Syracuse University
SURFACE

Office of the Chancellor | University Administration

10-4-2007

Women in the Academy: Insider Voices with Outsider Values

Nancy Cantor
Syracuse University, ncantor@syr.edu

Follow this and additional works at: http://surface.syr.edu/chancellor

Part of the Education Commons

Recommended Citation
Cantor, Nancy, "Women in the Academy: Insider Voices with Outsider Values" (2007). *Office of the Chancellor.* Paper 28.
http://surface.syr.edu/chancellor/28

This Presentation is brought to you for free and open access by the University Administration at SURFACE. It has been accepted for inclusion in Office of the Chancellor by an authorized administrator of SURFACE. For more information, please contact surface@syr.edu.

Women at Emory: Past, Present, & Future
Emory University Women's Symposium
Thursday, October 4, 2007
Jones Room, Woodruff Library

Women in the Academy:
Insider Voices with Outsider Values

Nancy Cantor, Chancellor and President
Syracuse University[1]

It is a great pleasure and a privilege to join you today at Emory University, home to one of the oldest Women's Studies doctoral programs in the nation and a university that has taken seriously, in both scholarship and action, the cause of women in the academy.

I am also honored to be asked by two of my closest colleagues and friends from our days at Michigan, Lisa Tedesco, Earl Lewis, and by fellow psychologist, Nadine Kaslow, to speak on a topic about which I admittedly have some passion and some history – the landscape for women in the academy today and the challenges and possibilities that go with it. I started my career as a social psychologist at Princeton, receiving tenure in 1981 when, quite literally, the tenured women on campus would meet and all fit around the kitchen table of the Dean of the College, Nancy Weiss Malkiel. At that time, it was easy in some sense to attribute any unease to the important, but as it turns out not entirely sufficient, explanatory factor of small numbers.

Later, I served as co-chair of the National Research Council's Committee on Women in Science and Engineering and became more exposed to the full range of institutional contexts and career trajectories for women in the academy. I realized that, while numbers certainly set a stage, other, perhaps more subtle, aspects of women's experiences – the presence of some models and mentors; the flexibility of work-life policies; support for collaborative projects; risk-taking leaders, and more – are often just as potent in determining who flourishes and in what contexts.

And today, as I examine successful institutional interventions that support women in the academy – such as the ADVANCE programs set up by the National Science Foundation – I am ever more struck by the critical importance of climate and context, and ever more hopeful that we can actually transform our institutions to be more inclusive and more welcoming and thus better places for everyone to work. But, then, I *am* a social psychologist, and I really believe in culture and context and the power of individuals to effect change by challenging the norms and practices of institutions, as activists from the outside and as voices inside. Or, as a colleague said to me recently, "So this is what happens when the 60s activists get inside!" Which brings me to

---

[1] This speech was prepared as a keynote address, "Women in the Academy: Insider Voices with Outsider Values" at the first-ever Women's Symposium, Women @ EMORY: Past, Present, and *future* at Emory University on Oct 4, 2007. Deep gratitude is extended to Jo Thomas for her collaborative contributions to the preparation of the speech.

my core message today – when women assume insider positions and yet maintain some outsider values, we can make a big difference in changing the academy for the better.

Insiders and Whistle-blowers

I'd like to begin today with a remarkable op-ed in *The New York Times* written in June 2002 by Anita Hill, professor of law, social policy and women's studies at Brandeis University. Her title is "Insider Women With Outsider Values."[2] Her subjects are two other noteworthy women – Coleen Rowley and Sherron Watkins – who challenged venerable, male-dominated institutions – the F.B.I and Enron – and shed light on the need for reform. Hill's conclusions in this article offer a new and hopeful framework for thinking about women and institutional transformation.

Professor Hill was courageous enough herself to speak publicly about sexual harassment and the abuse of power in the workplace during the confirmation hearings for Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas in 1991. Assessing the achievements of these other outstanding women, she writes in her op-ed: "Ms. Rowley and Ms. Watkins are two women who rose through the ranks of male-dominated institutions to become insiders. Yet the not-too-distant history of male exclusivity in their institutions meant both were outsiders as well."

Hill observes that, as leaders, these women had access to information and authority over others, as well as a heightened awareness of the resistance within their own institutions to much-needed change. It's likely that this knowledge deepened their resolve to speak out – in their cases, "to blow the whistle." Hill articulates a critical contrast between *insider status* – positions of authority and leadership within previously male-dominated institutions – and *outsider values.*

She also argues that it is no coincidence that women like Rowley and Watkins spoke out, for this balance of insider position and outsider values can be a potent impetus for institutional activism. Women in leadership positions can serve the larger good in part because they *have* outsider perspectives and values and don't necessarily "buy" the institution as given. If women can manage to survive and succeed as insiders – and also keep pushing with the perspectives of outsiders – they can make the institution better for all concerned. It is a balancing act, and a difficult one at that. As women, we need to keep our voices, need to keep the sensibilities and awareness we have brought as "outsiders" and integrate them with any power and access we have acquired as "insiders."

