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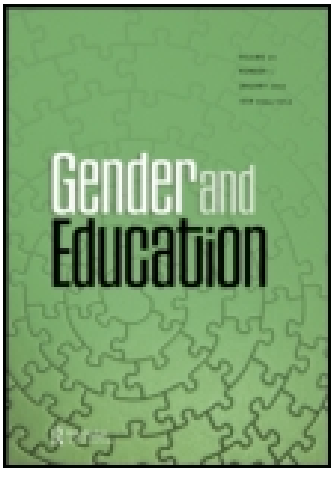

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The rules of the game: women and the leaderist turn in higher education

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The rules of the game: women and the leaderist turn in higher education

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This paper engages with Diana Leonard's writing on how gender is constituted in the academy. It offers an international review of feminist knowledge on how gender and power interact with leadership in higher education. It interrogates the 'leaderist turn' or how leadership has developed into a popular descriptor and a dominant social and organisational technology in academia. It considers some of the explanatory frameworks that have been marshalled to analyse women's leadership aspirations and absences. In doing so, it attempts to unmask the 'rules of the game' that lurk beneath the surface rationality of academic meritocracy. It also poses questions about the relentless misrecognition of women's leadership capacities and suggests the need for an expanded lexicon of leadership with which to move into the university of the future.

Keywords: leadership identities; mis-recognition; women's absences; feminist redistribution of knowledge

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Redistributing feminist knowledge in the academy

When I asked Diana about her wishes for her Festschrift in November 2008, she replied: 'No cringe-making, sentimental, maudlin hagiographies!' So, I put away my Barry Manilow CDs and promised her that I would just focus on the hag – which as we all know from having read our feminist guides to Wicca (Wise 2008), as opposed to Wikipedia – also means wise woman/crone. The misrecognition of women's wisdom and the need to consider what it means to grow, support and redistribute feminist knowledge in the academy were themes running through much of Diana's work (Leonard 2000, 2001; Leonard, Becker, and Coate 2007, 2010).

In this paper, I wish to engage with a concern of Diana about how women can be supported to achieve their aspirations and flourish in higher education (HE), without being damaged and impeded by patriarchal practices and norms. A frequent discussion was about how women are ambiguously positioned in relation to leadership. This can represent vertical career success. It can also mean incorporation into unhealthy and undesirable masculinist, managerial practices and incarceration in an identity cage (Acker 2012; Alvesson, Lee Ashcraft, and Thomas 2008). However, the international reach of Diana's work made her well aware of gendered inequalities in organisational hierarchies and the consistently low representation of women in positions of seniority in

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countries in divergent cultural and geopolitical contexts (Morley et al. 2006; Singh 2002, 2008). Diana was 'resentful that strong women were regularly overlooked for promotion' (Bloom 2010), but she was also cognisant that seniority should not be the main indicator of success and that mere representation, or counting more women in, is neither the main goal for gender equality and redistributive justice nor a happiness formula (Ahmed 2010). Diana emphasised how the academy was a place that 'actively *constitutes* gender' (Leonard 2001, 7). Furthermore, women, in her view, were absent from positions of power and influence because they lacked knowledge of the 'rules of the game'. Women, she argued, were often reluctant to be 'involved in the competitive, self-promotional behaviour traditionally associated with dominant masculinities' (Leonard 2001, 4). She strongly encouraged women to engage with the hidden curriculum of academia, for example, the use of networks, contacts, persistence and political skills. A research methodology that Diana often employed was to map wisdom and knowledge via reviews of the global literature on her chosen topic (Leonard, Pelletier, and Morley 2003; Leonard et al. 2006). It is in this spirit that I would like to offer the following review of research that captures trends, issues and selected explanatory frameworks for women's under-representation in leadership in the global academy.

