Spring 2014
Women at Work: Gendered Experiences of Corporate Life (WS 221)
Martha Reeves, Ph.D.
Monday – Wed. 3:05-4:20
Location: Crowell Building 108

Office: Gross Hall, rm. 110
mreeves@duke.edu
919-660-5696
Office hours by appointment

Course description and course rationale:

After graduation, some of you may be employed by large corporations, small or medium sized businesses. In these environments, women have to surmount barriers to success, and both men and women will have to learn how to minimize inequities which interfere with the full utilization of women’s talents. Many organizations have recognized female talent as a competitive advantage and have made major strides in the equality arena; others, still lag far behind.

This course is designed to help students begin to analyze the ways in which gender, race, and class intersect in the contemporary business setting. We will investigate whether or not hierarchical structures and organizations that are inherently patriarchal can ever recognize talent and employ people’s full potential. We will also look at how organizations are minimizing inequities and how men’s and women’s roles are evolving within corporations.

Guest speakers will highlight our sessions (see their bios at the end of this document)

The course has several goals / objectives:

1. We will investigate theory (and a bit of history) to understand why and how subordination of women exists in the workplace.
2. We will take a rather bleak view of the progress that women have made over the last several years (the argument that the glass ceiling is alive and well). During this section of the course we will examine organizational practices; globalization’s affect on women; and power and sexuality in the workplace.
3. Next, we will look much more optimistically at how individual women have progressed in organizations and how they have broken through the glass ceiling. At this stage in the course, we will hear from some successful women managers and entrepreneurs many of whom believe there is no such thing as a glass ceiling.
4. We will examine the debate about whether men and women lead differently; communicate differently; and how a culture of “masculinity” complicates the issue of equality in the workplace.
5. Finally, we will focus on the importance of understanding your own values in determining not only your career choice, but also the employer for which you choose to work.

Along the way, we will cover these topics (these may change given time constraints):
  • Labor market segmentation (both horizontal and vertical)
  • The process of de-skilling/reclassification of jobs deemed to be “female” roles
  • Women and technology
  • Sexual harassment in the workplace
  • Management systems as gendered processes (performance appraisals; job evaluation, hiring practices)
  • Communication styles of men and women
  • Globalization and how it has affected women
  • Networking and mentoring
  • Work/family/leisure time balance
  • Personal values and corporate culture

Student responsibilities:

1. **Full participation** – this means reading and reflecting on material before class and contributing during class. As you read, keep a written record of questions, insights you are having and we will discuss them. I don’t require attendance, but I do give a grade for participation. AND ATTENDANCE IS CRITICAL TO OBTAIN AN A OR B ON THIS PORTION OF YOUR GRADE. HOWEVER, MORE THAN ATTENDANCE IS REQUIRED FOR A GOOD GRADE. PRATICPATE BY PROVIDING THOUGHTFUL COMMENTS DURING CLASS DISCUSSIONS.

2. Uphold the Duke honor code. (available on the Duke website)

3. Support team members on any class assignment (no free-riders).

4. Take this opportunity (before you graduate) to think about what you want from your work-life. This is particularly important for women who often have more responsibilities than just their career.

5. **No computers on or cell phones on during class**

Materials:

Most materials are either on blackboard or available through library data bases: JSTOR; EBSCOHOST; INGENTA etc. Purchase the following:
Reeves, M. 2010. Women in Business. Routledge Publishing. Available from The Regulator Bookshop on 9th Street, Durham or through Amazon.com
One of the following books will be assigned to you:
Frankel, L. *Nice Girls Don't Get The Corner Office: 101 Unconscious Mistakes Women Make that Sabotage Their Careers*. (available Amazon)
Sandberg, C. *Lean In: Women, Work and the Will to Lead*. (available Amazon)
Jahnke, C. *The Well-Spoken Woman*. (available Amazon)

During the semester, I may be adding other materials to the syllabus which I will give as handouts or make available through the library.

**Assignments/ Grades:**
1 Exam: 25%
1 Project: 25%
Final paper = 25% (each person will informally share their research from their paper.)
Participation = 25%
I grade on a curve.