Of course, in cases like Rowley and Watkins, as it was for Anita Hill, speaking out meant leaving the institutions as a consequence of their activism. Hopefully, this is not always the outcome, as women strike a balance between insider voices and outsider values.

The Landscape as Women Move Inside

---

[2] Anita F. Hill, "Insider Women With Outsider Values," *The New York Times*, June 6, 2002.

If we are to address this balancing act – of individual survival and institutional transformation – in higher education, we first need to examine the landscape for women as outsiders coming into the academy, as well as the outsider experiences and values we bring with us.

Today, 170 years after women first gained entry to institutions of higher education in the United States,[3] 87 years after women first got the right to vote, and 35 years after Congress passed Title IX prohibiting sex discrimination in education, women have made tremendous strides, too numerous to list here. It's important to remember that every one of these accomplishments was founded on the strenuous and often painful efforts of women *who were defined by society and by law as outsider*s: women who campaigned and marched, who protested and sat in, who went to court again and again, *outsiders pounding on the doors of power* to end discrimination against women, to give us access to opportunities to make real choices, to fulfill our potential as citizens, as human beings.

We have made tremendous strides. Shirley Tilghman captured the changed landscape at many universities very well recently with a story about the retirement of Suzanne Keller, Professor of Sociology and the first woman granted tenure at Princeton University. When Suzanne retired, she recalled the atmosphere when she arrived on campus in 1966 as follows: "I really thought I was from Mars. It was as if the men had never seen a woman."[4] Women now make up 56 percent of the undergraduate population in our colleges and universities.[5] For the fourth year in a row, the majority of U.S. citizens receiving a research doctorate in 2005 were women.[6]

However – unfortunately we are still subject to caveats – however, despite the overwhelming presence of women on campus for the last 25 years, we are not doing as well as one might expect, especially at doctoral institutions. Women hold only 24 percent of full professor positions in the U.S.[7] As Martha West and John Curtis report, women are less likely than men to work in a research university, are less likely to get a full-time tenure track position and advance more slowly when they do. Women earn less than men at every rank, and are more likely to feel isolated and dissatisfied.[8]

---

[3] Miriam K. Chamberlain, ed., *Women in Academe; Progress and Prospects* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1991 paperback edition) 3.

[4] Shirley Tilghman, "Changing the Demographics: Recruiting, Retaining, and Advancing Women Scientists in Academia," remarks at the launch of the ADVANCE Lecture Series at the Earth Institute, Columbia University, March 24, 2005.

[5] *The Chronicle of Higher Education: Almanac Issue, 2007-08*, 54-1, August 31, 2007, 43.

[6] Hoffer, T.B., V. Welch, Jr., K. Webber, K. Williams, B. Lisek, M. Hess, D. Loew, and I. Guzman-Barron, *Doctorate Recipients from United States Universities: Summary Report 2005*, (Chicago: National Opinion Research Center, 2006). The report gives the results of data collected in the Survey of Earned Doctorates, conducted for six federal agencies, NSF, NIH, USED, NEH, USDA, and NASA by NORC.

[7] Martha S. West and John W. Curtis, "Organizing Around Gender Equity," online at http://www.aaup.org/NR/rdonlyres/356548BE-AF67-4D79-928C-03DDC73C8EEF/0/OrganizingAroundGenderEquity.pdf, 4, accessed October 1, 2007.

[8] Ibid., 12.

A 2006 analysis of the gender gap in faculty pay by Paul D. Umbach of the University of Iowa found that women faculty members in 70 disciplines earn about 21 percent less than their male peers, an average of $18,000 less per year. The difference ranges from $1,100 in Philosophy to almost $100,000 in Health Services Administration.[9] Even when variables such as seniority, publications, patents, outside research support, rank, and the job market are taken into account, there is still a gap of 6.8 percent that cannot be explained.[10] Furthermore, Umbach found, as the proportion of women in a discipline increases, the mean salaries drop for both women and men.[11]

It's hard not to feel a sense of déjà vu. As Theda Skocpol, who holds an endowed chair in government and sociology at Harvard University told *The Chronicle of Higher Education* three years ago, "This has a very early-'70s feel, like stuff we thought we had overcome. I feel like I'm in a time warp." [12]

Women in Science and Engineering: Still Under-Represented

In the fields of science and engineering the situation is particularly acute, and I would like to take a few minutes to focus on these women. A recent report from the National Academy of Sciences has drawn on a wide range of scholarship to give us a very detailed, very up to date look at trends that shed light beyond this arena alone.[13]

As the National Academy report – *Beyond Bias and Barriers: Fulfilling the Potential of Women in Academic Sciences and Engineering* – concludes: The data on girls and young women make it clear that talent in math and science is not the issue: girls in high school take as many mathematics and science courses as boys and earn better grades.[14] Half the degree recipients in a number of scientific fields are women, and women make up half the nation's workforce. *However*, we make up only one-fifth of the scientific and technical workforce, and the National Academy reports that the proportion of women in science and engineering declines with every step up the academic ladder.[15] It concludes: "It is not lack of talent, but unintentional biases

---

[9] Paul D. Umbach, "Gender Equity in the Academic Labor Market: An Analysis of Academic Disciplines," presented at the 2006 Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, San Francisco, CA, April 7-11, 2006, p. 12; online at http://myweb.uiowa.edu/pumbach/AERA2006_equitypaper.pdf

[10] Ibid., 14.

