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**APPRAISAL IN THE GENDERED ORGANISATION:
THE EXPERIENCE OF WOMEN ACADEMICS**

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requirements of the University of Glamorgan/Prifysgol Morgannwg
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

February 1997

*To SJG
& the 'Y Groes Mob'*

....for everything

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Abstract

This thesis investigates women academics' experiences of the gendered university culture, during a period of rapid change in the management of higher education and the academic profession. The research draws on a Foucauldian feminist methodology to understand how, and in what ways, the dominant discourses of the university culture constitute women academics' identities. In particular, the research questions the nature of the gender relations emerging as a result of the introduction of the discourses of 'new public management'. The research examines the ways in which these new discourses are promoted through a range of disciplinary technologies, including academic appraisal, and the impact this has on women academics' professional roles and identities. The empirical work is based on three university case studies, from both the 'old' and 'new' university sectors. In each case study, the women academics tell of their experiences of the gendered university culture, and their perceptions of the appraisal process. The findings suggest that the recent changes in the management of universities have reinforced and strengthened the masculine discourses of the gendered academy. The opportunities for women to exploit the discursive spaces arising from the recent unseating of the traditional discourses of the academy have been marginal. Through the adoption of a Foucauldian feminist methodology, this research has enabled women academics to have a voice in the shaping of knowledge about university organisations and management. In doing so, the research contributes to the understanding of gendered university cultures and the constitution of individual subjectivities, as well as, in the wider context, the gendered nature of organisations and organisational theory.

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Author's Declaration

At no time during the registration of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy has the author been registered for any other University award.

The following publications and conference papers have been presented from this thesis:

Publications:

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Thomas, R. (1996) *All Talk and No Action: The Failure of Academic Appraisal in the Gendered Academy*. Paper presented at the WHEN Annual Conference, University of Central Lancashire, March.

Signed.....

Date.....

Introduction

This thesis has two interrelated aims. Firstly, it contributes to a growing critique of the gender-blind nature of organisational theory (OT), arguing that an understanding of organisations, organisational processes and management cannot be understood in gender-neutral terms. Secondly, by developing this critique, the specific aim of this research is to understand women academics' experiences of the gendered university organisation, during a period of radical change in the management of universities and the academic profession. Drawing on a postmodern feminist epistemology, the research seeks to understand how, and in what ways, the 'new' discourses of public sector management constitute women academics' identities, and to deconstruct and challenge the assumed gender-neutrality of university structures and processes.

Despite 30 years of feminist writing on sex-segregation in organisations, both organisations and organisational theory are still based on (largely) unquestioned masculinist discourses (Calas and Smircich, 1996). In recent years, feminist critiques of the organisation have increasingly drawn from postmodernism to argue that not only is existing theory gender-blind (Hearn and Parkin, 1983) but that by understanding organisations through the lens of gender, better theory may be produced which offers new ways of understanding organisations and their subjects. A rewriting of OT from a gender perspective is not merely to add women to existing patriarchal knowledge. The aim is to deconstruct and rework it so as to produce more inclusive theory which recognises diversity and the concerns of all those

involved in organisations, not just women (Jacobson and Jacques, 1990; Calas and Smircich, 1996). Organisations can be understood as being 'gendered cultures' (Ramsay and Parker, 1992; Marshall, 1993), made up of a network of discourses. For most organisations, the dominant discourses making up the gendered culture are masculine ones which serve to marginalise, subordinate and silence women's voices. It is the challenging and deconstructing of the assumed naturalness, or 'truth claims', underlying these discourses which offers the potential for challenge and change for women (Weedon, 1987). Fundamental to this rewriting, therefore, is the understanding of organisations, their structures and processes as being gendered. This is the case for universities as for any other organisation. The popular notion of the university is that of the meritocratic liberal organisation, where power is vested equally between the members and where the notion of academic merit is taken to be gender-neutral (Kogan, 1988). However, there is now a well established literature, as well as statistical evidence, which documents the marginalised status of women academics. Most of this work comes from the liberal equal opportunities framework, focusing on the barriers to women's full participation. In recent years, however, in line with wider theoretical developments in the feminist critique of organisations, writers have argued that universities are patriarchal organisations, constituted in masculine discourse, based on masculine values and where asymmetrical power relations silence women academics' voices (Davies and Holloway, 1995; Morley and Walsh, 1995, 1996; Pritchard, 1996).

However, many of the old certainties about the nature and role of the academic profession are currently being challenged by the new discourses of higher education

management. One aspect of the change in the management of universities is the introduction of appraisal, forming one part of a disciplinary matrix aimed at achieving greater management of the academic process. This research examines women academics' experiences of the gendered university culture during this period of change, questioning the nature of the emerging gender regimes and the effect that the new discourses of higher education management have had on the production of meaning and individual identity. The impact of the new discourses on the gendered culture of the university has only been speculated on in the literature (Davies and Holloway, 1995; Morley, 1995; Pritchard, 1996). This research, based on detailed case study analysis, provides an important contribution to the understanding of the impact of the new discourses of management on women academics' professional roles and identities.

In order to address these issues, the thesis is divided into 9 chapters. In Chapter 1, the various approaches to feminist theory are presented. Five broad frameworks are identified, namely, liberal equal opportunities, radical, marxist, socialist and postmodern feminist. Each of these theoretical approaches is discussed in the light of its contribution to OT. As the feminist critique of organisations has developed, there has been a shift in focus from issues of women's access and participation in organisations to that of gender and the gendered nature of organisations and organisational processes. The second half of the chapter considers in more detail the contributions of postmodern feminism in the deconstructing of knowledge on the organisation, to reveal the underlying masculinist bias and to rewrite OT from a gendered perspective.

In Chapter 2, the feminist critique of OT is taken up to challenge the gender-blind nature of organisational analysis of universities. It is argued that universities, like other organisations cannot be understood in gender-neutral terms. The second half of the chapter draws on feminist theories to illustrate the various ways in which women academics have sought to understand and challenge their marginalised status in the organisation and the profession.

However, it is argued that the traditional discourses making up academic professional identity have been challenged by the introduction of the new discourses of public sector management. In Chapter 3, this 'new climate' in higher education management is set out, firstly, with a brief overview of the evolution of higher education management, followed by an analysis of the recent changes in university management and the impact on the academic profession. The new discourses of human resource management in higher education have been promoted through a range of disciplinary technologies, including the introduction of academic appraisal. From a Foucauldian perspective, the functioning of appraisal can be seen to be reshaping the nature of academic work, controlling behaviour, changing expectations and challenging professional identities (Townley, 1990b). The research, explores how individual subjectivity, the academic profession, and university cultures are defined and contested through the new management discourses.

In addressing these issues, Chapter 4 sets out the theoretical framework and research methodology. Firstly the development of feminist research methods is discussed,

leading to an exposition of the Foucauldian feminist framework underpinning this research. The second half of the chapter details the specific research tools used in the data collection. It is argued that semi-structured interviews are most appropriate in meeting the needs of a postmodern feminist epistemology. Given the silencing of women's voices, both in the creation of OT and in the day-to-day decision making in organisations, it is important to use research methods which enable women to have their own voices in the knowledge creation, to be able to tell their own stories of their organisational realities.

Following the methodology chapter, Chapters 5, 6 and 7 comprise the three case studies forming the empirical part of the research. The three case study chapters set out the women academics' own understandings and experiences of the gendered culture and gendered processes making up the university. Focusing specifically on the impact of appraisal, the women tell of their experiences of the recent changes in higher education management and the impact on their perceptions, values and identities.

Chapter 8 forms the first of two concluding chapters. In it, conclusions relating specifically to the case studies are presented, together with a discussion of the key findings. The chapter starts off by examining the nature of the gendered cultures and processes in each of the three cases. The second part of the chapter questions the nature of the new discourses of management and the impact of these on the women's values and identities. It is suggested that appraisal has worked to constitute the individual subject along a more narrow and prescribed academic identity. Finally, the

chapter explores the ways in which the women have responded to the new gender regime. The chapter questions the extent to which the women have been able to exploit the 'discursive spaces' revealed in the changing management of universities, to propose alternative ways of organising and managing. The findings from this research suggest that the new discourses of management have reinforced the embedded masculine discourses of the university. While some women have been able to put forward alternative, or reverse, discourses (Weedon, 1987), these have on the whole been marginal and localised.

Chapter 9 then takes the substantive conclusions presented in Chapter 8 and discusses their implications in the light of the wider theoretical explanations for understanding organisations. It is argued that the research provides insights that are of relevance both in the specific study of the gendered culture of the university and the constitution of individual subjectivities, and in the wider context in understanding the nature of gendered organisations and OT. The research enables women academics to have a voice in the shaping of knowledge on the nature and management of universities, which serves to challenge the image of the meritocratic organisation and reveal the gendered nature of the structure, processes and reward systems making up the university.

Chapter 1: Gendered Organisations

Introduction

Since the early 1980s there has been a growing body of literature which has criticised organisational theory (OT) for its lack of awareness of the impact of gender¹ and gender relations in organisations and the effect this neglect has had on the shaping of theory (Hearn and Parkin, 1983; Hearn et al, 1989; Calas and Smircich, 1992a, 1992b, 1996; Martin, 1990; Acker, 1990; Jacobson and Jacques, 1990; Mills and Tancred, 1992; Alvesson and Billing, 1992; Wilson 1996). It is argued that what is understood about organisations, organisational processes and management has been derived from theory which is gendered, based on masculine assumptions. Mainstream OT is therefore criticised for being gender-blind, failing to acknowledge that the research process is gendered, the researchers are gendered and so too is the knowledge generated. In recent years, much of the feminist critique of mainstream OT has drawn on postmodernism, emphasising the social constructionist nature of organisations (Crompton and Le Feuvre, 1992). However, whilst the research focusing specifically on gender and organisational theory² has only emerged in recent

¹ The meanings ascribed to the term gender by feminists are various and contested. Drawing on J. Acker (1992) I am taking gender to be understood as a socially produced phenomenon, i.e., a pattern of meanings which distinguish man, men and masculine from woman, women and feminine and which tends to subordinate the female. Gender is not fixed, therefore, but is produced in day-to-day social relations.

² A distinction here is made between 'organisational theory', which analyses the totality of the organisation and the structure and dynamics of social relations within it from 'organisational processes', which feed into this theory (Mills and Tancred, 1992:4). Gendering organisational theory can be distinguished from broader research topics which focus on occupational segregation and women and work.

years, the broader topic of ‘women in organisations’ has a longer history, dating back to the early 1970s.

This chapter starts by providing an overview of this early work and the various theoretical approaches put forward to explain women’s subordination in organisations. Within the literature, four broad theoretical frameworks may be identified: liberal/equal opportunities, radical feminist, marxist feminist and socialist feminist (also known as ‘dual systems’ theory)¹ (Walby, 1986, 1990; Abbot and Wallace, 1990; Collinson *et al* 1990; Rees, 1992). A fifth category may be added, postmodern feminism, which has underpinned much of the theoretical debate since the early 1980s (Amos and Parmar, 1984; Weedon, 1987). Despite the problems with oversimplification, such a framework provides a useful heuristic device, illustrating the various ways in which women’s subordination in organisations has been researched. Having provided an outline of the main theoretical approaches informing the research on women in organisations, the chapter then focuses more specifically on the issue of gendering organisational theory.

Explanations of gender inequality: ‘modernist’ accounts

Fundamental to all feminist theory is political orientation and practical change. The overriding and unifying aim of feminist research is the desire to increase understanding of women’s subordinated position in organisations and society and to help women to

¹ Some accounts conflate the two categories of marxist feminist and socialist feminist under the one title of socialist feminist.

work towards changing this. However, the explanations and strategies put forward for ameliorating this subordination differ widely. The earliest work on women in organisations date back to the “pre-feminist” (J. Acker, 1992) era. Within the structural functionalist paradigm (Burrell and Morgan, 1979), dominant from the 1950’s onwards, women’s subordinate position in paid employment was attributed to their primary function in society being that of the maintenance of the family unit. A woman’s natural role in society is, it is argued, a caring and supportive one, associated with child rearing and running the home. Conversely, men’s roles are associated with the public sphere, involved in a more instrumental role. What is more, under a structural functionalist paradigm, the gender based divisions of labour are seen to be carried out in the interests of the family unit, and of society, rather than as a result of the exercise of power and inequality (Walby, 1990). Explanations of the sexual division of labour are based on assumptions of male and female ‘natural’ roles within society (Rees, 1992). The same arguments can be seen in the economically derived human capital theory. Human capital theory seeks to explain women’s position in the labour market as being the result of their roles in running the home. Here it is argued that women’s domestic duties result in their failure to compete as fully as men in the labour market (Becker, 1957; Mincer, 1962). As their primary role is that of maintaining the family unit, it is argued that women are socialised to acquire fewer qualifications and have fewer work related ambitions. In addition, due to taking time out of work to raise children, they acquire less work based experience than their male counterparts. In other words, women fail to accumulate the ‘human capital’ required to compete equally with men (Rees, 1992).

The main criticism of structural functionalist based explanations for women's subordinate role is the focus on maintaining the status quo and therefore offering little scope for challenging the subordination of women at work. Where women have been considered within the analysis, this has often been based on the stereotypical assumptions about women's roles within society. Human capital theory, in particular, has been criticised extensively (Walby, 1990). Firstly, it is argued that there is not the empirical evidence to back up its assertions. On the contrary, evidence suggests that despite the fact that the gap between men's and women's experience is narrowing, pay differentials are not (Rees, 1992). Research in the US has shown that individual worker's characteristics account for less than 50% of wage differentials between men and women (Mincer and Polackek, 1974; Treiman and Hartmann, 1981) and thus contradicts the 'common sense assumption' that women fail to do as well in the labour market and organisations as men because they have fewer skills, experience and qualifications (Walby, 1990). Women are in low status jobs not because of their domestic situation, as human capital theory would suggest, but because their expectations within the labour market are a reflection of their opportunities. Thus women's orientations to work cannot be viewed as separate from their limited opportunities within the labour market. Human capital theory rests upon assumptions of a perfect labour market (Walby, *ibid.*), where employees are paid according to their worth. However, Cockburn (1983) has illustrated that the collective strength of workers can maintain higher wages than the skills used would determine and thus notions of skill are more than merely technician, but are subject to strong social influences (Walby, *op cit*). Sturdy *et al* (1992), for example, show that the notion of skill is a highly gendered one. Women's work is 'naturalised', seen to be merely the

exercise of their natural behaviour, i.e., emotional, caring and empathetic work, rather than the performance of skilled work. The fundamental criticism of human capital theory, as with structural functionalist accounts of women's subordination, is its theoretical underpinning which ignores the effect of unequal power relations in the labour market and wider society and the impact this has on women's positions.

The power-blind nature of early 'pre-feminist' analysis of women's subordinate positions in the labour market is also reflected in the early developments in feminist orientated analysis to the gendered divisions of labour, as well as much of the contemporary mainstream management literature on women in organisations (Collinson *et al*, 1990). The 'liberal' (Jewson and Mason, 1986), or equal opportunities perspective, can be seen to be the mainstream, least radical and earliest attempt to understanding women's position from a feminist perspective, where the focus is on achieving equal rights for women, compared with men. The fundamental argument underpinning the liberal approach, on which UK equal opportunities legislation is based, is that of 'equal treatment'. This means that individuals with the same ability, performing the same standards of work, should have the same access to jobs and receive the same rewards, regardless of their social group (Liff and Wajcman, 1996). Still working within the functionalist paradigm, liberal/equal opportunities approaches to understanding sex discrimination focus on the personal and structural barriers preventing women from competing equally with men in the labour market and within organisations. Differences in behaviour between men and women are seen to be the result of socialisation and sex-role conditioning and thus the liberal approach challenges the explanation that women's subordination can be

reduced to biological differences. Within liberal perspectives, analysis has focused on two main issues: equal rights within employment and the sexist attitudes which sustain disadvantage (Walby, 1990). The liberal approach can be seen to underpin the literature on women's 'barriers to management', or 'glass ceiling' analysis.

Early work within the liberal framework focused on women's 'internal' barriers and organisational barriers which prevent them from advancing. It is argued that socialisation and sex-role stereotyping determine a woman's pathway in life. In particular, it is argued, women are socialised to be less ambitious and develop personality traits contrary to those thought to be required in management (Hennig and Jardim, 1977), popularised by the expression "fear of success" (Horner, 1972; Jacklin and Maccoby, 1975). Similarly, there are a great number of studies which focus on various organisational processes to explain women's marginalised status, again using sex as a determining factor. These are mainly laboratory-based experiments, looking at the influence of sex on such areas as evaluations of leadership potential, appraisal ratings, and job selection (Day and Stogdill, 1975). The value of this research may be considered to be limited due to the lack of consideration of contextual factors. Added to this, laboratory-based studies often require people to 'pretend' that they are the subjects being studied, rendering the studies even further divorced from reality.

The most influential work within the liberal framework is that of Kanter's "Men and Women of the Corporation" (1977). Focusing on structural barriers to women's advancement, Kanter argues that it is not sex which determines a person's career success but the structural distribution of power within the organisation and the social

composition of work groups. Kanter suggests two factors that determine women's marginalisation within the organisation. Firstly, she argues that management is gendered around masculine notions, where women are seen to be invaders and acting out of their sex-typed roles. Secondly, she notes how male sponsorship and networking ensures that men gain access to and retain power. Kanter believes that women have little opportunity to reach senior positions because they have little power. Because women do not gain access to power, they expect not to gain access and act in self limiting ways. Those who do achieve promotion are isolated as their work groups are made up of men.

However, the liberal framework underpinning the research which concentrates on barriers to women's advancement has been criticised for its superficial treatment of discrimination in the workplace and for "reinforcing patterns of organisation and management that neglect women's interests" (Hearn and Parkin, 1983:52). For example, the analysis of psychological barriers focuses on problematising the individual woman. Women are compared against a masculine norm with any 'deviant' behaviour being then changed to bring it in line with this norm. Thus, the focus is on 'masculinizing' the "defective as a normalizing practice" (Calas and Smircich, 1992a:229). As the dominant assumptions underlying the liberal approach, informed by structural functionalism, is one of sex-role stereotyping, the focus has been on proving women's worth rather than questioning these underlying assumptions (Marshall, 1995). Strategies for overcoming these barriers focus on changing personal attributes, or as Riger and Galligan (1980) observe, 'being like men'. Criticisms of research which focuses on structural barriers, such as Kanter's, are that

they fail to address the fundamental questions on the nature of work and organisations and the impact they have on people (Riger and Galligan, *ibid*). Rather than focusing on the barriers preventing women in reaching senior positions in organisations, the focus should be, radical feminists argue, on the cultural imperatives which determine that organisations and management should be structured in a particular way. In other words, the issue should be that existing institutional arrangements are “fundamentally flawed” (Ferguson, 1984:4). By focusing on the day-to-day discrimination facing individual women, the overarching structures seen to cause women’s subordination are neglected (Walby, 1990). This has led to its main criticism, that the liberal approach takes an ‘elastoplast’ approach, focusing on the outcomes of discriminatory practices rather than the causes. Much of the liberal feminist approach can be criticised, therefore, for being reactionary in nature, failing to address the fundamental causes of inequality within society and organisations. It is criticised for not offering an alternative to existing ways of understanding organisations and women’s subordinate positions within them (Hearn and Parkin, 1983). For more radical theorists, this means that the issue of women’s subordination is addressed without recourse to changing the political and economic structures of contemporary capitalist society (Eisenstein, 1984). In addition, feminists have argued that the liberal approach has limited possibilities in challenging and changing women’s subordination due to its knowledge base. The approach has been criticised for working within existing analytical frameworks, which have been devised by male researchers based on masculinist knowledge, and thus does not pose a challenge to ‘malestream’ knowledge and the nature of research (Abbott and Wallace, 1990). Liberal analysis merely aims to incorporate women into existing research and existing ways of seeing

the world whilst leaving existing theoretical foundations intact. As Calas and Smircich (1992a) observe, the liberal approach only requires the “grafting” of women into existing research structures. Furthermore, in recent years, arising from debates about equality and difference, liberal approaches have been criticised for the tendency to treat all women the same, as one homogenous, unified category, with the same traits and ‘norms’ of behaviour (Alvesson and Billing, 1992) and thus playing down the structural determinants of class, race, and sexuality.

Following from the limitations seen in the liberal/equal opportunities approaches, and in line with developments in more critical analysis of organisations (Witz and Savage, 1992), theories have been developed which have focused on women’s differences rather than equality with men and how society and organisations need to accommodate, and make best use of, these differences. Some writers have argued that it is only these more critical radical approaches, addressing the fundamental structures which create and maintain women’s subordination, which can be truly seen as feminist theory (Hearn and Parkin, 1983; Dex, 1985; Rees, 1992). Firstly, it is argued, the aim of these approaches is to question the androcentric nature of research and thus the issue of gender (or women) is put at the forefront. Secondly, the research moves to widen the debate from the traditional functionalist accounts of women’s position in relation to their domestic roles (Rees, 1992). Finally, radical feminist accounts are focused firmly on change. Whilst the work attempts to provide theoretical explanations for women’s subordination, the focus is also on practical change. It is the nature of this change which clearly distinguishes feminist approaches from the liberal approach, which, it is argued, whilst being focused on improving

women's situation, does not address the deep-rootedness of gender inequality (Walby, 1990).

Radical feminists contend that the biologically-based oppression of women is the oldest form of oppression in society, predating that of class and race (Eisenstein, 1984). Here patriarchy is seen as an independent and trans-historical system of institutionalised relationships of power. It is argued that freedom for women comes from breaking away from the patriarchal system so that women may discover their "true" consciousness and voice. Radical feminist analysis has focused, in particular, on the role of the family, women's capacity for motherhood and biologically determined male aggression as accounting for women's subordination. It is argued that the role of the family, through "sexual slavery and forced motherhood" (Weedon, 1987:17), is the key instrument of women's oppression (Firestone, 1974; Rich, 1980). Firestone (1974), for example, argues that it is the requirement of male protection, through women's physical weakness and reproduction, which explains their subordinate position in society. Also focusing on women's bodies, Daly (1978) points to male violence as the root cause. Radical feminists have also criticised existing knowledge, which, it is argued, has been defined by men, with part of this knowledge creation being to define women, as a category, to be inferior and subordinate (Delphy, 1984). However, in relation to paid work, there is little analysis offered within the radical feminist framework, except in relation to male violence and sexual harassment, and sexuality in the workplace (Walby, 1990). The main criticism of radical feminist analysis has been on biological reductionism or essentialism (Barrett, 1980; Segal,

1987) and, as in liberal analysis, the tendency to treat women as a universal category (Weedon, 1987; Abbott and Wallace, 1990).