**Individual Research Paper:**

Investigate any issue / topic we covered in class in more detail. (Much has been written about each of these topics, but given the nature of the course we have are unable to go into any of them in-depth.) The maximum length of the paper should be 15 pages double spaced (not including title page and bibliography) You may choose to do an extensive literature review on a topic with your own recommendations for how women or organizations should deal with specific issues or you may choose to do original research by interviewing a selection of women (and or men) on a particular topic. By the mid term (or before) I would like to approve each individual’s idea for the paper.

**Team Project Options:** (12 pages double spaced maximum length). Choose one of these projects.

1.) Interview 3 women in the business world and discuss their approach to power. Do they think they have power? How do they use power in the workplace? Do they use their sexuality as a form of power? How do they deal with others in the organization who have more position power than they do? Can you connect any of the things they have to say about power to the research on women and power.

2.) Interview three women about work-life balance issues. Try to find women who work in different environments (one must be business). Also try to find women of different life stage (older, new to the workforce, and a woman with children). How are their issues the same / different? What programs do their employers provide to help them? Link your findings to the literature on this topic.

3.) Conduct a content analysis of current media featuring women. Do you think these portrayals are realistic? Do they stereotype women? Are the portrayals positive?
Negative? Do they show many aspects of women or just a few? Do they depict minority women realistically? You can use any of the following forms of media: You Tube; Blogs, TV programs, magazines.

4.) Conduct and analysis of gendered practices on campus. In your analysis, cite some of the readings that we have used in class (and others) that illuminate some of these practices.

Topics/Readings/Sessions:

I. Theory and History

Jan. 8   Introduction to the course and the syllabus

        An Introduction to Women in the Workplace, from Women in Business, chapter 1.

Jan. 13  A Patriarchal Theory of Organization


Jan. 15  A Patriarchal Theory of Organization

        Walby, S. Gender Segregation at Work, Chapter 2, p. 14-29. 
        Reeves, M. chap. 2, Occupational Segregation and Gender Segregation

Jan. 20  MLK Day – No Class

Jan. 22  Gender Socialization - Girls and Women in the Mass Media

        Collect two examples of women/girls depicted in advertising – one that you think is positive and the other negative. Bring these in for Jan. 27th class.

        Film–Killing Me Softly 4 in class.

Jan. 27  Gender Socialization and Gendered Organizations
II. The Negative and Positive – Is there or isn’t there a glass ceiling?

Jan. 29 Women and Science and Technology

Selections from Women, Science and Technology (on blackboard)

http://www-2.cs.cmu.edu/~gendergap/papers/sigcse97/sigcse97.html

"Undergraduate Women in Computer Science: Experience, Motivation and Culture"

Feb. 3 Management Systems As Gendered Process: Recruitment and Selection

Reeves, M. Chapter 3 – Employment Discrimination Law

Reeves, M. Chapter 4 – Career opportunities: Recruitment, Selection and Promotion.

Excerpt from Selling Women Short (on sakai)

Feb. 5 Guest Speakers – Karen Levert and Julie Grill

See their bios at the end of the syllabus

Feb. 7 Management Systems as Gendered Processes: Assessment and Psychometric Testing


Feb. 12 First Test


Reeves, M. Women in Business, Chapter 5 – Equal Pay

Bertrand, Kamenica, & Pan, 2012 “Gender Identity and Women’s Pay” (on Sakai)

Feb. 19  Power and Sexuality in the Workplace

Reeves, M., Chapter 6, Hostile Work Environments and Sexual Harassment


Question: Should women use their sexuality in the workplace to get ahead?

Feb. 24  Book Discussion:

Come prepared with your partner(s) to discuss your assigned book.

Feb. 26  Book Discussion:

Come prepared with your partner(s) to discuss your assigned book.

March 3  The Communication Style Debate: Are Men and Women’s Styles Different


Your own observations of the similarities and differences in men’s and women’s communication styles. Bring in a one page observation of 1.) how women and men talk one on one – the differences you notice or 2.) how women talk in groups of women versus mixed groups

Reeves, M. Chapter 7, Gender and Communication.

March 5  Strategies for Success

SPRING BREAK

March 17  The Importance of Networking / Mentoring


Reeves, M. Chapter 6, Mentoring and Networking.

March 19  Balancing Work/Family and Leisure Time Interests –

Read: Why Still Women Can’t Have It All – on Sakai


Reeves, M., chapter on Work – Life Balance

March 24  Negotiation Skills – A Vital Skill For Men and Women
Negotiation case studies will have been handed out – read and prepare before class.