[11] Ibid., 13.

[12] Quoted by Robin Wilson, "Women in Higher Education: Where the Elite Teach, It's Still a Man's World," *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, December 3, 2004.

[13] *Beyond Bias and Barriers: Fulfilling the Potential of Women in Academic Sciences and Engineering* (Washington, DC, The National Academies Press, 2007).

[14] M. E. Evans, H. Schweingruber and H. W. Stevenson, "Gender differences in interest and knowledge acquisition: The United States, Taiwan, and Japan," *Sex Roles* 47 (3-4) (2002):153-167; C. Morgan, J. D. Isaac, and C. Sansone, "The role of interest in understanding the career choices of female and male college students," *Sex Roles* 44 (5-6) (2001):295-320; Y Xie and KA Shauman, *Women in Science: Career Processes and Outcomes*, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003).

[15] *Beyond Bias and Barriers: Fulfilling the Potential of Women in Academic Sciences and Engineering* (Washington, DC, The National Academies Press, 2007), 14.

and outmoded institutional structures that are hindering the access and advancement of women." [16] As Cathy Trower and Richard Chait have written, these women experience "social isolation, a chilly climate, bias and hostility."[17]

The National Academy report underlines the dire situation for minority group women, who are subject to dual discrimination, and are in a position that can only be described as "extreme." As Donna Shalala observes, "Women scientists and engineers with minority racial and ethnic backgrounds are virtually absent from the nation's leading science and engineering departments."[18] Between 1989 and 1997, the proportion of tenured minority group women went down. [19] As Donna Nelson reports, as recently as five years ago there were no African American, Hispanic, or Native American women in tenured or tenure-track faculty positions in the nation's "top 50" computer science departments.[20] And in the "top 50" physical sciences and engineering departments, no Native American woman and only one African American woman held the position of full professor.[21] This pattern is true in other fields as well. In philosophy, for example, the *Chronicle of Higher Education* reports that "fewer than 30 black women are known to hold full-time jobs in the discipline."[22]

It's true that there is a "lag time" between attaining a PhD and becoming a full professor. In physics, for example, the women who comprised 5 percent of all full professors in 2005 were drawn from a pool of PhDs in which only 4 percent were women, and similar correlations can be found at other ranks.[23] This notion of "lag time" has been used to try to explain the under-representation of women.

But, as Donna Nelson observes, it does not account for the high percentage of women with recent PhDs who then do not appear in the ranks of assistant professors. The National Academy reports that even in fields such as biology, where women earn more PhDs than men, white men hold the bulk of these faculty positions.[24] Just as bad, women in all fields of science and engineering are 40 percent more likely than men to exit the tenure track for an adjunct position.[25] The "lag" model and the "pipeline" model on which it is based are helpful to think

---

[16] Ibid., 1.

[17] C. Trower and R. Chait, "Faculty diversity: Too little for too long," *Harvard Magazine* (March-April, 2002), cited in *Beyond Bias and Barriers*, 18.

[18] Donna Shalala in *Beyond Bias and Barriers*, xi-xii.

[19] Trower and Chait (2002), cited in *Beyond Bias and Barriers*, 19.

[20] D.J. Nelson, (2005). *A National Analysis of Diversity in Science and Engineering Faculties at Research Universities*, (2005), online at http://cheminfo.chem.ou.edu/~djn/diversity/briefings/Diversity%20Report%20Final.pdf, cited in *Beyond Bias and Barriers*, 19.

[21] Nelson (2005) cited in *Beyond Bias and Barriers*, 19.

[22] Robin Wilson, "Black Women Seek a Role in Philosophy," *Chronicle of Higher Education*, September 28, 2007.

[23] R. Ivie and K. N. Ray, *Women in Physics and Astronomy, 2005*, (College Park, MD: American Institute of Physics, online at http://www.aip.org/statistics/trends/reports/women05.pdf, accessed October 1, 2007), cited in *Beyond Bias and Barriers*, 56.

[24] Nelson (2005), cited in *Beyond Bias and Barriers*, 56.

