

# WOMEN'S NETWORK

## In This Issue...

- Why is the Pipeline So Leaky?
- Women's Network Meetings
- The Intersection of Gender, Home and Work
- Decisions and Actions
- Next Time ...

## The Women's Network ...

- early to mid-career researchers and lecturers across the University of Manchester
- an informal space
- bi-monthly meetings
- a chance to come together and discuss gender-related challenges

## Get to Know Each Other

We would like to send out an email to Women's Network group members with the names and/or contact details of the other members so that we can start to get to know each other. Please let us know if you want your name or contact details excluded from such a list.

## Social Media

Is everyone keen to get involved in social media campaigns? We need participants and/or leaders of a Twitter hashtag campaign, perhaps #academicsexism, that calls out instances of discrimination and sexism in academic situations. Alternatively, an email campaign (or bot) that contacts conferences/workshops/etc. to ask about childcare (on-site creches or funding bursaries) to include those who might otherwise struggle to attend?

## Why is the Pipeline so Leaky?



All of the Women's Network seem to be on short/fixed term contracts, which creates tension and uncertainty for our career futures. We asked "Where do you see yourself, career-wise, in five years time?" and got a variety of answers. Some were keen to climb the academic career ladder, some were content to work as hands-on researchers, while others wanted to explore careers outside of academia. Despite these differences, gender-bias can create barriers for everyone.

- Direct bias means men and women are not treated equally for job offers, promotions, publications, speaking opportunities, etc. [2]
- Indirect bias creates unequal/gendered expectations [1] (e.g. job criteria focus on individual accomplishments/ignore emotional work, citation metrics favour male authors who are (self-)referenced more, etc.).
- Double standards, from others (men put forward but women have to ask/push themselves forward) and from oneself (men apply for things with 60% of requirements but women apply only with 100% [5]).
- No support and/or job security for those with less traditional career paths [6] (choosing to stay as researcher, leaving academia, job-sharing or other part-time work, etc.).

What are some potential solutions?

- **Institution** The University can create/publish/promote policies on double blind review processes, transparent promotion panels, speaker quotas, re-balancing gendered job descriptions/CDR forms, and other ways (implicit and explicit) men and women are treated differently.
- **Social** This (or other) networks can provide support and opportunities to learn from each other, develop strategies for identifying/addressing problems, raise awareness of issues and push for change.
- **Personal** As individuals, everyone can get better at identifying and reacting to gendered issues (e.g. saying no to time-consuming but unrewarding work, tracking/valuing gendered tasks, calling out instances of discrimination or unfairness, questioning assumptions, etc. )

## Women's Network Meetings

Nothing is set in stone yet, but the current plan is to hold bi-monthly meetings at Christie's Bistro.

The next meeting is:

in Crawford House, Room 5.1 on 18th September at 3-4 p.m.

Come along with your ideas, comments, suggestions and questions!

## The Intersection of Gender, Home and Work

Home and work are inextricably connected, so that small disadvantages in one can create large disadvantages in the other, ultimately snowballing into a big problem down the line. In the last meeting, participants raised a couple of points that may come from or contribute to gender discrimination through the intersection of home life and the workplace. Many of these points were well captured in an article brought to our attention by Dr. Clare Mumford [6].

Women continue to do more than half of the housework [4] and childcare [3]. This unequal distribution of home responsibilities can cause problems for career success or progression as women with less time, energy or flexibility struggle to jobs that are settled, secure, respected, well-paid or with good potential for progression.

These inequalities may further compound as women's careers take a back seat. For example, having the less well-paid career can lead to women taking time off, going part-time or moving to less demanding roles, ultimately damaging career prospects. Another example raised, couples may choose where to live to better accom-

modate the partner with the more advanced career, leading women to have longer or more burdensome commutes (although one study suggests women have shorter commutes to accommodate childcare [7]). Does anyone know of other relevant studies? Does anyone want to run a study, suggest the idea to a suitably placed researcher or even just create a survey on SurveyMonkey?

The Women's Network is interested in knowing more about the University's policies on these topics, especially on child care and support for academics as they attend conferences. More actively, the Women's Network may start a campaign drawing attention to childcare as an issue to encourage institutions, conferences, etc. to make statements and policies on the topic.

There are many more ways that home and work life intersect in which gender could play a role that causes problems. If you can think of one, know of relevant research or want to write about such a problem, please get in touch!

[Back to Contents](#)

## Next Meeting Topic

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Careers is a big topic, so we hope to discuss ...

1. Approaches to career aspirations
2. Going over promotions criteria
3. Practical tips from our network members on how to use certain language/styles

This is not definitive or fixed, so please get in touch with ideas, comments and suggestions!

[Back to Contents](#)

### Contact Information:

To join the mailing list, email [emma.richardson-2@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:emma.richardson-2@manchester.ac.uk)

To contribute to the newsletter, email [julia.kasmire@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:julia.kasmire@manchester.ac.uk)

## References

- [1] Joan Acker. Hierarchies, jobs, bodies: A theory of gendered organizations. *Gender & society*, 4(2):139–158, 1990.
- [2] William T Bielby and James N Baron. Men and women at work: Sex segregation and statistical discrimination. *American journal of sociology*, 91(4):759–799, 1986.
- [3] Arlie Hochschild. The time bind. *WorkingUSA*, 1(2):21–29, 1997.
- [4] Mylene Lachance-Grzela and Genevieve Bouchard. Why do women do the lion's share of housework? a decade of research. *Sex roles*, 63(11-12):767–780, 2010.
- [5] Tara Sophia Mohr. Why women don't apply for jobs unless they're 100% qualified. *Harvard Business Review*, 25, 2014.
- [6] Matthew R Roesch, Donna J Calu, Kathryn A Burke, and Geoffrey Schoenbaum. Should i stay or should i go? *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences*, 1104(1):21–34, 2007.
- [7] Tracy Turner and Debbie Niemeier. Travel to work and household responsibility: new evidence. *Transportation*, 24(4):397–419, 1997.

## Decisions Made and Future Actions

Ideas for things the Women's Network would like to do:

1. Use the LISTSERV to ask for help from other members, e.g. looking at each other's CV's, suggesting vacancies, raising questions and consulting on scenarios.
2. Develop a media presence, including a newsletter, blog page, website, twitter profile.
3. Hashtag campaigns and other social media activism
4. Get to Know Each Other Email - are members interested in receiving an email with the names and contact details of other members so we all know who is in the network (excluding those who request their details not be shared)?
5. Future meetings to be bimonthly at Christie's Bistro.
6. Hear from women on their varied career paths (professors, long term researchers, and outside of academia).

[Back to Contents](#)

## Random Feminist-ish Quote

*"If women understand by emancipation the adoption of the masculine role then we are lost indeed."*

— Germaine Greer, *The Female Eunuch*