Project Due – hand in during class

March 26  Projects Presented during class (round table discussions)
March 31  Personal Dilemmas and Workplace Initiatives

“The Pregnant Professor” in Gender and the Workplace, p. 65-76.
III. Organizational Culture and Career Management

April 2  Globalization and Women: Expatriate Experience and Women Managers Worldwide


Case Study – Women in the Middle East – case posted on Sakai or handed out in class.

April 7  Women As Entrepreneurs
Read: Chapter 10 in Women in Business.
Read Korn Ferry study on Sakai
Guest Speaker – Amy Unell, Film-Making Entrepreneur, Taitiana Bergeson, Mati Tea, and ....

April 9  Men and Masculinities in the Workplace


Film-- Tough Guise - Excerpts

April 14  Career Issues for High Achieving Women

Values exercise – in class

April 16  Individual Presentations (based on your paper) All Papers Due by 5 pm. Either bring to class or email by 5 pm.

April 21  Individual Presentations (based on your paper)

April 23  To Be Determined

Bios of guest speakers (Both Past and Present for this semester)
Karen Levert

Karen is the founder and a principal of Southeast Techinventures (STI). STI works with university-based inventors to accelerate the commercialization of technologies and intellectual property (IP) in the areas of (1) bioengineering, (2) photonics and communications, (3) information technology, (4) materials science, and (5) surveillance and security networks. Before co-founding STI, Karen built a consultancy business focused on strategies and operating plans for new business units formed within established companies. Prior to this enterprise LeVert was executive vice-president of LevelEdge, a startup technology software company based in San Francisco, CA. In 1998, she launched a bioremediation franchise company based in Durham, NC that she later sold in early 2001. LeVert's career began at Nationwide Insurance, a top five insurance provider, in her last corporate position she managed a 500-person service center along with a $20 million budget, and prior to that held positions of Controller and Accounting & Systems Manager.

Julie Grill, Vice President of Regulatory Affairs and Quality Systems

Julie Grill brings expertise in the design and conduct of clinical trials for medical devices and in navigating the associated worldwide regulatory environment. Prior to joining NDI Medical, she was Director of Clinical Studies and Regulatory Affairs for NeuroControl Corporation, leading multi-center studies, and preparing and obtaining approval for IDE, PMA, HDE, 510k, and CE mark applications for various neurostimulation products. She has also worked as a reviewer in the Neurological Devices Branch of the U.S. Food and Drug Administration. She has a master's degree in biomedical engineering from Case Western Reserve University and a B.S. in biomedical engineering from Duke University.

Amy Unell

Amy Unell is the founder of StoryTales Productions based in Durham, NC. Passionate about telling stories that motivate, inspire, and educate, she was an Emmy-nominated producer for NBC's Today Show. She has covered a diverse range of subjects, including the Academy Awards and Sarah Palin's Vice-Presidential Nomination in Alaska, as well as the devastation of Hurricane Katrina and the Olympic Games in Athens and Salt Lake City.

Brooks Bell

Brooks was raised in Anchorage, Alaska and attended Duke University to study psychology. While at Duke, Brooks co-founded two ventures - a college painting company and novelProjects, a website development firm. novelProjects was acquired by Atlantic BT in 2010. Upon graduation in 2003, Brooks founded Brooks Bell to become a pioneer in bringing scientific disciplines of A/B testing and optimization to the traditionally subjective field of marketing. In 2012, Brooks co-founded HQ Raleigh, a 14,000 square foot co-working space, incubator and community for high-growth, high-impact startups. In 2013, Brooks co-founded the ThinkHouse, a comprehensive living program for young startup founders.
- See more at: http://brooksbell.com/about/team/brooks_bell#sthash.QhBswVcw.dpuf

Films at Lilly Library that May be of Interest

Films about minority women at work:
Two Dollars and A Dream
Tea and Justice: The Life and Times of NYPD's 1st Asian Women Officers

Films about careers:
My Brilliant Career
Coco Before Chanel
Career Girls
Up in the Air

Films about male and female communication styles:
Men are from Mars, Women are from Venus
Working 9 to 5

Films about Women Entrepreneurs
Women Owned Businesses
Coco Before Chanel

Films about Women and their Quest for Physical Perfection
America the Beautiful

Films About Women and Their Advertising Image
Killing Me Softly (4)

Films about Racism and Sexism and the impact of Stereotypes:
Last Chance for Eden