



Subtle Gender Bias at Work

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Overview

1. Conceptual Framework
2. Gendered Structure of Careers
3. Evaluations of Women & Men
 - Biased Assessments
 - Valuable Work
4. Potential Responses



Overheard...

- Female associate professor in chat with a student, referring to female assistant professor:

I understand that she wanted to have a child and that can't wait forever. But now she's having a second. Really, how serious is she about getting tenure?



Overheard...

- Male full professor in hiring discussion, referring to female associate professor being considered for open senior position:
All she's done is publish a paper a year in one of the top 2 journals, for the past 10 years.



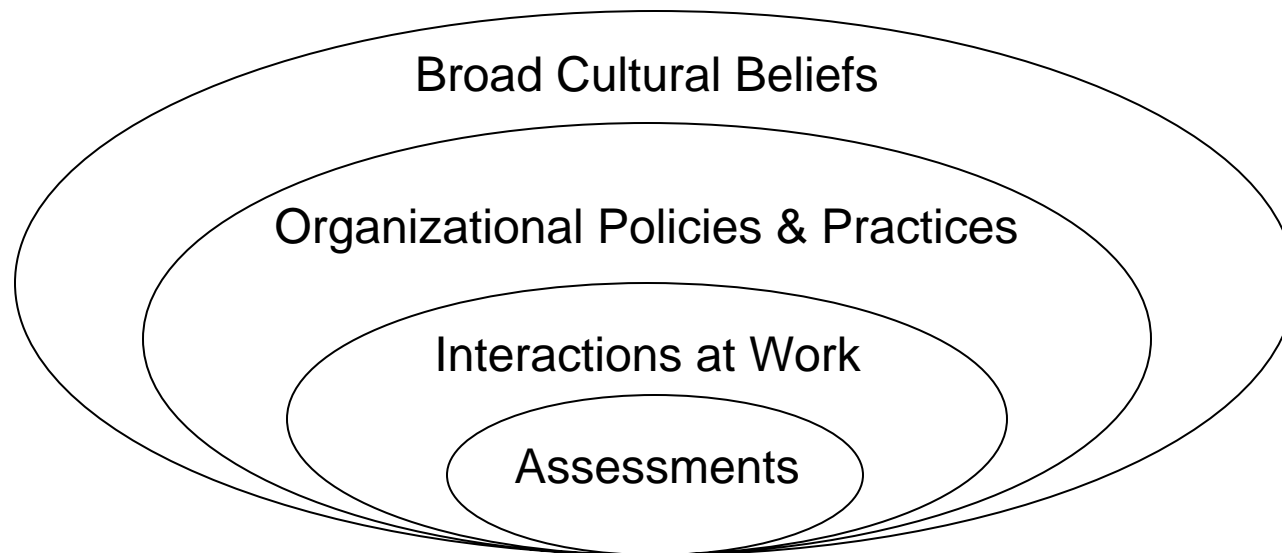
Overheard...

- Male department chair to female assistant professor (a woman of color) who won a research leave from her college:

I know it isn't ideal, but we really need your perspective on the search committee this year.