[25] Donna Ginther, "A hazard analysis of the 1973-2001 Longitudinal National Science Foundation Survey of Doctoral Recipients conducted for the Committee on Maximizing the Potential of Women in Academic Science and Engineering

about aggregates of women but are ultimately insufficient because they do not take into account the complex career trajectories of individual women. As Cliff Adelman has observed, "liquids move in pipes; people don't."[26]

The Academy report uses the example of women medical faculty, who earn significantly lower salaries and are promoted more slowly than their male counterparts, to illustrate some of the barriers that may contribute to these complex career trajectories. Drawing on a recent article in the *Journal of Women's Health*, they fault the *culture* of academic medicine, explaining that it lacks high-ranking female role models. Gender stereotypes limit opportunities for women, and expectations are different for women and men. Women tend to be excluded from career development opportunities, and receive less funding, space, and staff support. In such a culture, the article reports, women suffer profound social and professional isolation.[27] As Bickel and colleagues have shown, academic medicine also tends to reward "unrestricted availability to work," and therefore the neglect of personal life.[28]

As Ann Crittenden suggests in her book on the price of motherhood, we should not be surprised by the dismay of a physician and mother at a major Boston hospital who was still required to attend meetings scheduled after a twelve-hour day: "Any deviation from accepted practice stands out, requires explanation, causes resentment, and interferes with the male environment's tunnel vision," she said.[29]

Environments toxic to women are not unique to medicine. Surveys of more than 1,000 university faculty members carried out by the Higher Education Research Institute found that women were more likely than men to feel that colleagues devalued their research and did not welcome them as collaborators. The women also felt they were constantly under scrutiny.[30]

Into these working environments and culture, women usually bring multiple identities: as women of color, as LGBT women, as parents, as daughters, as wives, as partners. With these identities come multiple commitments and complications. It is true that men also have

---

and the Committee on Science, Engineering and Public Policy of the National Academies," in *Beyond Bias and Barriers*, 92.

[26] Cliff Adelman, *The Toolbox Revisited: Paths to Degree Completion From High School Through College* (2006) Online at http://www.ed.gov/rschstat/research/pubs/toolboxrevisit/toolbox.pdf., cited in *Beyond Bias and Barriers*, 55.

[27] A. Brown, W. Swinyard and J. Ogle, "Women in Academic Medicine: A Report of Focus Groups and Questionnaires, with Conjoint Analysis," *Journal of Women's Health* 12-10 (2003), 999-1008, cited in *Beyond Bias and Barriers*, 83.

[28] J. Bickel, D. Wara, B. F. Atkinson, L. S. Cohen, M. Dunn, S. Hostler, T.R.B. Johnson, P. Morahan, A. H. Rubenstein, G. F. Sheldon, E. Stokes, "Increasing Women's Leadership in Academic Medicine: Report of the AAMC Project Implementation Committee," *Academic Medicine* 77-10 (2002)1043-1061, cited in *Beyond Bias and Barriers*, 84.

[29] Cited in Ann Crittenden, *The Price of Motherhood: Why the Most Important Job in the World is Still the Least Valued* (New York: Metropolitan Books, Henry Holt and Company, 2001) 35.

[30] H. S. Astin and L. J. Sax, "Developing Scientific Talent in Undergraduate Women" in *The Equity Equation: Fostering the Advancement of Women in the Sciences, Mathematics and Engineering*, eds. C. S. Davis, A. B. Ginorio, B. B. Hollenshead , P. M. Rayman (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1996) cited in *Beyond Bias and Barriers*, 98.

responsibilities – some more than others. Nonetheless, the experience of conflicting identities is the *pervasive* one for women. What most women lack is – not a "wife," as some of us joke – but a "third space" that gives us the time, the structures, the flexibility, the support, and the encouragement to carry out our multiple roles. And in cases where some of these alternatives are available, they may tend to be seen as concessions, not as entitlements. Women, understandably, are reluctant to take advantage of them.

As Mary Ann Mason and Marc Goulden found, in science, tenured women are twice as likely as tenured men to be single.[31] Across the disciplines, a majority of the women who attain tenure did not have any children in the household. [32] Although a decision not to marry or have a family might be termed "a realistic career choice" for a woman, what kind of a human "choice" is it? And what are the larger implications of presenting women with such a "choice"?

The author Nancy Folbre, who has argued that children are "public goods" essential to everyone's economic well-being, says that when people ask her whether having a child isn't a purely personal choice and private obligation – rather like the decision to raise a pet – "I just remind people that when their Lab grows up, it's not going to pay their Social Security."[33]

In the face of these "barriers and biases," the National Academies' committee calls for changes in the culture, structures, and practices of higher education, calls for "a new normal" way of doing things.[34] How to bring about this "new normal" and who will lead the way, then, become the critical questions – ones that I know you have been asking at Emory on the President's Commission on the Status of Women.

Moving Inside: Women and Leadership

This brings me to the situation for women leaders in the academy. For despite the overall landscape of small numbers and many gender disparities, as women seek to bring about "a new normal," we are no longer *all* "outsiders," pushing on the doors of power. Women are moving into leadership positions, making the transition from "outsiders" to "insiders," acquiring some power and status. In the past 20 years, for example, the proportion of female college and university presidents has more than doubled. In 1986, less than one out of 10 presidents was a woman. In 2006, according to a recent survey from the American Council on Education, the proportion of women had risen to almost one in four. The increase has been highest in community colleges, where the number of presidents who are women rose from 8 percent in 1986 to 29 percent in 2006.