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The leaderist turn

A powerful cultural ideology has emerged in HE reform suggesting that the essential ingredient in successful organisational transformation is that of leadership. Leadership has replaced management in post-neo-liberal HE change discourse and is defined by Northouse (2007, 3) as a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal. The focus on leadership as the organisational panacea has produced a critical literature on 'leaderism'. O'Reilly and Reed (2010, 2011) see 'leaderism' as a development or evolution of managerialism that has been utilised and applied within the policy discourse of public service reform in the UK. It is, they argue, a social and organisational technology which is being applied in support of the re-orientation of the public services towards the consumer-citizen. Hence, the leaderist turn is not innocent, and transformative leadership is value-laden. It has the potential to disguise the corporatisation and values shift in academia by diverting attention to personal qualities, skills and dispositions required for organisational transformation. The cultural ideology of leaderism suggests that certain subjectivities, values, behaviours, dispositions and characteristics can strategically overcome institutional inertia, outflank resistance and recalcitrance and provide direction for new university futures. The norm-saturated narratives of how certain people are identified or identify themselves as legitimate and intelligible leaders are open to further investigation. There is an assumption that individual agency, unimpeachable characteristics and structural positions will result in some organisational members being authorised to exert and display leadership power.

Potent cultural templates, or scripts, circulate for how leaders should be – often based on larger cultural and historical formations (Alvesson, Lee Ashcraft, and Thomas 2008). Leaders are expected to demonstrate authority and affective agency and possess excellent interpersonal and communication skills. However, leaders also have to negotiate intersections with other simultaneously held and contingent identities, and it is in these co-existing identifications where some dissonance may occur, with cultural scripts for leaders coalescing or colliding with normative gender performances.

Furthermore, leadership is socially articulated and constituted by a social and policy world that many women do not choose or control.

Leadership can be a punishment as well as a reward. There is often a morality that captures women, for example, the suggestion that leadership is the turn-taking, sacrifice or re-orientation of externally facing, international researchers to the duties of domestic labour. HE leadership can also be rotational and fixed term, involving multiple and conflicting affiliations, resignifications and unstable engagements with hierarchy and power (Cross and Goldenberg 2009). It can include working with resistance and recalcitrance in order to colonise colleagues' subjectivities and guide them towards the goals of managerially inspired discourses including post-neo-liberal austerity cultures. Leadership involves an affective load that incorporates identity work to manage self-doubt, conflict, anxiety, disappointment and occupational stress (Acker 2012). The corporate-approved identities and narratives for what constitutes an effective leader can be a form of identity cage which restricts rather than builds capacity and creativity. It is pertinent to ask why women should desire or aspire to enter HE leadership at all. This often involves taking on a completely new job – sometimes without any socialisation, training or support. Traditionally, research leaders, with accrued academic capital, have been thought most appropriate for organisational leadership. Now, it has been expanded to include mobility across different occupational sectors, as well as organisational roles. The re-alignment has to be affectively absorbed in order to demonstrate transferable leadership skills and attributes, for example, from leading research to leading whole or parts of HE organisations. This paper interrogates the global literature on women's under-representation in HE leadership but also discusses the affective dimensions of crafting and managing leadership identities. It raises questions about who self-identifies, and is identified and intelligible to existing power elites, as having leadership legitimacy.

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Feminisation?

Gender equality legislation, policy initiatives, changes in socio-economic gender relations, aspirations and expansion of opportunities have all contributed to increasing numbers of women undergraduate students in the global academy – precipitating a misogynistic feminisation crisis (Leathwood and Read 2009; Morley 2011). Female enrolment ratios now exceed those of men in two out of every three countries with data. The number of female students rose sixfold from 10.8 to 77.4 million between 1970 and 2008 in the global academy (UNESCO Institute of Statistics 2010). A Global Gender Parity Index that computes the ratio of female-to-male enrollments in HE is now 1.08, meaning that there are now slightly more women undergraduates than men enrolled worldwide.

