Masculinity at Work

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MASCULINITY AND GENDER EQUALITY

There is a broad range of ideologies and varieties of masculinity. In many ways, masculinity is a valued social identity (Maass, Cadinu, Guarnieri, & Grasselli, 2003) and, for some, masculinity is understood as an achieved status that is not assumed on the basis of physical or biological development but is earned through ongoing demonstrations of manhood (Vandello & Bosson, 2013; Vandello, Bosson, Cohen, Burnaford, & Weaver, 2008). However, a dynamic personal understanding combined with a heavy external cultural influences makes masculinity a concept that is not easily defined (Thompson & Bennett, 2015). In any event, aspects of masculinity have implications for organizational dynamics and human relations in the context of gender at work. Those aspects include: relational styles, ways of caring, self-reliance, a worker/provider tradition, risk-taking, group orientation, use of humor, and (in some instances) heroism. A description of possible enactments of these aspects of masculinity in the workplace will be presented later. Unfortunately, some

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dominant forms of masculinity, hegemonic masculinity for example, reinforces gender inequality relative to more equality masculinities (Messerschmidt, 2012).

Berdahl, Cooper, Glick, Livingston, and Williams (2018) argue that much of what often appears to be (or is proclaimed to be) a level playing field of opportunities and demands for doing what it takes *for anyone* to get ahead at work is more accurately understood as counterproductive work behavior aimed at proving masculinity on the job. While there is evidence to suggest that men and women alike must play the game to win, or survive as the case may be, studies show that women of all races report higher workloads that include "office housework" compared with White men, and women and nonwhites report less access to glamor work (Berdahl & Min, 2012; Brescoll & Uhlmann, 2008; Rudman, 1998). Studies of corporate settings have identified successful managers as being those who are decisive, instrumental, and willing to take risks (Collinson & Hearn, 1994; Kerfoot & Knights, 1993; Messerschmidt, 1995; Pfeffer, 2010). These are reasonable characteristics attributable to people across gender identity group affiliations. Indeed, one recent report indicates that 29% of senior management roles in 2019 were held by women globally, and 87% of global businesses have at least one woman in a senior management role (Grant Thornton, 2019, p. 5).

Research on gender stereotypes across cultures in the 1980s confirmed a consistent belief in male agency and action, with people from 30 nations universally rating men as more adventurous, dominant, forceful, and independent than women (Williams & Best, 1990). Although these characteristics might be attributable to anyone, these aspects of masculinity are sometimes enacted by men as a response to a perceived threat to masculinity. Masculinity threat will be discussed in more detail in the next section but has implications for observed and experienced gender equality. For example, Heilman and Okimoto (2007) observed that penalties for women's success in stereotypical, male-dominated manager roles may result from the perceived violation of gender-stereotypic prescriptions. However, they also demonstrated that bolstering woman's feminine credentials (e.g., motherhood status) reduces penalties for success in a stereotype incongruent role.

Masculinity threat is also associated with physical aggression (Bosson, Vandello, Burnaford, Weaver, & Wasti, 2009), victim-blaming (Munsch & Willer, 2012), and sexist and homophobic attitudes (Weaver & Vescio, 2015; Willer, Rogalin, Conlon, & Wojnowicz, 2013). These

studies provide evidence of various compensatory responses to perceived masculinity threat by men, and these responses are directed at people who are viewed as the source of that threat. Taking a slightly different focus, Munsch and Gruys (2018) also provide insight into understanding young adult men's reported experiences of masculinity threat as it relates to women/femininity and as it relates to other men/masculinity.

Benevolent sexism (BS), for example, includes paternalistic behaviors reflecting the extent to which people believe women deserve to be provided for and protected; implying that women cannot adequately or sufficiently provide and care for themselves. When men endorse BS, they communicate that men's power over women is justified by women's need for men for guidance and protection. *Hostile sexism* (HS) reflects general antipathy toward women, but also the idea that women fail to acknowledge men's legitimate power over them. Examples of hostile sexism include behaviors such as disproportionately interrupting or talking over women in meetings; or believing that women seek to gain power by getting control over men. These enactments of masculinity have implications for interpersonal relationship quality and organizational dynamics in the workplace climate.