The American Council on Education's 2007 report on the presidency notes, however, that there is a recent slow down in progress, as most of the gain in leadership positions was achieved

---

[31] Mary Ann Mason and Marc Goulden "Do Babies Matter?: The Effect of Family Formation on the Lifelong Careers of Academic Men and Women," *Academe* 88 (6) (2002), 21-7.

[32] Twelve to 14 years after receiving a Ph.D., 62 percent of tenured women in the humanities and social sciences and 50 percent in the sciences do not have children in the house. See Mary Ann Mason and Marc Goulden (2002).

[33] Nancy Folbre, personal communication in July 1995, cited in Ann Crittenden (2001), 82.

[34] *Beyond Bias and Barriers*, 112.

before 1998, when the percentage of women reached 19.1. This relative stagnation is troubling, since women represent 45 percent of faculty and senior administrative staff today.

Hope remains, however, in that the graying of college and university presidents today – more than half are older than 60 – portends an imminent period of hiring and thus an imminent opportunity to jump start women's progress.[35] And this is an opportunity that we should not miss; one that deserves a vigorous and organized effort to move women into leadership positions, especially in research universities and other four year institutions.

In the meantime, we can and must work for change from both sides of the door. Many of the biases and barriers to women are a function of culture and of practices that, at least in principle, we can change. We can and must create environments that attract more women – and are attractive to more women – in leadership roles.

Importantly, many of the women who are moving into leadership roles have fresh memories of blocked opportunities – for ourselves or for other women we know and admire. And, I would argue that this is not altogether a bad thing, as keeping one foot inside and one foot outside (at least in our minds) may serve to keep us on track to make the changes that will create "a new normal" in our institutions.

Of course, pushing for justice, advocating for change – even bringing up the need for change – has never been a task for the timid. This prompted Shirley Tilghman to call efforts to address the under-representation of women in science and engineering "a form of risk-taking behavior that makes bungee jumping and going over Niagara Falls in a barrel seem like child's play."[36] However, we have many non-timid women now inside the academy, and even if it may not always feel everyday as if we have power or voice, we do have outsider values and memories that can reverberate enough in our consciousness to influence how we behave as colleagues and leaders, and how we advocate for others.

The Psychology from the Inside

Why do women in seemingly powerful positions in the academy so often retain these outsider values and perspectives? This is where I believe that psychology becomes very relevant to understanding that even on the inside, women carry an involuntary "marking" as a member of a group, a marking that simply isn't part of the psychology of male "insiders," who can insist that *their* gender or other identities are "irrelevant."

As social psychologist Claude Steele suggests, women are vulnerable to gender stereotypes even when no one around us "intentionally" wishes to invoke them and even when we ostensibly have succeeded in breaking through barriers into previously male domains.[37] And

---

[35] *The American College President: 2007 Edition* (Washington, D.C.: American Council on Education, 2007). See also Audrey Williams June, "Presidents: Same Look, Different Decade," *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, February 16, 2007, A33.

[36] Tilghman (2005).

[37] Claude M. Steele, lecture at: *Future of Minority Studies*, Cornell University, July 30, 2005.

it is useful to be aware that most – if not all – of the scrutiny we will feel as a function of gender comes in very mundane, subtle, tacit form. The cumulative effect is hard to even measure oneself, even as we know it is there.

Many of us, for example, have experienced or witnessed the subtle invocation of gender when we argue strongly for a position and suddenly someone says: "Well, let's talk about this calmly or dispassionately." And what is instructive about this experience is its ambiguity – like most group-based marking – you are never quite sure whether they would have said the same thing if you had been a (confident, forceful) male colleague. Nonetheless, you have a good hunch the answer is "no."

Stereotypes about women, described by Mason and Goulden as "a thousand paper cuts,"[38] can result in discrimination even if the stereotypes are positive. For example, the stereotype of women as compassionate and caring, even passionate, is in many respects a very positive recipe for behavior in organizations, especially in a society long on individualism and short on communal responsibility. Yet, we all know that it can often be invoked to undermine the credibility and leadership strength of individual women in contexts when others, men or women, may feel somewhat threatened by the power of a passionate voice. And even when such "gender schemas," as Virginia Valian among others calls them, are unspoken or invisible, they can inflict damage that can be difficult or impossible to undo. [39]

The pervasiveness of easily and often unintentionally invoked gender schemas is quite simply a fact of our lives that we are wise to recognize even if we are somewhat powerless to change their course. As psychologists Laurie Rudman, Peter Glick, and Julie Phelan suggest, gender schemas have a prescriptive aspect to them (specifying how men and women *should* act) that is hard to extinguish even when actual roles and behaviors change.[40] They serve as a kind of reference point by which an individual's behavior is judged even when we don't consciously agree with their premise.

Even those of us who consider ourselves progressive about gender roles will notice if a woman in a leadership position seems "pushy"– more like a man – or "emotional"– more like a woman.[41] This additional layer of scrutiny is unnecessary and fundamentally unfair. Rudman and her colleagues describe a case that went to the Supreme Court that perfectly exemplifies the double bind that women face. Ann Hopkins, a successful accountant was denied partnership at her firm for being "too masculine." The Court ruled in her favor, observing that women are placed in an "intolerable catch-22: out of a job if they behave aggressively and out of a job if they don't."[42]

---

[38] Mason and Goulden (2002).