As Tables 1 and 2 indicate, high rates of women's participation are yet to translate into proportional representation in leadership and decision-making positions (OECD 2010). Curiously, in a culture of measurement and audit in HE, women's representation in different roles and grades is not always perceived as sufficiently important to measure, monitor or map comparatively. The Centre for Higher Education and Equity Research (CHEER) at the University of Sussex had to construct its own tables (Tables 1 and 2). The data that do exist suggest that women disappear in the higher grades, that is, when power, resources, rewards and influence increase (Blandford et al. 2011; Lund 1998; She Figures 2003, 2006, 2009; Singh 2002, 2008). She Figures (2009) (the datasets from the European Commission on

Table 1. Percentage of women professors and heads of higher education institutions (1997–2003).

		1997		1998		1999		2000		2001		2002		2003	
No.	Region/country	P	H	P	H	P	H	P	H	P	H	P	H	P	H
	Region														
1	EU[a]					13[b]		15.2[b]				16[b]		15[b]	
2	Americas														
3	Sub-Saharan Africa							10[c]							
4	Asia														
5	Australasia	4.5[d]													
6	Commonwealth	9.9[e]	8.3[b]	9.9	6.9[f]			13.1[g]	9[g]						
	Country														
1	Australia	9.4	14.8	9.4		15.4[h]		3.1[h]		3.3[h]		3.5[h]		3.6[h]	
2	Austria							6.2[b]				9[b]			
3	Canada	11.8	15.7												
4	Ghana	10						15[i]						14[i]	
5	India	10.5		10.5				18							
6	Nigeria	5						15[i]		12[i]		23[i]		23[i]	
7	Norway					7		13.3[b]		10		16[b]		13	
8	South Africa	8		8				7[i]							
9	Sweden							13.8[b]				14[b]			
10	Tanzania	8.6										8[i]		8[i]	
11	The Netherlands					5		6.3[b]				8[b]			
12	Uganda	16.7													
13	UK	8.6	6.7			13		12.6[b]				15[b]			
14	USA	19.8			19.3	20.8				22.7	21.1			23.7	

Notes: P, professors; H, heads of institutions, for example, vice-chancellors, rectors and presidents.

[a]EU 15 till 2004; EU 25 2004–2007; EU 27 2007 onwards. Data from 1999 to 2003 have included EU 25 stats in this table. Figure for 2000 refers to EU 15 (She Figures 2003, 2006, 2009).

[b]Grade A women (She Figures 2003, 2006, 2009). This means full professors.

[c]Figure approximated for Africa (Tettey 2010).

[d]Australasia referred to as South Pacific (UNESCO 2002).

[e]Only for professors (P) and executive heads (H). Deans 4% in 1997 (Lund 1998).

[f]Vice-chancellors. Other senior management positions: 13.9% of registrars, 8.4% deputy vice-chancellors, 3.2% of pro-vice-chancellors and 8.5% deans of faculties (UNESCO 2002).

[g]Singh (2002).

[h]'Above senior lecturer' positions (Universities Australia 2012).

[i]University of Ghana, University of Ibadan (and Bayero only for the 2008 figure for Nigeria), University of Stellenbosch, University of Dar es Salaam and University of Makerere, respectively (Tettey 2008).

women in tertiary education) reported that throughout the 27 countries in the European Union (EU), 13% of institutions in the HE sector were headed by women. Only 9% of universities that award PhD degrees were headed by women. The highest shares of female rectors (vice-chancellors) were recorded in Sweden, Iceland, Norway, Finland and Israel. In contrast, in Denmark, Cyprus, Lithuania,

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Table 2. Percentage of women professors and heads of higher education institutions (2004–2010).