Unlike radical feminist analysis, marxist feminism has been used extensively by feminist theorists as a conceptual framework for understanding gender inequality in paid work. The key difference between a marxist feminist approach and that of the radical feminist approach is that for marxist feminists, gender inequality is seen to be a by-product of capitalism. Thus, the issue of gender can be seen to be added to marxist analysis of class relations to examine gender inequalities as part of a system of stratification in society (Witz and Savage, 1992). As with radical feminists, there are various treatments of women's subordination within this framework. The main focus is on the exploitation of women's marginal position and low power in the labour market. Other writers have drawn on structuralist debates on women's position in the household. For example, within the 'domestic labour debate' the oppression of women has been attributed to the role of women in maintaining the family unit and the production of children to ensure the long term survival of capitalism (Secombe, 1974; Barrett, 1980). Focusing on the labour market, studies have highlighted women's roles as a special section within the 'reserve army of labour' serving as low priced, flexible and disposable labour (Beechey, 1977, 1978), and as the disposable secondary layer(s) of a 'dual labour market' (Barron and Norris, 1976).

Marxist feminists accounts of women's subordination have been criticised primarily for attempting to apply a pre-existing Marxist framework to the analysis of women's subordination (Collinson *et al*, 1990). In particular, this critique calls attention to the

androcentric nature of the original analysis on which it is based. In addition, marxist feminist analysis of labour market subordination, found in the reserve army and dual labour market approaches fails to differentiate between different women's experiences, the impact of class and race, different employers and industries and different labour markets (Walby, 1986). Such work has been criticised for being overly deterministic in nature, assuming an omnipotent, unified management and a submissive, passive workforce (Collinson *et al*, 1990). There are also seen to be several internal contradictions within the Marxist feminist explanation. For example, the focusing on the domestic labour debate, where it is argued that the best interests of capitalist social relations is to keep the woman at home, maintaining the family unit, is contradicted by the arguments presented in the reserve army thesis where the achievement of profit maximisation is sought through utilising and maintaining women's cheap labour (Abbott and Wallace, 1990). Linked to this, Walby (*op cit*) observes that there are contradictions in the argument that capital dispenses with women first during times of recession, yet these women are employed because of their low wages. There are also empirical contradictions, with women not leaving the labour market either in the recession of the late 80's or earlier economic downturns (Walby, 1990). Finally, by giving primacy to the role of capitalism in women's subordination, marxist feminist analysis fails to account for gender inequality and the presence of patriarchal relations prior to capitalism and in non-capitalist societies (Walby, *ibid.*).

The fourth theoretical framework, accounting for women's subordination, is that of socialist feminism (also termed 'dualism', or 'dual-systems theory) which can be seen

as a synthesis of the two systems of capitalism and patriarchy (Hartmann, 1979; Cockburn, 1985; Walby, 1986, 1990; Crompton and Saunderson, 1990; Witz, 1992). Here the two systems of patriarchy and capitalism are examined as independent but interacting systems. Walby (1986), adopting a dual systems framework, defines patriarchy as “a system of interrelated social structures through which men exploit women” (1986:51). Women, in undertaking housework, share a common class position with exploited workers. The patriarchal nature of both paid work and the State prevent women’s entry into the labour market on the same terms as men. Thus patriarchal labour market structures determine the primary mechanism whereby women are subordinated. For example, Hartmann (1979) argues that jobs are segregated by sex so that women are locked into lower paid work, enabling men to keep women in a position of disadvantage. This has taken place throughout the centuries, predating the capitalist era. For example, women have been excluded in the early medieval guilds, in the professions, in a variety of occupations by the state and by trade unions. Due to women being locked into low paid, dead end jobs, they are reliant on husbands for financial support. In return, women are expected to carry out domestic duties, which reduces their ability to devote time to gaining skills and training to access better jobs. Thus women’s disadvantaged position in the labour market results in them doing most of the domestic work and this in turn reduces their ability to access better paid work (Walby, 1990). Superficially, Hartmann’s arguments seem similar to those of human capital theory. However, the cause is seen not to be a societal acceptance of the fact that women’s primary role is that of maintaining the family unit, as human capital theory would suggest. Rather, it is due to their lack of opportunities within the labour market, where men contrive to ensure

that women are locked into low paid, low opportunity jobs, so that they remain dependent on men. This way both capitalism and men benefit from women remaining in the domestic sphere. The principal criticism is whether it can adequately explain how capitalism and patriarchy together, as an interrelated system, work to subordinate women. Citing Mitchell's work (1975), Walby shows how Mitchell argues that capitalism is located within the economic level in society whilst patriarchy works at the unconscious level. However, to contend this results in an inability to explain patriarchal practices operating within the capital level and vice versa (Walby, 1990). Finally, Abbott and Wallace (1990) argue that some dual systems approaches tend to underplay women's resistance to their subordinate positions.

Explanations of gender inequality: Postmodern feminism

In recent years, post structuralist/postmodern¹ feminism has emerged as a major influence in understanding women's subordination in organisations. Feminist writers have found validity in several underlying concepts of a postmodern approach which they have, to a greater or lesser extent, appropriated. Postmodernism can be seen as a loose title to unite the work of several French philosophers, notably Derrida, Lyotard and Foucault², based on the idea that the world is constituted through language rather

¹ Whilst poststructuralism and postmodernism have been differentiated, I am taking the term postmodernism in a more general sense to include poststructuralism.

² Foucault was in fact against being labelled as postmodern, or any other category for that matter, as the focus of his work is essentially iconoclastic, breaking down the pillars of theory and knowledge. Whilst it is difficult to put a framework around his work, due to its shifting in focus between individual pieces of work and his constant self questioning, he does have in common with Derrida and Lyotard, the debunking of Enlightenment epistemology but in no way offers an alternative (Burrell, 1988).

than language reflecting the world. Language is therefore seen as representational rather than descriptive of reality. A postmodern analysis is based on a critique of the notion of logocentrism (that the world is external to language), denying that there is an internal reasoning agent with a mind and soul upon which social action pivots (Hassard, 1993). Thus, there cannot be, in the postmodern project, an essential being, a metaphysical core, no “I”, as Ferguson (1984) puts it, only a socially constructed “me”. This ‘decentered subject’ is seen to be merely a “convenient location for the throughput of discourses” (Hassard, 1993:15). Through their various works, postmodern writers have endeavoured to illustrate the inherent instability of language and meaning, through deconstructing meaning, revealing instabilities in theory, and illustrating how language (defined as discourse) constitutes human subjectivity.

Fundamental to postmodern analysis is the refutation of Enlightenment epistemology and its search for ‘truth’ through the championing of rational, empirical research. Seen as “shoddy science” (Ravetz, 1971), such endeavours, it is argued, are a process of professional self-justification, where knowledge is produced and justified within a restricted and privileged linguistic domain and one in which women’s voices are infrequently heard (Burrell, 1993). Feminist¹ writers have taken up this notion of representational language and the consequent debunking of Enlightenment epistemology and “Grand Theory” which, they argue, is grounded in masculine bias,

¹ When referring to feminist writers, I am also including male theorists who would label themselves as ‘pro-feminists’ and are writing within a feminist framework.

opening up the possibilities to challenge what is regarded as 'truth', knowledge, normality, and offering the concomitant rethinking of the notion of the 'subject'. As Ramazanoglu (1993) argues, knowledge can be understood as transitory; "...there is no single truth....but many different truths situated in different discourses, some of which are more powerful than others" (Ramazanoglu, 1993:21). Given that knowledge is transitory, based on discourses none of which have privilege over others (Lyotard, 1984), the aim of a postmodern 'theorist' should not be in search of fundamental truths, but to engage in the practice of theory based on indeterminacy and 'ironic self-reflexivity' (Gergen, 1992), or the 'dialectic of difference' (Cooper and Burrell, 1988). Taken to its logical conclusion, this ironic self-reflexivity makes postmodern theorising an oxymoronic endeavour - if there is no real, tangible, factual truth, then how can this very assertion be true (Gergen, 1992)? Thus we are urged to engage in a "language games" approach to theorising, where theoreticians are engaged in 'serious play' and the activity of agonistics. It is this dialectic of difference which is seen to give rise to social action: "...rather than founders of 'the last word' (where in the beginning was the word of God), we should perhaps view ourselves as balloon craftsmen - setting aloft vehicles for public amusement" (Gergen, 1992:216). Calas and Smircich (1992a), arguing from a postmodern feminist perspective, suggest that the purpose of theorising is not to formulate the last word on a subject but more as an invitation to dialogue. Thus the focus within a postmodern feminism, is not on radically changing the world, as there is no end to theorising, no "great Refusal", as Foucault (1980) puts it. Rather, postmodern feminism aims to produce a theoretical approach which engenders the act of constant self questioning - a constant questioning of "who you can be as you are today" (Calas and Smircich, 1992a:232).

For Ferguson (1984), drawing on the insight of Foucault, a feminist analysis challenges the ways in which we think about ourselves, and in doing so means that we are already engaged in an emancipatory project since much of the world is constituted through our beliefs about ourselves and about the world.

However, several tensions exist between postmodern analysis and feminism, the most contentious being the notion of the decentered subject. It is not surprising that postmodern analysis has been treated with deep suspicion by some feminists, many seeing its message to be nihilistic, reactionary and politically inadequate, denying feminists with an emancipatory project. As the self is seen as decentered, with no *essential* self, merely constructed in discourses, postmodernity is seen to be at odds with feminist theory, which has developed on the grounds of women's voices and women's experiences, agency and praxis. As Strickland (1992) argues, this ultimately means that "we no longer have criteria against which to measure "better" or "worse", "truer" or "falsar"; nor can we investigate structures of domination or even talk about "oppression of women" in any but a very local and restricted sense, relative to a "language game" or "narrative" (Strickland, *ibid*:4). This has led to various approaches in taking a postmodern stance, whilst retaining aspects of feminist theory conceived within a more modernist framework. In other words, in varying amounts, feminists have chosen to appropriate aspects of postmodernism (Ferguson, 1984; Weedon, 1987; Sawicki, 1991). Thus rather than using a postmodern approach in totality, and therefore falling into the reflexivity problem, those concepts seen to be particularly useful, insightful, which take theory forward have been appropriated.

This can be seen to be a more eclectic approach, mindful of the criticisms of postmodernism's relativism and ignoring structural factors, and drawing on feminist theory to make up for these deficits. Ferguson (1984), for example, points to Foucault's own defence of using theory eclectically:

For myself, I prefer to utilize the writers I like. The only valid tribute to thought such as Nietzsche's is precisely to use it, to deform it, to make it groan and protest. And if some commentators say I am being faithful or unfaithful to Nietzsche it is of absolutely no interest (Foucault, 1980:53-4, quoted in Ferguson *ibid.*:xvi).

What is being advocated therefore, is to use the interpretive tools put forward by postmodern theorists rather than a wholesale adoption of the theoretical framework. This has been the case with feminist writers who have developed, what has become known as Foucauldian feminism.

Foucauldian Feminism

The work of Foucault has been taken up by feminist writers to address questions of how power relations are exercised within organisations and the impact of power and knowledge on self identity, within a historical context (see Weedon, 1987; Diamond and Quinby, 1988; Bartky, 1990; Nicholson, 1990; Hekman, 1990; Sawicki, 1991; McNay, 1992; Ramazanoglu, 1993). Before outlining the ways in which Foucault's work has been seen as being particularly useful for feminist analysis, it is first necessary to provide an outline of his argument (bearing in mind that, (a) he would object to being classified as having a specific theoretical approach, being more concerned with debunking existing philosophical, or epistemological, frameworks and

in no way constructing an alternative, and (b) that Foucault's own work is difficult to classify and summarise, given the shifts and changes over the 30 year period of his writing, with his later work partly being devoted to re-examining and subtly reforming his earlier work). Several Foucauldian concepts may be identified as offering potential to feminist analysis, notably, those of discourse, power and the subject.

Discourse

Foucault's work focuses on how human beings, as individual subjects, are *constituted* through discourses, expressed as the product of the interrelationship of power and knowledge. Thus, rather than having a unique, essential self, an individual's subjectivity is socially constructed. The concept of discourse is seen to be fundamental to a Foucauldian analysis and may be defined as "practices that systematically form the objects of which they speak...[Discourses] do not identify objects, they constitute them and in the practice of doing so conceal their own invention" (Foucault, 1974:49). Discourses may be seen to function as a set of rules which operate in 'discursive fields' to determine what is true and false, what is and is not the case, who and what may be defined as acceptable and normal, what may be said, who may say it and with what authority. Foucault's work concentrates on how discourses produce 'disciplinary regimes' in organisations which create the subject and which have a normalising effect, defining what, and who, is normal, standard and acceptable (Townley, 1994). Discourses can, therefore, be seen to be extremely powerful (Ramazanoglu, 1993). Foucault's concern was in understanding discourse

in terms of the 'effects' of power and knowledge that they bring about. In other words, to question:

...what rules permit certain statements to be made; what rules order these statements; what rules permit us to identify some statements as true and some as false; what rules allow the construction of a map, model or classificatory system; what rules allow us to identify certain individuals as authors; and what rules are revealed when an object of discourse is modified or transformed... (Philip, 1985:69)

Thus discourses can be seen to be a "system of possibility" (Philip, 1985:69) in that they allow us to say whether something is true or false and therefore makes possible a field of knowledge. Truth can be understood, therefore, as transitory, the outcome of particular discourses. It is this that creates the foundation for resistance, challenge and change (Weedon, 1987).

Power

Bound up within this notion of discourses lies Foucault's radical reconceptualisation of power. Rather than being possessed, exercised by one on another, Foucault considers power in terms of its outcome within a particular set of social relations. The operation of power is seen at every level, immanent within social relations. Power is therefore ubiquitous, present like a network, or capillaries, throughout society and organisations. Viewing power in this way, the role of the analyst is not to trace the source of power, but to focus on the workings of power, i.e., not the 'why' or 'who' but the 'how' of power. Thus Foucault argues that we must examine the 'effects' of power, and its role in the production of meaning and the creation of the subject. The exercise of power creates knowledge and the exercise of knowledge

produces power. In other words, power and knowledge are seen to “inhabit” each other (Legge, 1995), they are interdependent. Working interdependently with knowledge, then, power can be seen to be creative, and positive, as well as negative. It is productive in that it ‘creates’ knowledge and it is this concept which offers opportunities for resistance through producing new sets of discourses within which to challenge existing notions of the truth.

A Foucauldian approach to the analysis of power, as a non possessive, pervasive phenomenon, arising out of social relations, can lead to ignoring, or downplaying of the systematic ways in which women are subordinated both by society, in general, and by men, in particular (Ramazanoglu, 1993). In other words, there is no locus for social action, no monocausal source of women’s subordination and therefore no focus for a feminist praxis. Foucault may therefore be criticised for underestimating the difficulties of changing the status quo, depriving women of a sense of agency and denying a monocausal focus for change (Strickland, 1991; Ramazanoglu, 1993). However, Foucault is actually offering an alternative form of feminist praxis here (Weedon, 1987). Freedom for women comes from challenging the ways in which they are defined, labelled and classified. Rather than focusing on the source of power, women need to focus on its role in the production of truth, reality and the human subject (Weedon, *ibid.*). This involves examining how power is deployed and how it is exercised in the organisation and society. Women need to ‘chip away’ at the micropolitics, at the minutiae of individual disciplinary technologies within organisations which serve to marginalise them and assert male bias. Only through the deconstruction of discourses which maintain the ubiquity of male dominance can

women gain voice and visibility in organisations. By saying that power is everywhere, Foucault is offering the opportunity of resistance at every point: “At every moment, step by step, one must confront what one is doing...what one is” (Foucault, 1984:374). Resistance to the ubiquity of power relations comes through challenging the discourses which constitute the individual subjectivity.

Subjectivity

An individual's identity is dynamic, constantly reforming as an outcome of power relations. Thus the individual is constituted through discourses and disciplinary practices and is therefore both a subject and object of power/knowledge. Foucault's work examines how an individual's subjectivity and understanding of others has been historically constituted through different understandings of knowledge, rather than being a fixed and unchanging original identity waiting to be revealed. Therefore political freedom in the radical feminist form, through emancipation, makes no sense as there is no true 'women's voice', no essential woman's identity to be revealed, only dominant and subordinated discourses. Such arguments are seen to be contrary to the postmodern thesis which dismisses Enlightenment epistemologies of universal freedom and truth (Jagger, 1992). A Foucauldian analysis enables the feminist to focus on the day-to-day personal, local level forms of discrimination and oppression, and offers ways for understanding and challenging the ways in which women's voices are subordinated and ignored. By examining and challenging the ways in which experience and meaning is constituted, 'naturalness' and 'truth' are opened up and this creates opportunities for resistance and change at a local level. Resistance comes

from challenging the discourses of domination and constructing alternative or counter discourses (Weedon, 1987). The focus of Foucauldian feminism is not on the overarching emancipatory project, but on the day-to-day, practical, ground level ways in which women are labelled as subordinate and marginal. In this way, a plurality of theoretical approaches may be advocated. A Foucauldian feminism may offer insight into how power 'effects' women's oppression and how women daily struggle to deal with this power but can still accept the overarching structures of inequality within society. A more detailed account of Foucauldian feminism will be presented in Chapter 4.

The contribution of postmodernist writers, especially the work of Foucault, provides a theoretical framework whereby women may understand, challenge and change the gendered nature of organisational knowledge, the gendered structures and processes of organisations, and the production of gender within organisations and organisational theory. The second part of this chapter examines the various ways in which the theoretical approaches to understanding women in work have been applied specifically to the issue of organisational theory. It will be argued that an understanding of organisations from a gender perspective is a very recent development in organisational theory. Whilst there has been a considerable amount of theorising on the gendered nature of the labour market and occupations, as well as the impact of gendered assumptions on narrowly defined organisational processes, the issue of understanding organisations as gendered entities has been relatively neglected in the literature.

Gendering Organisational Theory

The recent interest in postmodern philosophy has highlighted the unsteady foundations of knowledge and truth and has provided the means by which organisational knowledge may be called into question. It is this instability of knowledge which has been taken up by feminist writers to highlight the lack of questioning of the influence of gender on the generation of organisational theory. The basis of this argument, that women and men have different experiences and different perspectives, has only in recent years gained voice in the literature. Three interrelated criticisms of mainstream OT have been highlighted, namely, that the knowledge generated, the subjects of the research on which the knowledge is generated and the actual generators of that knowledge, have been male, or represent male values. Furthermore, this knowledge has been portrayed as scientific, neutral and genderless. Consequently, the notion, or knowledge of organisation is constructed in masculine discourse (Jacobson and Jacques, 1990).

The gender-blind nature of organisational theory

Firstly, then, the focus of the critique of mainstream organisational theory has been the gender-blind nature of the research design which has informed this body of knowledge (Ferguson, 1984; Harding, 1986; Calas and Smircich, 1992a, 1996). The gender of the subjects of research has not been considered to be an issue. As Collinson and Hearn (1994) observe, the fact that research is by men on men remains unacknowledged, unquestioned and unchallenged until recently: "Men are both talked about and ignored, rendered simultaneously explicit and implicit" (1994:3). Most of

the studies informing theory have been on male workers, whether they be coal miners, accountants, engineers or assembly line workers (Abbott and Wallace, 1990). Added to this, in what has been referred to as “one of the great blind spots” of organisational theory (Rothschild and Davies, 1994:583), is the assumed gender neutrality of this body of knowledge through the adopting of a generic notion of ‘organisation man’, where masculine characteristics are taken as being generic ones to create the normative organisational member. Thus in the generation of organisational theory, the issue of gender and gender relations has been ignored and has not been considered to have any impact on organisational and management functioning. Organisation man is seen as sexless, neutral and “neutered” (Jacobson and Jacques, 1990; Calas and Smircich, 1996). A classic example of this can be seen in the famous Hawthorne Studies (Roethlisberger and Dickson, 1939), where had sex based power differentials between the male researchers and young female subjects been considered the results of the research would be dramatically altered (Acker and Van Houten, 1974). The fact that the subjects were young female workers, living in the family home, from traditional families of immigrant background meant that the sex power hierarchy found at home was congruent with that found with the male supervisors conducting the experiments. Thus it would be reasonable to expect the women’s behaviour to mirror that of home and therefore to do exactly what was required of them by the researchers. The output increases could be explained, therefore, by the sex power differentials (Acker and Van Houten 1974). Acker and Van Houten’s early work in highlighting the gender-blind nature of organisational theory revealed other instances where, had the issue of gender been considered, the interpretation of the research would have been very different. It is the contention, therefore, that by gendering

organisational theory, better theory of organisations is produced (Alvesson and Billing, 1992; Calas and Smircich, 1992b). Sex differentials which have appeared in the research findings have tended to be ignored, discounted or explained away as another variable (Collinson and Hearn, 1994).

Secondly, the gender of the person creating the theory can be seen to be one of the defining characteristics shaping the theory produced (Jacobson and Jacques, 1990). With the generation of organisational theory, therefore, the gender blind nature of organisational theory can be attributed to the lack of women theorising in this area. There have been prominent women in the process of theory making over the years but their message rarely receives the attention that male counterparts receive (Jacobson and Jacques, 1990). Whilst feminist theory has a far longer history, gendering organisational theory has only in recent years gained a voice in the literature. This has two clear implications for the generation of research. Firstly, despite the seemingly scientific neutrality of enquiry, “what is known has been consistently linked to who was doing the knowing” (Jacobson and Jacques, 1990:5). In other words, rather than being the genderless, scientific researcher, the creation of theory is determined by a range of personal characteristics, one of which is gender. Secondly, much of the research is funded by industry (commissioned by men for masculinist goals of efficiency) and has a non radical/critical orientation. Feminist theorising, on the other hand has a history of radical critique and change.