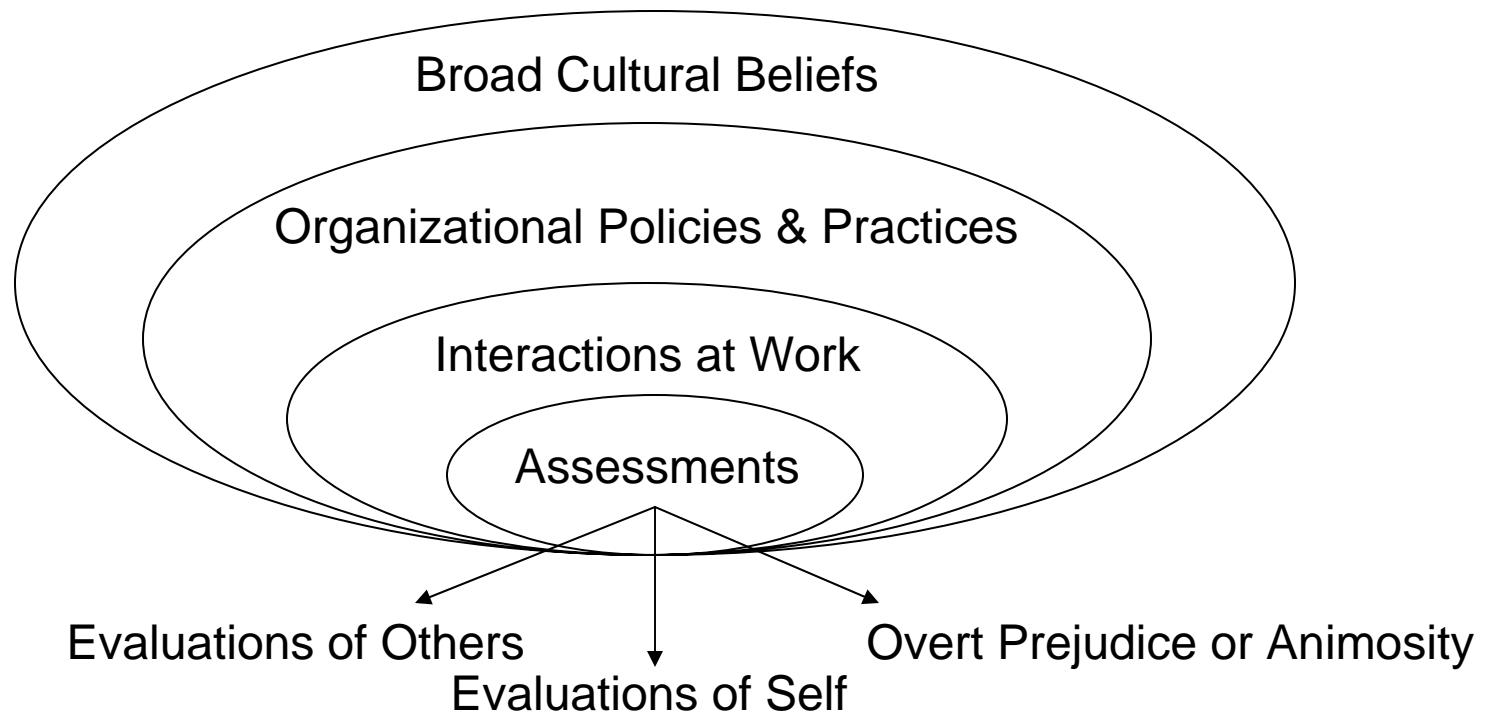
Conceptual Framework

- Gender as a Multi-Level System
- Mutually Reinforcing



Conceptual Framework

- Mostly unintentional, often unconscious
- Institutionalized policies from another era





Gendered Structure of Careers



Ideal Worker Norm

- Continuous, full-time paid work – from training to retirement
- Primacy of work on a daily basis
- Expectation of long hours
- Travel and relocation as requested

Acker, J. 1990. ““Hierarchies, Jobs, Bodies: A Theory of Gendered Organizations.” *Gender and Society*, 4 (2): 139-158.

Williams, J.C. 2000. *Unbending Gender: Why Work and Family Conflict and What to Do About It*. New York: Oxford University Press.



Increased Work Hours for Some

- For family as unit, because more dual-earners
- For dual-earners:
 - 1970 Couples working 100+ hours per week:
 - 9.5% of childless dual-earners
 - 8.2% of dual-earner parents
 - 1997 Couples working 100+ hours per week:
 - 16.5% of childless dual-earners
 - 12.8% of dual-earner parents

Jacobs, J. & Gerson, K. 2001. "Overworked Individuals or Overworked Families?" *Work & Occupations*. 28 (1): 40-63.



Penalties for Time Out

- Gradual rebound but lasting negative effect
- 20 years after a break (of 6+ months): women who had a break earn 5-7% less than comparable women with no break
- Maternity leaves → shorter breaks & return to same employer → less wage loss
- Some research finds that leave-takers earn less and are less likely to be promoted than others.

Jacobsen, J. P. & Levin, M. 1995. "Effects of Intermittent Labor Force Attachment on Women's Earnings." *Monthly Labor Review*. September: 14-19.

Judiesch, M.K. & Lyness, K.S. 1990. "Left Behind? The Impact of Leaves of Absence on Managers' Career Success." *Academy of Management Journal*. 42 (6): 641-651.