In general, most people are woefully inadequate at predicting affective (emotional) impact of future events (Wilson, Centerbar, Kermer, & Gilbert, 2005; Wilson & Gilbert, 2005; Wilson, Wheatley, Meyers, Gilbert, & Axsom, 2000). People also overestimate the hurtfulness of *hostile sexism* due to the dramatic nature of that type of incident. Likewise, there is a tendency to underestimate the impact of *benevolent sexism*. Consequently, a common assumption is that hostile sexism relative to benevolent sexism tends to produce more extreme negative emotions in the short run and requires longer recovery (Bosson, Pinel, & Vandello, 2010). There is evidence of an intensity bias in predictions about initial reactions of anger and disgust from women who experienced benevolent or hostile sexism (Bosson et al., 2010). Although women who experienced either type of sexism reported equal levels of fear and depression, bystanders overestimate depression and fear responses to hostile sexism, and underestimate those emotional responses to benevolent sexism relative to experiences of hostile sexism. This intensity bias was present among bystanders in general, but the estimates of impact were also biased among people who had themselves experienced sexism of the same type in the past.

Despite these less admirable enactments of masculinity there is encouraging evidence to suggest that the dynamics of gender relations in the workplace are changing in positive ways. Although most research on the topic focuses on how gender is done (enacted) and gender inequality is perpetuated through men's actions, there are studies that explore how the enactments of masculinity by men are supporting or challenging the existing gender system. That is, how they are doing and undoing gender in the workplace (Cf. Eagly, 2009; Ely & Meyerson, 2010; Kelan, 2018; Ollilainen & Calasanti, 2007). Ely and Meyerson (2010) wrote about an organizational approach to undoing gender in a case study of workers at offshore oil platforms. Kelan (2018) also addressed the issue of men doing (and undoing) gender at work. Ollilainen and Calasanti (2007) stretch the boundaries of beliefs and knowing when it comes to gender roles by exploring metaphors at work for maintaining the salience of gender in self-managed teams. This chapter aims to contribute to this conversation by exploring how different aspects of masculinity intersects with the daily lives of all employees in the workplace and then discussing some possible implications for equity and inclusion.

Masculinity Enactments in the Workplace

Prosocial behavior is any voluntary action intended to benefit or help someone including sharing, comforting, guiding, and perhaps defending. Prosocial engagement among women and men is common, but the expression is unique. Women and men emphasize unique types of prosocial behaviors. Women are more communal and relational, whereas men are more agentic and oriented toward prosocial behaviors that are more collective, or group focused. It was Bakan (1966) who introduced and summarized two-dimensional concepts that distinguish women as more relational and communal (connected with others), and men as more agentic, or reliant on individual agency, self-assertive, dominant, and competitive (Newport, 2001). This predominance of communal and agentic orientation in social exchange is pervasive across world cultures (Williams & Best, 1990) and likely contributes to variations in the enacted prosocial behaviors of women and men. These sex differences in social exchange behaviors also match widely shared beliefs about gender roles.

Origins of gender role beliefs lie outside of organizations in which we work, yet they spillover into the workplace context and undoubtedly influence the division of labor. For example, consider who schedules the

meetings or office parties (and procures the party supplies) versus who runs the meetings (or cleans up after the party). The point is that there is a biosocial interaction between physical attributes and social structure when it comes to gender relations in the workplace.

The effects of the beliefs about gender roles are mediated by hormonal processes, social expectations, and individual dispositions; None of which are easily defined because they are not fixed or even stable. Individual dispositions, like hormones and social expectations, change over time and across specific situational contexts. Interested readers may want to review empirical evidence and details on how gender stereotypes have changed over time from 1946 to 2018 (Cf. Eagly, Nater, Miller, Kaufmann, & Sczesny, 2019).