Finally, as the generation of knowledge is inextricably linked to the theoriser (Foucault, 1979), where both the ‘known’ and the ‘knowers’ (Jacobson and Jacques,

1990) are male or based on masculinist values, the outcome of organisational research generated can also be seen to be gendered, based on masculine lines. Traditional organisational and management theory can be seen to be bound up with notions of organisational effectiveness, the achievement of which celebrates stereotypical assumptions of maleness and masculinity. As Witz and Savage (1992) observe, the aims of much of this research has been instrumental in nature, attempting to solve practical management problems, and working from a set of assumptions very much in the structural functionalist tradition. These assumptions include sex-role stereotyping about the nature of women and their role in society, where the primary role of the woman is seen to be that of home maker and carer. Women are seen as 'naturally' having more emotional skills, such as empathy and caring in contrast with men's instrumentality and rationality. Such an image runs contrary to that of an effective organisation and management, where the values of efficiency, rationality, formality and impersonality are deified. As Pringle (1989) observes, the image of the (bureaucratic) organisation is one of gender neutrality and the 'ideal' manager equates with male gender. What is more, this focus on impersonality and abstract rules establishes a firmly positivist orientation to organisational theory. The emphasis on formal rules serves to hide and obscure the subjective decisions carried out in organisations which reinforce sex-segregation and discrimination (Roper, 1994). Even where the focus has been on more radical organisational theory, especially the publication of work coming from the radical structuralist paradigm (Burrell and Morgan, 1979) in the 1970s, the opportunity to create more gender focused research was missed (Hearn and Parkin, 1983).

More recently, the focus has been on the notion of the organisation as it is portrayed in organisational and management theory. Here, it is argued, organisations, as institutions, and in their very conception, are patriarchal, based on male values and masculinist modes of understanding. Organisations may be understood as sites of gender formation, where masculinity and femininity are constituted, and where femininity is seen as subordinate (Crompton and Le Feuvre, 1992). Organisational theory perpetuates the masculine discourse of organisation in that it forms the foundations of the knowledge gained by generations of managers and participants in organisations and forms the core knowledge found in textbooks on management, carrying the “force of TRUTH” (Jacobson and Jacques, 1990:6).

Feminist analysis of organisations

It has been argued, therefore, that mainstream OT is a masculine discourse. Having drawn attention to the gender blind nature of OT, there have been moves, from the early 1980s, to understand organisations from a gender perspective. Starting from early attempts to insert gender into existing organisational theoretical frameworks (Hearn and Parkin, 1983; Ferguson, 1984), the literature has developed to offer a radical reconceptualising of organisational theory, through the use of gender as a lens for understanding organisations (Jacobson and Jacques, 1990; Calas and Smircich, 1992b).

From the 1980s onwards, there can be seen to be a shift in focus to, what has been termed the “Women’s Voice” perspective (Calas and Smircich, 1992a) and the move

towards questioning the privilege given to male perspectives in organisational and management literature. The aim of this writing is to emphasise gender values as being different between men and women, “to demonstrate the differences between male and female experiences and then position “the different” as another valid form of representing human experience” (Calas and Smircich, 1992a:225). For example, Ferguson (1984), draws on the Foucauldian concept of discourse to argue that women’s values of “caretaking, nurturance, empathy, [and] connectedness” (Ferguson, 1984:25) are undervalued in a patriarchal society and represent a submerged discourse within the organisation:

Women tend to judge themselves by standards of responsibility and care toward others, with whom affiliation is recognised and treasured. Women’s moral judgements are closely tied to feelings of empathy and compassion for others, and more directed toward the resolution of particular “real life” problems than toward abstract or hypothetical dilemmas. Arising out of their experience of connection, women’s conception of moral problems is concerned with the inclusion of diverse needs rather than with the balancing of opposing claims....In contrast, male self-identity is largely formed through the denial of relation and connection with others. In a culture that defines manhood in terms of separation and self-sufficiency, boys become men by breaking affiliative bonds, pursuing individual achievement, and avoiding attachment to others. (Ferguson, 1984:159).

Accordingly, early work in attempting to carry out the task of gendering OT has focused on redressing the imbalance and including or integrating women’s voices and women’s experiences in theory to ‘complete’ existing theory. A gendering of organisational theory can only come from a ‘difference’ perspective, in that it questions universal assumptions underlying such theory - hence its only recent emergence in the literature, in line with the development of a ‘difference’ perspective in feminist theory. Much of the work which may be categorised within the Women’s Voice perspective, questions the dominant model of organisations and management

and its emphasis on instrumentality/rationality and goal directedness and, instead, highlights the feminine characteristics of need-orientation and a morality of responsibility. Examples coming from this perspective can be seen in the recent work in the “women in management” literature (Marshall, 1984; Grant, 1988). Here there has been an emphasis on new organisational structures and working practices, and the move towards post-modern or post-Fordist organisation structures. It is argued that under such devolved structures new management skills are required which are commonly associated with stereotypical feminine qualities, especially those of consensus seeking, intuition, and integrative decision making styles. Women are seen to possess the ‘soft’ HRM qualities of team-building, participation, communication (Marshall, 1984).

Ferguson’s work “The Feminist Case Against Bureaucracy” (1984) can be located within this ‘difference’ perspective. Ferguson draws on a Foucauldian concept of discourse to present a radical feminist critique of how women’s voices and women’s experiences are a submerged discourse with the bureaucratic organisation. This is based on the argument that women’s experiences are “institutionally and linguistically structured in a way that is different from that of men” (*ibid*:23). This feminine discourse can be seen as a potential voice of resistance to the overarching bureaucratic control structures. Through deconstructing the bureaucratic discourses, and pointing to a different set of values based on women’s notions of morality and individual identity, an alternative mode of personal identity and social interaction may be put forward “out of which a fresh form of understanding and action might emerge” (*op cit*:155). The aim therefore, Ferguson argues, is not for feminine discourses to be

incorporated within the dominant bureaucratic discourse (i.e., to become like men), rather it is to use the subjugated feminist discourse to render bureaucratic capitalism obsolete by challenging the truth claims upon which it is built. Ferguson argues that resistance within existing bureaucratic structures is unlikely to be a successful project for women. She dismisses the argument of the liberal approach that a significant increase in the numbers of women in senior positions will change the nature of bureaucratic control, arguing that to succeed within the existing framework demands that women internalise the bureaucratic discourses. Resistance is via alternative, non hierarchical organisational forms, for example, co-operatives, or non hierarchical sub cultures within bureaucratic organisations, such as women's studies courses within the bureaucratic university.

However, Ferguson's analysis may be criticised for reifying bureaucracy. Her work presents bureaucracies as gender-neutral and disembodied oppressors and therefore she is forced to use gender merely as an analogy to describe behaviour rather than seeing it as a complex system of control and oppression (Acker, 1990). This is brought about because the analysis is still caught within the gender-neutral framework of organisational theory - the "women in borrowed clothes" approach, as Jacobson and Jacques (1990) term it. Added to this, Ferguson's own argument is internally flawed in that she argues that in order to deal with bureaucratic control, workers become 'feminized', which enables them to manage their sense of powerlessness but in doing so perpetuates their dependence. She argues that both men and women act in this way and, in making this argument, denies the uniqueness of women's experiences and conceals the links between men and power (Acker, 1990).

Arriving at similar conclusions to Ferguson, Townley (1994) presents an analysis of HRM, from a Foucauldian perspective. Townley's work, whilst not focusing exclusively on the issue of gender, has implications for understanding gender relations within organisations. Townley argues that HRM, as a discourse, is made up of a set of discursive practices which together render the organisational members 'knowable' and therefore governable. Again, as with other writers appropriating a Foucauldian methodology, Townley argues that to conceive HRM in this way reveals the opportunities for resistance and a way to political action. The discursive practices operate in ways that discipline the individual, rendering them both the object and subject of power/knowledge. Townley documents the various ways that disciplinary technologies operate within the organisation via the discourse of HRM. The disciplinary technologies are made up of dividing practices which categorise and rank the individual, establishing norms and standards against which individuals can be compared. For example, the functioning of performance appraisal which operates to standardise and individualise individuals. It permits division and ranking of the individual (and therefore an object of knowledge) as well as enabling the individual to rank and compare themselves, rendering them 'knowable' (and therefore a subject of knowledge). A range of techniques are available to render the individual knowable. These include ranking procedures, such as job evaluations and appraisal and examination procedures, such as the selection process and the process of the 'confessional', found in self assessment techniques, team building exercises and appraisal.

Townley (1994), like Ferguson (1984) argues that women's experiences can be understood as submerged discourses within HRM. Recognising these subordinated discourses is achieved through techniques which 'end the silence' and allow subordinated individuals to gain voice within the organisation. Resistance therefore can be conceived of as something local and specific. 'Freedom' comes not from overcoming the structures of oppression. Rather it comes from being able to constitute who we are - being able to challenge and deconstruct the ways in which individuals are subjects of power/knowledge.

Like Ferguson (1984), Townley sets out a vision for change, an organisational form with non-exploitative forms of social relations and where asymmetrical power relations are recognised and not abused. This involves a move away from hierarchies and superior/subordinate binary pairs. This may be either through constructing alternative non hierarchical organisational forms or at least making clear the ways in which individuals are disciplined within organisations. Her political vision, therefore, is where social relations are based on "voice, visibility, integrity, difference and non-hierarchical relations...[...]...based on reflexivity, reciprocity and respect for the specificity of the Other" (*op cit*:168). Both Townley and Ferguson, therefore, see feminist discourses as a way of creating a more ethical form of organisation. Acker (1990) also argues for an end to the organisational forms that exist currently and a move towards ones where:

The rhythm and timing of work would be adapted to the rhythms of life outside of work. Caring work would be just as important and well rewarded as any other; having a baby or taking care of a sick mother would be as valued as making an automobile or designing computer software. Hierarchy would be abolished, and workers would run things themselves. Of course, women and men would share equally in different kinds of work (Acker, 1990:155).

However, to emphasise women's differences to men has several problems. Firstly, it may be accused of sustaining stereotypical views of women and femininity, which may be used to justify discrimination on the grounds that women are different and therefore inferior according a variety of (essential) organisational skills. As Scott (1988) has illustrated, difference may be interpreted along the so-called 'natural' gifts of man as hunter, woman as nurturer. Linked to this criticism is Acker's (1990) critique of Ferguson (1984), where she argues that by working from an essentialist notion of femininity, Ferguson tends to stereotype women as victims - weak, passive and oppressed. In addition, such approaches may be criticised for their universalising tendencies, by talking about women's differences in the generic sense, there is a playing down of the differences between women themselves; women are presented as a clear cut homogenous group (hooks, 1989) and reducing masculinity and femininity to a dualism (Alvesson and Billing, 1992).

A move towards a postmodern¹ approach to organisational theory means moving beyond existing categories of organisations. A postmodern approach "extends this work to ask what new knowledge would be created considering the needs, capabilities and interests of both the knowledge producer and the female organisational subject. Conceivably, this position leads not only into new ways of seeing, but into new subject areas as well" (Jacobson and Jacques, 1990:14). Here, the focus of

¹ The use of the term postmodern here is in its epistemological form, rather than to denote an epoch and the associated arguments of Post-Fordism and a move away from bureaucratic organisational structures (often distinguished by the use of a hyphen, i.e., 'post-modern').

organisational theory is the challenging of the gender structures where society is structured purely on a basis of sex and gender processes which produces gender norms, messages and symbols which subordinate women. Such an approach offers no grand theory. Instead the analyst should be reflexive about knowledge, recognise the perspective-dependent nature of organisational knowledge, and be aware that such knowledge is a creation rather than a description of reality (Jacobson and Jacques, 1990; Calas and Smircich, 1992b).

Organisations as Gendered Cultures

An application of feminist postmodern influenced analysis of organisations can be seen in the analysis of organisations as gendered cultures. Adopting a cultural framework, it may be argued that all organisations can be seen to be gendered to a greater or lesser extent. Seeing organisations as gendered cultures offers a useful lens for understanding and analysing the multifaceted layers of gender relations within the organisation (Mills, 1988, 1989; Sheppard, 1989; Witz and Savage, 1992; Ramsay and Parker, 1992; Maddock and Parkin, 1993; Marshall, 1993; Gherardi, 1995; Itzin and Newman, 1995).

Mainstream literature on corporate culture may be criticised on the same count as that of organisational theory in general, in that it is gender blind and therefore perpetuates the gendered division of labour (Mills, 1989). In common with mainstream organisational theory, much of this literature comes from a structural functionalist perspective with positivistic assumptions, seeing culture as having a strong unifying

force within an organisation with any deviations being seen as abnormal, deviant, and in need of corrective measures to make the individual fit into the culture (Mills, 1988). Special emphasis is placed on the role of training and reward management to encourage and reward individuals who have internalised the culture. What is more, such literature infers that if one can identify the organisation's culture, even create the desired culture, then the 'right' individuals may be recruited to fit that culture. Culture, within this approach, is seen to be another organisational variable which can be manipulated to achieve competitive advantage. This is particularly the case with writing on 'strong' cultures (Deal and Kennedy, 1988) and 'excellent' cultures (Peters and Waterman, 1982). Such analysis perpetuates the myth of gender neutrality in organisational processes and underlying assumptions. Thus there is no acknowledgement of difference and a basic assumption that individuals experience and understand organisations in a gender-neutral way. Furthermore, viewing culture as an organisational variable that can be manipulated to achieve strategic success ignores the impact of the outside world, focusing merely on the internal climate. Such writing is more about organisational processes, which are in themselves gendered. However, these processes are more a product of the culture than a description of the culture itself (Gherardi, 1995).

Rather than adopting a structural functionalist interpretation of culture, as a strategic tool to be manipulated by management in order to improve organisational performance, culture may be understood as a 'root metaphor' (Smircich, 1983) for understanding the organisation. In other words, "culture is something an organisation *is*" (Smircich, 1983:347, italics added). Viewing culture in this way, an organisation

can be seen to be made up of a web of shared symbols and meanings, or discourses, emerging from social interaction. Culture may be therefore perceived as a process of the construction of 'discursive formations' in which certain (masculine) discourses achieve dominance over others, due to their association with established truth claims.

Adopting a more interpretive approach, organisational cultures can be perceived as gendered cultures in that they are integrally and invisibly cast in terms of gender (Wilson, 1994). Approaches to analysing gendered cultures range from empirical studies documenting and classifying various gender cultures (Cockburn, 1991; Maddock and Parkin, 1993; Gherardi, 1995; Newman, 1995; Itzin, 1995) and more theoretical accounts, developing analytical frameworks whereby women's subordination may be understood (Mills, 1988; J. Acker, 1990, 1992; Ramsay and Parker, 1992; Marshall, 1993). A cultural approach to analysing gender relations in organisations goes beyond formalised equal opportunities to illustrate how the impact of patriarchal structures is embedded in the basic assumptions of the organisation as well as in wider society (Walby, 1986; Cockburn, 1991). Viewing a culture through the lens of gender enables analysis of the various tensions facing women in operating within several cultural domains (Newman, 1995) such as organisation, profession, family, and the impact this has on the shaping of their identities. It also accommodates differences between women in terms of race, class, age and sexuality. Thus, the culture of an organisation may be perceived of as being made up of gendered discourses, the dominant ones of which serve to marginalise women, with women's voices as subordinate. J. Acker (1992) refers to the basic assumptions making up an organisational culture, as the "gendered substructure" of the

organisation. Similarly, Mills (1988) argues that the organisation is composed of rules, or expectations, which “guide people in the appropriate or relevant behaviour, help them to know how things are done, what is expected of them, how to achieve certain things, etc.” (Mills, 1988:360). The impact of wider society is relevant here and its influence on the gendered relationships within organisations and the impact it has on, and the interrelationships with, the organisational culture. Gender relations within organisations reflect wider society, reflecting attitudes about women's roles as carers, engaged in the domestic, private sphere of home. This reflects the dominant discourse underlying society of male as breadwinner, female as homemaker. Within organisations therefore, women are seen as ‘invaders’, out of place and ‘abnormal’ (Sheppard, 1989). However, gender relations within the organisation are not determined exclusively by these “extra-organisational rules” (Mills, 1989) from the wider society, they are also determined by a range of internal rules. These, Mills (*ibid*) suggests are: “technical rules”, the day to day organisational processes, “social-regulative rules”, the norms of behaviour, “State rules”, legislation and its impact on the organisation, “strategic rules”, which determine the organisation’s location within the environment so as to exploit local conditions, and, finally, “reproductive rules” where the gender blind nature of analysis is perpetuated and unquestioned.

By focusing on gendered cultures, there is the opportunity to examine the varying levels in which organisations and sections of organisations are more or less gendered in favour of masculinity (Alvesson and Billing, 1992). The gendered culture is manifest in a wealth of practices which serve to marginalise women. These gendered organisational processes (which are interlinked with those of class and race) may be

understood as concrete activities, i.e., ...“advantage and disadvantage, exploitation and control, action and emotion, meaning and identity, are all patterned through and in terms of a distinction between male and female, masculine and feminine.” (Acker, 1990:146). These gendered processes may then be subdivided down to a set of interrelated activities which together build up the gendered culture and can be seen as the concrete outcome of gendered discursive practices within the organisation (Mills, 1988; Acker, 1990; Harlow *et al*, 1995). Firstly, the gendered division of labour can be seen in terms of hierarchy, sex-role stereotyping, rewards structures, authority and power, core/periphery split and the nature of the work. For example, extra-organisational rules or codes (Gherardi, 1995) are embodied within the sex-segregation of work. Whilst not being too deterministic over this issue, writers such as Gherardi (1995), Kanter (1977) and Ferguson (1984) have illustrated how women’s lack of power and opportunity within the organisation results in a lowering of ambitions, commitment and provides a self fulfilling prophesy resulting in behaviour which portrays women as being less ambitious and committed than men. Kanter (1977) argues that organisational sex-segregation perpetuates and confirms women’s marginalisation, where low paid, repetitive, meaningless work results in women focusing on life outside work and therefore being seen by the members of the culture as having low organisational commitment. This argument is confirmed by Ferguson (1984) who argues that “women are not powerless because they are feminine; they are feminine because they are powerless, because it is a way of dealing with the requirements of subordination” (1984:95). Thus there are many books and courses available to train women to be good organisational workers, to fit in with the

culture (whilst never recognising that the culture is in fact gendered). As stated earlier, the emphasis is on women as abnormal and as the aberration.

Secondly, the creation of gendered symbols and images which justify and legitimise gendered divisions. Hence senior business managers are seen as thrusting, ruthless, rational and sexual (Calas and Smircich, 1992a; J. Acker, 1992), embodied in notions of macho management. Similarly, many professions are gendered in the images and symbols of masculinity as well as class (Crompton and Sanderson, 1990). Thirdly, the gendered social relations at work reinforce male dominance. This is noticeable in the operation of sexuality at work and forms of sexual harassment and sexual dominance to maintain male power (Pringle, 1989). Finally, J. Acker (1992) notes how the gendered processes impact on the individual's self identity, where the individual constitutes notions of self through understandings of the organisation's opportunities and structures of work and the demands for gender appropriate behaviour. This leads to Sheppard (1989) arguing that women are constantly walking a tightrope of acceptability in the organisation.

However, Mills (1989) observes that individuals bring into the organisation a sense of self which is not fixed but in a constant state of flux. Thus, a gendered culture, like the meaning ascribed to gender itself, is not fixed, monolithic and uncontested, but is constantly changing and reinforcing; culture is processual, it is a site where meanings are contested. Adopting a cultural framework offers the opportunity to challenge and critique the sexist nature of organisations (Clegg and Higgins, 1987; Mills, 1989; Marshall, 1993; Gherardi, 1995). As Gherardi (1995) notes, taking a cultural

perspective enables a questioning of how “the symbolic construction of gender comes about, how it varies from one culture to another and how the preferences system sustains social thought on gender” (1995:19). Change, Mills argues, comes from challenging the way in which individuals see and understand the world. Examples of resistance, cited by writers, range from the development of female subcultures in manufacturing industry (Pollert, 1981), in universities with the setting up of Women’s Studies degrees (Davies and Holloway, 1995), women’s organisations (Ryan, 1979), challenging malestream organisational theory (Calas and Smircich, 1992a, 1992b), through to day-to-day resistance such as wearing low cut dresses and heavy perfume (Maddock and Parkin, 1993). Men too resist the organisational pressures to conform through the wearing of beards, pony tails, and ‘wild’ ties (Gherardi, 1995). However, Mills also argues that such challenges should not overwrite the need for wider structural changes in the nature of society.

Analysing organisations as gendered cultures acknowledges the difficulties of change as the focus is on the multiple layers of discourses that permeate every aspect of the organisation and which work to subordinate women. Women’s experience within organisations is frequently one of managing their gender, of blending in. Moving from this towards the ‘claiming of a rightful place’ (Sheppard, 1989) involves challenging the gender assumptions and stereotypes which subordinate women at work and in society. Women do reflect on their experience and their existence within organisations and this is the route to change. Constructing alternative discourses means challenging prevailing culture(s) and the organisational practices which serve to reinforce it and in doing so offers an opening for resistance and change.

The concept of culture can be used, therefore, as a short hand term to cover all these taken-for-granted, 'natural', unquestioned attitudes and behaviour, values and basic assumptions about the nature and function of the organisation and the role of women within it. Discourses operate through a range of techniques within the organisation, which function to discipline the individual and shape and control behaviour in ways which can assert male bias. It covers the wealth of practices, such as the use of language (Riley, 1983), dress (Sheppard, 1989), drinks after work and other informal networks, which can all serve to build up a picture of "otherness" for women.

Conclusions

This chapter has set out the historical developments of feminist approaches to understanding women in organisations. Early 'modernist' accounts focused on sex as the determining factor in explaining women's marginalised status in the labour market and organisations. Here, the issue was the various barriers which prevented women's full participation and advancement in the organisation. More recently, rather than focusing on reforming the organisation, there has been a shift in attention towards transforming the organisation and society. Radical feminist approaches have put women at the centre of analysis, to understand organisations and organisational practices from a woman's perspective. Building on this 'Women's Voice' perspective, postmodern feminist analysis of organisations has challenged the essentialist notions underlying the 'Women's Voice' perspective, advocating a social constructionist approach. The aim of feminist writers coming from a postmodern

feminist perspective has been to deconstruct the knowledge of organisational theory to reveal the masculinist bias of knowledge and to re-write it from a gendered standpoint. An application of a postmodern influenced analysis of the gendered organisation is the notion of the gendered culture, made up of a network of dominant discourses which act to marginalise and subordinate women and perpetuate masculine hegemonic power. Resistance comes through revealing and challenging the gendered discourses within the organisational culture.