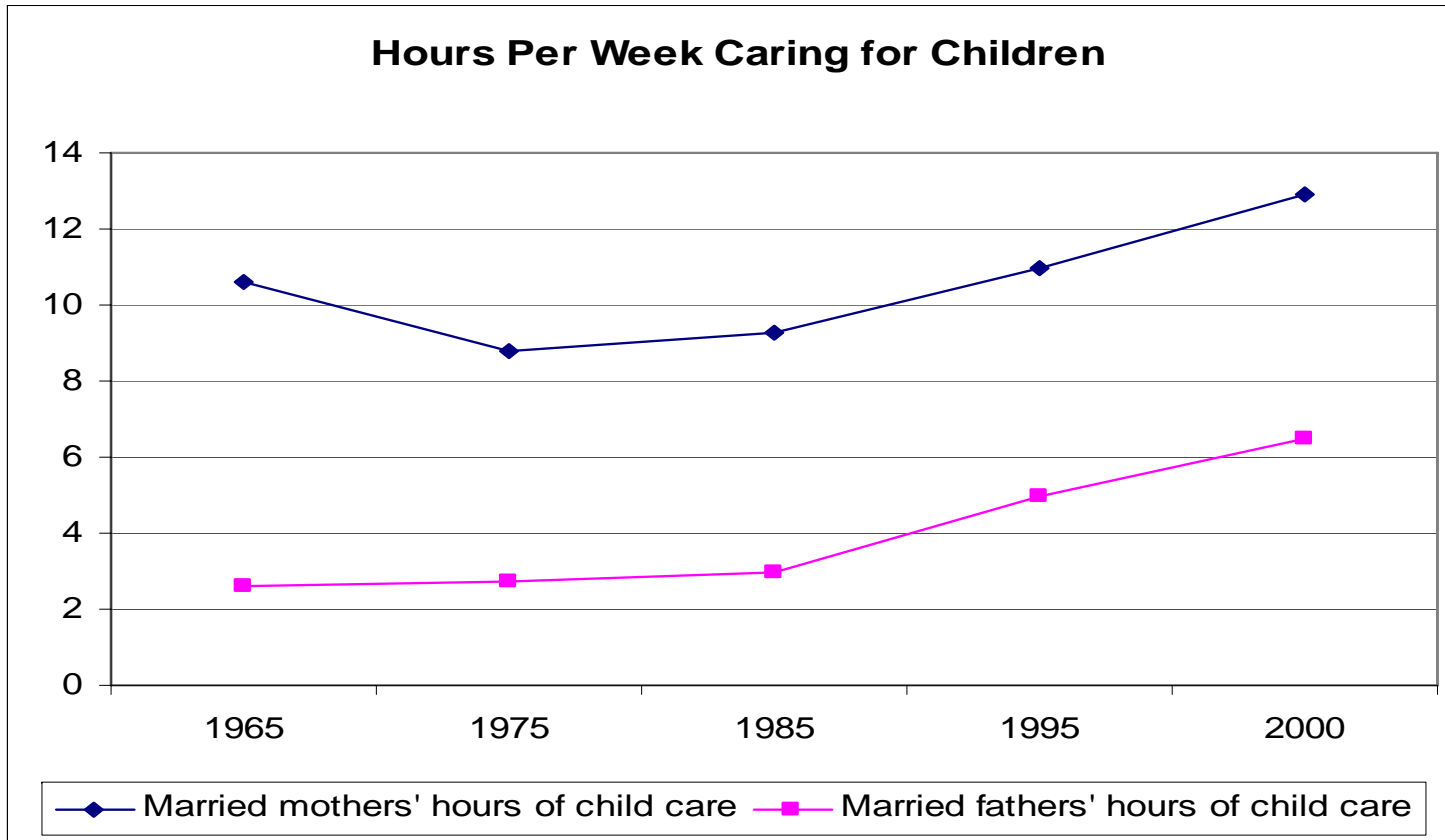
What's Gender Got to Do with It?

- Gender differences in time spent on family work and market work
- Different gender beliefs – expectations, scripts, schemas – for mothers and fathers in the larger culture
- “Competing Devotions” vs. “Package Deal”

Blair-Loy, M. 2003. *Competing Devotions: Career and family among women executives*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