Observations and everyday lived experiences suggest there are many dimensions that comprise the system of influences on individual choices, social exchanges, and public institutions. Prosocial behaviors are only one domain of human behavior. Beliefs about prosocial helping behavior as kindness and showing concern are often associated with stereotypes of women (Diekman & Goodfriend, 2006). Yet, men in many occupational roles also take enormous risks on behalf of others (e.g., law enforcement officers or soldiers who protect communities and nations from attack). A first step toward understanding the role of masculinity in the enactments of prosocial behavior involves examination of gender roles.

Gender role beliefs are descriptive and prescriptive in that they provide distinction between what men and women usually do and expectations for behavior (what they *should* do). Descriptive aspects of gender role beliefs, including stereotypes, inform people about typical behaviors. Stereotypes and sex-typical behaviors are most often relied upon (intentionally or implicitly) when situations are ambiguous or confusing. The prescriptive aspect of gender role beliefs informs people about what is desirable or admirable for gaining social approval in the social or situational context.

Culturally shared beliefs provide a general framework for understanding why prosocial behavior can be enacted differently by women and men depending on the specific situational context. Gender role beliefs and stereotypes dictate/predispose different prosocial behaviors for women and men. To understand the relevance of the stereotype beliefs about communion and agency for prosocial behavior in general, and in workplace settings in particular, it is helpful to consider the implications of these beliefs for the types of social relationship bonds that people form.

Social bonds take a relational (communal) form by linking people together in close personal relationships. Alternatively, social bonding may take a collective form by linking people together in groups and organizations (Brewer & Gardner, 1996). By ascribing ambitious and competitive qualities to men, gender role beliefs imply a social context in which people differ in status and men strive to improve their hierarchical position (Baumeister & Sommer, 1997; Cross & Madson, 1997; Fiske, Cuddly, Glick, & Xu, 2002). In general, superior social status is conveyed by the agentic status ascribed to men (e.g., being dominant and assertive), but these attributes are not evaluated as favorably as the communal attributes ascribed to women (Langford & MacKinnon, 2000). Therefore, a gender role analysis (Eagly, 2009; Wood & Eagly, 2002) suggests that prosocial behaviors are more common in women to the extent that the behaviors have a relationship focus that provides supporting and caring for individuals; whereas, prosocial behaviors are more common in men to the extent that the behaviors have an agentic focus where collective emphasis facilitates gaining status, or implies higher status.

This is not to say that differences between gender roles are exclusive to one or the other sex (e.g., that all men act one way, or that all women act another way), or that only men (or women) would be expected to behave a certain way in specific situations. However, the intersection of gender roles with other individual factors do influence the enactment of prosocial behaviors. Gender roles influence behavior in combination with many other roles, including roles associated with group memberships other than gender (e.g., religion, race, ethnicity, age) and roles that are associated with specific obligations (e.g., occupational role; family responsibility; caregiver for a family member).

The point is that despite the diverse range of possible influences on social behaviors, gender roles are a contributing factor and they function to influence behavioral interactions partly through social norms and the expectations that others have in certain situations or contexts. Gender roles also function through personal identification with one's gender and are tied to hormonal processes that influence behaviors interpreted as either feminine or masculine (Cf. Wood & Eagly, 2009).

Trends in classification of agentic and communal prosocial behaviors are evident across social contexts (interactions with strangers, interactions in close relationships, interactions in workplace setting; other social settings) using multiple methods of observation reported in a variety of studies including meta-analyses, archival data, field observations, and

laboratory experiments (Becker & Eagly, 2004; Eagly & Crowley, 1986; Eagly, Nater, Miller, Kaufmann, & Sczensny, 2019; Huston, Ruggiero, Conner, & Geis, 1981; Johnson et al., 1989; Lyons, 2005; Organ & Ryan, 1995).