The notion of the gendered culture is taken up in Chapter 2. It is argued that while a number of theoretical perspectives are put forward in the literature to understand university organisations, they are gender-blind. This chapter has argued that organisations cannot be understood without a consideration of gender and this is the case for universities as for any other organisation. Chapter 2 examines women's accounts of university organisations as sites of gender construction, arguing that universities may be understood as gendered cultures where the gendered processes, practices and social relations are in favour of men and masculinity.

Chapter 2: Gendered University Cultures

Introduction

Since the early 1970s, alongside the wider feminist critique of gender inequality in organisations and society, women academics have documented the various ways in which they are marginalised and subordinated within academic institutions. However, these accounts stand in sharp contrast to the popular notion of the university as a community of scholars based on consensus decision making and the supposed gender-neutral measures of academic merit. Research into the structure and process of universities has thrown doubt on the existence of a community of scholars, suggesting that it is more a normative model than a reflection of individual academics' experiences of university organisations. Feminist analysis of university organisations has argued that universities are patriarchal institutions (see Adams, 1993; Acker, 1994; Morley, 1994; Davies and Holloway, 1995; Heward, 1996). Furthermore, recent writing on the university organisation, drawing from a feminist postmodern framework has questioned the nature of the gendered university culture, focusing on the underlying gendered discourses of the academy and the academic profession, which favour male values and masculinity.

This chapter starts by setting out the various ways in which university organisations have been analysed. It is argued that such models, like that of organisational analysis in general, are underpinned by gender-blind assumptions. The chapter then presents

feminist accounts of the university, which illustrate that, contrary to the image of meritocracy perpetuated in gender-blind university organisational analysis, universities may be understood as patriarchal institutions imbued with masculinist discourses. The second half of the chapter sets out the various ways in which women academics have documented and analysed the gendered substructure of the university culture and their experiences within it. It is argued that a postmodern feminist framework is both useful and revealing for understanding the nature of the masculinist discourses making up the university culture.

Models of University Organisations

The traditional model of the university¹ is that of the ‘community of scholars’. Here the university is typified by the image of the autonomous and independent guild of dons, engaged in the “disinterested and often serendipitous pursuit of truth” (Kogan, 1988). This portrayal of the university has its roots within a functionalist paradigm, where the university is seen as a system of shared power, non hierarchical and where decisions are reached through a ‘dynamic consensus’, achieved through the common needs and commitments of the members (Millet, 1962). Underpinning this traditional image lie two much valued assumptions on the purpose and role of the university and of the academic profession.

¹ When discussing the traditional purpose and image of the university institution, this refers to the ‘old’ university sector, prior to the removal of the binary divide and the reclassification of polytechnic institutions as universities, following the Further and Higher Education Act, in 1992.

Firstly, the purpose of the university is said to be threefold: as generators, disseminators and repositories of knowledge; as developers of the nation's workforce; and as apparatuses of change (Allen, 1988). Universities are seen as having a role as a centre of alternative opinion and of fundamental importance to the achievement and maintenance of this, is that they set their own goals, standards and curriculum, hence the much cherished notion of 'academic freedom'. The notion of academic freedom is underpinned by a sociological maxim that objective knowledge is best generated and disseminated by independent and autonomous institutions, with members of the academic profession enjoying comparative freedom.

The second fundamental principle is that universities must be free from government intervention. Thus the role of the state must be *laissez-faire*, based on this unquestionable value of academic freedom. The role of the University Grants Committee (UGC)¹ as "progenitor of the most enlightened principles of state conduct towards universities" (Berndahl, 1977:194) clearly illustrates this. The UGC's role has been described as a 'buffer' which, on the one hand acted as guardian of the liberties of the universities and, on the other hand, as distributor of government funding in the nation's interests (Becher and Kogan, 1992). Traditionally, the role of the State was simply one of facilitator, providing the necessary resources and leaving

¹ The University Grants Committee (UGC) was replaced by the Universities Funding Council (UFC) following the Education Reform Act (1988). This, in turn, became the Higher Education Funding Council (HEFC) in 1993 when it merged with the Polytechnic and Colleges Funding Council (PCFC), on removal of the binary divide between these two sectors. Accompanying these changes was a change in the composition of the members of the funding body, with a stronger private sector business influence and an increasingly interventionist role in terms of managing the universities through a variety of performance indicators, stricter financial controls and formal reports.

both the institution and the individuals within it independent and autonomous. Accountability for standards was ensured through a system of peer review in the assessment of 'academic merit'.

This community of scholars model can be seen to be held in the hearts and minds of the academic profession. As Harman (1990) observes, "At the heart of every contemporary university there is said to be this traditional university ideal which is characterised by an extreme degree of decentralisation, democratisation and cohesion" (1990:32). However, the extent to which this model exists, or ever existed in some former 'golden age' is debateable. It has been argued that the 'community of scholars' image of the university is more of a normative model than a reflection of reality (Halsey and Trow, 1971; Lockwood and Davies, 1985; Kogan, 1988; Becher and Kogan, 1992; Harman, 1990). Despite this, the myth of the community of scholars has considerable strength in the minds of the academic world and has resulted in much confusion in separating the beliefs about what university organisations are like from the actual reality (Lockwood and Davies, 1985).

Several alternative models have been put forward for understanding and analysing university organisations which may be contrasted with this dominant image of the community of scholars (Becher, 1984; Harman, 1990). These range from bureaucracy influenced analysis through to radical, Marxist influenced ones. In particular, the concept of bureaucracy has been applied to universities but with only limited success. Mintzberg (1979) suggests that universities, like hospitals, can be perceived of as "professional bureaucracies" where decision making is decentralised

and democratic and where there are poor organisational controls. Thus universities are seen to be 'bottom-heavy' organisations. Closely linked to the idea of the collegium, the image of the professional bureaucracy emphasises a large degree of autonomy on the part of its members with authority and power based on knowledge and professional expertise, rather than hierarchy. The emphasis is on the use of "value-rationality" as the guiding principle, where academics have a fundamental belief in the values of the organisation for their own sake, irrespective of the effect adherence to such values has on the organisation's performance (Satow, 1975).

The main limitation of the professional bureaucracy model, as with the collegium model, for understanding university organisations, is that it portrays an image of a single unified body of scholars. Several writers have argued that universities are more complex and 'variegated' in nature (Parker and Jary, 1994), acting more like "organized anarchies" (Cohen and March, 1974), or "multiversities" (Kerr, 1973), where conflict is endemic within the system. Within the organised anarchy model, for example, the university is seen to be made up of warring tribes of disciplinarians (Harman, 1990). Here universities are viewed as being anti-managerial, or have limited manageability, valuing high levels of academic independence and with stronger allegiance being paid to the individual discipline than to the institution. Academics look to their status, reputation and identity from their discipline, which transcends institutional boundaries. As Baldrige *et al* (1977) observe, the university "is an organization in which generous resources allow people to go in different directions without coordination by a central authority" (1977:8, quoted in Harman, 1990:32). Within the 'multiversity' model offered by Kerr (1973), the university may also be

perceived as being a plural organisation, typified as being made up of “a series of individuals held together by a common grievance over car parking” (1973:20). Weick (1976) similarly, offers the notion of universities as being ‘loosely-coupled systems’.

More pertinent to recent developments in the management of universities, Kogan (1988) argues that universities can now be seen to be moving towards a more “dependent institutions” model. Here the aims of the university are set not by its members, but by its sponsors. In particular, Kogan argues, polytechnics and the civic universities established during the nineteenth century are more akin to this model, being appendages to the economy. As polytechnics were founded with very different aims and funding systems from those of the traditional university, they have a different organisational structure and management. The aim for this public sector higher education was to develop a system which would be of equal value to the universities yet would operate under public control. Despite Crosland recommending a model of self management for public sector institutions on the same lines as universities, in reality, polytechnics were very much under the management of the local authority, regional advisory boards, the National Advisory Body for Public Sector Higher Education (NAB) and the Department of Education and Science (DES). Whilst polytechnics had a measure of internal self government, they were clearly under the control of the local authority in everything from the maintenance of buildings through to the setting of conditions of work for academic staff. Consequently, the emphasis on managing and management of institutions and academic staff has always been stronger in the polytechnic sector. Many writers have commented on the developments in the management and funding of universities, post 1979, as

conforming to this dependent institution, or managerialist model (see Kogan, 1988; Pollitt, 1990a; Becher and Kogan, 1992). The development in the system of higher education from the 1960s, it is argued, can be typified, then, as a move to an increasingly managed system. As Barnett (1990) observes, the so-called "crisis" in higher education is that of its legitimacy, i.e., the independent pursuit of knowledge has become out of date. These issues and the impact on the academic profession are discussed in detail, in Chapter 3.

The concept of corporate culture has been taken up by several writers as a framework for understanding universities (Becher, 1981; Dill, 1982; Masland, 1985; Tierney, 1988; Harman, 1990). Much of this work draws from the more functionalist interpretations of culture, emphasising the unifying and integrating aspects, or 'esprit de corps' of culture (Clark, 1983; Masland, 1985; Tierney, 1988) and creating and managing cultures (Dill, 1982). However, Harman's (1990) study of the culture of the University of Melbourne draws on an interpretative framework, whereby culture may be understood as a metaphor for understanding the university organisation. This is seen to overcome some of the problems of partiality and normativity characterised by many of the models of university organisations. Harman's (*ibid.*) research reveals the presence of several cultures and sub cultures making up the university and these cultures are not always in harmony together in the manner portrayed in the more functionalist interpretations of the concept.

More radical models have also been offered for understanding university organisations. From a radical structuralist framework, universities have been

portrayed as functioning to perpetuate and sustain capitalism (Halsey and Trow, 1971; Harman, 1990). Harman, however, is critical of neo-Marxist models for understanding universities, as being too deterministic, arguing that as universities in effect 'bite the hand that feeds them'; by critically appraising their benefactors, they cannot be seen to be upholders of the system. However, the extent to which universities may be perceived as centres of alternative thinking may also be challenged, given the role played by senior academics, serving as gatekeepers in determining what is acceptable and unacceptable knowledge (Burrell, 1993). Drawing from a postmodern framework, Burrell argues that universities act as arenas of disciplines, (in the Foucauldian interpretation) 'disciplined' in every sense by these disciplines, determining what is normal, acceptable and 'sayable' (Burrell *ibid.*). Burrell is critical of offering any ideal type of university structure, arguing instead that universities can be understood as being a plurality of competing discourses, some of which are more dominant than others. Other postmodern informed models have argued that universities may be understood from a micropolitics framework, as arenas of conflicting and competing subcultures, made up of dominant and subordinate discourses (Ball, 1987; Hoyle, 1988).

Gendered University Organisations

It was argued in Chapter 1 that much of what is understood about organisations is based on gender-blind analysis. This can be equally applied to most models of university organisations, where the influence of gender on understanding the structure and processes has remained unquestioned. Functionalist based analysis of universities

therefore, forms the dominant perspective and is presented as neutral and therefore above debate or criticism (Ball, 1990). However, the dominant image of the community of scholars stands in sharp contrast with feminist accounts of university life. Universities, like other organisations, cannot be understood in gender neutral terms (Heward, 1994; Morley, 1994; Thomas, 1996). Taking up the critique of mainstream OT, set out in Chapter 1, analysis of university organisations is based on unquestioned masculinist discourses, i.e., the models generated, the organisations upon which they are based, and the assumptions of the researchers themselves, are gender-blind. Furthermore, the lack of questioning of the gendered assumptions underlying university organisational analysis serves to perpetuate the myth of the meritocratic academy.

There have now been two decades of writing documenting the experiences of women academics within universities. Much of this research is anecdotal in nature, consisting of women academics reflecting on their own experiences. There is less research available which is grounded in larger, more comprehensive empirical data across institutions, and drawing from both old and new universities¹. The overall picture provided by these personal accounts is one of marginalisation, powerlessness and estrangement (Coser, 1981; Spender, 1982; Rendel, 1984; Simeone, 1987; Acker, 1980, 1992, 1994; Webb, 1988; Davies and Holloway, 1994; Morley and Walsh, 1995, 1996). The publication of conference proceedings from women academics'

¹ This lack of detailed empirical work reflects the lack of funding offered to support research of this nature, further emphasising as well as reinforcing women academics' marginalisation within the academic institution and the generation of critical feminist knowledge.

networks, such as Women's Higher Education Network (WHEN) and the Women's Studies Network (WSN) has provided a useful platform for women academics to reflect on their experiences and construct a feminist critique of the gendered academy (see, for example, Davies *et al*, 1994; Evans *et al*, 1994; Morley and Walsh, 1996). In addition to accounts and critiques of the patriarchal nature of academic institutions based on participant observation, there have also been individual or small case studies, based mainly on semi structured interviews (McAuley, 1987; Whitehead, 1987; Spurling, 1991; Bagilhole, 1993; Handley, 1994; Morley, 1994, Heward *et al*, 1995; Farish, *et al*, 1995) and general statistical surveys of women academics' horizontal and vertical segregation within university institutions (Blackstone and Fulton, 1975; Aziz, 1990; Jackson, 1990; Parks, 1991; Halsey, 1992; Lovell and Leicester, 1993). Comparative and single case study research in other countries reveals that women academics' subordination is consistent around the world (Blackstone and Fulton, 1974, 1975; DiNitto *et al*, 1982; Sutherland, 1985; Simeone, 1987; Lundy and Warne, 1990; Toren, 1993; Wolffensperger, 1993; Beers and Mantel, 1994).

The following sections set out the various ways in which women academics have analysed their marginalised status within the university organisation. Feminist accounts of university organisations can be divided loosely along the theoretical frameworks, set out in Chapter 1, namely, liberal, radical (including marxist and socialist) and postmodern feminist. However, before considering this analysis in more detail, a brief history of women academics' participation in universities is presented,

accompanied by a statistical overview of the current position of women academics in UK universities.

Women's participation in universities

The entry of women into the academic profession mirrors that of other professions such as medicine¹, law and the Civil Service. Women were first admitted into British universities in 1869 when they were allowed to study at London University. However, it was not until the end of the 1890's that women were able to attend all the major universities and sit for degrees (the exception being Cambridge, where women were not awarded equal status with male students until 1948). During this period the women only colleges of Girton and Newnham at Cambridge and Somerville and Lady Margaret Hall in Oxford opened. Women students studying at these colleges faced a conflict over their role and the desirability of them taking exams, with women at Newnham and Lady Margaret Hall taking easier versions of the degree (Parks, 1991). These early women students faced a constant struggle for acceptance against the common stereotype that education somehow affect middle class women's femininity and marriage potential (Delamont, 1989). Throughout the twentieth century the number of both female and male students has risen dramatically. This widening of access is partly due to the increased demand for university based qualifications from many of the professions and semi-professions (Halsey and Trow, 1971). Much of the

¹ As medical degrees were taken in universities, this profession was clearly not open to women until they were permitted to sit for degrees in universities. Women were able to take medical degrees in Edinburgh from 1885 but could only become a member of the BMA in 1893 (Kamm, 1966).

mass expansion in higher education from the 1960s onwards was made up of female undergraduates. Between 1970 and 1988, the number of female undergraduates rose by 52,700, whilst male undergraduates rose by 11,400 (Halsey, 1992). This was further helped by the setting up of polytechnics in the late 1960s and the recruitment of non-traditional entrants and more flexible modes of study (Robinson, 1968, quoted in Parks, 1991). In fact, during its first few years, the number of women students in the polytechnic sector outweighed male counterparts; however, this has since evened out. The ratio of male to female undergraduates is now roughly 50:50, although women are still much more likely to take subjects stereotypically associated with women's jobs and women's roles.

Despite the increase in the participation of women at undergraduate level, the entry of women into the academic profession has not been on anywhere near the same scale. As with other professions and most white collar work, marriage bars operated which were not removed until after the second World War. By the mid 1960s, women academics made up just 10% of the total membership of the profession, rising to 11.6% by the mid 1970s (with 13.6% of polytechnic staff being women) (Halsey, 1992). Since the 1970s there has been a steady rise in the numbers of women academics in both universities and polytechnics. A frequently espoused assumption (common to analysis of gender inequality in other professions) is that as the number of women students increase then this will naturally feed through to increased numbers of academics in total as well as in the higher levels of the hierarchy. However, the huge increase of women students during the 1960s has not worked its way through into the

academic profession and change is slower than an extrapolation of the statistics might suggest (Sutherland, 1985). What is more, the expansion of universities during the 1960s, Sutherland (*ibid.*) argues, has meant that many Chairs were filled by relatively young people, blocking promotion opportunities for latecomers. The recent funding cuts in universities has led to fewer promotion opportunities and thus this situation is unlikely to change (Davies and Holloway, 1995).

Current statistics show that, despite recent increases in the number of women academics, there is still a gender imbalance across the hierarchy. Not only are women the minority, they are also much more likely to be at the bottom end of the hierarchy and in less secure posts than their male counterparts. The most recent statistics for academic staff (1994/95) show that women represent roughly a third of all full-time staff in each grade, except in senior posts. Only 3% of women academics are Professors and only 17% Readers and Senior Lecturers (HESA, 1996) (See Table 1 below). The last set of statistics published before the removal of the binary divide between universities and polytechnics, showed that women academics' positions were roughly the same in both sectors, despite formalised systems of equal opportunities being more developed in the former polytechnic sector (Anand, 1992) (See table 2, below).

Table 1: *Distribution of Academic Staff Across Ranks by Sex in the UK, 1994/95*

	Men %	Women %
Professor	13	3
Reader/Senior Lecturer	30	17
Lecturer	57	80

Source: Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA), (1996)

Table 2: Distribution of Academic Staff in 'Old' University and Polytechnic Sectors, Across Ranks by Sex in the UK, 1989/90

	'Old' universities		Polytechnics ⁽¹⁾	
	Men	Women	Men	Women
	%	%	%	%
Professor	16	3.5	8	3
Reader/Senior Lecturer	30	17.5	22	11
Lecturer	54	79	70	86

Source: *Universities' Statistical Record (USR) (1989/90)* and Department of Education, table B21/90, March 1990.

Notes:

⁽¹⁾ Figures for polytechnics made up as follows. Professor figure comprises all staff above grade of Principal Lecturer. Reader/Senior Lecturer figure made up of Principal Lecturers and Readers. Lecturer figure made up of Lecturer and Senior Lecturer. Senior Lectureship in the old university sector is broadly similar, in pay and status as the Principal Lecturer grade in the polytechnics.

Tables 1 and 2 show the proportion of men and women at each grade. Table 3 shows the relative proportion of men and women at each level in the hierarchy.

Table 3 Full-time Academic Staff in UK Institutions by Grade and Gender, 1994/5

	Professor	Reader/ Senior Lecturer	Lecturer
	%	%	%
Men	93	84	69
Women	7	16	31
Total %	100.0	100.0	100.0
Total number	7,424	18,766	42,925

Source: *Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA), (1996)*

The table clearly indicates that there is a huge gender imbalance across the hierarchy, with the vast majority of Professorial posts being held by men. In 1997, only seven vice-chancellors of British universities were female (THES, 1997). The implications of this gender imbalance on university decision making are clear, as Acker (1994) points out:

Professors in British universities are the people who head departments, represent the university to the government, serve on working parties, act as external examiners, make hiring and promotion decisions. In many universities, the numbers of women professors can literally be counted on the fingers of one hand, while the men number in the hundreds (*ibid.*: 137).

Women academics are also more likely to have less secure contracts than their male counterparts (NATFHE, 1993; AUT, 1993b; Acker, 1994). Between 1981 and 1991, the number of staff working part-time rose by 162% in the old universities. By the early 1990s, 8% of all academic staff in old universities were employed on a part-time basis (USR, 1993) and 9% of staff in the new universities (PCFC, 1991). Current statistics show that this trend is continuing, with academics classified as part-time making up 10% of the total number of academics in UK institution (HESA, 1996). Women academics are much more likely to be on part-time contracts, with 18% of women academics currently working on a part-time basis, compared with 7% of men (HESA, 1996). This trend towards flexible uses of academic labour was confirmed by both university teaching unions, NATFHE (1993) and the AUT (1993) in surveys on part time working . Both surveys noted that women were more likely to be employed on a part-time basis than men. What is more, whilst male academics on part-time contracts usually had other employment activities, such as consultancy, for women this was likely to be their only source of income. For women working part-time the problems of marginalisation are further compounded by low pay, loss of pension provision, low job security and lack of office space and secretarial support. Women in both studies felt that their teaching commitments left little time for research which was seen as the route to gaining a full time post. In the AUT survey, only 4% of women said they chose to work part time, with 41% saying they worked part time because of childcare commitments. The same results were found in the NATFHE survey, where many women respondents said that they would prefer to work full time if adequate childcare arrangements were made.

Current statistics also reveal that people with a disability are significantly under represented in the academic profession, with 1% of academic staff recorded as having a disability (HESA, 1996). The lack of statistical information on class, race and sexual orientation of academic staff makes it difficult to assess the extent to which these characteristics affect academic experience (Kitzinger, 1990). Furthermore, the lack of statistics collected by individual universities serves to undermine declarations of being an equal opportunity employer, given that understanding the current situation is regarded as the essential first step towards change (Williams *et al*, 1989).

Therefore, the statistics illustrating the gender makeup of academic staff in UK universities illustrate a clear gender imbalance in the academic profession. The causes of this have been attributed to a range of factors, most commonly underpinned by liberal feminist assumptions.

Feminist Analyses of Universities

Liberal Analysis

As was pointed out in Chapter 1, analysis falling within the liberal framework forms the dominant discourse for explaining women's marginalised status in organisations. Consequently, most of the analysis on women academics can be seen to fall within the liberal framework. The liberal/equal opportunities framework also underpins UK discrimination legislation and is therefore reflected in individual university responses to developing equal opportunities policy. Surveys on equal opportunities (EO) within universities have noted the general belief amongst academic decision makers that,

fundamentally, universities are meritocratic organisations with equal opportunities for all, with statements in university charters and mission statements on EO being seen as evidence of EO practice (Williams *et al*, 1989; Farish *et al*, 1995). Formalised EO tends to be more developed in the former polytechnic sector than in the old universities (Farish *et al*, 1995). Cottrell (1992) notes that ex-polytechnics were more likely to have signed up to Opportunity 2000 - the government-led initiative to increase the number of women in top jobs. The old university sector, however, tends to be more resistant to the introduction of university-wide EO initiatives, as part of wider resistance to changes, seen to be an attack on their exclusivity, elitism and prestige (Powney and Weiner, 1992; Heward and Taylor, 1993). In both sectors, examples of discriminatory practices are viewed as temporary aberrations in an overall meritocratic organisation, where power is seen as being equally vested in each of the members, regardless of age, status and sex, and decisions are made collectively in committees. Furthermore, there are many who argue that university teaching is an 'ideal profession' for women, "...one of the most attractive careers for women in paid employment in modern society" (Halsey, 1992:216), given its flexible hours, conveniently placed holidays and women's so-called 'natural' teaching skills (Williams *et al*, 1974; Hansard Society, 1990). This traditional wisdom is illustrated in a 1960s publication by the International Federation of University Women (1966), where it was commented that:

"Women have always been admitted into the teaching profession, unhampered by any traditional prejudice against them; on the contrary, it is generally accepted that women have special gifts for educating the young, teaching them and forming their character" (IFUW, 1966:20, quoted in Halsey, 1992:220).