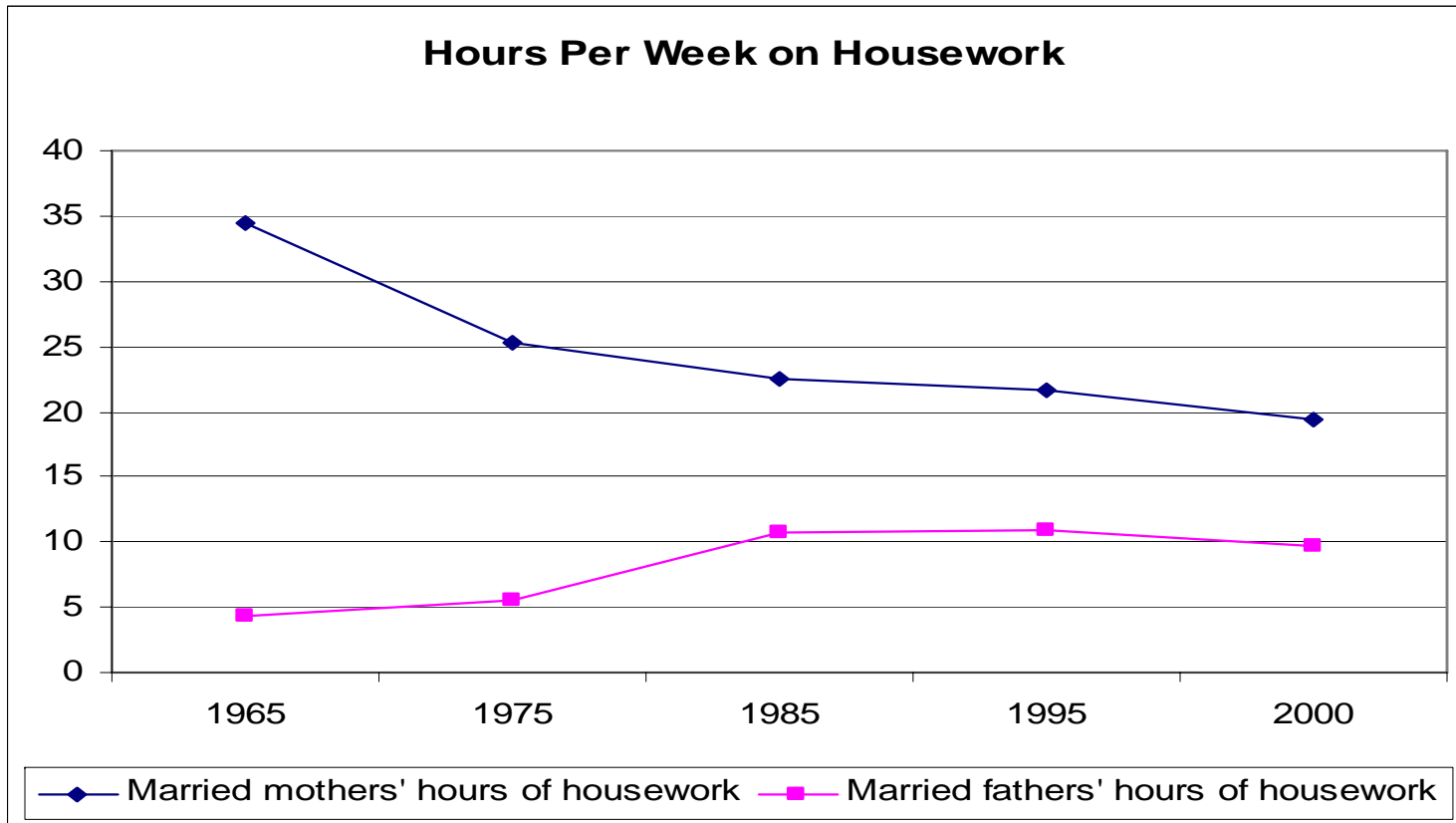
Townsend, N.W. 2002. *The Package Deal: Marriage, work, and fatherhood in men's lives*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

Who Does the Family Work?



Bianchi, Robinson, & Milkie. 2006. *Changing Rhythms of American Family Life*. NY: Russell Sage Foundation.

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Gender & Wage Trajectories

- Women: 5% wage penalty **per child**
- Men: Small wage premium **upon marriage**
- “Net and fixed effects” after accounting for human capital (education, training, seniority, work hours, previous breaks), occupational traits, and stable differences across individuals
- Hidden productivity differences or bias?

Budig, M.J. & England, P. 2001. “The Wage Penalty for Motherhood.” *American Sociological Review*. 66: 204 – 225.

Anderson, D. J., Binder, M. & Krause, K. 2003. “The Motherhood Wage Penalty Revisited: Experience, Heterogeneity, Work Effort, and Work-Schedule Flexibility.” *Industrial and Labor Relations Review*. 56 (2): 273-294.



Evaluations of Women & Men



General Gender Beliefs

- Assessments of competence – women lower (less agentic)
- Assessments of warmth – women higher (more communal)
- Takes more evidence for an individual to defy stereotype than to confirm it
- Most studies find that gender beliefs are held equally by women & men

Fiske, S.T., Cuddy, A., Glick, P., & Xu, J. 2002. "A model of (often mixed) stereotype context." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*. 82(6): 878-902.

Valian, V. 1998. *Why So Slow? The Advancement of Women*. Boston, MA: MIT Press.



Double Bind as Leaders

- “Autocratic” women rated very low.
- When women’s and men’s leadership styles are identical, women perceived as more task-oriented.
 - Successful women leaders seen as more hostile and less rational than successful male leaders.
- Attractive men rated as especially capable; attractive women rated as less capable and less deserving of their success.

Eagly, A. & Karau, S. 2002. “Role Congruity Theory of Prejudice towards Women Leaders.” *Psychological Review*. 109:573-598.

Valian, V. 1998. *Why So Slow? The Advancement of Women*. Boston, MA: MIT Press.

