, and in turn, he filled any request from her. She had nothing to gain by going public when she finally did so, and she said she would not have done so had she not been approached by staff of the Judiciary Committee, who had been told of rumors that Judge Thomas had been involved in sexual harassment at EEOC.

The Judiciary Committee was made up of fourteen upper-middle-class white men. The Senate, which had to vote to confirm the nomination, consisted of ninety-eight men, almost all white, and two white women. More of the senators (in-
SEXUAL HARASSMENT AS DISCRIMINATION

Barbara Gutek (1985) found that 67.7 percent of 393 men would be flattered if asked to have sex by a woman co-worker, but 62.8 percent of 814 women would be insulted by a sexual invitation from a male colleague (table 1, p. 96). Demands for sexual relations by superiors as the cost of keeping a job or advancing in it is quite pro quo, a long-standing ugly phenomenon of work life for heterosexual and lesbian women of all classes and races, and also for many women college and graduate students. Most people understand the unfairness when someone who needs a job or a grade is subject to unwanted sexual advances, verbal or physical. But sexual talk, gestures, and other behavior inappropriate to a work environment or to a professional or student-teacher relationship also constitute discrimination against the targets. This concept of sexual harassment as discrimination, first advanced by Catharine MacKinnon (1979), was promulgated in EEOC guidelines in 1980 but was not upheld in the courts in this or other countries until the late 1980s.

The concept of harassment as discrimination emerged in the United States when white women and men of color were hired in workplaces and accepted in training institutions from which they had been excluded. Women in blue-collar jobs tend to come up against sexual harassment and other forms of interpersonal resistance when they successfully break into white men’s work worlds, especially when they are women of color and have low-status jobs. The intent of such harassment is to make work life so unpleasant that the woman will quit. Women who enter formerly all men managerial or professional schools or workplaces are likely to be subject to sexual innuendoes or remarks about their physical appearance, which are aimed at undercutting their poise and work performance. The aim is to induce them to shrink from visibility and assertiveness, the hallmarks of the person who becomes a leader in a field.

Only recently, and only in a very few instances, have formal complaints or grievances been filed and lawsuits instituted over persistent episodes of sexual harassment of women or of homosexual men. The reason for not making the incidents public is that the accuser is often not supported by colleagues or bosses, and in many cases, the harasser is the boss. When the incidents, such as embarrassing sexual remarks or jokes at meetings, are between peers, they are frequently condoned or at least not halted or criticized by those present. Neither senior men nor women are likely to put a stop to such incidents while they are happening or to chastise the harasser and offer support to the person harassed in private afterward. Those “microinequities” are not considered serious enough for a lawsuit, but “in the daily granting of comments to women to initiate feeling and expec

Recently, for harassment, which sexuality, and many work or student labor at one of the people in other person. Then, or sexual peer commitment for inappropriate turned into an up to which makes it or explain to others, one reaction to gender powerless because to suppressed if the relation or relations.

Even senior before Anita Hill, fifty year old full Senate, resigned continuous verbal breasts at meeting the only woman in the department chair of the department and to other women in lecture a 1. Women men women now considered. Rather than aware of women in increased.

“Speak-out and how situations of harassment is experienced because women and men, in a public at be treated neutral friendly, but not such distinction
of the American
Professor Hill and
had a day of debate
to a lifetime term
job, with applause
essional women’s

ould be flattered if
women would be
96). Demands for
ancing in it is quid
osexual and les-
çollege and gradu-
who needs a
physical. But sex-
environment or to a
rimination against
first advanced by
es in 1980 but was
80s.
the United States
workplaces and
cluded. Women in
other forms of in-
white men’s work
status jobs. The in-
that the woman will
essional schools or
marks about their
ise and work per-
and assertiveness,
mal complaints or
isodes of sexual
of making the in-
ues or bosses, and
uch as embarrassing
re frequently con-
er senior men nor
re happening or to
in private after-
ugh for a lawsuit,
but “in the daily lives of working women, it is precisely these small, taken-for-
granted comments, jokes, and physical acts, each individually unlikely to force a
woman to initiate administrative action, that may accumulate in the long-term
feeling and experience of harassment” (Schneider 1985, 104).

Recently, feminists have begun to speak of a continuum that runs from gender
harassment, which is inappropriately calling attention to women’s or men’s bodies,
sexuality, and marital status, to sexual harassment, which is turning a professional,
work or student-teacher relationship into a sexual relationship that is not wanted by
one of the people involved and that is coercive because the initiator has some power over
the other person. The defining criterion for gender harassment is that the person’s gen-
der or sexual persuasion is used to comment on the individual’s capabilities or ca-
reer commitment. The defining criterion for sexual harassment is that the behav-
ior is inappropriate for the situation; what should be a gender-neutral situation is
turned into an unwanted sexual situation, and the initiator or instigator has power,
which makes it difficult for those subject to the harassment to protest, leave, com-
plain to others, or take action without jeopardy to their own status. The immediate
reaction to gender and sexual harassment is likely to be discomfort, anger, feelings
of powerlessness, inability to work, or feeling demeaned. These feelings may be
suppressed if the person feels he or she has no choice but to continue in the situa-
tion or relationship.