In the workplace context, prosocial behaviors are sometimes operationalized as *organizational citizenship behaviors* (Organ & Ryan, 1995) that might include voluntarily helping a colleague with excessive workload or other discretionary behaviors not explicitly recognized or formally rewarded, but that promote organizational functioning. On the surface, there are not significant differences between women and men engaging in prosocial behaviors in the workplace. This is not surprising given that formal job descriptions apply equally to men and women having the same job. That is, it is reasonable to expect that there would be fewer sex differences in behaviors bound by the requirements of the job. However, there are clear differences between men and women within the domain of extra-role behaviors that go beyond required expectations and that may lead to personal gains in status or reward (e.g., attending meetings that are not mandatory; volunteering for extra-role behaviors that offer little or no immediate reward or compensation). Women appear to engage in relational prosocial behaviors more than men (Farrell & Finkelstein, 2007; Heilman & Chen, 2005; Kidder, 2002). In a Canadian sample, women, regardless of job status, reported more communal behaviors than men (friendly, unselfish act) especially when interacting with other women (Moskowitz, Suh, & Desaulniers, 1994). Moreover, in a meta-analysis of findings from across multiple studies, female managers offer attention to individual needs and personal consideration that focuses on mentoring and developing employees who report to them (Eagly, Johannesen-Schmidt, & van Engen, 2003). By contrast, men, more than women, appear to engage in behaviors that focus on the organization itself (Farrell & Finkelstein, 2007; Heilman & Chen, 2005; Kidder, 2002).

Given the differences in how prosocial behaviors are enacted between women and men, attention is sometimes drawn to helpful and harmful manifestations of these behaviors. Attempts to gain insight and understanding or explanation are warranted when social exchanges and organizational dynamics appear to favor one group over another. This is particularly the case when the people who seem to have the most to gain (or lose) are associated with a particular identity group affiliation. Recent

work to better understand the dynamics of gender relations in the workplace has identified and directed a focus on the role of masculinity identity threat as a potential explanatory factor.

Masculinity Identity Threat

The notion of masculinity threat is based on the idea that masculinity is precarious when it is believed to be a function of hierarchy and status (Vandello et al., 2008). When this is the case, masculinity identities are easily threatened (Bosson & Vandello, 2011). In fact, Vandello et al. (2008) argue that manhood is threatened more easily than womanhood and through a wider range of transgressions. An alternative perspective, of course, might be that perhaps women have more flexible interpretations of femininity and womanhood, and/or a broader range of acceptable criteria for womanhood. In any event, the main thesis for Vandello et al. (2008) is that manhood status is not a developmental certainty, and that even once achieved it is vulnerable and can be lost. Furthermore, "because of the precarious nature of manhood, anything that makes salient its precariousness, or calls one's masculinity into question, should be especially anxiety provoking," (Vandello et al., 2008, p. 1326). Rather than conceptualizing manhood as a developmental certainty, many gender role theorists have instead argued that achieving manhood (i.e., agency, instrumentality and achievement) are central to most psychological definitions of masculinity (Ashmore, Del Boca, & Wohlers, 1986).

Research has also demonstrated that affective and reparative responses to threatened masculinity are not uncommon. *Affective responses* to masculinity threat stem from concerns about what others might think when masculinity is threatened publicly. In the face of adversity and perceived threat to masculinity, men experience negative affect and concern about the perceptions they believe others have of them (Dahl, Vescio, & Weaver, 2015). This notion is supported with evidence of increases in negative thoughts (Vandello et al., 2008) and reported concerns that others may assign negative labels (Rudman & Fairchild, 2004), but also with increases in reported anger (Dahl et al., 2015). The increase in anger has been shown to predict social dominance orientation over women and benevolent sexism (Dahl et al., 2015). *Reparative responses* are behaviors that are an attempt to reestablish one's masculinity in the eyes of others. Men (but not women) respond to gender threats with attempt to repair tarnished social identities (Vandello et al., 2008).