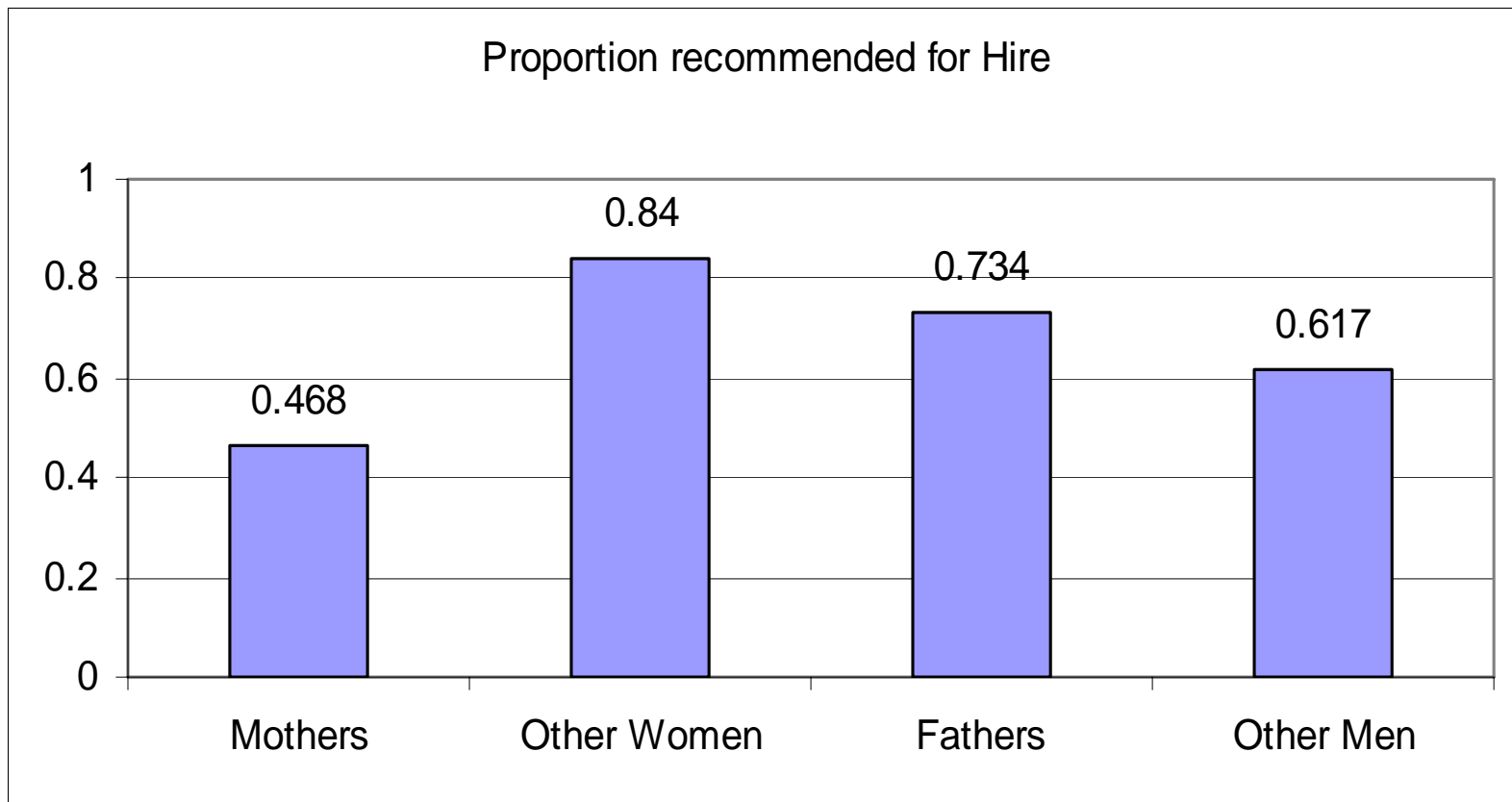


Bias against Mothers

Correll, Benard & Paik. 2007. "Getting a Job: Is There a Motherhood Penalty?" *American Journal of Sociology*. 112 (5): 1297-1338.