[39] Virginia Valian, *Why So Slow: The Advancement of Women* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1999) 2-3.

[40] Laurie A. Rudman, Peter Glick, and Julie E. Phelan, "From the Laboratory to the Bench: Gender Stereotyping Research in the Courtroom," in Eugene Borgida and Susan T. Fiske, eds., *Beyond Common Sense; Psychological Science in the Courtroom* (Malden, Ma: Blackwell Publishing Ltd., 2008) 83-101.

[41] Alice H. Eagly and Anne M. Koenig," Gender Prejudice: On the Risks of Occupying Incongruent Roles," in Eugene Borgida and Susan T. Fiske, eds., *Beyond Common Sense; Psychological Science in the Courtroom* (Malden, Ma: Blackwell Publishing Ltd., 2008) 63-81.

[42] *Price-Waterhouse v Hopkins* (1989, p. 1791), cited in Rudman, Glick and Phelan (2008), 89. It is also worth considering how the Court would have ruled in this case if it came before them today, as it has recently struck down

Such contradictions and daily scrutiny are a maddening part of the lives of women in leadership or in "solo" positions, and it is made worse by the fact that it is simply not part of the psychology of our male colleagues – they don't experience it, and they don't "see" it as real for us. As Satya Mohanty, a progressive literary scholar and founding director of the Future of Minority Studies Project, says, there is an ironic *epistemic privilege* to the position of outsiders (coming inside) – you see it all pretty clearly, but because others (one might say "real" insiders) don't see it and rarely experience it, you can never count on your insights being validated by those more firmly in power.[43]

Building Trust as Insiders with Outsider Values

Since insiders don't routinely experience this scrutiny and the judgments that accompany it, their well-meaning insistence that all is well, and their advice not to "over-react" can be a critical impediment to interpersonal trust – yet it is precisely that trust that must be developed if we are to effectively act as insiders and more to the point, change institutional culture.

So, how can we build trust and momentum for change? I think it takes deliberate work, and progress requires stretching on all parts and acknowledging some tacit dynamics of group life. There are a number of ways to make those dynamics explicit by taking deliberate stock of things and sharing ideas for improvement:

Peer group consensus building is very helpful – especially in validating, and thus deflating somewhat, the impact of those thousands of small things that happen every day to put women and other outsiders on guard about their status and security inside. The academy, in my view, tends to over-rate the value of hierarchical mentoring, senior to junior, when peers with shared backgrounds, concerns, and goals can also serve as very effective lateral mentors. Peer group consensus building can reduce isolation, validate shared insights, and forge new practices in scholarship and teaching. For women, of course, this consensus sharing and building has always been a hallmark of our practices – including, the earliest suffragette conventions, such as in Seneca Falls, a place which all of us who live in Upstate New York specially cherish, the consciousness raising groups of the women's movement, and the networks of scholars in women's studies holding meetings like this one at Emory. What is so important about these peer networks is that they not only empower the participants and bolster their ability to persevere, but they set new scholarly and intellectual directions for their work, as, for example, the *Future of Minorities Studies* network is doing now.[44]

Inter-group conversations can also be very helpful if they can be structured not to point fingers but to reveal the unintentional ways in which people can be made to feel vulnerable just

---

a lower court ruling on gender pay discrimination on a technicality, invoking a statute of limitations on reporting discrimination, even though the complainant sued as soon as becoming aware of the disparity.

[43] Satya Mohanty, *Universalism and Multicultural Politics*, panel presentation, Future of Minority Studies Symposium, Syracuse University, April, 2006. See also, Satya Mohanty, *Literary Theory and the Claims of History: Postmodernism, Objectivity, and Multicultural Politics*, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1997).

[44] See http://www.fmsproject.cornell.edu/

by being who they are, if they're members of minority groups or groups with histories of exclusion. This is especially true if the "outsiders" can lessen their guardedness and the "insiders" can listen without defensiveness. One way to facilitate this is to invoke the truth that all of us are outsiders in some contexts and at some points in our lives. Conversations such as these are at the heart of the interventions that many universities are doing in departments where women are under-represented, as in the focus groups that form the core of many ADVANCE grants from the National Science Foundation to institutions working on advancing women in science and engineering.[45]

No bad actors, but lots of communal responsibility. An important consequence of such inter-group conversations is the acknowledgement of the ways in which gender (or other group-based marking) lurks in the background even when there are "no bad actors." Along with this recognition, however, should come a stronger sense of communal responsibility for counteracting (rather than denying) the automatic effects of gender, regardless of our benign intentions. This is what reports like the Academy study can do. It is also why it is important for individual campuses to have commissions such as yours at Emory, and for disciplinary societies to begin to keep statistics on progress in the professions. Such deliberate record keeping has been slow to take hold, but is beginning to happen. For example, the same article in the *Chronicle* reporting on the dearth of black women in philosophy also reported that the American Philosophical Association will start keeping track next year, for the first time, of the number of its 10,000 members in North America who are women or scholars of color. We all have to start with the numbers, and then turn to the culture behind them.