		2004		2005		2006		2007		2008		2009		2010	
No	Region/country	P	H	P	H	P	H	P	H	P	H	P	H	P	H
	Region														
1	EU[a]	15.3[b]				18[b]		19[b]	9						
2	Americas														
3	Sub-Saharan Africa														
4	Asia														
5	Australasia														
6	Commonwealth					15.3[c]	9.8[c]								
	Country														
1	Australia	3.8[d]		4.1[d]		4.5[d]	24	4.3[d]		4.4[d]		4.7[d]		4.9[d]	
2	Austria	9.4[b]						14[b]							
3	Canada						15.7								
4	Ghana	7[e]		18[e]		7[e]		7[e]		10[e]					
5	India						9.3								
6	Nigeria	24[e]		15[e]						16[e]					
7	Norway	15.7[b]		14				18[b]				20			
8	South Africa				42.3[f]		0	19[e]							
9	Sweden	16.1[b]						18[b]							43[g]
10	Tanzania	7[e]		9[e]		8[e]		10[e]							
11	The Netherlands	9.4[b]						11[b]							
12	Uganda	6.1[e]								12[e]					
13	UK	15.9[b]				16		17[b]		22[h]		15.7[h]		19.8[h]	14[h]
14	USA			25.1		24[i]	23	26.5	36[j]			28			

[a]EU 15 till 2004; EU 25 2004–2007; EU 27 2007 onwards. Data from 1999 to 2003 have included EU 25 stats in this table. Figure for 2000 refers to EU 15 (She Figures 2003, 2006, 2009).

[b]Grade A women (She Figures 2003, 2006, 2009). This means full professors.

[c]Singh (2008).

[d]'Above senior lecturer' positions (Universities Australia 2012).

[e]University of Ghana, University of Ibadan (and Bayero only for the 2008 figure for Nigeria), University of Stellenbosch, University of Dar es Salaam and University of Makerere, respectively (Tettey 2008).

[f]University of Witwatersrand (Tettey 2010).

[g]Peterson (2011).

[h]Blandford et al. (2011).

[i]All HE institutions. Doctoral universities: 19.2%; MA universities: 28.7%; BA universities: 31.3%; and associate degree universities: 47.1% (West and Curtis 2006).

[j]Deans, when compared with 23% in 2006 women presidents of universities (Curtis 2011).

Luxembourg and Hungary, no single university was headed by a woman when She Figures reported in 2009. Women's proportion of rectors was also very low (7% at most) in Romania, Austria, Slovakia, Italy, the Netherlands, the Czech Republic, Belgium and Germany. This under-representation reflects not only continued inequalities between men and women, but also missed opportunities for women to influence and contribute to the universities of the future.

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Sociology of absences

The pattern of male prevalence in senior leadership positions is visible in countries with diverse policies and gender equality legislation. In the UK, in 2009/2010, women were 44% of all academics. A higher proportion of staff in professorial roles was male (80.9%) than female (19.1%). Men comprised 55.7% of academic staff in non-manager roles and 72.0% of academic staff in senior management roles (Blandford et al. 2011). This is by no means unusual. In the EU, She Figures (2009) noted how women's academic careers remain characterised by strong vertical segregation. The proportion of female students (55%) and graduates (59%) in the EU exceeds that of male students, but women represent only 18% of grade A (professorial) academic staff. In 70% of the Commonwealth's 54 countries, *all* universities were led by men in 2007 (Singh 2008).

Davies (1996) observed that women were entering adjunct roles, but not attaining the most senior positions in organisations. While the reform of HE has created new middle managerial positions including quality assurance, innovation, community engagement and marketing managers (Deem 2003; Fitzgerald and Wilkinson 2010; Morley 2003; Noble and Moore 2006), women are often found in the 'velvet ghettos' of communication, finance and human resource management (Guillaume and Pochic 2009) or languishing in what Eveline called the 'ivory basement' (2004). Ryan and Haslam (2005) theorised how women are often in unpopular and precarious management areas, that is, 'glass cliffs', in which men and women are differentially selected for rewarding and unrewarding organisational tasks and leadership roles associated with an increased risk of negative consequences. In some locations, there has been a feminisation of penultimate managerial positions in HE. In Australia, for example, women constitute 40% of the pro-vice-chancellors but only 18% of the vice-chancellors (Bagilhole and White 2011).