Explanations of women academics' so-called 'failure to compete' within the liberal framework, focus on the psychological and structural barriers which prevent women from competing equally with men. Consequently, they highlight problems such as sex stereotyping, socialisation, conflicting roles of work and home life and insufficient investment in qualifications (Acker, 1994). In its crudest form, women academics' marginalisation has been attributed to women's lower levels of motivation, lack of ruthlessness and self determination. It is argued that, because of the lack of overt pressure to publish, women 'take the easy way out' and devote their energies to the teaching and administration aspects of the job (Sutherland, 1985). Within such analysis, explanations for women's marginalised status are attributed to women academics' lower research activities, lack of assertiveness in meetings, low participation in cross university committees through 'inappropriate' socialisation. These all shift the fault on to the individual woman and thus suggest that it is the woman rather than the culture which needs to change. In addition, still within the liberal framework, structural barriers may be highlighted: that women face conflicting roles of home and work; that they take time out at critical points of the career ladder for raising a family; that a woman's academic merit is informally judged to be of lesser value than her male colleagues. There is a tendency in much of this literature to attribute most of women's failure to get on to the demands of domestic life.

Sutherland's (1985) survey of women academics' experiences of universities in five European countries; France, UK, East and West Germany and Finland is an example of research drawing largely from a liberal/equal opportunities set of assumptions. The research, based on 244 interviews with women academics in 10 universities, revealed

that women academics' marginalisation was a common feature in all of the countries studied. Whilst the research is largely focused on how, rather than why women academics are marginalised, Sutherland's research does provide a detailed document of the various ways in which the institution and the profession serve to discriminate against women. However, whilst this research documents some of the symptoms of this discrimination, it fails to question the underlying gendered substructure of the university.

Research based on statistical surveys may also be criticised for failing to take into account the importance of context in understanding women academics' experiences. Abstracted from their setting, statistics about women's participation in university institutions can ignore the asymmetrical power relations within the institution (Morley, 1994). This can be seen in Halsey's survey, where male and female academics' publication rates were compared, with women's lower publication rates being put forward as an explanation for their lower status in the institutional hierarchy. Failure to invest in technical qualifications and failure to produce research output (at the right age) is one of the most frequent explanations put forward in the literature for women academics' subordinated position, mainly attributed to family/domestic commitments. Echoing human capital theory, Halsey's (1992) research, for example, concludes that women academics fail to compete with their male counterparts because of their lower publication rates and inferior qualifications:

“The outcome is that women in this privileged profession put themselves, or are put, at a disadvantage in the competition to produce research. They are partially subordinated to men. Yet, to repeat, we cannot offer a comprehensive explanation of the markedly poorer prospects of professorial promotion which have so far been women's lot” (Halsey, 1992:234).

Similarly, Sutherland indicates how the most commonly cited reason for women academics' marginalised status, from her interviews, was family commitments. Within this functionalist based argument, it is argued that, because women have domestic commitments they are unable to compete on the same footing as men. Toren's (1993) research indicates that it is not so much a problem of role conflict but the fitting in of child rearing at the right time with career cycles. Time taken to amass qualifications, Toren argues, is used as an informal 'rule of thumb' measure to assess the calibre of individual academics. Given the fact that many women start a family at the same period in life when an academic career is at its critical stage of development, assessing publishing productivity against age becomes a stratifying technique, distinguishing between individual academic careers and reinforcing gender differentials. Added to this, the day-to-day demands of family life and the restrictions on mobility all present further problems for women academics (Sutherland, 1985; Leonard and Malina, 1994; Acker, 1994).

The belief that women put their family first is then reflected in many of the informal assumptions made about women academics. As Sutherland (1985) argues, women tend to be perceived as being less reliable than men, with domestic demands being used as a way of rationalising discrimination. Statistical research has attempted to assess the validity of such claims, with inconclusive results (Stiver Lie and O'Leary, 1990). The key limitation to much of the research focusing on domestic responsibilities is that it fails to move beyond the problem to questioning the causes. Studies which have attempted to contextualise the problem have questioned the

institutional arrangements such as the arranging of meetings in the evening, the lack of childcare facilities, informal age restrictions, and inflexible timetabling (Spurling, 1991). Other strategies noted within the liberal approach include the usual array of assertiveness training, 'dressing for success' and for those who can afford it, private childcare and home help.

This image of the meritocratic organisation perpetuates the myth of gender neutrality. As Williams *et al* (1989), in their survey on equal opportunities policies in universities in England and Wales, concluded:

“A tone of moral superiority or complacency plus ignorance of the issues and available evidence was pervasive. Individual merit was seen as a neutral and non-negotiable attribute, and discrimination or bias as unacceptable but most unlikely to occur” (Williams *et al*, 1989:24).

In their survey, Williams *et al* (*ibid.*) found generally a poor awareness of equal opportunities, particularly in the old university sector. What is more, suggestions that academic institutions are patriarchal, they argue, strike at the very image of the liberal academy and the notions of academic merit and academic freedom and are therefore seen to be attacks on the profession itself. Referring to the wider issue of equal opportunities, Williams *et al* (1989) note the ways in which senior management marginalise equal opportunities initiatives, taking the publication of equal opportunities statements as evidence that equality has been achieved. This then serves to legitimise, through bureaucratisation, existing inequalities, reinforcing complacency. Women academics' lack of achievement is then rationalised as their own personal failing to compete in the 'academic game' (McAuley, 1987). Sutherland's research is a good example of this, where the main reason for women

academic's marginalisation is seen to be their 'life cycles'. This is further illustrated by Sutherland's comment that furthering the research would be through comparing women's responses with male colleagues. This "male-as-norm bias" (Acker, 1994), the comparing of the disadvantaged woman with the superior, advantaged (male) group's characteristics is never questioned under the liberal analysis. The research question then is 'why have women academics failed to match up to men?'. However, the so-called naturalness of these masculine norms is rarely questioned and the dominant discourse of the liberal perspective remains unchallenged and unquestioned in much of the analysis. As Acker comments: "We ask why....women fail to apply for promotion like men, without questioning why..... or how career structures exclude women" (*ibid.*:132). Instead, research should question how certain discourses become dominant and in what ways these discourses serve to marginalise women academics within the gendered academy. Only through an understanding of this can analysis deconstruct the 'naturalness' of these truth claims to reveal the underlying gender bias.

Whilst providing a detailed description of the various manifestations of discrimination within the university, liberal analysis tends to concentrate on the signifiers of women's subordination rather than providing underlying explanations (Morley, 1994). Added to this, by focusing on strategies which encourage women to 'behave like men', the analysis is directed at women's inability to cope with the demands of the institution, rather than the androcentric nature of universities as organisations. Whilst it is important to understand the gendered processes at play within the institution, it is

necessary to see these as part of a wider gendered substructure, or culture, which systematically asserts masculine discourses as normal and natural.

Radical and Socialist feminist Analysis

Taking up the limitations of the liberal framework, radical and socialist feminist analysis has presented a power-based perspective of the university. The university is a patriarchal institution where male hegemony is seen as natural and unproblematic. This is the case regardless of country or culture, as concluded by Coser: “Academia is a masculine realm everywhere, whether in the US., Britain, the Soviet Union, or elsewhere” (Coser, 1981:18). Similarly, as the Hansard Society Report on Women at the Top, concluded that: “It is wholly unacceptable that the centres of modern academic teaching and excellence in Britain should remain bastions of male power and privilege” (1990:11).

Coming from a radical feminist perspective, Adams (1983), for example, argues that universities are patriarchal institutions where invisible boundaries are erected by men to exclude women. Contrary to the meritocratic ‘myth’, the reality is that the “university has been from its beginnings a patriarchal institution and is committed to remaining so.....There is only one sex: male. The naive belief that the University is or can be a heterosexual system is mistaken...” (Adams, 1983: 135). Similarly, Acker (1980) has drawn attention to the various ways in which hegemonic male power of the university can be perceived as being embedded in the everyday life of the institution. Acker’s work highlighted three key ways in which female academics

experience the feeling of “otherness”, namely: conflicting demands of the ‘greedy institutions’ of home life and an academic career - institutions where the work is never done; the relative powerlessness of minority women within the male dominated institution; and the male domination of knowledge and practice. Taking each of these three issues, Acker concludes that the discrimination facing women academics lies deep within the structure of higher education.

Drawing on socialist feminist analysis, Aziz (1990), notes the increased use of part-time working and short contracts for women academics, further marginalising women academics into a secondary labour market, or reserve army within universities. Women academics, Aziz argues, are increasingly making up an academic proletariat within the profession, carrying out the teaching aspects of the job, leaving male colleagues to conduct more high profile work such as research.

The strategies adopted by radical and socialist feminists in addressing the subordinated status of women in the university, tend to be, by definition, more long term in focus as they involve the removal of capitalist and/or patriarchal social relations. However, more short term strategies include the setting up of women academic networks, consciousness raising and increased access to universities. For radical feminists, the focus is more on producing woman-centred knowledge, voicing women-centred discourses, and finding space for women within the university, for example through the setting up of Women’s Studies courses (Evans *et al*, 1994).

Whilst liberal analysis tends to ignore the underlying gender divisions of academic life, shifting the responsibility on to the individual to change, radical approaches, which point to wider structural forms of domination, only offer long term solutions, calling for major changes in society. Moves to develop a “radical oppositional culture” (Davies and Holloway, 1995) of Women’s Studies courses (Walsh, 1994) contribute to providing a support system and generate critical scholarship in the shorter term but face difficulties in terms of resources and acceptance from the mainstream decision makers. A feminist postmodern analysis, as Weedon (1987) argues, focusing on the micropolitics of women’s oppression, enables the moving away from analysis at the macrostructure level of transformative change found in radical feminism. The focus is on the micropolitics of power, examining how women as academics are constituted as subordinate members of the academy and the impact this has on the production of meaning and identity.

Postmodern Feminist Analysis

Universities may be perceived as gendered cultures, made up of a network of interwoven discourses, which permeate the entire organisation and which work to subordinate women. The notion of a gendered university culture covers all the taken-for-granted, unquestioned attitudes, behaviour, values and basic assumptions about the nature and role of the institution and the role of women within it. It includes the wealth of practices which render women academics’ participation undervalued, unrecognised and marginalised, leading to an overwhelming feeling of ‘otherness’ (Acker, 1980). For example, the judging of academic merit serves to create and

perpetuate a particular hegemonic masculinity (Heward, 1994). The reliance on informal peer assessment as part of the selection process, as well as the composition of interview panels being predominantly (or all) male, as well as the tendency to recruit in your own image, makes it more likely that senior academics will select 'one of the chaps' from the 'old boy's network' (Sutherland, 1985; Beers and Mantel, 1994). Senior academics, who are mostly male, serve as gatekeepers (Heward *et al.*, 1995) deciding who may enter the academy, who may shape the discourses of power, and therefore who may control the intellectual space (Foucault, 1979; Bourdieu, 1988; Burrell, 1993). Furthermore, Acker (1994) argues that it is most likely to be male academics carrying out the role of peer judgement in promotions, which, given the fact that few are familiar with gender research serves to disadvantage women academics further. Those who have not been sponsored, or mentored, find it difficult to have their voices heard. Mentorship is considered essential for receiving career advice such as 'tip offs' on job vacancies and promotions opportunities, as well as information on research contracts, publishing work, the opportunity to engage in joint research with established academics, and so on (Delamont, 1989). The role of informal networking is also seen as an important source of information about career development and a way of self promotion. Activities such as evening drinks, playing squash and golf, as well as travelling around the world taking part in the 'conference circuit' are often more difficult for women to participate in, complying with male patterns of sociability, and doubly difficult for those women with children, or dependent relatives (Leonard and Malina, 1995).

The gendered culture goes far deeper than the day-to-day practices. As Humm (1994) argues, the university is patriarchal not only procedurally, in its sexist practices, but also epistemically, in the underlying sexist discourses making up the institution. Universities as organisations can be seen to be “doubly gendered” in that organisations are gendered constructs (Martin, 1990; Harlow *et al*, 1995), based on values of efficiency, instrumentality, lack of emotion, rationality, and impersonality; traits seen as being ‘natural’ to men. The dominant organisational paradigm of the rational bureaucracy coincides with the ‘common sense’ stereotypes (McAuley, 1987), or ‘extra-organisational rules’ (Mills, 1988) of masculine traits as well as standing antithetical to the stereotypical image of feminine traits which are seen to be ‘naturally’ more emotional, empathetic and caring. Even more pernicious is the attitude that if a woman is intelligent then she cannot be feminine and attractive. As Whitehead (1987) observes, referring to female Oxbridge academics, “...the term ‘blue stocking’ has never been meant as a compliment.” (1987:114). Within organisations, therefore, women are stereotyped as being emotional and this is negative (Burrell, 1984). Consequently, they are seen as ‘invaders’ and abnormal’ (Sheppard, 1989).

The dominant discourses in the academic culture, which tell a woman academic that she is inferior, influence a woman academic’s self identity and self worth. Women academics frequently comment on having to ‘prove their worth’, on having to work harder than male colleagues (Bagilhole, 1993). They face a constant challenge not to internalise and treat as fact the discourses which tell them that they are not up to the

job, that they are “less brainy”, that they are less committed. For women who are mothers, these problems are exacerbated further. Not only do they face the practical difficulties of juggling the “greedy institutions” (Acker, 1980) of the family and the university but also the mothering identity, with its emphasis on nurturing and caring, further distances the image of a woman from that of the serious, efficient academic.

University cultures thus present a set of problems for women in terms of forming their identity as academics. They are confronted with a whole range of discourses which shape their notions of femininity but at the same time face organisational rules and practices which are male dominated (Mills, 1993).

Recent accounts of women academics have been written against a backdrop of transformative change in the nature, role and management of universities in the UK (see Chapter 3 for full details). This presents new challenges and opportunities for women academics. Whilst there is a well developed literature documenting women’s experiences of the gendered university culture, there is little research which focuses specifically on how the changing culture of higher education of recent years has affected women academics’ day-to-day experiences and the impact on their identities. What research there is on the impact of the new discourses of management on the university gender regime tends to be speculative in nature, questioning the nature of the new gender regimes which might emerge from this change (see Davies and Holloway, 1995; Pritchard, 1996). There is a need for detailed case study analysis as well as in-depth analysis of the changing character of university organisations and management from a gender perspective (Pritchard, 1996). However, research by

Maddock and Parkin (1993) on the impact of 'new managerialism' in the NHS and local government revealed a move towards a "smart macho" culture, driven by the ethos of the market place and with an intensification of work, which they found worked to further exclude and disadvantage women (*ibid.* 1993). The new environment of higher education is generally seen as having become more difficult for all academics but particularly so for women, given that discourses are seen to promote a "virility culture which institutionalizes bullying as a legitimate managerial and academic strategy" (Walsh, 1994:6) and which run counter to notions of mutuality and diversity, embodied in the principles of equality of opportunity. Equal opportunities is reduced to a university public relations exercise (Walsh, *ibid.*). Davies and Holloway (1994) suggest that the recent changes, which have brought in a new, intensified work regime in universities, will disproportionately affect women who are mothers, locking them more tightly into 'low profile' teaching/pastoral activities and reinforcing the sexual division of labour. However, it is also suggested that the new discourses of managerialism may offer opportunities for women, emphasising the postmodern notion of generative as well as oppressive power (Morley and Walsh, 1995). With the increased emphasis on management systems and formalised processes of assessment and accountability, a more transparent system may replace the informal 'gentleman's club', making university decision making more visible and therefore rendering it clearer for women to see how they might respond. Added to this, women may have opportunities to exploit the change and gain access to decision making by positioning themselves as change agents in the university, leading to the "unsettling of the embeddedness of masculinities in management" (Pritchard, 1996:236). Pritchard questions whether, with the introduction of the new

discourses of public sector management, and the high value given to research output and income generation, management roles in the institution might become 'feminised', associated with the sex-typed maintenance role of administration. Alternatively, Pritchard, speculates, the role of management in universities may be conjoined with research to become an integral part of the hegemonic masculine discourses of the academy.

Conclusions

This chapter has argued that an understanding of university organisations, their structure, processes and management can only be achieved through the lens of gender. Contrasting with the traditional notions of the liberal academy, women academics have documented the various ways in which universities are patriarchal organisations. This writing is informed by feminist theories, from those underpinned by liberal equal opportunities analysis through to more recent writing informed by postmodern feminism. Here, the focus is on decoding, or deconstructing, the gendered discourses making up the university culture, which serve to disempower women both materially and psychologically (Morley and Walsh, 1995).

Chapter 3 sets out the recent changes in the nature, role and management of universities and the impact on the academic profession. Under the general title of 'New Public Management', it is argued that universities are witnessing a period of radical change, representing a move towards a much more controlled and managed system of tertiary education in the UK. This clearly has implications for the nature of

the gendered culture of the university organisation and the experiences of women academics.

Chapter 3: Managing Academics

Introduction

Since the early 1980s, developments in the management of public sector organisations have had a fundamental impact on the nature and role of universities and the academic profession. The changes which have taken place have been characterised as moving towards a much more managed system of higher education, impacting on and changing university cultures and having a direct influence, therefore, on the role and self-identity of academics. The introduction of new management techniques, under the umbrella term of 'New Public Management' (NPM), has struck at the heart of the notion of academic professionalism built up over the centuries, increasing management power and reducing professional autonomy. Drawing on the Foucauldian notions of discourse, power and subjectivity, this chapter will illustrate how the introduction of academic appraisal, as part of this wider package of change, forms one element in a disciplinary matrix, regulating and normalising academic work, bringing work in line with the prevailing government ethos on managing public service professionals. Several writers have argued that the new forms of organisation and management control have challenged the identity of the academic profession, leading to new academic norms, based on instrumental behaviour, focused on quantifiable outputs (Parker and Jary, 1994; Willmott, 1995; Davies and Holloway, 1995; Pritchard, 1996). Before examining the introduction of academic appraisal, the chapter starts off by contextualising these developments, outlining the evolving

management of the higher education system in England and Wales. The chapter then considers one aspect of this package of change, that of the appraisal of academics.

The Development of the University System in England and Wales

To appreciate the impact of recent developments in NPM on the management of universities and academics, it is necessary, firstly, to outline the historical development to the system of higher education. It was argued, in Chapter 2, that the origin of the university system in the UK, dating back to the medieval universities of Oxford and Cambridge, has had a strong influence over the shaping of the identity of the academic profession. There is a widely held image, in the minds of academics, the state and society, that the university is a community of scholars, engaged in the disinterested pursuit of truth and knowledge, free from all influence and bias. This common conception of the university can be traced back to its early years. The original academics were 'masters', celibate monks in holy orders. 'Universitas' became the collective term for the masters and students, the organisation and its premises and hence the institution of the university as a self-governing community of scholars, independent of the rest of society was founded. As an organisation, the university was based on the principles of participative enquiry, collaborative internal government, institutional autonomy, meritocracy and critical enquiry (Stewart, 1989). This university system remained the same for 600 years, made up of a group of Christian colleges, run by celibate Anglican fellows in holy orders, teaching liberal, humanistic education, and only to confirmed Anglican (male) students. By the C19, however, the nature and role of the university had changed. The purpose of a

university education was now to provide polish for the leisured classes. As Butler observes, a university education "was a means of acquiring an education and satisfying curiosity... it was not an instrument for the resolution of social ideas, there was no need then to put scholarship to any practical use" (Butler, 1968:5). The education provided was to be liberal and the acquisition of knowledge an end in itself, set out in Newman's "Discourses on the Scope and Nature of University Education" (1852), as "intellectual enlargement", "expansion of the mind" and the "formation of the character" (Barnett, 1990:20).

The monopoly held by Oxford and Cambridge was finally ended with the setting up of London University in 1827, heralding a radical change in the tradition of university education. Established as a non secular alternative to Oxford and Cambridge, London university was conceived of by an alliance of people dissatisfied with the Anglican, liberal and elite system of higher education in England and its failure to meet the changing societal needs in training the middle classes in sciences applied to industry (Allen, 1988). The curriculum was to be more vocationally orientated, attuned to the cultural and economic needs of an industrial society. For the first time, women were also permitted to study at a university, although they were not eligible to graduate until 1878. Throughout the rest of the nineteenth century, civic institutions opened up in all parts of the UK, controlled by London University external validation. However, expansion was still only minor and by 1951, there were still only 12 independent universities in England and Wales, with the Oxbridge colleges at the top of the hierarchy.

Higher Education Expansion, 1960-1979

This all changed in the 1960s when the numbers in HE grew significantly for three reasons. Firstly, there was a widening of access during this period, with non-traditional entrants, particularly women entering universities in increasing numbers. Secondly the period saw the development of the idea of degrees as a route to employment rather than just a means of civilising the community (Becher and Kogan 1992). Thirdly, the period marked an increasing number of students passing A levels and wishing to go into HE. During this period, the number of universities in England and Wales doubled and so, by the late 1960s, there were 44 institutions, employing 24,000 academic staff and with 184,000 students (Shattock, 1994). At the same time, the universities were providing student accommodation, and maintaining low staff/student ratios, resulting in greater demands for central authority funding.

The University Grants Committee (UGC) had been set up in 1919 with the role of providing advice on the distribution of government funding for universities. After 1945, this role began to change as the UGC was increasingly called upon to fund universities and by the late 1960s, there were demands that it should move from its advisory role to a more strategic one. Naturally, as the State funded more and more of HE so too did its influence increase in the running of the universities. However, the "contra-functionalism" of universities (Becher and Kogan, 1992), i.e., their role as questioners of the dominant political system, whilst at the same time providing skills and leadership for society, never came into question. The UGC awarded grants on a quinquennial basis, leaving the day to day running of the university down to the

individual institution. Academic freedom and university independence, set down in the early medieval system, were considered to be paramount.

