In recent decades, the percentage of women in high-level leadership positions within academic libraries has increased to over 50%. While this seems like significant progress, women continue to represent at least 80% of the library workforce. In this presentation, we will address factors that contribute to the disproportionate number of women in leadership positions and identify obstacles for women to attain leadership roles. We assert that librarians must develop a critical awareness of the culture within academic libraries that continues to privilege men and masculine leadership traits as well as our individual roles in perpetuating that culture. Only then can we determine how we can change our language and behaviors surrounding work and leadership in order to encourage women to pursue leadership positions and to fully support them in these roles.

Conversation Guidelines

♦ Listen actively -- respect others when they are talking
♦ Be honest and willing to share
♦ Try not to generalize
♦ Be respectful of others' experiences
♦ Share your experience (not others)
♦ What you share during the session the room stays in the room
♦ ?
♦ ?

Suggested Readings


Twitter: #libleadgender; #critlib; #radlibchat; #LeadHERship
### Personal Action Plan

How am I going to change the status quo? When will I take action?

- Seek leadership training
- Find a sponsor or become one
- Explore and address my biases
- Support women leaders
- ???

### Timeline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Timeline</th>
<th>Actions</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Self</td>
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<td>□ This year</td>
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### Further Reading

- City of Boston. *Boston — Closing the Wage Gap*. Online report.
- Hathcock, April. White Librarianship in Blackface: Diversity Initiatives in LIS. In the Library with the Lead Pipe.
Gender and Library Leadership: A Critical Examination

Robin Ewing and Melissa Prescott
ARLD Day | 29 April 2016
Introductions

Robin

- Professor and Research Librarian at St. Cloud State University

Melissa

- Associate Professor and Research Librarian at St. Cloud State University
Road map for today’s session

• Framing the issue
• Barriers for women
• Current leadership culture
• Current mental model
• Individual-level work
• Organizational-level change
• Toward a new vision
Framing the issue

- Address “positional leadership” (directors, deans, etc.)*

- Focus on gender discrimination while factoring in other intersecting forms of oppression

- Acknowledge problematic binaries and issues with language

* AAUW. (2016). Barriers and bias: The status of women in leadership.
Framing the issue

• What does the data say?
  • Higher Education
  • Academic Libraries
Our approaches to gender and leadership

Melissa:
- Critical theory, critical pedagogy, antiracist pedagogy
- Systemic oppression, social constructs, and socialization
- Social justice and equity

Robin:
- Business management
- Human resources
- Logic
Ground rules

1. Listen actively
2. Avoid generalizing
3. Be respectful
4. Share your own experiences, not others’
5. The conversation stays here
6. What else?
• What barriers contribute to the disproportional representation of women in leadership positions?
Barriers to leadership positions

- Societal structures
- Personal interest and ambition
- Gender stereotypes
- Wage inequality
- Less social capital
- Lack of support
Barriers to leadership positions

- Societal structures
- Personal interest and ambition
- Gender stereotypes
- Wage inequality
- Less social capital
- Lack of support
Current culture: Gendered leadership

- Factors that perpetuate a gendered leadership culture
  - Strong socialization around gender
  - Expectations and goals affected by our internalization of gender
  - Leadership traits biased toward men
  - Language that reinforces stereotypes

### Gendered leadership: Language

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HE...</th>
<th>SHE...</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Is aggressive</td>
<td>Is pushy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is careful</td>
<td>Is picky</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Follows through</td>
<td>Doesn’t know when to quit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loses his temper</td>
<td>Is bitchy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exercises authority</td>
<td>Is tyrannical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is discreet</td>
<td>Is secretive</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

| The family picture on HIS desk: Ah, a solid, responsible family man | The family picture on HER desk: Hmm, her family will come before her career |
| HE’S not at his desk: He must be at a meeting | SHE’S not at her desk: She must be in the ladies’ room |
| HE’S getting married: He’ll get more settled | SHE’S getting married: She’ll get pregnant and leave |
| HE’S having lunch with the boss: He’s on his way up | SHE’S having lunch with the boss: They must be having an affair |

Current mental model: Gendered leadership

- Reaching parity
- “Second-generation gender bias”
- Denial of gender discrimination
- Deluge of “self improvement” literature for women leaders

Individual level work

- Recognize behaviors and processes that perpetuate stereotypes and reinforce power dynamics
  - Use of language
  - Microaggressions
- Reflect critically on our social locations
  - Unearned advantage and disadvantage
  - Implicit and explicit biases
  - Expectations of ourselves and others
- Support each other professionally and personally
• What actions can organizations take to increase the percentage of women in leadership roles?
Call to action

Three levels of what each person commits to doing

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<tr>
<th>This week</th>
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<td>Your profession</td>
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