Without wishing to advocate a false universalism or epistemological imperialism, transnational formations of gender are apparent in relation to leadership, with women's under-representation spanning diverse socio-economic and political contexts. The Global North refers to countries that are industrialised, and have relative political and economic stability, with high levels of health and education. This is a socio-economic rather than a geographical identification. While many countries are in the Northern hemisphere, some are not, for example, Australia and New Zealand. The Global South refers to low-income countries. Again, while many are in the Southern hemisphere, some are not, including Afghanistan and Nepal. Women's absence from senior leadership is a recurrent theme in studies in the Global North (Bagilhole and White 2011; Blackmore and Sachs 2001, 2007; Elg and Jonnergård 2010; Husu 2000). It also features in studies from the Global South, for example, those from Ghana (Ohene 2010; Prah 2002), Kenya (Kanake 1997; Onsongo 2004), Nigeria (Adadevoh 2001; Odejide, Akanji, and Odekunle 2006; Pereira 2007), Pakistan (Rab 2010; Shah 2001), South Africa (Dunne and Sayed 2007; Shackleton, Riordan, and Simonis 2006) and Sri Lanka (Gunawardena et al. 2006). Lack of women in the global academy's executive means that women are under-represented across all decision-making fora, including committees, boards and recruitment panels. Currently, the expertise and skills of a significant part of the HE workforce are being under-utilised.

There have been many iterations and accounts for women's absences. Kanter's (1977) pipeline theory was an early theorisation of women's under-representation in US corporations. This suggests that the under-representation of women at senior

levels will reverse once generations of appropriately qualified women move through organisational hierarchies and become better placed for promotion. However, Diana believed that career trajectories were not so linear for many women who are often diverted into servicing roles and on short-term research or teaching contracts (Leonard 2001). Research studies today are attempting to offer explanatory frameworks for women's absence from HE leadership that go beyond the reductive rationality of a pipeline. Common themes in the literature include gendered divisions of labour, gender bias and misrecognition, management and masculinities, greedy organisations and mentoring. The following sections engage with each of these themes.

Gendered divisions of labour

Lynch (2010) suggested that academia is constructed as a 'carefree zone' which assumes that academics have no commitments other than that to their profession. Leaders are constructed as zero-load workers, devoid of care responsibilities (Grummell, Devine, and Lynch 2009a). The moral imperative on women to care for children, the sick and elderly means that women have negative equity in the workplace (Guillaume and Pochic 2009; Lynch, Baker, and Lyons 2009; O'Brien 2007). Runte and Mills (2004, 240) claimed that as it is women who invariably 'navigate between parental and employee roles, it is therefore women who pay the "toll" for crossing the boundary between work and family'. Women academics caught between two greedy institutions – the extended family and the university – is a theme in research from Australia (Currie, Thiele, and Harris 2002; Probert 2005), Ghana (Adu-Yeboah and Dzama Forde 2011; Tsikata 2007), Ireland (Devine, Grummell, and Lynch 2011; Russell, O'Connell, and McGinty 2009), Kenya (Kamau 2006; Onsongo 2004), South Africa (Moultrie and De la Rey 2004), South Korea (Kim, Yoon, and McLean 2010) and the UK (Raddon 2002). A dominant view is that time expended on role performance in one domain depletes time available for the demands of the other domain (Runte and Mills 2004). Bardoel et al. (2011) used the term 'bias avoidance' to describe how individuals feel that they have to minimise or hide extended family commitments to achieve career success.

While the gendering of primary care responsibilities is a major consideration, it fails to account for why some women who are single or child-free are also absent from HE leadership. Modern forms of gender identity are also more multifaceted, fluid and varied than they were a couple of decades ago (Billing 2011). While Diana would be the first to suggest that traditional heterosexual marriage exploited women's labour (Delphy and Leonard 1992; Leonard 1980), she was unhappy with explanations that name barriers as marriage, housework and childcare as these reinforce essentialist and heteronormative assumptions that all women live in nuclear families. Such assumptions reinforce the traditional binary system of gender roles and heterosexual framings of kinship. They also ignore differing cultural and social capital relating to social class, age, sexualities, disabilities and ethnicities. Furthermore, this level of analysis can serve to divert attention from structural discrimination, such as gender bias, in the workplace itself.