The Robbins Report (1963) is usually portrayed as being the key turning point in the function and system of Higher Education in England and Wales. However, it may be argued that it merely set down in writing and made policy changes that were beginning to take place from 1945 (Becher and Kogan, 1992). In 1962, the government, for the first time, reduced the figure of funding recommended by the UGC for universities and throughout the 1960s the UGC itself laid down increasingly prescribed guidelines on how the funding should be spent by individual institutions (Allen 1988). Whilst trying to play a more active role, the UGC came in for increased criticism from wider society for its narrow definition of the role of universities (highlighted by the Robbins Report), and demanding a larger and different system of higher education. Shattock (1994) observes the paradoxical situation that whilst the UGC was more active than ever during this period, it lost more and more power to the government. The Robbins Report was based on the principle that there was a direct relationship between university growth, industrial growth and national prosperity and that universities had a role as agents of social change (Robinson 1968). Niblett (1981), argues that Robbins represented " the most massive attempt by a single nation, through a governmentally appointed committee, to consider how its higher education should be patterned and should develop (Niblett, 1981:1). The now famous 'Robbins principle' (Allen 1988) set out the tone of liberal equality of education, that is, that HE should be available to all suitably qualified who demanded a place, regardless of cost and funding and need for qualified graduates. The

consequence of Robbins was that universities increasingly relied on the a benevolent state to fund their activities, rather than externally generated income (Parker and Jary, 1994).

Despite the Robbins Report recommending a unitary system of HE, with Oxbridge at the apex, a binary system of universities and polytechnics was proposed by Crosland in 1965 and established, following the 1966 white paper "A Plan for Polytechnics and Other Colleges" (DES, 1966). Universities would continue in their independent status, funded by the UGC, whilst a new sector of Polytechnics (formed in the early 1970s), teacher training colleges and technical colleges would be set up, funded and controlled by the LEA's, awarding degrees through the Council for National Academic Awards (CNAA). Through the polytechnics and the setting up of a binary system of HE, the State was able to put pressure indirectly on the universities (the management of which it could not directly interfere with) to provide more flexible and vocational degrees, to a wider section of society, and therefore be more responsive to national needs (Allen, 1988; Becher and Kogan, 1992).

By the end of the 1960s there was a fall in the demand for university places, along with increased public dissent about the cost of HE, partly stimulated by bad press of student riots and partly due to economic uncertainty, culminating in the collapse of the quinquennial grant system following the oil crisis in 1974. However, the public sector system of polytechnics grew in strength, the number of female students increased, especially via the polytechnics, and the principles of HE growth and equality of opportunity, funded by a benevolent state, set down in Robbins, lived on

until 1979. Thus, the university system in England and Wales had evolved from an élitist institution, based on Christian teaching of a liberal education, funded by private benefactors and the preserve of the upper classes, to a mass (albeit still not classless) State funded and centrally directed system of universities, polytechnics, teacher training colleges and colleges of HE. However, the fundamental principles for universities, of a collegial structure, decision making independent of its funders, and academic freedom to preserve truth and knowledge remained the widely accepted and promoted model for university institutions right up to the start of the 1980s.

Higher Education Reform - the 1980s and 1990s

The public sector reforms which have taken place since the Conservative government of 1979 took office, have had a profound impact on the role and management of universities as with public service organisations in general. Before examining the impact of 'New Public Management' (NPM) on the system of higher education, it is first necessary to contextualise the developments in the management of universities, post 1979, within the wider framework of UK public sector reforms.

The Context of Change

The changes in the management and role of the public sector, implemented throughout the 1980s and 1990s, have increasingly been referred to under the umbrella term of New Public Management (NPM). There is much debate in the literature on the nature of NPM; its form and the extent to which it exists, as well as the ways in which its disciplinary effects have served to reconstitute the identities of

public sector workers (see, for example, Pollitt, 1990a; Hoggett, 1994; Isaac-Henry *et al*, 1993; Clarke *et al*, 1994; du Gay, 1996)¹. It is now widely accepted that public sector organisations have undergone a period of radical change since 1979, which has had a fundamental impact on its structure, management and operations.

Developments in the organisation and management of the public sector, over the last two decades, have been attributed to the material need to curb 'excessive' demands on government spending, accompanied by the promotion of an ideologically driven agenda of neo-liberal economics, aimed at extending market forces (Kirkpatrick and Martinez Lucio, 1995). A detailed account of the changes in the structure and management of the public sector is beyond the remit of this discussion. Briefly, however, the changes can be summed up as including privatisation, deregulation, competitive tendering of services, the creation of internal markets and the devolving of management (Thompson, 1992). Accompanying these structural changes a range of new management practices can be noted, including the use of profit centre management, performance management, quality management, business planning and 'culture management' (Hoggett, 1994; Pollitt, 1995).

¹ There is a confusing array of terms and interpretations used to describe and account for the changes in the management of the public sector, since the introduction of New Right influenced policies in the early 1980's. Whilst the term managerialism is used by Clarke *et al* (1994) as a general title for these changes (in place of new public management (NPM)), managerialism is also used to signify the crude adoption of private sector management practices in the early 1980's, also termed Neo Taylorism (Pollitt, 1990). Added to this, there are those who use the term New Public Management to denote an emerging management style unique to the specific context of the public sector, distinct from managerialism (Stewart and Ranson, 1988).

In analysing the developments over this period, two main versions of NPM can be identified in the literature, namely 'Neo Taylorism', and 'Post-Bureaucratic/'Post-Modern'/Post-Fordist organisational structures with the accompanying trend in what Wood (1989) terms 'new wave management' (Pollitt, 1990a; Ferlie, 1994; Clarke *et al*, 1995). During the early part of the 1980s, developments in reforming the public sector have been characterised as a fairly crude form of 'managerialism', or 'neo-Taylorism' (Pollitt, 1990a) with the importing of private sector business techniques into the public sector. The aim of the new Conservative Government, on coming to office in 1979, was to achieve a sizeable reduction in taxation and public expenditure and a tighter control of the money supply (poor control of which, accompanied by 'excessive' public sector spending was seen as the principal cause of the economic crises of the 1970s (Farnham and Horton, 1993)). This reduction in expenditure would in turn reduce the role of the State, seen to be too interventionist and paternalist, and replace it with one based on enterprise and founded on the neo-liberal principles of the free market. The public sector was criticised by the New Right for being wasteful, badly managed, bureaucratic and dominated by unaccountable monopolies, powerful trade unions and self-interested professionals. Public sector management, in particular, was the focus of much criticism. It was seen to lack the toughness of its private sector counterparts, lack the skills necessary to bring in the changes and to represent a culture which was deemed to be inappropriate for the new vision of the public sector. Five main features of this so-called Neo-Taylorism can be identified (Pollitt, 1990a): the strengthening of line management and importing of private sector management practices; the shifting of power from professionals to line managers; decentralisation and budgetary devolution; entrepreneurial led

management; and a move to a board of directors model for institutional governance. Together, these were seen to introduce a more market orientated system in place of inefficient bureaucratic forms of organisation. Crucial to the achievement of "better management" was the introduction of performance management, especially the increased use of merit pay, appraisal, employment by contract, mechanistic objectives setting and performance measurement. Such measures enable the decentralisation of decision making and the shifting of budgetary authority to the lowest level, while increasing the tight upwards accountability. As Pollitt (1990b) concludes, in the period post 1979, the entire public sector has witnessed a proliferation of attempts at performance assessment, appraisal, evaluations, reviews, measurement and indicators.

The second influence noted in the literature is the move towards the adoption of Post-Bureaucratic (Heydebrand, 1989), or post-modern (Clegg, 1990) organisational forms, typified by decentralisation, devolution, customer orientation and core/periphery split, as part of wider historical trends in a shift away from bureaucratic organisational structures. There are dangers of over generalising the extent to which organisational forms in both the public and the private sector have moved towards a post-modern form. For example, Hoggett (1994) comments that whilst many public sector organisations may, on the face of it, seem to have all the trappings of post-modern structures, they still have strongly asserted older forms of bureaucratic controls in place. However, there is much evidence that, structurally, public sector organisations have moved towards decentralised operational management but with concomitant highly centralised strategic control. Thus, whilst evidence of devolved management can be seen across the public sector, this has been

accompanied by a whole range of techniques to increase accountability to the centre. Furthermore, with the “increasingly influential” ‘contract State’ (Ferlie, 1994), the use of competition as a means of controlling and co-ordinating business unit activities can be identified. From the 1990s there was an extension of the market, therefore, by means of a shift to management by contract and more ‘loosely-coupled’ relationships within the public sector. This has been accompanied by a split between the purchaser and the provider, i.e., a split between the funding body and the service provider, and a split between the strategic core and the operational periphery.

At the organisational level, the introduction of ‘new wave management’ (Clarke *et al*, 1994) of excellence, entrepreneurialism and culture management has been noted. Usually associated with human relations forms of management or ‘soft’ interpretations of Human Resource Management, the focus here is on techniques designed to foster strong commitment and organisational loyalty to the new culture of the public sector, through the use of transformative leadership, company logos, mission statements, uniforms, appraisal, training, and a new assertive HRM function. The aim is to move away from the ‘bad’ traditional, bureaucratic management to a new culture of entrepreneurialism (Wood, 1989), where the public sector worker reconstitutes him/herself as a customer-focused, efficient worker. As du Gay (1996) argues, the concern of ‘new wave management’ is that of ‘normalising’ behaviour, changing worker’s values, norms and attitudes to fit the new culture. HRM is typified as being more strategically integrated with the organisation’s business plan and mission statement so that personnel reward systems, for example, are more attuned to the achievement of organisational goals. Here it can be seen that HRM works as a “moral technology”

(Foucault, 1979) to transform public sector employees into a highly committed and goal directed workforce who identify with the organisational culture. The achievement of this has been sought through the use of key personnel techniques, all of which have been used in more sophisticated forms to wider sections of the workforce throughout the 1980s (Storey and Sisson, 1989). These include more sophisticated uses of recruitment and selection procedures, appraisal, performance related pay (prp), training and development, direct communication and mission statements. However, Hoggett (1994) argues that the move towards the so-called 'contract State' has not been accompanied by the more Utopian ideals of post-modern structures, that of high trust relationships, high skills and the use of cultural management to foster a shared vision. Rather, the developments in HRM and cultural management can be understood as the subjecting of public sector workers to increased forms of surveillance and disciplinary practices (du Gay and Salaman, 1992), to engender an intensification of labour.

The implications of the developments in NPM on public sector professional identity has been profound. During the 1980s public sector professional groups came in for considerable criticism from the New Right, for showing allegiance to their own professional body rather than to senior management or to the customer (Crompton, 1990). Public sector professional groups were seen to be more interested in building up their areas of power and domination rather than responding to the needs of the government and the market. In sum, professionals were seen to be unaccountable monopolies which, at best, inhibited the government from bringing in their reforms and, at worst, were no better than closed shop trade unions 'out to feather their own nests' (Ackroyd and Soothill, 1994). Rather than viewing professionals from the

more functionalist interpretations as the disinterested guardians of the public's interest, the New Right saw them more as exercisers of monopoly power, restricting the smooth functioning of the market mechanism. Professional autonomy was regarded as inhibiting efficiency and the managerial prerogative (Pollitt, 1990a). Professional experts should advise management, it was argued, rather than being immune to management control. In short, professions should be "on tap" rather than "on top" (Pollitt, 1990a:131). Evidence can be cited throughout the 1980s and 1990s which illustrate the government's efforts to erode professionals' rights to monopoly control over their services. Through legislation, for example, solicitors, dentists, opticians, health service professionals and academics have all been exposed to the rigours of the market in one form or another (Crompton, 1990). Where the State determines provision, professional providers have had to face the rigors of market competition and quasi-markets to break their monopolies. As Crompton observes: "Despite the protests of the 'professionals' concerned, little distinction appears to be made between the brewers"...(the brewing industry in the UK being frequently criticised in the media and by government for its monopolistic tendencies)... "and the British Medical Association" (*ibid.*:159).

Several interpretations are offered in the literature on the impact of public sector reform on the autonomy of public sector professionals. As early as the 1960s the potential for a clash of loyalties between occupational (professional) goals and values and organisational (bureaucratic) goals and values was noted (Kornhauser, 1962). Under a Neo-Weberian analysis, public sector professionals may be seen to be undergoing a process of 'deprofessionalisation' and loss of status resulting from a

declining market position. Here, the focus is on how public sector professionals struggle to secure control over self-regulation in the face of increased managerialism (Willmott, 1995). Adopting a labour process analysis, it has been argued that the recent reforms in public sector management have resulted in the proletarianisation (Oppenheimer, 1973) of certain public sector professional groups (Wilson, 1991) and the commodification of professional work. The period has been characterised by a change in the nature of control where the responsible autonomy and collegiality enjoyed in previous periods has been replaced by tight managerial control, driven by tight financial controls. As the provider-client relationship is controlled more and more by the State, some professional work becomes more bureaucratised, routinised and casualised. Control is shifted from peers to management, via the use of a range of performance indicators (often highly quantitative in nature). There is a loss of decision making and discretion over work activities by the professional (Dawson, 1996). This is most noticeable, Dawson argues, where senior management have cost cutting and financial management high on the agenda, as has been the case in the last 15 years.

An alternative scenario to the proletarianisation thesis may still be interpreted as a form of deprofessionalisation (Reed and Anthony, 1992). This is where professionals merge, or become assimilated with the (new) management to become a professional-manager class (Ehrenreich and Ehrenreich, 1977). Traditionally, professional groups have viewed management very much as a subservient facilitator (Dawson, 1996) or “custodial management”, as Ackroyd and Soothill (1994) term it. Here the strategic decision making and financial control is in the hands of the profession. However, in public sector organisations, professional groups are not autonomous to the same extent and

management has traditionally been viewed as an irritant, an imposed constraint. With the increased managerial presence in recent years, the strategies open to professional groups operating in the public sector have been either to resist all attempts to interfere in their autonomy, or alternatively to become incorporated into the management system.

The Changing Management of Higher Education

The impact of NPM on higher education can be analysed at the national level, institutional level, and professional-subjective, or individual level (Becher and Kogan, 1992; Parker and Jary, 1994). Clearly, these levels cannot be understood in isolation, each level being interrelated and fundamentally connected.

Changes at national-structural level

During the 1970s the system of higher education in England and Wales was coming under increasing financial strain. The ending of the quinquennial grants system symbolised the end to the State's and society's willingness to leave the affairs of HE in the hands of its members (Becher and Kogan, 1992). With the Conservative government's desire to curb excessive public sector expenditure, a HE system where funding was provided on request, with no accountability, was anathema. The universities were regarded, in particular, to be working against the visions of the New Right and suffered cuts on a greater scale than the polytechnics (Becher and Kogan, 1992). It is clear that the period, post 1979 has been one of increased state intervention in the running of the universities, both 'old' and 'new', which has been seen as an attack on the autonomy of both the institutional and professional right to

decide the role and function of HE. The message was quite clear, that the Government role in HE should change from one of supplier of funding to that of customer for the services and an agency to enable students to purchase educational services. Scott (1989) argues that three main reasons may be put forward to account for the nature of the radical changes taking place over this period. Firstly, in line with the ideology of the New Right, they represent a package of sweeping reforms designed to bring efficiency and accountability to a perceived archaic and privileged intellectual aristocracy and their so-called 'ivory towers'. As Parker and Jary (1994) observe this public criticism of the universities and academics had been building up over the years such that: "...the image of the eccentric, but valuable, boffin gave way to the devious and dangerous history man, and the university the bastion of parochialism rather than the cutting edge of the intellect." (*ibid.*:5). Secondly, the period represents an increasing acceptance that the increased role of the State in the management of universities is a natural outcome of an attempt to cope with a resource hungry system arising from the conflicting demands of maintaining high standards while, at the same time, meeting the society's needs for an educated workforce. Finally, linked to this resource problem, Scott (1989) argues that the developments could be interpreted as a "retreat" from and "reaction" to the expansionary policies of the Robbins/Crosland era, with any future expansion being funded through efficiency gains and commercial sponsorship.

At a national-structural level, universities have experienced changes in funding criteria, most notably in research, a mass expansion of both students and institutions

with the creation of the “new” universities, and a New Right critique on the role and function of universities (Parker and Jary, 1994). As with the public sector as a whole, the principal guiding reform of HE was increased financial scrutiny, starting off with a series of grants cuts and a selective apportioning of grants to different institutions, from the early 1980s. In 1981, the Public Expenditure White Paper announced a 20% cut in HE expenditure over the next three years. This was followed by further cuts in the early 1980s as well as new funding being available only through increased efficiency or via new funding sources other than the government (Davies and Holloway, 1995). The impact of these funding cuts forced many universities to make dramatic cuts in staff and student numbers (Sizer, 1988). It was these financial cuts which marked a new period of state intervention in the management over HE from the 1980s onwards (Scott, 1989). However, it is misleading to see the changes in the management of the HE system post 1979 purely in terms of cuts in funding. Whilst the cuts created an intensification of work and stress for individual academics, it is the nature of the resource allocation and the increased direct control in the management of HE from the centre which has served to transform both the structure and climate of HE (Davies and Holloway, 1995). Crucial to the changing nature of management of HE, therefore, is the changing role of the funding council over this period. The UGC’s role as buffer finally ended with the removal of the block grant system and a separation of funding relating to teaching and research. As Wragg (1994) argues, the changing nature of funding sees the funding council move from acting as a buffer to one of a conduit, driving higher education reforms, with the Department of Education pursuing a markedly interventionist line (Pritchard, 1996). Following these cuts then

a whole range of management initiatives can be identified which have challenged and undermined the universities' institutional autonomy.

In the old universities, the publication of the Jarratt Report (CVCP, 1985) was seen to set the tone for university management. Jarratt advocated the adoption of a more systematic, managerial type of governance of universities. It was argued that the overall objectives of HE were too ambiguous and general, and that there was a need to set up systems of management which ensured effective staff management, especially in the monitoring and assessment of academic performance (*ibid.*). Jarratt's key recommendations included the introduction of performance indicators to measure efficiency, vice chancellors to be seen as chief executives with heads of department being recast as line managers, and universities to be "run like any other business". The message coming from Jarratt, and subsequent white papers, was that higher education needed to be 'shaken up', that universities had been "showered with money from the public purse..." and had become "playgrounds of self indulgent and inward-looking cliques rather than engine rooms of a post industrial economy" (Green, 1987:164). In the same year as Jarratt, the UGC demanded a much more detailed corporate planning by the universities, setting out clear aims for research, recruitment and expenditure. Performance indicators for research were to be published, enabling public comparison and university funding was to be formula based. In the 1987 white paper "Meeting the Challenge", universities were required to submit annual reports on their efficiency gains.

Early use of performance indicators were fairly crude in nature, based on unit costs and expenditure (Davies and Kirkpatrick, 1995). However, from 1984, they became more selective, separating out research and teaching components of funding and increasingly allocating funds on the basis of 'objective' performance measures of research. Thus, following the Research Selectivity Exercises (later renamed Research Assessment Exercise), of 1985, 1989, 1992 and 1996, funding was increasingly attached to an individual university's performance in research (Miller, 1996). Moves to raise the quality of teaching in universities came from government directed measures implemented by the HEFC to undertake a Teaching Quality Assessment of teaching standards across academic disciplines in universities. In addition, the Higher Education Quality Council (HEQC) was set up in 1991 with the role of overseeing quality standards and systems in universities, run and funded by the universities themselves.

During the 1980s, the polytechnics too experienced increased control from the centre. Throughout the 1980s, the polytechnic sector suffered a 20% cut in funding per student, compared with 8% for universities (Wilson, 1991). The polytechnic sector had long been run under a more managerialist, less collegiate environment, lacking the status and autonomy of its university counterparts. With a limited pool of resources, the National Advisory Body for Public Sector Higher Education (NAB) had been set up, in 1982, to decide upon allocations of government funding. This body had a strong LEA membership, resulting in internal tensions between the LEA's aims to widen access to HE and the State's to maintain levels of expenditure. Consequently, NAB was replaced by the Polytechnic and Colleges Funding Council (PCFC) (with no

LEA members), following the Education Reform Act in 1988, and the removal of the polytechnics (and other HE colleges) from LEA control. Both sets of institutions had the grants system removed and replaced by contracts.

The 1991 white paper set out proposals to remove the binary divide between polytechnics and universities to create a new unitary system of HE. In addition, plans to double the number of students in HE over the following 25 years heralded a new era of expansion. However, resourcing this expansion was to be paid for through efficiency gains. The implementation of the Further and Higher Education Act in 1992, following the “hard managerialist” (Parker and Jary, 1994) 1991 white paper, brought an end to the binary divide between universities and polytechnics and colleges and in 1993, the UFC and PCFC were replaced by a single funding body, the Higher Education Funding Council (HEFC)¹. These developments can be interpreted as achieving further ‘efficiency gains’ through opening up universities to competition via the creation of a quasi-market, with the universities now having to compete for students with the “new universities”, which offer a greater variety of courses at a lower unit cost (Parker and Jary, 1994).

Changes at institutional level

For the universities, the impact of national level changes on the management of individual institutions was primarily felt post Jarratt (1985). The emphasis in Jarratt

¹ There are four bodies in the UK responsible for the allocation of funding for higher education: Higher Education Funding council for England (HEFCE), the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales (HEFCW), the Scottish Higher Education Funding Council (SHEFC) and the Department of Education Northern Ireland (DENI).

was that universities should be run on a more corporate model, with vice chancellors acting like chief executives, the drawing up of corporate plans and an assertion of the managerial prerogative. Thus Kogan (1988) refers to a move towards a “dependent institution” model, discussed in Chapter 2. The internal organisation of universities has undergone significant changes over the post 1979 period. These include: the creating and strengthening of the role of line management; structural reorganisation with strategic management and business planning at the centre and individual faculties being recast along the lines of strategic business units; substantial growth in size alongside worsening staff:student ratios; stronger emphasis on markets and competition; and the beginnings of the use of a strategic HR function (Parker and Jary, 1994; Mackay, 1995; Williams, 1996). However, as the management of universities and the academics within them becomes more corporate several problems arise. With the increased decentralisation of decision making to cost centres and the associated increased accountability to the centre, notable in much of the public sector reorganisations during the 1980/90’s, (Hoggett, 1994), there arises the need for sophisticated performance indicators and standardised output measures. Throughout the university sector, there has been an increase in the presence of line management, resulting in stronger direction and control of academic activities. Academics are now accountable for their activities to industry in providing industry financed research, to the government in satisfying a whole range of performance indicators, and to the student who increasingly has to fund his/her studies. The result has been a shift in climate from one of co-operation where academics were held in high esteem by government and public and were free to direct the curriculum, teaching and research, to a climate of managerialism, competition and close regulation.