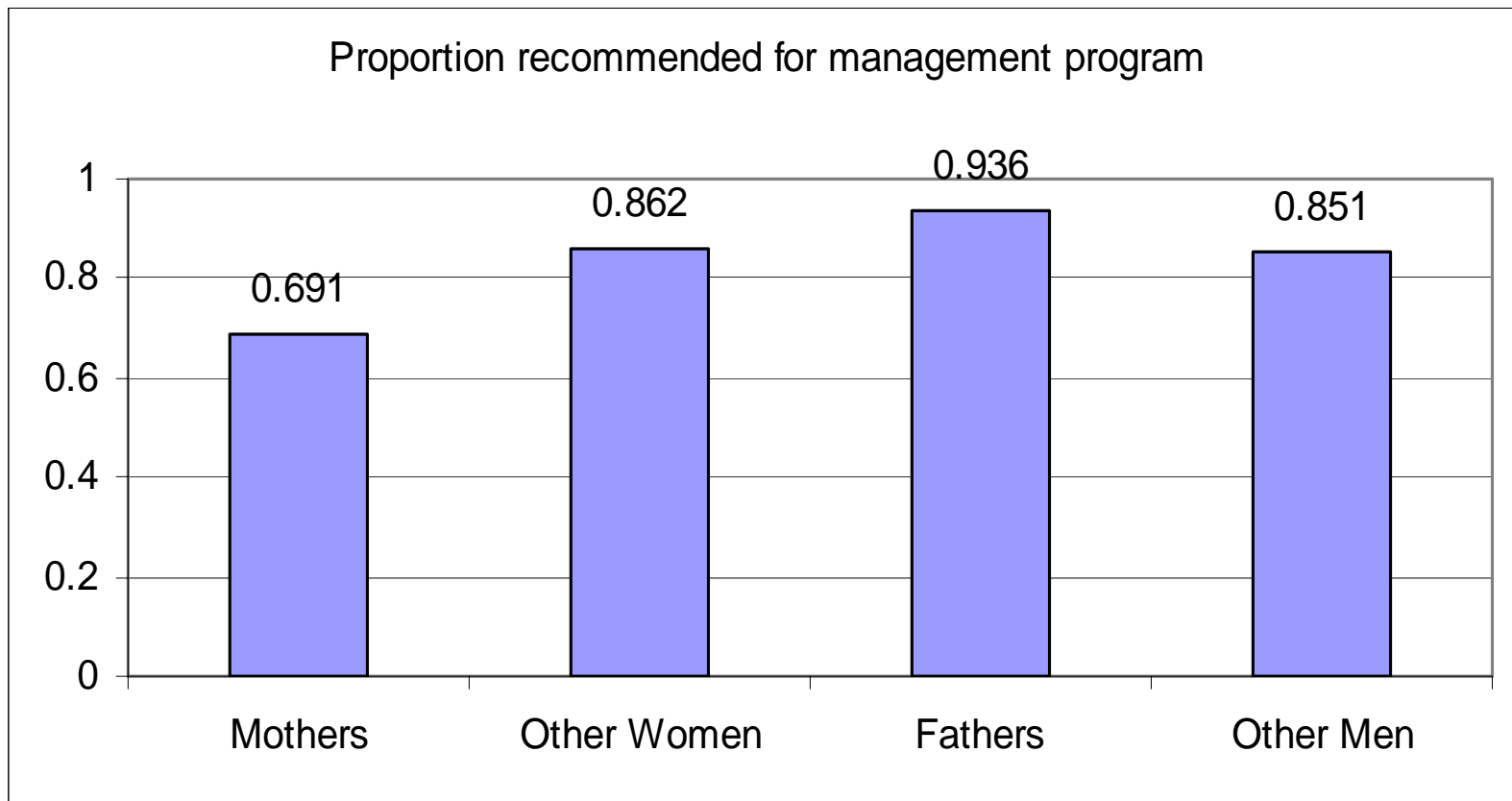
- Lab experiment – equivalent resumes rated in pairs (mother / other woman, father / other man)
 - Recommended for hire, for management training, starting salary, competence, commitment
- Audit study – equivalent cover letters & resumes sent to companies listing marketing job in newspaper
 - Called back for interview