One example of reparative responses to perceived masculinity threat is often observed in financial negotiations between men and women in the workplace.

Netchaeva, Kouchaki, and Sheppard (2015) conducted three studies based on precarious manhood theory to investigate the reaction of men to women who are in supervisor roles. In their experiment on negotiation strategies between women and men, where participants were negotiating with either a male or female supervisor, several interesting findings were reported. First, males negotiated higher counteroffers than female participants regardless of the gender of the manager. Second, among male participants, those who negotiated with a female manager presented significantly higher counteroffers relative to counteroffers when negotiating with male managers. Third, males negotiating with female managers made significantly higher counteroffers than females who made counteroffers to female managers. In fact, although the amount of the counteroffer (a measure of assertiveness in the study) was clearly associated with gender of the manager for male participant, manager's gender did not affect female negotiators; there was no significant difference between counteroffers made by female participants when they negotiated with a female versus male manager.

Netchaeva et al. (2015) interpreted these findings as evidence that a female manager elicits a threat to masculinity of male participants resulting in more assertive behavior (higher counteroffers in negotiation) from her male subordinates. In an attempt to buffer the presumed threat, these researchers conducted a follow-up study to compare the elicited threat behavior (assertiveness in negotiation) in a different sample of men who were negotiating with a female team leader displaying either administrative (communal; soft) versus ambitious (agentic; assertive) negotiating style. In this follow-up study, male and female participants negotiated higher amounts with team leaders who displayed more ambitious leadership regardless of the team leader's gender. Males, compared with other males, negotiated higher with ambitious female leaders than with ambitious male leaders. However, when confronted with administrative female leaders (less ambitious), there was no significant difference in the negotiated amount. In other words, female leaders with administrative rather than ambitious approach stood to lose less with male negotiators. Female participants did not differentiate between ambitious female or ambitious male leaders. Female participants negotiated higher with ambitious leaders, relative to administrative leaders, but gender of leader was not a

factor in the negotiated amount, only the ambitious style of the leader. Female participants did not differentiate between gender of leader when negotiating with administrative leaders. For these researchers, the higher counteroffer (assertiveness) by men when negotiating with females who have a higher status role is viewed as evidence of an enacted behavioral attempt to restore perceived threat to masculine identity. Next, we will see how perceived threats to masculine identity may also lead to increased anxiety and stress, increased risk-taking, aggression, and avoidance of any activity that might be perceived as feminine.

Common themes across the vast literature on male gender roles and masculinity from across multiple disciplines and perspectives suggest that manhood is elusive and tenuous, and that manhood requires social demonstration as proof. In other words, "real men" are made, not born. Vandello et al. (2008) note that they are not suggesting that manhood *is* more precarious than womanhood as a social construction of a gendered reality, but that people in many cultures define, perceive, react, and operate *as if* this were true. If this is true, there are important implications of this way of operating for interpersonal relations in the workplace context (Cf. Brescoll, Uhlmann, Moss-Racusin, & Sarnell, 2012). Certainly, it is possible that beliefs about relative precariousness of manhood versus womanhood no longer prevail within contemporary, industrialized societies.

Anxiety and Stress. Studies on masculinity conducted in the 1980s provided evidence that was interpreted to mean that gender role anxiety is central to several theories of masculinity (Eisler & Skidmore, 1987; Eisler, Skidmore, & Ward, 1988; O'Neil, Helms, Gable, David, & Wrightsman, 1986). More recent studies have also demonstrated an association between threatened gender identity and anxiety and stress-related responses that are stronger for men than for women (Caswell, Bossom, Vandello, & Sellers, 2014; Michniewicz, Vandello, & Bossom, 2014; Vandello et al., 2008). For example, Vandello et al. (2008) hypothesized that reminders of precariousness and uncertainty of manhood activate anxiety-related and aggression-related cognitions for men. They interpret their results as support for the hypothesis that feedback perceived as gender threatening arouses stronger feelings of anxiety and related emotions (e.g., threat and shame) among men than among women, a pattern that is consistent with the notion that manhood is a more tenuous, precarious state than womanhood. This finding and interpretation might have implications for social and interpersonal interactions in

workplace settings to the extent that situations or conditions are viewed as a gender threat (masculinity threat) for men in the workplace.