Changes at individual level

The developments in the New Public Management of universities has been seen to have had a profound impact on the status and self identity of the academic profession (Wilson, 1991; Halsey, 1992; Parker and Jary, 1994; Willmott, 1995; Miller, 1996; Pritchard, 1996; Nixon, 1996). Academics, like other public sector professions, have faced a period of turbulence in the way that they are managed, since the beginning of the 1980s. They have witnessed a plethora of changes which have been seen as an attack on their professional autonomy, resulting in falling morale (AUT, 1990), lowering of relative earnings, loss of tenure, fewer promotion opportunities, increased use of short term and temporary contracts and a series of disputes in both new and old universities over worsening pay and conditions and new contractual arrangements (AUT, 1990; Farnham 1991; Kingston, 1996). In the ex-polytechnic sector, academics have faced a series of disputes over this period, culminating in the 1989/90 dispute over the implementation of new contractual arrangements. The dispute, in particular was over the control of class contact hours, presence at work, income from consultancy, and holiday arrangements, which together was seen as a fundamental attack on the professional status and high trust working relationships (Wilson, 1991).

An appreciation of this impact must be considered in the light of the traditional norms and values, such as academic freedom and collegial decision making, seen to make up the academic profession. Starting from the early 1980s, with the funding cuts, a series of developments have taken place which has severely challenged the notion of academic

freedom and autonomy. Firstly, the period witnessed a high expansion in student numbers, which, without the concomitant increase in staff has necessitated dramatic increases in teaching hours, class sizes and course administration. Over the period, the staff student ratio has risen by 25% (AUT, 1990), with a 37% decline in pay (Wilson, 1991). In addition to the increased teaching demands, the pressures to demonstrate productivity in research has also been marked, with the introduction of the Research Assessment Exercise (formerly Research Selectivity Exercise). This has brought about a change in focus to the valuing of quantifiable measures of research output.

In the management of academics, several developments have taken place which can be identified within a package of HRM and a move towards managing human resources in a much more interventionist way. Firstly, there has been a move towards greater flexibility in the use of manpower. With the loss of tenure for all new appointments, in 1988, there has been a rise in short contracts and temporary contracts. There is also evidence, from both the AUT and NATFHE surveys (1993) that universities are increasingly using flexible contracts in the employment of academics. Numbers of part-time contracts have risen dramatically over the past few years as universities have attempted to cope with uncertainty over levels of student numbers. In addition, new contracts for academics in the new universities have emphasised the need for flexible approaches to working hours and holidays. The management of human resources in universities seems to have adopted a more pragmatic, low cost response to market changes, in common with many private sector organisations, rather than a longer term strategic initiative. There is increasing use also of merit pay for academics, amounting to 3% of the paybill in the old universities, in 1991/2 and linked to individual performance. As Blackwell and Lloyd (1989) argue, the

increased management of human resources in universities has been brought about by the use of declining resource inputs within a set of constraints acting as proxies for market forces.

Traditionally, the role of Personnel has been underdeveloped in both the old and the new universities. In the old universities, matters relating to staffing were undertaken by the “establishment officer”. However, generally, academics enjoyed a high-trust, ‘gentleman’s agreement’ contract of employment (Mackay, 1995). In the ex-polytechnic sector, personnel matters were in the hands of the local authority, prior to incorporation. The bureaucratic, rules based approach to personnel matters, found in local authority control was then transferred to the newly established personnel function after incorporation. This is reflected in the new contracts for academics which are much more managerial in tone than those in the old university sector. Mackay (*op cit*) argues that this different historical legacy of management in the two sectors is reflected in current attempts to manage and direct academics’ activities. In the old universities, appeals are made to the academic professional status, emphasising commitment, whereas in the new universities, it has been achieved through the asserting of employee status and the use of control by contract (Mackay, 1995).

Willmott (1995) argues that the general effect from the recent management developments has been the progressive commodification and intensification of academic labour. With the new management demands of accountability and the need to maximise the academic output, academics are increasingly struggling to secure a degree of self-regulation over their work in the face of pressures to replace the traditional ethic of collegiality with that of

managerialism and quasi-market competition. It can be argued that a new norm of performance has been established and reinforced through a range of disciplinary technologies designed to heighten the visibility of academic performance; to measure, compare, and rank academics and feed back this information to academics so as to equip them with knowledge of themselves and others. This emphasis on 'performativity' (Lyotard, 1984) can be seen in Willmott's (1994) illustration of the distribution of staff publication lists. The shifting subjectivity is away from professional towards that of instrumentality, careerism and hierarchy, yet the intensification of work is brought about through appeals to the professional identity of the academic (Willmott, 1994). Three outcomes can be noted from the increased focus on quantitative measures of performance and the greater presence of management and academic surveillance. Firstly, academic work which is non visible and non measurable, such as student contact and 'being available' become 'optional burdens'. Consequently, academic effort is switched to producing publications, with the consequence that, "aside from the neglected families and gardens of "productive" academics, a major casualty of the additional effort devoted to research has been the time and care devoted to the teaching of students" (Willmott, 1995:1019). Secondly, the profession is split into two: research active and teachers; resource rich and resource deficient departments and institutions; research institutions and 'teaching only' institutions. Those who are research active are redefined as 'fast track workers, given light timetables and low administrative burdens. Their comparative advantage becomes effectively institutionalised as it becomes increasingly difficult for those without the established research record to prepare publications due to the fact that they pick up the heavy burden of extra teaching and administration (Willmott, *op cit*). The outcome of these measures, has been a narrowing of the academic work towards greater

individualism, competition and instrumentality (Davies and Holloway, 1995; Willmott, 1995; Pritchard, 1996; Thomas, 1996). The perverse effect has been that the academic service, especially that of teaching suffers as it fails to contribute directly to the output measures upon which the individual academic, department and institution are judged.

One of the key disciplinary mechanisms introduced in the managing of academic labour can be seen to be that of appraisal. As it feeds directly into an academic's career opportunities, the academic becomes introspective, focused on self evaluation and self discipline. Academic identity is reconstituted as the individual, instrumental, competitive worker.

Appraisal in Universities

Introduction

For the old university sector, the origins of academic appraisal can be traced back to the Jarratt Report (1985). Jarratt recommended the introduction of academic appraisal into universities within a year. In fact it was not taken up until 1987, when the DES made it a prerequisite of the pay award. Due to further delays as a result of pay negotiations, appraisal was finally implemented in universities in 1989 (Bryman *et al*, 1991). Whilst appraisal had, in some institutions, been carried out in a more informal setting before Jarratt, in the form of staff development, Jarratt was seen to advocate the adoption of a much more systematic form of appraisal, as part of wider recommendations for the introduction of a more managerial type of governance of

universities (CVCP, 1985). The introduction of academic appraisal can be seen to be part of a movement towards managing and assessing academics with the discourse of management being used to strengthen and justify increased control over the academic profession. This cannot be expressed more clearly than in the Jarratt report, where it is stated:

We stress that in our view universities are first and foremost corporate enterprises to which subsidiary units and individual academics are responsible and accountable...[...]...Introducing staff development, appraisal and accountability...[...]...handled with sensitivity would be of benefit both to staff and the university as a whole (*ibid.*:28).

Townley (1990b) argues that the fact that appraisal was imposed on academics is fundamental to understanding its operation. Seen as part of the Jarratt Report recommendations, appraisal was understood by academics as being primarily that of regulating performance and bringing academic work in line with the prevailing government ethos on managing public service professionals. Similarly, in the ex-polytechnic sector, appraisal was introduced alongside the new national contracts, implemented after a long running dispute in 1991/92.

Discourses of Appraisal

Before examining the research on academic appraisal in more detail, it is necessary to contextualise this research, drawing on the more general literature on appraisal. It can be seen that in recent years, the popularity of performance appraisal has gained strength, as part of the discourse of HRM. Its growth and extension can be attributed to a move away from bureaucratic age/wage pay structures towards individual accountability and performance related pay, notably in the public sector (Bevan and

Thompson, 1993; Bowles and Coates, 1993). In particular, its use has been associated with 'soft' HRM policies (Guest, 1987) or 'sophisticated paternalism' (Purcell and Sisson, 1983), designed to inculcate a committed, empowered and dedicated workforce. Alongside techniques such as team briefing, merit pay, and participative decision making, appraisal is seen as part of a package of HRM which serves to create a high trust (Fox, 1974) organisational culture in place of more coercive forms of control. An understanding of the rise in popularity of appraisal can be made in terms of wider moves in cultural management and the "management of meaning" (Smircich and Morgan, 1982; Willmott, 1993). Rather than being concerned with developing the individual, focusing on his or her performance, appraisal can be understood as a technique for monitoring the extent to which the individual has internalised the organisational culture, i.e., has the correct 'mind set' (Bowles and Coates, 1993). In the public sector, in particular, the spread of appraisal can be attributed to its 'moral technology'. Thus, it may be argued that much of the value in appraisal is its symbol element, indicating a 'new order' of managerialism, accountability and direction. Townley (1990b) argues that much of the attraction of appraisal lies in its image of technicism; it gives an image of rational, logical, planned management rather than ad-hocracy. Its appeal is in this 'language of accountability' (Gowler and Legge, 1983), giving off the image of effective management. The operation of appraisal thus provides a basis of legitimacy, seen as an "emblem of good practice". Rather than measuring performance, appraisal can be seen as functioning more in terms of "attitude restructuring" (Townley, 1993).

Historical Development of Appraisal

Performance appraisal has long been considered to be part of the general tool kit of personnel management, both in the UK and the USA (McGregor, 1957; Stroul, 1987; Gellerman and Hodgson, 1988). The earliest record of appraisal was in AD 3, when the Chinese Imperial Rater was employed to evaluate the performance of official family members (Swan, 1991). Even at this early stage of its development, the perennial problem of bias was encountered. Modern applications of appraisal, in the UK, can be traced back to Robert Owen's 'silent monitor'. This was a painted wooden block, suspended above the worker and rotated each day to reflect the individual's performance. Each face had a different colour, ranging from white, denoting "super excellence in conduct" to black denoting "excessive naughtiness". In the US, the origins of appraisal can be found in classical management theory and the scientific management movement, with its emphasis on individual performance measurement and performance pay. However, by the 1950's, the many problems associated with appraisal, such as subjectivity, bias and leniency error, led to demands from both academics and practitioners to abandon the whole process. McGregor's now famous article "An Uneasy Look at Performance Appraisal" (1957) argued that appraisal forced the appraiser to sit in judgement "playing God" and that it resulted in "a violation of the integrity of the personality" (McGregor, 1957:90). Such criticisms led to the development and widespread adoption of more open, participative methods, such as 'management by objectives' (MbO). Whilst MbO itself fell out of favour, the general trend over the years has been a move away from the more "tick box" style of appraisal, especially for managerial and professional staff.

In recent years, Long's survey (1986), forming part of three industry-wide Institute of Personnel Management (IPM) surveys on the use of appraisal during the 1970s and 1980s, found that despite the numerous shortcomings documented in the literature, the widespread use of appraisal has continued, even gained pace (Long, 1986; Townley, 1989, 1992). Of particular note has been the extension of its use into non-traditional areas, especially for blue collar and clerical workers (Crompton and Jones, 1984), partly due to attempts to harmonise terms and conditions of work between all employees, and partly due to moves towards rewarding individual performance and breaks with traditional collective bargaining arrangements.

Modernist Discourse on Appraisal

Most of the writing on appraisal comes from a functionalist perspective, where appraisal is one of a variety of tools available to the HR specialist. Appraisal is seen to form part of a bundle of techniques of HRM which, when used 'correctly', will produce a motivated and effective workforce. The major concern of this writing is its practical implementation and the seemingly endless quest for the perfect, objective appraisal instrument, free from bias and subjectivity. Appraisal literature, like that of personnel writing in general, is founded on the modernist assumptions of positivism, rationality, performativity and neutrality, embodied in masculinist images of objectivity and reason (Calas and Smircich, 1992a; Townley, 1993; Legge, 1995). Consequently, there is a huge array of 'how to do it' type manuals, each one promoting a refinement of earlier appraisal systems. The literature focuses on the various failings of appraisal, putting forward measures to overcome these problems to

achieve the 'perfect appraisal system'. The main purpose of appraisal, as set out in this literature, is that of data collection in order to make HR decisions (DeVries *et al*, 1981; Randell *et al*, 1983; Elton, 1987; Torrington and Hall, 1987; Sherman *et al*, 1988). 'Done properly', it is argued, an effective appraisal system is essential to managing human resources, offering the opportunity to review performance, stimulate staff development and thereby motivate the individual. Appraisal is seen to be an essential element of personnel management, serving to assess training and development needs, improve current performance, review past performance, assess future potential, assist in career planning decisions, set performance objectives and assess salaries (Long, 1986; James, 1988).

It is generally argued in the literature that appraisal cannot achieve all of the objectives promised, despite the tendency, as Randell (1989) observes, for appraisal designers to build all embracing and monolithic appraisal schemes. Consequently, there is a huge range of different appraisal instruments which have been devised over the years, each one claiming superiority over the rest. These include various forms of comparative methods (comparing one employee's performance against that of another), absolute methods (relating performance to pre-set standards) and results-oriented methods (the best known being 'management by objectives', or MbO) (Long, 1986). Over the years, the general trend has been to move from simple 'tick-box' methods, to more complex designs, made up of several methods, including self appraisal forms, objectives setting and performance review.

What becomes apparent, in the mainstream writing on appraisal, is that there are a number of recurring problems, which impede the ability to carry out 'objective' assessment. Four main problems are highlighted in the literature: conflicting aims; links with promotion and pay; subjectivity and bias; and issues of equal opportunities. A large amount of writing on appraisal is devoted to the issue of the aims or purposes of appraisal. In particular, the issue of whether the appraisal should be developmental, focusing on training, or whether it should be one of assessment, focused on judging performance and tying in rewards (especially performance related pay). The 'golden rule' recommended in this literature is that the appraisal system should aim to do one of these but cannot combine the two (Meyer *et al*, 1965; Landy and Farr, 1983; Randell *et al* 1983; Fletcher and Williams, 1985; Long, 1986; Scribbins and Walton, 1987; Elton, 1987; Randell, 1989). The broad message, then, is that the more judgmental the scheme, the greater the potential for grievances as it forces decisions to be made about the appraisee which, regardless of sophistication of technique, are based on subjective assumptions (Zedeck and Cascio, 1982; Townley, 1990a). As Randell *et al* (1984) argue: "The history of staff appraisal schemes shows that the most frequent reason for their failure is the application of conceptually muddled attempts at measuring people" (1984:7). Similarly, Pollitt (1988), referring to the use of appraisal schemes in public sector organisations, comments that "[T]o lump all the possible purposes of appraisal together in one system is not only managerially ignorant, it is also a sure recipe for disappointment" (Pollitt, 1988:16).

A second concern within the literature is the linking of appraisal with reward and promotion (Randell, 1989; Townley, 1992). Here, problems of subjectivity and

inconsistency become most pronounced, especially where unequal standards are applied by different appraisers (Townley, 1992), as well as a whole range of perennial problems associated with managing through the cash nexus. For example, Kessler (1994) outlines the key practical problems associated with managing appraisal systems, the root of which lies in the problem of subjectivity, which is compounded by its multiple use (pay, promotion, development). In addition, in periods of rapid change, performance criteria frequently change and require constant revision. There is also the risk of 'leniency error', where managers award average appraisals to high flyers if promotion or pay rewards are not available, and also may award higher than average to the incompetent in order to promote them out of the way. These problems are compounded when linked to pay resulting in short term goal orientation and 'window-dressing' performance to produce the desired measures of efficiency.

Thirdly, appraisal has a number of recurring problems which impede the achievement of an objective assessment. Much of the research into these problems comes from the field of psychology, where the various distortions in achieving an accurate appraisal have been examined, the most common being the problems of subjectivity, bias and leniency error (Sinclair, 1988; Carlton and Sloman, 1992; Murphy and Anhalt, 1992). As Long's survey noted: "Rater bias, halo effect and skewdness of rating remain perennial problems (Long, 1986:iii).

Fourthly, and again linked to the issue of subjectivity and bias, the issue of appraisal and equal opportunities has also received attention within the functionalist literature on appraisal. There is surprisingly little research in this area and what does exist, like

the literature on appraisal in general, tends to be decontextualised, ignoring the wider social, organisational and political context within which appraisal operates. Research on gender bias and appraisal is mainly psychology based, comprising laboratory-based experiments using students as subjects, located within 'sex as variable' assumptions (Day and Stogdill, 1975), discussed in Chapter 1. Much of this work is so abstracted from the real world, with students being required to put themselves in the position of managers making human resource decisions, that it has little value, as its subjects are, as Ilgen (1983) terms it, "paper-people". In addition, this research is focused mainly on earlier methods of rating rather than objectives setting type of appraisal, concerned with rater accuracy.

Most studies examining the equal opportunities aspects of appraisal have focused on the issue of subjectivity in assessment. It is suggested that the accuracy of the rater (appraiser) can be affected by the task concerned, the positions in the organisation of the participants, the sex of the ratee and rater, the training and tokenism (Rose 1978, Nieva and Gutek 1980, Dipboye 1985, Williams and Walker 1985, Shore and Thornton 1986, De Meuse 1987, Drazine and Auster 1987, Hedge and Kavanagh 1988, Sackett *et al* 1991) and perceptions of the value of "feminine" traits in human resource decisions (Heilman and Saruwatri, 1979; Schein, 1978; Taylor and Ilgen, 1981). Studies have shown that women tend to receive less useful feedback than their male counterparts. This may either be more innocuous, neutral and less critical (Corby, 1982), or less positive and constructive (Thomas, 1987). Similarly, Brown (1993) has found that women tend to get less negative feedback

in appraisal through chivalry and fear that they would react emotionally. Thus they are denied the critical feedback necessary for staff development. Studies have also shown that women tend to have lower performance expectations and lower self confidence in self-appraisals (Maccoby and Jacklin 1974). It is considered "feminine" to be modest and not to "blow your own trumpet". As Brown (1993) comments "self effacement and self depreciation are not particularly useful qualities in appraisal interviews" (1993:3). Alimo-Metcalf's research (1993) found that women find it more difficult to talk openly about their performance and their relationship with their appraiser. Bridges (1988) found that, when compared with men, women tend to report lower expectations for themselves in accordance with societal stereotyping of modesty and weakness. If a woman does achieve, she, more likely than not, attributes it to luck rather than skill (Stern 1989).

Much of this work comes from liberal equal opportunities assumptions, which argues that women face barriers, arising from socialisation and sex-stereotyping, which prevent them from advancement in the organisation. Stereotypical assumptions about 'women's role' are then reflected in appraisal decisions. However, despite the problems of subjectivity and bias, appraisal is presented within the equal opportunities approach as a means to overcoming barriers to women's advancement in the organisation. Again, if done properly, by providing formalised, objective performance criteria, systematic feedback for professional development and career planning, it is argued that appraisal counters subjectivity and therefore helps to contribute to the equal opportunities of the institution as a whole. The Hansard

Society report on Women at the Top (1990), for example, recommends that formal, objective criteria for performance should be established in order to overcome unfair promotions procedures.

Reconceptualising Appraisal

What becomes clear from the literature is that the perfect appraisal system is as illusory as it ever was. As Grint (1993) argues: “since performance appraisal systems have been subjected to constant criticism and reconstruction over the last fifty years one might ask, ‘why, in the constant process of appraisal systems revisions, can’t we seem to get it right?’” (Grint, 1993:64). Grint (1993) argues that the heart of the problem lies in the epistemological roots underlying traditional approaches to appraisal and appraisal research. The assumption is that by perfecting the system, the eventual ‘truth’ about the appraisee will be discovered. Thus, the focus of the writing is always aimed at removing bias and subjectivity, in other words, the human element. Drawing on postmodern notions of the decentered rather than essential, core self, Grint argues that objective appraisal can never be achieved because of the multiplicity and ambiguity of individual subjectivity. By foregoing technicist, objective interpretations and taking instead a ‘social constructionalist’ approach, it is possible to avoid a “permanent enigma; a quest for the sacred and secret panacea that always manages to evade those looking for a method to appraise individuals objectively” (1993:67). Fundamental to traditional notions of appraisal is the assumption that objective information, i.e., the ‘truth’ about the appraised is accessible via appraisal,

exemplified in Morgan's metaphor of the numerical view of reality (Morgan, 1988:480, cited in Townley, 1993:229).

In recent years, therefore, in line with wider debates surrounding the nature of HRM, the contributions of postmodern analysis, especially the work of Foucault, has been taken up to challenge the more traditional, technicist, objectivist interpretations found in the 'how to do it' type texts (Townley 1989, 1992, 1993; Ball, 1990; Grint, 1993; Coates 1994; Newton and Findlay, 1996). Foucault's concepts of power/knowledge, discipline and surveillance, and the constitution of individual subjectivity, have been applied to the working of appraisal to illustrate how appraisal functions as a "disciplinary technology", which serves to *create* rather than reflect reality. Appraisal may be described as an 'information panopticon' (Zuboff, 1988). The panopticon is an architectural design devised by Bentham as the perfect building for a penitentiary (Townley, 1994). It comprises a central tower, around which prisoners are housed in individual cells. Prisoners are open to surveillance from the guards but cannot see the guards themselves. They are also hidden from each other. Thus the prisoners are watched without their knowing when they are watched and hence the prisoner is forced to behave at all times, 'just in case'. As Foucault observes, "the surveillance is permanent in its effects, even if it is discontinuous in its action" (Foucault, 1979:201). Furthermore, as the effects of power are continuous, the prisoner, in effect controls him/herself: "in short, that the inmates should be caught up in a power situation of which they themselves are bearers" (Foucault, *ibid*:201). The essence of panopticism is visibility. Visibility renders the individual knowable to both him/herself and to the organisation, and therefore manageable. Because the individual does not know when

they are being watched, they internalise the control and thus are rendered the perfect disciplined individual (Townley, 1992). Acting as an information panopticon, then, appraisal allows the appraiser to “see everything” and to monitor all aspects of the individual’s job in one instrument. It thus forms “the perfect disciplinary apparatus” which “would make it possible for a single gaze to see everything constantly (Foucault, 1979:173). Townley (1992) takes up this notion of the disciplinary gaze as a metaphor to describe the workings of appraisal. Contrasting the gaze with more conventional notions of appraisal acting as a mirror reflecting reality, Townley suggests that appraisal functions more like a gaze, surveying individuals, prescribing norms and assessing performance.