Balancing Survival and Voice on the Inside

Until some substantial critical mass of women is achieved in our institutions and fields, and until the media and other purveyors of popular culture begin to spread new gender schemas with less restrictive prescriptions for women, our markings as "outsiders" will continue to intrude mindlessly on our daily lives, even as "insiders." In the meantime, our search for success must by necessity balance these strategies for survival and consciousness-raising with equally assertive efforts to be agents of transformation. In that balancing act, some residue of feeling like an outsider will remain even with cumulative experience on the inside, and we might as well use that recognition to make the culture of our institutions more amenable to and attractive for women to enter.

Beware of received wisdom. In this regard, I think it is important to pursue the things that have brought us this far – to make our institutions ones we would want to be a part of, rather than simply accepting them as given. It is also worth being somewhat wary of received wisdom – such as, when colleagues say: "Don't collaborate, don't do interdisciplinary work until tenure, don't be risk-taking, don't show weakness by changing your mind on a decision" – because it probably describes someone we'll never fully look like or perhaps even want to be like. I always

[45] See, for example, http://wiseli.engr.wisc.edu/Products/MoreWomen.htm

tell new faculty in our orientation sessions that, while it is certainly good to meet the expectations for tenure within their department, on the day they wake up with tenure, they had better be waking up in a place they want to work. Even as we try to fit in and succeed, we cannot lose sight of what is important to us and what motivates us to keep at it. We must preserve those things – whether they are a collaborative or interdisciplinary mode of working, public scholarship, risk-taking leadership styles or any of a host of other "non-traditional" approaches.

Because we are among the insiders in the room, we have the opportunity to bring to bear our sensibilities and our voices as women. We also have the opportunity – and an obligation that is both moral and practical – to help forge the structural and practical supports that can assure our own survival and success, as well as that of other women. In the process, we can transform the environments and the institutions we inhabit in ways that are better for everyone. As Stacey N. Jones, author of your 2006 report to The President's Commission on the Status of Women here at Emory, noted, studies already show "the most effective style of leadership – transformational – tends to be practiced by women."[46] If we are already doing it, let's just band together and be heard.

Transforming Institutional Culture: "A New Normal"

This brings me finally to the call to action from the National Academy that we band together – starting on the inside but listening to the outsiders too – to build "a new normal" in institutional culture and practices. I would suggest that we think together about building better institutional culture by examining the kinds of leadership styles we promote, the kinds of daily interactions in our departments and units that we promote, as well as the institutional practices and reward structures that provide incentives for and strong messages about inclusion. If we take such a broad-based approach, then many people across the academy, men and women, faculty, staff, and administrators, and students can all contribute to effect change – even if some of us have to keep raising our voices a little bit louder by virtue of our positions of authority.

Transformational leadership. In considering how we build this "new normal," and who responds to the call for action, I obviously put a great deal of weight on the voices of women in leadership positions, and the male allies that they can recruit to the cause. I look to them (to us) to create and promote a culture of collaboration, of the give and take of social support, of flexibility of models and respect for individual and group differences, and, perhaps most daringly, of risk-taking in which leaders and others are freer to make mistakes and change course.

Some of this is now widely-accepted, even if not always practiced. For example, many leaders speak to the need to break down the silos of the academy, whether in departments, disciplines, or administrative units, encouraging more collaborative team work at all levels. Such collaboration is bound to help reduce the isolation that many experience on a daily basis in the academy, and at the same time improve our work by pooling knowledge. An added benefit of

---

[46] Stacey N. Jones, The Case for Leadership: Why Women Should Have Viable Access to Decision-Making Roles in Higher Education, a report for The President's Commission on the Status of Women, 2006, online at http://www.pcsw.emory.edu/pdf/PCSW_report_final_rev3.pdf.

encouraging a collaborative workplace is that it often also means a great deal of social support – both instrumental and emotional – comes along. A sense of shared fate, more like a family (admittedly with all the tugs and pulls that represents) than a chilly workplace, is created.

These concomitant benefits of collaboration have been observed in several institutions working with an ADVANCE grant to promote women in science and engineering. For example, Billimoria and Jordan at Case Western Reserve University[47] observed a science department in which the leadership encouraged team teaching, numerous social/intellectual departmental events, and quite a bit of shared and transparent decision making, and they found not only a pattern of good science, but a strong record of recruitment and retention and promotion of women. The authors quote one visiting female student as saying: "I kind of got the feeling that people here at least spoke to each other as opposed to being locked up in their labs all day and not getting along or having time to socialize."[48] Another woman, a post doc, says: "this environment is so much more like family than it is like work-mates who you don't talk to or care about or see much outside of the workspace."[49] And, indeed, the line between work and play, career and family, that often makes it hard for women to prosper when drawn too firmly or rigidly, largely evaporated in this particular thriving department, as demonstrated by the group faculty efforts to clean each others' gutters of leaves each fall – a tradition that illustrates both instrumental and social support at its best!