Gender bias and misrecognition

Misrecognition is the way in which wider society offers demeaning, confining or inaccurate readings of the value of particular groups or individuals. This poses questions about why women's capital is so devalued and unintelligible to decision-makers. Eagly and Karau (2002) maintained that the incongruity between what it means to

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be female and what is seen to be managerial can produce at least two forms of prejudice: (1) less favourable evaluation of the potential for women to take on leadership roles compared with men and (2) less favourable evaluations of the actual behaviour of female leaders. How the leadership role is constructed determines the selection process in so far as particular qualities are normalised and prioritised (Grummell, Devine, and Lynch 2009b). Gender bias has been theorised in terms of the dominant group 'cloning' themselves and appointing in their own image in order to minimise risk (Gronn and Lacey 2006). Husu (2000) and Rees (2011) called for greater transparency and suggested that bias is likely to occur if assessments are based on obscure criteria and confidential evaluation processes. An example of accountability and transparency is Sweden, which had 43% of women vice-chancellors in 2010. There is a statutory requirement for public universities to provide gender statistics on students, doctoral students, teachers and professors, deans and heads of departments (Peterson 2011). However, the concept of transparency can suggest organisational truths that can readily be unmasked and communicated. Van Den Brink, Benschop, and Jansen (2010) discovered that appointment procedures were contingent and complex. Their study of 13 Dutch universities articulated more with Diana's views on the subterranean nature of the 'rules of the game' (Leonard 2001) and revealed a range of casual discriminatory practices in professorial appointment that eluded formal protocols and objective criteria. The local logic of the institution and the organisational *status quo* are often informally invoked to determine who would be a comfortable fit (Grummell et al. 2009b; Pullen and Simpson 2009). Women can be perceived as 'risky' appointments to senior positions (Ibarra, Carter, and Silva 2010).

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Management and masculinities

Diana was acutely sensitised to the cultural sociology of organisations and believed that the managerial university had reinforced constructions of masculinity that were unhelpful to feminism (Leonard 2001). She understood the liminality or disjuncture between female social identities and masculinised academic and professional identities and how masculine hegemonies exist despite women leaders. The idea that a good leader is defined according to normative masculinity has been theorised elsewhere (Binns and Kerfoot 2011), with maleness seen as a resource and femaleness as a form of negative equity. Fitzgerald (2011) believed that the focus on productivity, competitiveness, hierarchy, strategy and the inalienable logic of the market renders senior HE leadership a masculine domain. Femaleness is often perceived as irreconcilable with intellectual and managerial authority – a theme explored in Pakistan by Shah (2001), in South Africa by Smit (2006) and in the Global North by scholars including Eagly, Makhijani, and Klonsky (1992) and Valian (1999). These views suggest that women managers are transgressive challenges to gender stereotypes. The concept of social cognition suggests that we 'think gender' and that we have deeply embedded notions of gender-appropriate behaviour and roles. When we think 'leader', we think 'male' (Sinclair 2001).

In Sri Lanka, Morley et al. (2006) found that leadership was perceived as demanding, aggressive and authoritarian and more fitting for males. Odejide (2003) reported how, in Nigeria, male leaders were preferred in order to deal with student unrest. The imperative for tough, detached and ruthless decision-making led Devine, Grummell, and Lynch (2011) to argue that masculinity is not equated with caring in the way that femininity is, so men can practise care-less masculinity without moral

disapproval. This has implications for how women construct their leadership identities. In masculinised organisational cultures, women leaders can sometimes find that they are the organisational 'other' and must manage their otherness in order to succeed (Acker 2012; Probert 2005). This incongruence can involve minimising gender difference or assimilating in order to be treated equally to men or as men (Bailyn 2003). Managing identity, discrimination and other people's negativity can be an additional affective workload which deters women from applying for highly visible senior positions (Kram and McCollom Hampton 2003; Morley 1999).