Aggression. Threats to masculinity, unlike threats to femininity for women, seems to prime aggressive behaviors for some men (Dahl et al., 2015) or assertive behaviors when aggression is inappropriate (Netchaeva et al., 2015) that are intended to reestablish power associated with masculinity and maintain the traditional gender-based status quo. In the Vandello et al. (2008) study, threats to one's gender identity increased the likelihood for priming aggressive thoughts more strongly for men than for women.

In seeking to understand the structure, rather than the content of gender roles, Bosson and Vandello (2011) offer insight on the use of physical aggression and active responses to gender identity threats among men. They found support for their hypothesis that situational and cultural factors that increase the precariousness of manhood and the tenuous nature of a man's view and beliefs about his manhood also increase the likelihood of aggressive behavioral displays in response to those factors. Viewing gender status as vulnerable has implications for attitudes and behaviors across several life domains including health, interpersonal relationship, and perhaps workplace behaviors. Men define their own gender status in terms of the active things they *do* more so than their ways of *being* and who they are as a person (Bosson & Vandello, 2011). This may help to explain why some men take greater physical risks than women (Byrnes, Miller, & Schafer, 1999; Munsch & Gruys, 2018). Bosson and Vandello (2011) propose that men and women are different in the ways they view, interpret, and use physical aggression and action behaviors. They suggest that men are more likely than women to believe that action and aggression are tools for demonstrating one's masculinity to others in social and cultural context. Their findings suggest that men do associate manhood with behavior and that they perceive aggression and aggressive displays as an effective way to restore manhood when being threatened.

Men in situations where there is masculinity threat have also been found to engage in aggressive behaviors other than physical aggression. Other aggressive behaviors associated with power and dominance believed to compensate or "repair" perceived threats to masculinity (Babl, 1979) might include sexual aggression (Maass et al., 2003). As mentioned earlier, hostile sexism and benevolent sexism are distinct enactments and elicit different responses (Bosson, Pinel, & Vandello, 2010; Dahl et al., 2015; Glick & Fiske, 1996).

Risky Behaviors. Studies have focused on two general types of risky behaviors in the context of response to masculinity threat: aggression and financial risk. When induced to perform a public and stereotypic feminine task, gender threats were linked to physical aggression more readily among men than among women, whether in terms of cognitive accessibility or interpretations of others' actions (Bosson et al., 2009). Several studies have also shown that men take greater financial risks than women and that merely priming masculinity increases financial risk-taking behaviors among men (Bernasek & Shwiff, 2001; Meier-Pasti & Goetze, 2006; Sunden & Surette, 1998; Weaver, Vandello, & Bosson, 2012).

Avoidance of femininity. Men and women alike must negotiate work and nonwork demands. In response, many organizations around the world have shown increased willingness to accommodate work-life balance with flexible work arrangements and other related initiatives. However, these initiatives are often underutilized by men (Allen, 2001; Hill, Hawkins, Martinson, & Ferris, 2003; Kossek, Lautsch, & Eaton, 2006). This may reflect men's resistance to work arrangements that prioritize stereotypically feminine concerns such as childcare and family (Vandello, Hettinger, Bosson, & Siddiqi, 2013).