Even senior women have faced such continued harassment. Several months
before Anita Hill’s allegations, a woman neurosurgeon, Dr. Frances K. Conley, a
fifty year old full professor at Stanford Medical School and head of the Faculty
Senate, resigned after sixteen years on the faculty. She said she had been subject to
continuous verbal sabotage of her professional status, such as comments on her
breasts at meetings and being called “honey” in front of patients. Dr. Conley was
the only woman faculty member in neurosurgery and one of two full professors in
the department. The other, the acting head of neurosurgery, was going to be made
chair of the department. He was the man she said was constantly insulting to her
and to other women. Her women colleagues and the women medical students re-
ported the long-standing practice of men physicians’ use of pictures of naked wo-
men in lectures. If women complained or argued, they were labeled “premenstru-
al.” Women medical students have always been subject to sexist practices, but
women now constitute almost 40 percent of the classes in the United States.
Rather than abating, gender and sexual harassment as a means of curbing the am-
bitions of women has persisted as the number of women in medicine has in-
creased.

“Speak-out” sessions reveal many incidents of gender and sexual harassment
and how situations are differently perceived by women and by men. Neither type
of harassment is likely to diminish using only formal methods of complaint and
censure because both are so pervasive at every level in every workplace where
women and men work together. The best remedy is clear indication from senior
men, in a public setting, that all women employees, trainees, and students are to
be treated neutrally—which does not mean coldly and distantly, but in a cordial,
friendly, but not sexual manner. Most people do know the difference, they make
such distinctions all the time in relating to their friends’ spouses, for instance.
The Gendered Workplace

It takes a very well-established woman to stand up for her professional status successfully, and she needs the support of senior men. Dr. Conley finally agreed to return to the Stanford Medical School faculty because the administration appointed a task force on discrimination and also set up committees to review claims of sexual harassment. A follow-up interview showed that her actions paid off. Mary Roth Walsh (1992) reported that Conley has become the Anita Hill of American medicine, giving speeches all over the country and garnering awards from feminist organizations. Dr. Gerald Silverberg, the chair who had harassed Conley and many other women who were prepared to testify against him, resigned, made a formal apology, and was attending gender sensitivity classes and counseling sessions!

Women who live on the economic margins and women at the beginning of their careers cannot be expected to counter the constant sexist commentary that men use to guard the boundaries of what they feel is their turf. Nor can sympathetic men in similar positions. Not much support can be expected from senior men, who often engage in gender and sexual harassment themselves. So it is up to senior women to use whatever power they have for social change. They can no longer remain silent: "Woman must put herself into the text—as into the world and into history—by her own movement" (Cixous 1976, 875).

References


Guarding the Gates: The Micropolitics of Gender


• 293 •
CHRISTINE L. WILLIAMS

The Glass Escalator: Hidden Advantages for Men in the "Female" Professions

The sex segregation of the U.S. labor force is one of the most perplexing and tenacious problems in our society. Even though the proportion of men and women in the labor force is approaching parity (particularly for younger cohorts of workers), men and women are still generally confined to predominantly single-sex occupations. Forty percent of men or women would have to change major occupational categories to achieve equal representation of men and women in all jobs, but even this figure underestimates the true degree of sex segregation. It is extremely rare to find specific jobs where equal numbers of men and women are engaged in the same activities in the same industries.

Most studies of sex segregation in the work force have focused on women's experiences in male-dominated occupations. Both researchers and advocates for social change have focused on the barriers faced by women who try to integrate predominantly male fields. Few have looked at the "flip-side" of occupational sex segregation: the exclusion of men from predominantly female occupations. But the fact is that men are less likely to enter female sex-typed occupations than women are to enter male-dominated jobs. Roskin and Roos, for example, were able to identify 33 occupations in which female representation increased by more than nine percentage points between 1970 and 1980, but only three occupations in which the proportion of men increased as radically (1990).

In this paper, I examine men's underrepresentation in four predominantly female occupations—nursing, librarianship, elementary school teaching, and social work. Throughout the twentieth century, these occupations have been identified with "women's work"—even though prior to the Civil War, men were more likely to be employed in these areas. These four occupations, often called the female "semi-professions," today range from 5.5 percent male (in nursing) to 32 percent male (in social work). (See Table 1.) These percentages have not changed substantially in decades. In fact, as Table 1 indicates, two of these professions—librarianship and social work—have experienced declines in the proportions of men since 1975. Nursing is the only one of the four experiencing noticeable changes in sex composition, with the proportion of men increasing 18 percent from 1970 to 1990. Even so, men continue to be underrepresented.

Although there are some women in these fields, the assumption that sex segregation is a major barrier to men entering or institutionalizing certain job specialties is not true. Male co-workers, for example, place less importance on job sex segregation than women do. A cultural harassment system exists in these fields, with men and women feeling uncomfortable working in traditionally "female" occupations. However, counter-sexual harassment co-workers result in males effectively being kept out of these fields. Many occupations also require contact with the public, which can undermine the work that they were designed to serve. Informal, and culturally, male occupations.

The assumption that men are "out of place" in a work setting, Kantor (1977) theory of tokenism, argues that organizations, as they are organized, impose a gender hierarchy. Likewise, Jacobs argues that organizations experience the "face" (1989:167), as they attempt to use their power and position.

However, the occupational hierarchy assumes that men will be able to integrate into these occupations when they integrate them. Kenner's (1988) both concludes when men systematically explore the barriers to men's en