Some literature contradicts Diana's arguments on how gender is *constituted* in the academy (Leonard 2001) and suggests that women and men have innately different leadership dispositions. This approach is problematic as it essentialises and homogenises male and female characteristics and posits that some women's advanced skills, for example, in communication, are innate (Billing and Alvesson 2000). Binns and Kerfoot (2011) discussed the 'female advantage' literature (Helgesen 1990; Rosener 1990), which claims the existence and naturalisation of female leadership traits, for example, empathy and relationality. Such propositions create binds for women who do not 'fit' the gender script. Muhr (2011) critiqued the dualism of leadership as masculine or feminine, and Billing (2011) recommended more sophisticated frames of analysis and asked in what sense do work practices and norms still reflect the life situations and interests of men? (300). The Margaret Thatcher syndrome, that is, the woman who achieves seniority, but refuses any gender identification and indeed whose policies harmed many women, highlights that gender sensitivity is more significant in leading change than the biological sex of post-holders (Itzin 1985).

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Greedy organisations

Global competitive pressure and performative audit and austerity cultures have intensified academic working hours generally and leadership is experienced as an all-consuming activity (Fanghanel and Trowler 2008; Lynch 2006; Morley 2003). Devine, Grummell, and Lynch (2011) claimed that 'Effective senior management required relentless commitment to the strategic goals of the organization and an implicit assumption of their 24/7 availability to their management roles' (645). Fitzgerald (2011) described leadership as exhausting, with unrelenting bureaucratic demands and institutional pressures. Women HE leaders in Woodward's UK study (2007) reported 'unmanageably large workloads' (11). These observations have led to leadership being described as 'greedy work' (Currie, Thiele, and Harris 2002; Gronn and Lacey 2006). Devine, Grummell, and Lynch (2011), in their Irish study, discussed leaders requiring 'an elastic self' in the context of new managerial reforms and 'a relentless pursuit of working goals without boundaries in time, space energy or emotion' (632). Stress, well-being, work/life balance and sustainability are concerns in academic life (Edwards et al. 2009; Kinman and Jones 2008). However, Diana's analytic vocabulary highlighted external socio-political pressures, rather than the therapeutic and individualised notion of 'stress' (Leonard 2001). What is becoming apparent, however, is that leadership can involve living an 'unliveable life' for many (Butler 2004).

Mentoring

Diana believed that women should support other women in the academy both formally and informally – something that she did particularly well. This process is often encoded as

mentoring. Diana was keen to rescue mentoring from its remediation imagery and therapeutic potential. Rather, she perceived it as a form of redistribution of feminist knowledge and social capital. She was conscious of how much talent was lost through lack of sponsorship, guidance and support at crucial career stages. Furthermore, male dominance of leadership can produce stability in relationships, networks and structures that reproduce professional hierarchies (Barrett and Barrett 2011). Mentoring can be another form of leadership and implicitly relies on generational power geometries. However, women academics are reported to receive less mentoring and sponsorship than their male counterparts and this starts early in academic careers (Dever et al. 2008). Diana highlighted this lack in her work on women and doctoral studies (Leonard 2001).

Mentorship is perceived as a winning formula for women's careers (Chesterman 2009; Eliasson, Berggren, and Bondestam 2000). The effectiveness of formal mentoring programmes is contentious. A large-scale US survey and interviews found that mentorship was not translating into women's promotions and that what was lacking was sponsorship – something more readily extended to male than female mentees (Ibarra, Carter, and Silva 2010). De Vries (2010), however, reported successful mentoring interventions, for example, at the University of Vienna, Austria (Nobauer and Genetti 2008), and Flinders University, Australia (Gardiner et al. 2007). Positive outcomes for Flinders included higher retention and promotion rates and higher average research grant amounts and more scholarly publications, all in comparison with a control group. However, there is a significant difference between the informal mentoring that Diana espoused and the formal mentoring programmes initiated to 'fix the women' (Schiebinger 1999). A criticism of formal mentoring is that it assimilates women into dominant masculine corporate cultures (McKeen and Bujaki 2007, 218). Devos (2008) believed that 'these programmes are supported because they speak to institutional concerns with improving performance, while being seen to deal with the problem of gender inequity' (195). Colley (2001, 193) argued that formal mentoring was an individualised response to problems that may require more collective or structural solutions.