Correll et al. Lab Study



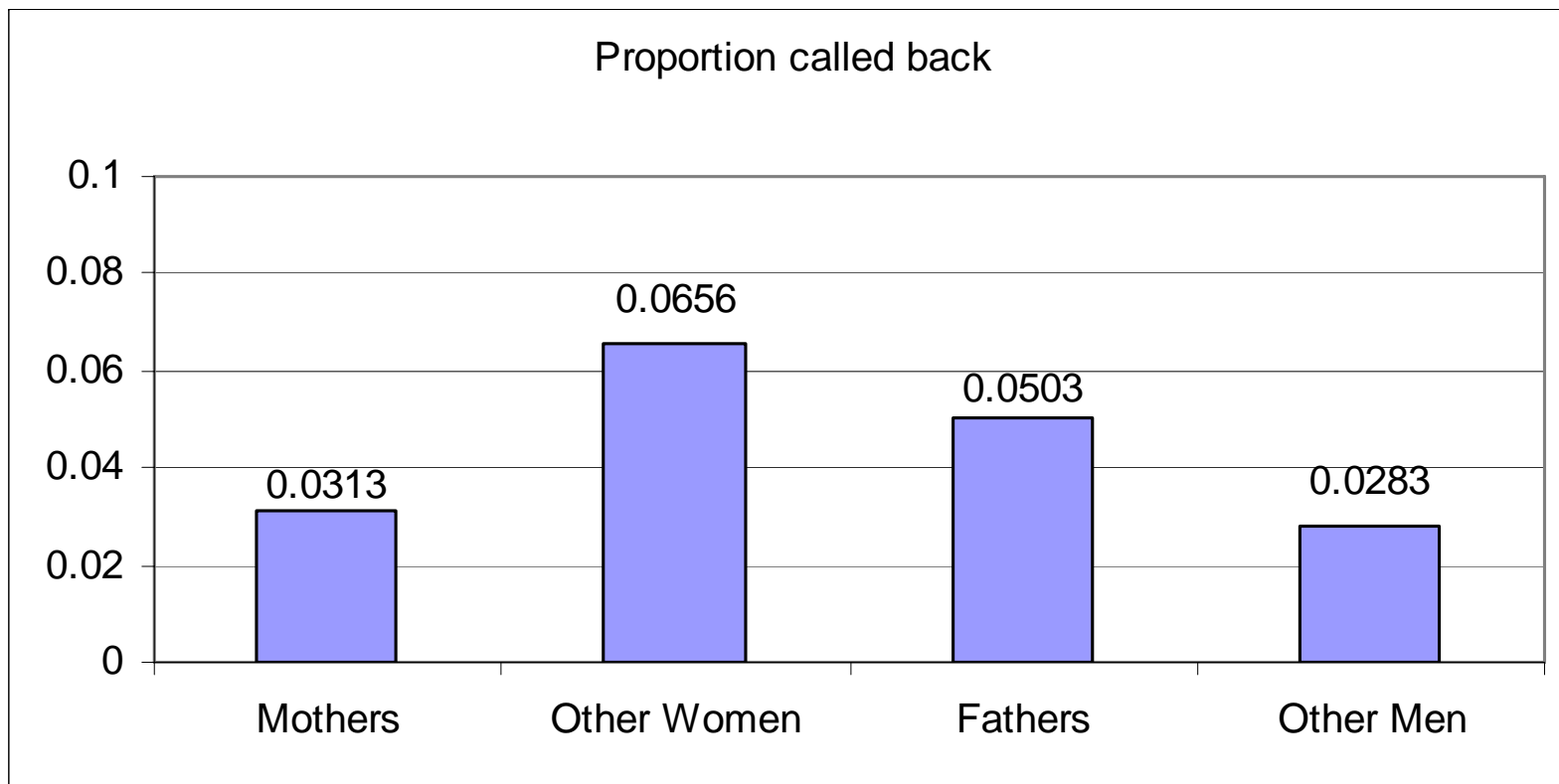
Statistically significant differences by parental status for women & men.

Correll et al. Lab Study



Statistically significant differences by parental status for women & men.

Correll et al. Audit Study



Statistically significant differences by parental status for women only.



Mothers' Competence, Commitment

	Mothers	Other Women	Fathers	Other Men
Competence	5.19	5.75**	5.51	5.44
Commitment	67.0	79.2**	78.5	74.2**

- Assessments of competence and commitment mediates – partially explains – sex differences in hiring decisions, salary recommended, etc.



Evaluations by Mentors

- In successful letters of recommendation for medical school faculty, women were:
 - Twice as likely to receive a “letter of minimal assurance” (no specifics).
 - Twice as likely to have a “doubt raiser” in the text.
 - Half as likely to be called “successful.”
 - 4x less likely to have the words “accomplishment” or “achievement” mentioned.
 - 4x more likely to have “compassion” and positive relationships with patient and staff discussed.
 - 1.5 x more likely to have “grindstone” adjectives.

Trix, F. & Psenka, C. 2003. “Exploring the Color of Glass: Letters of Recommendation for Female and Male Medical Faculty.” *Discourse & Society*. 14 (2): 191-220.



Trix & Psenka Letters

TEXT 6. EXAMPLES OF CATEGORIES OF *DOUBT RAISERS*

negative language

While Sarah has not done a lot of bench type research, She has a somewhat challenging personality.

Although his publications are not numerous as you know, While not the best student I have had,

hedges

It appears that her health and personal life are stable.

He appears to be a highly motivated colleague,

potentially negative

As an independent worker she requires only a minimum amount of supervision.

Bright, enthusiastic, he responds well to feedback.

unexplained

Now that she has chosen to leave the laboratory.

faint praise

She worked hard on projects that she accepted.

I have every confidence that Bill will become better than average. He is void of mood swings and temper tantrums.

irrelevancy

She is quite close to my wife.

He is very active in church.