Masculinity Contest Culture in Organizations

The chapter concludes with a consideration for how these aspects of masculinity shape organizational workplace climate and behavioral norms in the workplace (i.e., masculinity contest culture). Berdahl et al. (2018) outline a theoretical framework for considering the workplace as a masculinity contest culture (MCC) such that men experience ongoing pressure to continually demonstrate behavioral displays as evidential support for their manhood. In any event, the masculinity contest concept focuses on how behaviors believed to signify masculinity in the workplace evolve to define the structure of the organizational cultural norms. In that sense, then, MCC is the organizational manifestation of precarious manhood (Bosson & Vandello, 2011). Organizational culture is shaped by traditional masculinity norms and masculinity contest culture (Berdahl, 2007b; Berdahl et al., 2018). MCC norms apply to men and women (Ely & Kimmel, 2018), and most probably have important and largely unexplored implications for social exchanges among people who are transgender and non-binary. High MCC is associated with sexist norms and zero-sum thinking such that men in masculinity contest work cultures

may be inclined to view any power gains by women as a threat or potential for loss in status or power of men (Kuchynka, Bosson, Vandello, & Puryear, 2018).

The consequences for organizations with high MCC include toxic leadership, higher incidences of harassment and bullying, along with low employee outcomes on several hygiene factors such as work engagement, dedication, and well-being at work. Toxic masculinity "involves the need to aggressively compete and dominate others" (Kuppers, 2005, p. 713). However, not all masculinity is toxic and not all workplaces that employ men, whether the workforce is predominately male or female, are a masculinity contest culture. Work becomes a masculinity contest when enacted organizational values are more reflective of masculinity norms than the espoused organizational mission. Examples of masculinity culture might include, but are certainly not limited to competitive displays of workload (Williams, 2013), sexual harassment (Berdahl, 2007a, 2007b), physical aggression (Bosson et al., 2009), risk-taking (Iacuone, 2005).

Chapter Takeaways

Gender inclusion and work-life integration are key factors that promote flexible workplace practices and progress by interrupting cycles of gender bias (Bailyn, 2011; Dutton, Ashford, Lawrence, & Miner-Rubio, 2002). Gender inclusion consists of organizational awareness of and support for equal gender representation at senior organizational levels and intolerance for "Good old boy" networks in which small groups of men control the workplace and offer an occasional "sweetheart deal" for women employees.

If competitive us-versus-them perspectives elicit hostile or aggressive behaviors among men in response to success of women in the workplace, then one key to creating more gender equity and inclusion in the workplace may involve finding ways to diffuse this type of zero-sum thinking. Organizations that have more gender diversity enjoy significant concrete rewards including enhanced innovation and decision-making (Galinsky et al., 2015). Organizational leadership can intentionally modify practices and wording in policies that appear to benefit or privilege any group at the expense of another. Adopting organizational strategies that appear to benefit or single out any particular group or class of employee may be counterproductive and create backlash. For example, implementing diversity training, equity and inclusion workshops, or initiatives for work-life

integration into organizations that have high masculinity contest cultures are not likely going to result in meaningful change (Williams, 2013). Although intuitively appealing, these types of organizational practices often have the unintended consequences of increasing resentment.

Initiatives that promote work-life integration allow and encourage all workers to control when and where they work while advancing creative flexible solutions. Work-life norms counterbalance the masculinity contest culture norms that value devotion to the centrality of work in life. Policies and practices that seek to benefit or celebrate specific groups very likely activate a competitive or protective mindset among high-status group members. Organizations seeking to reduce zero-sum thinking might benefit from the intentional framing of gender fair policies with wording that support *all* workers. Subtle changes in wording such as replacing "maternal leave" with "parental leave" communicates support for *all* parents regardless of gender identity.

Giving and taking is what reciprocity and social exchange (power exchange currencies) are all about. Perceptions of gender and gender roles certainly influence the interpersonal exchanges that occur in a workplace setting. This chapter has focused on the specific role that masculinity plays at the intersections of gender relations in the workplace between and among the multidimensional aspects of gender identity.

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