A challenge is to rescue mentoring from neo-liberal constructs of performance and women's missing agency and find new conceptual grammars that move beyond hegemonic and patriarchal indicators of achievement. A question is whether mentoring can be subverted and orientated to a feminist morphology of the university of the future? Considerations include how to mentor and be mentored without linking it solely to the current performance indicators of audit and austerity. There are dangers of subscribing to the myth that organisations and professions are logical and rational and all that is required is a guide to assist a decoding process. There is also a powerful affective domain to mentoring. It involves substantial emotional labour and has the potential for affective overload. It can also be competitive and destructive, that is, killing the king/queen – the process by which the mentee extracts knowledge, networks and capital from the mentor and then eliminates or displaces him/her. An overarching question is how we remove the gendered code from success itself?

Moving on

Much of the global literature appears to articulate with Diana's views that women and men in HE are largely placed differently, with differential access to leadership and hence to influencing meanings, discourses and practices (Marshall 2007). While the numbers of female leaders have increased in some countries, for example, Sweden, it is indisputable that women are under-represented in senior leadership internationally. However, it is still

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relevant to call for power itself to be theorised and to seek ways to 'lessen the power of the male order, rather than to join the ranks' (Squires 1999, 117–118).

Discussions often rely on unproblematic notions of polarised gender identities – in private and professional domains. Gender is treated as univocal or as a demographic variable (noun), rather than as a verb, that is something that is in continual production, for example, via processes of knowledge production and distribution, identificatory and performative practices, opportunity structures and social relations in HE (Leonard 2001). Metaphors of entrapment abound, for example, glass ceilings, waste, for example, leaky pipelines, and victimhood, for example, ivory basements. Ironically, while much of the literature describes male norms, it often reproduces female norms and overlooks differences in age, ethnicities, disabilities, sexualities and cultural and social class locations – distributions of power that Diana frequently highlighted in her work (Leonard 2001). The literature abounds with normative assumptions about childcare, innate, benign female dispositions and aspirations. There is scant coverage of success stories of women accessing authority and facilitating feminist change. Nor is there much consideration of the ambivalence or pleasures that many women experience in HE – either by ludically engaging with leadership or by making positive choices not to (Hey and Leathwood 2009; Wilkinson and Blackmore 2007).

Diana was an original and creative thinker. As a visiting professor in CHEER, she joined us in imagining the university of the future (Hey and Morley 2011). It seems that we require a re-invigorated and re-textured vocabulary and an expanded lexicon to focus on the leadership values and challenges that lie ahead for HE, for example, creating knowledge for a rapidly changing world – one in which gender relations are also in flux. Women *are* entering HE leadership, albeit in low numbers. We need to build on this momentum to envision what type of sustainable and gender-sensitive leadership is required for the university of the future (Morley 2011). Representational space cannot be the only goal for gender equality (Neale and Özkanli 2010). Corsun and Costen (2001) suggest that while 'women and minorities may have been granted access to management positions, they do not have sufficient capital (economic, political, social and symbolic) to force a redefinition of the implicit – that is White male – requirements of the field' (18). Distinctions need to be made between women in academic leadership and feminists in academic leadership (Mauthner and Edwards 2010). Feminist leadership is characterised by a commitment to social equity and change and awareness of gender issues and intersections with other structures of inequality. It also attempts to challenge unequal distributions and exercise of power, hierarchical structures and decision-making processes and discriminatory institutional practices. It is the gendered world itself that represents the problem, not simply the exclusion of women or the existence of the male norm (Butler 2004; Verloo and Lombardo 2007). A goal should be to make the academy gender-free. Leadership roles appear to be so over-extended that they represent a type of virility test. We need to ask how leadership practices can become more sustainable, with concerns about health and well-being as well as competitive performance in the global arena. In other words, we need new rules for a very different game.

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