Trix & Psenka Letters

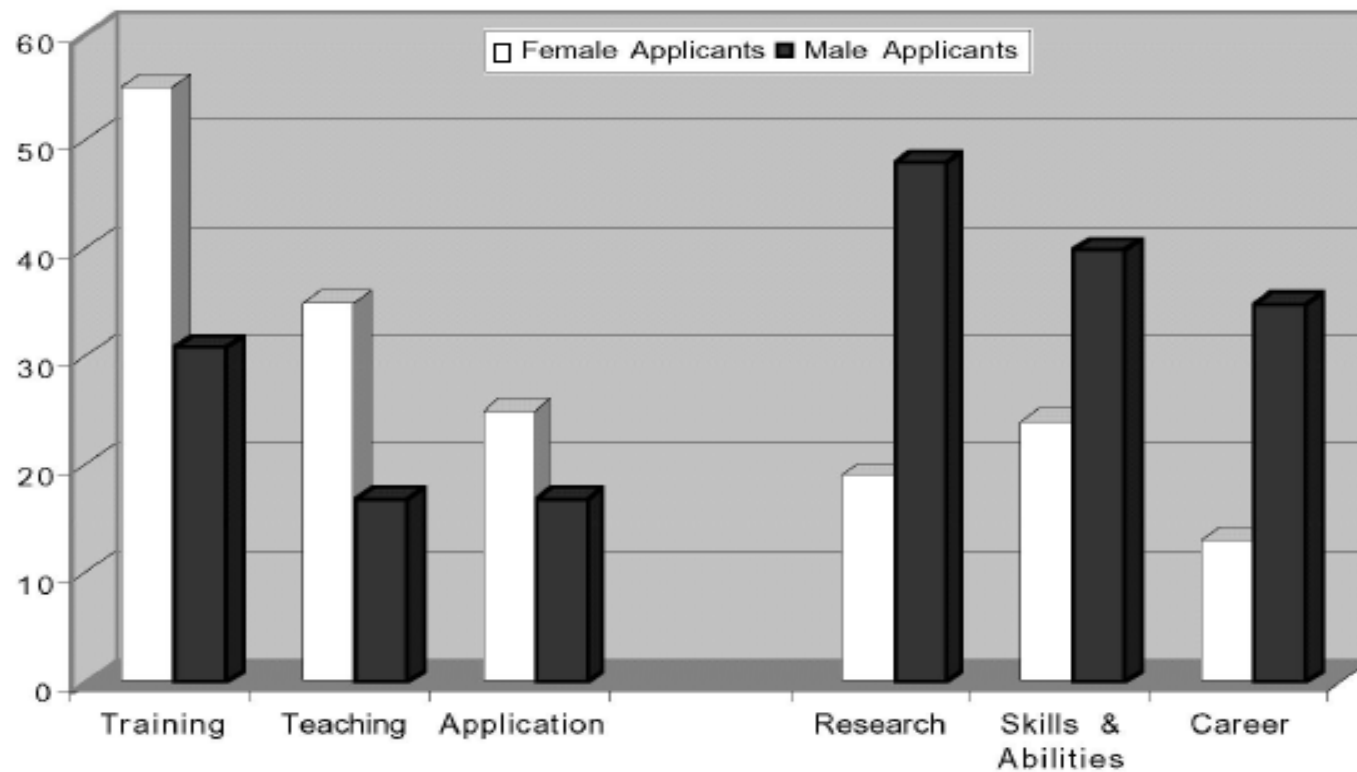


FIGURE 3. *Semantic realms following possessives. Rank-ordered within gender sets from equal numbers of letters 'her training'; 'his research'*

Evaluations by Those Hiring



Fig. 5. Hireability of the job applicants as a function of the participant's gender.

Steinpreis, R.E., K.A. Anders & D. Ritzke. 1999. "The impact of gender on the review of curriculum vitae of job applicants and tenure candidates: A national empirical study." *Sex Roles* 41: 509-528.



What Work is Recognized as Valuable?

- Relational work: collaboration and extended mentoring
- Not recognized as work, seen as being “nice” (or needy)
- Nurturing at work seen as natural **for women**, not as skill or result of effort

Fletcher, J.K. Disappearing Acts: Gender, Power, and Relational Practice at Work. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1999.



Distribution of “Service” Work

- Women assumed to be interested and/or particularly needed as women, especially as women of color
- Increases work load but little pay-off



Potential Responses



Diversity Practices that Work

- Data from 800 private-sector firms in U.S. from 1972 – 2002 matched with EEO-1 records
- Effects of diversity policies and programs on the **proportion of managerial positions** filled by white men, white women, black men, black women, Hispanic men, and Hispanic women
- Diversity task force, diversity staff – greatest increases in representation of women, black men.
- Mentoring and networking – moderate increases for women. ***May be key for professionals, though.***
- Diversity training - generally low pay-off.

Kalev, A., Dobbin, F., & Kelly, E. 2006. ““Best Practices or Best Guesses? Assessing the Efficacy of Corporate Affirmative Action and Diversity Policies.” *American Sociological Review*. 71: 589-617.



Work-Life Policies and Women in Management

- Same data on >800 private sector firms in U.S.
- **Child care benefits** (expense accounts, on-site centers) increase women's share of managerial positions.
- **Flextime** increases women's share of managerial positions.
- **Part-time options** associated with more white men in management.
- **Maternity leaves** increase women's share of managerial positions only after 1993 federal leave law in effect.

Kelly, E., Kalev, A., & Dobbin, F. 2007. "Are Family-Friendly Policies Woman Friendly? The Effects of Corporate Work-Family Policies on Women's Representation in Management." Paper presented at meetings of the American Sociological Association.



Other Ideas for Faculty...