As we work to create these more flexible, collegial, collaborative working environments, drawing less rigid lines between our roles as professionals and our roles as people, we may well also bring other unanticipated benefits. For example, some of the policies that we have all supported to enable women and men to mix careers and families have faltered in large part because they are seen as privileges to be taken at one's own professional peril, rather than as integral parts of the culture of the institution, and thus as entitlements that benefit all.

As Mason and Goulden suggest, the well-documented complex of biases known as "the maternal wall" impedes the career advancement of women and the minority of men who bear major child-care responsibilities. They and others have suggested a host of ways to address work-life issues, including leave policies, active service with modified duties, stopping the tenure clock, part-time tracks with full benefits, and arrangements to accommodate two-career couples. [50] These and other arrangements are being tried in any number of colleges and universities around the nation, and they have the potential not only to make space for individual women but also to create that "critical mass" of women necessary to change the culture of higher education. But these policies will not work to their full effect unless they become second nature in the culture of our departments and units, and are seen as expanding the possibilities for excellence for everyone.

---

[47] Diana Billimoria and C. Greer Jordan, "A Good Place to Do Science: An exploratory Case Study of an Academic Science Department," presented by Diana Billimoria at the 2005 NSF-ADVANCE Meeting in Washington, D.C., online at http://www.case.edu/admin/aces/AGoodPlaceToDoScience.pdf.

[48] Billimoria and Jordan (2005) 9.

[49] Ibid., 10.

[50] Mason and Goulden (2002).

And, speaking of excellence in the academy, transformational leadership also has to encourage flexibility in other, even more risky ways if "a new normal" is to become real and more women are to stay and flourish once we come inside. In particular, just as we want to encourage a new collaborative culture in the academy, we also should encourage a new more flexible model of professionalism and of excellence in scholarship. There are a number of interests, styles, commitments that we make academics "check at the door" to fit the mold of distinguished scholar or strong leader, and I believe that this list of tacit benchmarks should be reconsidered. To begin such a dialogue – which we do at some peril, for the outcry will surely be that we are watering down excellence in the process – would be very constructive as we build the "new normal." Here is my list, and others will have their own to add:

- Don't make women or men check their families or their relationships or their passions at the door;

- Don't make any of us check our social identities and our commitments to our many groups and communities at the door;

- Don't define the academy so narrowly as to leave much of the world out of it and eschew the public good that higher education can achieve;

- Don't force a choice between public scholarship and scholarly excellence;

- Don't force young faculty, graduate students, or others newly entering the academy to make a choice between "new scholarship" (be it interdisciplinary or community-based or otherwise "non-traditional") and "mainstream scholarship," when they may be able to do some of each and the lines may disappear soon anyway;

- Don't rigidly make people pick scholarship or leadership, work or family, or any other roles and identities we pit, for they may be more compatible than we think if we build a new normal of academic culture – I for one, practice social psychology 24x7 in my "day job" as president, and my family is as present in the daytime as they are in the evenings (albeit not enough in either!).

- Don't define leaders as those who never make mistakes, and thereby force a risk-averse style of leadership that by definition will stall transformation.

As we all band together to build this "new normal," there is one admonition that I take especially to heart – let's not scrutinize each other as much as the world scrutinizes us.

Vision from Outsider Values

Let me conclude by returning to the epistemic vision that comes with bringing our outsider values inside the academy. Part of that vision is the rather automatic ways in which we see the world as populated with women ready to be at the table – that is, we quite literally think of women, not just men, when we think of excellence. Not only do we think of a world

populated with talented and productive women, we also see quite clearly the practices that keep them out, or the norms that discourage their choice of an academic career in the first place.

Vision. That is what comes with "outsider values." And, this brings me back to Anita Hill (and Coleen Rowley and Sherron Watkins) for it is the message of "making the most of outsider values" that I think ultimately empowers women (and other insiders with outsider memories) to the benefit of all. I like to think of their actions not so much in legal or ethical whistle-blower terms – as happened to be the case in their examples – but rather in terms of whistle-blowing against the daily life of institutions – the routine ways in which we structure careers, act toward others, compete rather than collaborate, exclude rather than include – that hold us all down. If we who have insider positions – even if only recently garnered – can retain enough of an outsider perspective to push against institutional received wisdom, then a great deal of good can happen.

As Anita Hill said:

> "Coincidence or not, the fact is that in the public and private sectors the number of women in positions of authority is growing. As their numbers increase, so will their opportunities, not only to be whistle-blowers but, more important, to shape institutional standards from the top." [51]

Let us help those numbers increase, and as they do, let's fulfill our communal responsibility not to just take our institutions (and our insider status) as given, but to shape what we have in inclusive and empowering ways. Then our successes will improve the survival of others.

[51] Anita F. Hill, "Insider Women with Outsider Values," *The New York Times,* June 6, 2002.