Interpreting appraisal as a gaze emphasises its ‘normalising’ role. Rather than cataloguing data about the individual - in its perfected form, objective, revealing and truthful - appraisal serves to *create* specific work norms, championing some, while leaving others ignored, undervalued, discarded. Viewing appraisal in this way helps to understand why, despite all its apparent failings as a rational technical tool, the spread of appraisal, especially for public service professionals seems insatiable. It can be understood as part of a package of change in the public sector, designed to imbue public sector workers with the new discourses of new public management, entrepreneurial, customer oriented and output focused. Against these norms, individuals may be ranked, classified and divided to “fix individuals in a web of objective codification” (Rabinow, 1986:22). This renders the individual describable, calculable and comparable; it is embodied in Foucault’s concept of the examination:

The examination combines the techniques of an observing hierarchy and those of a normalising judgement. It is a normalising gaze, a surveillance that makes

it possible to qualify, to classify, and to punish. It establishes over individuals a visibility through which one differentiates and judges them (Foucault, 1979:175).

Thus appraisal serves as a 'normalising' mechanism, making the individual "known" and thus rendering him/her both the *object* and *subject* of power (Townley, 1994). Firstly, by measuring the individual against set norms of behaviour and standards of performance, each person can be positioned in a hierarchy of performance and can be judged against others. Secondly, the individual is the subject of power/knowledge in that he/she becomes a creation of the functioning of appraisal as performance is changed to suit prescribed norms of behaviour. The individual internalises these norms and is reconstructed along set lines through the process of self evaluation against set criteria. Here Foucault's notion of the confessional is relevant. Appraisal's role becomes one of monitoring the extent to which the individual has internalised the company's culture - a shift from focusing on the physical performance to concern with discovering the "ideological person" (Coates, 1994:182). The confessional is a process which confirms self identity. As Ball (1990) observes, the appraisal interview embodies the image of the confession:

The confession is a ritual of discourse in which the speaking subject is also the subject of the statement; it is also a ritual that unfolds within a power relationship, for one does not confess without the presence (or virtual presence) of a partner who is not simply the interlocutor but the authority who requires the confession, prescribes and appreciates it, and intervenes in order to judge, punish, forgive, console (Foucault, 1981:61, quoted in Ball, 1990:161).

The appraisal provides feedback on performance which becomes part of the individual's self understanding. Individuals participate in the discipline of themselves, resulting in their reconstitution along prescribed norms. Appraisal not only judges the individual against pre-set norms, it also *creates* the individual, as a subject, leading to

the individual creating his/her own self identity - a constant placing of individuals in situations where they are forced to think about themselves and simultaneously provide the answer (Coates, 1994).

However, it is difficult to achieve the perfect panopticon as the all controlling directing mechanism. It is not inevitable that the outcome of its gaze will be as originally intended. As Garland (1987) comments, Bentham failed to consider the negative aspects of panopticism, the degree of resistance which its principles might bring about (cited in Townley, 1992:196). Whilst appraisal might produce the all obedient servant, this might not produce the required behaviour. It can result in an obsession with observable performance. The individual becomes introspective, constantly seeking information and evaluations of performance. This is the disciplinary effect of appraisal. However, focusing on quantifiable, observable aspects of the job may serve to neglect other aspects of the job, important for its total execution.

Furthermore, as Townley (1994) comments, there is no intention of simple determinism in this understanding of panopticism. Quoting Rose (1990), Townley argues, rather, that "...the will to govern needs to be understood less in terms of its success than in terms of the difficulties of operationalising it." (Rose, 1990:10, cited in Townley, 1994:141). Despite the grand scheme, the espoused aims, the original intentions, and so on, the actual form which appraisal takes reflects the local conditions and institutional culture: "people know what they do and why they do what they do but they do not know what it is that they do does" (Foucault, quoted in

Townley, *op cit*:141). Appraisal needs to be understood, not as a neutral technical instrument for information gathering, Townley argues, but as a “social phenomenon, both reflecting and engendering different interests and interpretations, whose significance is constructed and emerges from a context” (Townley, 1990b:43).

Appraising Academics

Research on academic appraisal tends to echo the more traditional technicist, objectivist and rationalist heritage of appraisal writing. There have been various surveys on academic appraisal, since its inception, mainly based on single case institutions and focusing on its implementation (Rutherford, 1988, 1992; Helm, 1989; Arthur and Robertson, 1993; Wilson and Beaton, 1993). In addition, Bull (1992) carried out a review of eight university appraisal schemes, on behalf of the CVCP. The most comprehensive research, to date, has been the two year, university-wide survey by Bryman *et al* (1991). The research on appraisal in universities has tended to focus on the type of appraisal systems in operation and the main difficulties encountered in its implementation. The general conclusions from this research is that, despite its association with the managerialist tone of Jarratt (Townley, 1990b), there has been a widespread acceptance of appraisal by academic staff. However, there have been criticisms over what is perceived to be its excessive bureaucracy and lack of tangible outcomes. For example, the Bryman *et al* survey found that the systems often had conflicting or ambiguous aims. Both the Bryman *et al* and Rutherford (1988) research found that most respondents were in favour of greater links between appraisal and promotion. The recommendations from Bryman *et al*, however, are

somewhat contradictory, suggesting a need for more direct links with promotion and yet acknowledging the fact that such links result in a loss of openness and the ability to discuss problems in a frank manner. The study also showed that appraisal was conducted in a 'vacuum' in the university, rarely linked to developmental activities or strategic planning. However, all of the research suggests that academics are generally indifferent about appraisal, stating that it has little impact on their performance or motivation.

Wilson and Beaton's research (1993), analysing the introduction of appraisal in a Scottish university, has highlighted many of the age old concerns associated with appraisal implementation. The authors argue that appraisal can be understood as a new managerial discipline within universities, changing norms of performance and pushing new cultural values of intensified work regimes and new forms of macho management. As one of their respondents commented: "They are asking for world leadership in research, a heavy contribution to senior administration and outstanding teaching at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels. What you are looking at is a thoroughly stupid job specification" (Wilson and Beaton, 1993:175). Townley's (1990b) genealogical approach to the introduction of appraisal in universities also emphasises the power relations involved in the process. Townley also argues that the aims of appraisal are that of monitoring and collecting information on performance. This can be clearly seen in the Jarratt Report (1985), where a range of performance indicators are recommended to make universities, departments and individuals more accountable for their performance. For academics, appraisal is seen to offer clear direction of behaviour, to remove "...divided loyalties and conflicts of interest..." and

so make academics "...work to a common purpose and objectives..." (CVCP, 1985:9/10).

However, despite the overtly managerialist language in Jarratt, the effects of appraisal are not necessarily negative (Foucault was at great pains to emphasise the positive, creative aspects of power). Appraisal can help to create and sustain an individual's sense of identity. People engage in techniques such as appraisal, Townley (1994) argues, because of the benefits they can obtain in terms of feedback, a confirmation of competence and motivation.

The gender implications of academic appraisal have been largely neglected in the research. Neither the Bryman *et al* (1991) study, nor the one carried out by Bull (1992) considered gender, except in so far as the women academics were able to choose a female appraiser and recommending equal opportunities training for all appraisers. However, in the Wilson and Beaton (1993) case study, several interesting gender issues emerged. There was evidence from their respondents that appraisal reflected the gendered culture of the university which was seen to favour masculine norms and values. In particular, they noted the treating as normal, masculine career patterns, stereotypical attitudes about women and a lack of awareness of women academics' needs. As one respondent commented, women academics were generally seen as expendable and this would be reflected in appraisal as much as in any other activity. In addition, it was felt that if the appraiser was not aware of gender issues, they might be less sensitive to women academics career patterns and alternative career objectives. Finally, one woman had felt that the whole appraisal process had treated

her very badly, dismissing both her teaching and research. Apart from the findings in this study, gender and academic appraisal has been neglected in the literature. There has been no systematic research which principally aims to study women academics' experiences of appraisal within the gendered culture of the university institution. However, that is not to say that there has been no concern expressed over the gender implications of academic appraisal in the academic press and through the AUT (Tate, 1988; Brown, 1993; AUT, 1991, 1993). A conference on "Appraisal of Staff: An Equal Opportunities Approach", held at Bradford University, in 1990, raised several practical implications for appraising women academics but very little consideration was given the wider implications of appraisal within the gendered university (Randell *et al*, 1991).

Conclusions

This chapter has described the changing nature of higher education management, highlighting the impact of the 'new' discourses of management since 1979. Part of the changes introduced has been the appraisal of academics as well as a range of other 'disciplinary technologies' which together represent an increased management of academic activities. It was argued that, rather than viewing appraisal from a functionalist interpretation, a social constructionist approach, drawing from postmodernism, highlights the role of appraisal in the 'management of meaning' (Smircich and Morgan, 1982). In particular, the normalising and subjectivising effects of appraisal are highlighted, and its role in directing academic work and constituting academic identity in line with the prevailing government ethos. The chapter also

argued that most of the research on appraisal in higher education may be criticised for being gender-blind. Viewing appraisal from a social constructionist perspective, the research presented in this thesis aims to decode the gendered norms promoted through appraisal and to appreciate their impact on women academics' identities.

The next chapter sets out the Foucauldian feminist epistemology, introduced in Chapter 1, which forms the epistemological approach underlying this research. In addition, the chapter details the methodology and research methods adopted in conducting the study.

Chapter 4: Research Design and Methodology

Introduction

Chapter 1, 2 and 3 set out the background to the research. The research questions arising from this literature, are focused on the nature of the new gender regimes emerging in 'New Higher Education', examining, in particular, the normalising and subjectivising role of appraisal in constructing the new gendered academic norm. The research examines women academics' understandings of appraisal and the impact on the nature of academic work and identity. Focusing on the generative notion of power relations, the research examines women academics' role in shaping the new gendered culture and the possible dislodging of the embedded masculine discourses. In this chapter, the epistemological and methodological approach adopted to address the research questions is explained.

Before setting out a detailed account of the methodological approach to the study, it is first necessary to explain my background and provide a brief overview of the participants in the research. I came to this research with an unapologetically personal aim. I had recently received my first lecturing post in higher education and found myself working in an institution and a profession which was overwhelmingly male dominated. However, I was aware that higher education was witnessing a period of transformative change where many of the traditional practices were being challenged. It was the question of how women academics, including myself, might be affected by

this package of change which originally attracted me to the research. I present in this thesis the accounts and interpretations of women academics working in three case study universities, two 'old' and one 'new'. I am not connected with any of the three universities making up this research.

Case studies 1 and 3, named Kingswood University and Bridgetown University respectively (see Chapters 5 and 7), come from the 'old' university sector. Case study 3, named Maresfield (see Chapter 6) is a former polytechnic. The institutions were selected on the basis of a telephone survey assessing the state of development of equal opportunities (see 'Case Studies', p.157). The main period of 'data' collection was the Spring and Summer of 1994, in the form of semi-structured interviews. Questions covered in the interviews were generated from an initial pilot study, carried out at another university institution in the previous year.

The aim of this chapter is to describe the approach taken in investigating and analysing the experiences of women academics within the changing culture of university institutions. The research is grounded in a feminist epistemology which takes as its starting point a critique of 'malestream' epistemology and methodology. Firstly, an overview of the debate on the nature of feminist epistemology is presented. It is argued that a postmodern feminist epistemology can be a productive and revealing framework for understanding the issues under investigation. Such a framework draws on the contribution of postmodern/poststructural philosophers, particularly that of Foucault, yet maintains the strongly political focus at the heart of feminist research. Having outlined the epistemological assumptions informing the

research, the second half of the chapter presents the methodology (i.e., the theoretical approach) adopted and the specific methods, or techniques, used for gathering evidence.

1) Feminist Epistemology

Introduction

In Chapter 1, it was argued that most of what is understood about organisations is derived from research which is gender blind. With a few notable exceptions (Hearn *et al*, 1989; Acker, 1990; Calas and Smircich, 1992a, 1992b, 1996; Marshall, 1995; Wilson, 1996), research which highlights the gendered nature of knowledge and which aims to rectify this imbalance, has been undertaken in academic disciplines outside that of Organisational Theory (OT). Whilst some feminist writers have argued that the very notion of the academic discipline is a masculine construct (Abbott and Wallace, 1990), there is still the need for this work to be taken seriously within the confines of OT. This would enable the production of theory which recognises and accounts for the various gendered experiences of people in organisations, creating new insights and new challenges to what we understand about organisations and the processes which take place within them. In other words, OT needs to reflect women's experiences and be therefore useful to both men and women. Such an approach would replace what is currently assumed to be neutral knowledge with a more adequate, inclusive knowledge about organisations. However, the goal of feminist research should not be to produce the 'final word', the argument is not that by coming from a feminist perspective, research is more pure or

‘truthful’. Rather, a feminist perspective starts from the recognition that the production of knowledge will always be perspective-dependent (Jacobson and Jacques, 1990), reflexive, partial, contextual and built on experience.

The argument for feminist epistemology

Over the past 20 years, feminist research has presented a fundamental challenge to ‘malestream’ theory, arguing, from various positions, that what is understood to be ‘truth’ and knowledge is only a partial representation, based on androcentric and distorted views of the world. This recognition has made way for the development of a distinctive feminist epistemology. However, what constitutes feminist epistemology can be seen to be very much a contested terrain, both between feminists of various perspectives as well as between feminists and critics (Farganis, 1994). Despite epistemological debates (detailed below), it is usually acknowledged that there are certain unifying features to feminist research (see Lather, 1988; Farganis, 1994; Maynard and Purvis, 1994; Olesen, 1996; Henwood, 1996).

Firstly, feminist research is characterised by its praxis orientation, i.e., the generation of knowledge which is practical, useful and focused on change to improve the lives of women. As Weedon (1987) argues, “Feminism is a politics” (*ibid.*:1). Feminist research starts from a premise that society is patriarchal and that the role of feminist theory is to reveal the nature, the ‘how’ and ‘why’, of patriarchal oppression. Whilst it is acknowledged that there are many ways in which people are oppressed, feminists place gender in the foreground (Farganis, 1994). However, the nature of what stands

for a change orientated approach is somewhat disputed, especially with the appropriation of postmodern philosophy by some feminists. Radical feminist thinking has emphasised the need to transform society and end patriarchal relations as a principal structuring mechanism in society. However, less totalising approaches have focused more on empowerment of women (Opie, 1992), revealing the gendered nature of dominant discourses in society. The difficulty is maintaining the political focus of research. As Maynard and Purvis (1994) have pointed out, raising awareness but offering no way out, no route to challenging the patriarchal structures and processes in society raises ethical concerns over the impact of research on those studied (these issues will be addressed in detail later in the chapter).

Secondly, feminist research aims to challenge and throw into doubt the assumptions underlying the nature of knowledge, especially that which lays claim to 'scientific' neutrality and disinterestedness. It is argued that the dominance of positivist modes of inquiry in the social sciences have served to support the continued subordination of women. Feminist research aims to reveal that such so-called value-free inquiry is in fact male knowledge and male truth (Smith, 1987). As Spender (1985) argues: "...there is no truth, no one authority, no one objective method which leads to the production of pure knowledge.....patriarchal knowledge is based on the premise that the experience of only half the human population needs to be taken into account and the resulting version can be imposed on the other..." (1985:5-6). This challenging of the truth claims made by existing knowledge is not unique to feminist research, forming also the basis of developments in postmodern philosophy. The root of this critique has been Enlightenment thinking and the notion that reason and logical

deduction can provide objective, reliable and universal 'foundational' knowledge (Flax, 1987). Enlightenment thinking is criticised by feminists for setting up false dualism, privileging one over the other, such as quantity over quality (Henwood, 1996), objectivity over subjectivity, rationality over emotionality and objective truth over ideology and distorted interests (Harding, 1986:186). As Harding (1986) argues, we must move away from the notion that there is an ultimate truth, a grand theory and meta-narratives bound up in Enlightenment thinking and "the psychic motor of western science - the longing for 'one true story'" (1986:193). Thus, it is argued, feminist research starts from the assumption that all knowledge generation is partial and situated in a particular cultural, political and historical context.

Linked to this, the third feature of feminist research is a concern to redress the power imbalance in the research process and adopt a more ethical approach to research (Oakley, 1981). Feminist research has criticised 'malestream' research for treating as 'objects' those who have been the topics of research. Reinharz (1983) refers to this as the 'research as rape' model, where researchers adopt a "take, hit and run" approach in their research: "They intrude into their subjects' privacy, disrupt their perceptions, utilise false pretences, manipulate the relationships, and give little or nothing in return" (Reinharz, 1983:80). In contrast, feminist researchers have argued for a stronger ethical stance which encourages openness, sharing, involving and which draws directly on women's own experiences. This has led to a debate over who may be involved in feminist research, summed up in the slogan that feminist research must be 'by, for and on' women and therefore suggests that only women can be involved (Stanley and Wise, 1983). Similar problems are raised with the desire to undertake

non-hierarchical, power sensitive research yet at the same time retaining the capacity for critical thinking (Reinharz, 1992). In addition, there have been debates over whether feminist research naturally dictates the need for qualitative research methods, which enable the women researched to have voice. Adopting a non-power position in research requires reflexivity on behalf of the researcher and an acknowledgement that the researcher is part of the research process and knowledge generation. As Abbott and Wallace (1990) argue “the researcher must be constantly aware of how her values, attitudes, and perceptions are influencing the research process, from the formulation of the research questions, through the data-collecting stage, to the ways in which the data are analysed and theoretically explained” (*ibid.*:207). They comment on the dilemmas facing feminist researchers in attempting to adhere to the tenets of feminist research while conforming to the requirements laid down in the wider academic community, editors of journals and funding bodies. This is especially the case when faced with the doctrine of disinterestedness and detached observation and communication, along with the high value assigned to objective research. Stanley and Wise (1993), for example, point out the importance of recognising that the researcher herself is also a subject in her research. There is a need to take, what Maynard and Purvis (1994) term an ‘intellectual autobiographical’ approach to research, accepting that an individual’s own experiences and understandings of the world have an impact on the questions asked, interpretations and conclusions of the research. Together, these issues demand a more open and integrative approach to research than that advocated by traditional scientific inquiry.

Developments in feminist epistemology

Harding (1990) identifies two main epistemological stances taken up by feminists: feminist empiricism and feminist standpoint. In more recent years and still in evolution, a third approach, termed postmodern feminism (or feminist postmodernism) may be added.

Feminist Empiricism

Feminist thinking, in general, has sought to highlight and put right the androcentric nature of knowledge. It has been critical of 'malestream' theory which has taken as generic the notion of 'man' as its object for study, either excluding women from research or taking men and women's various experiences to be the same, and that same being a masculine constructed one (Weedon, 1987). More radical approaches have argued that the notion of theory itself is a masculine form of discourse, designed to suppress women's voices (Daly, 1978; Rich, 1980).

Feminist empiricist research aims to put right the 'bad science' of existing knowledge, which is based on male-centred, sexist inquiry (Millman and Kanter, 1987). However, feminist empiricists work within the existing boundaries of knowledge, drawing on positivistic traditions. It may be characterised, rather cynically, as doing no more than to 'add women and mix' into existing theory, existing assumptions and knowledge about the world and the role of men and women within it. The aim is to produce a more complete picture, less biased and more objective, as a way of understanding the world. Its critique of existing knowledge can be seen to lie more at the

methodological than epistemological level, except in so far as it recognises that gender matters and that the 'knower' is located in a particular historical period rather than being a disembodied mind (Harding, 1990:93). Research is abstracted from its context and works in pre-given, androcentric categories, rather than questioning the assumptions of the nature of science itself and 'seeing reality differently (Stanley and Wise, 1983). Whilst feminist empiricists have contributed much to the debate on the nature of what is understood as knowledge, in recent years it is the contributions of feminist standpoint theories and postmodern feminism which have had the most impact on the shaping of feminist epistemology. As Abbott and Wallace (1990) observe, feminist empiricists, due to their adopting of a positivist mode of scientific inquiry, fail to address the importance of the relationships between experience, consciousness and theory.

Feminist Standpoint

Feminist standpoint approaches start from the assumption that only through an understanding of the experiences (through qualitative methods) of women can less partial, less patriarchal knowledge be produced. Standpoint approaches are associated with the shift from equality to difference in feminist theory, discussed in Chapter 1. Writing from a feminist standpoint perspective offers both a critique of existing theory as well as a challenging of the underpinning masculinist epistemology upon which this theory is based. A standpoint approach argues that women's different perspective needs to be heard alongside male accounts. However, it moves beyond the 'add women and mix' tendencies of feminist empiricists, insisting that

existing knowledge is partial, distorted, ideologically interested and therefore false (Strickland, 1992). Unlike attempts in liberal and Marxist inspired theory, which try to add in women where they have been left out, feminist standpoint argues for a radical reconceptualisation of knowledge itself. Feminist Standpoint theorists have been critical of Enlightenment thinking, discussed in Chapter 1, arguing that what has been understood as being universal and true knowledge is in fact a reflection of dominant, white, male western values (Strickland, 1992). As women are seen to have different experiences of the world, they speak with a 'different voice' (Gilligan, 1982). Women, it is argued, are united in a shared identity. This unity is not from biology but from shared experiences of oppression, subordination and marginalisation in society. Only through understanding the world through women's eyes, and women's experiences, i.e., from a woman's 'standpoint', can better knowledge be produced which is more inclusive and less distorted (Chodorow, 1978; Gilligan, 1982; Ferguson, 1984; Harding, 1986, 1990; Hartsock, 1987). Fundamental to standpoint theorists is that through replacing the androcentric biased accounts of men with that derived from a feminist scholarship, better theory is produced. What is more, because there is an acceptance that knowledge is derived from experience which is always partial, feminist accounts are less distorted than malestream ones and thus feminists have the 'epistemological and political edge' (Farganis, 1994). Whilst it is acknowledged that all knowledge is partial, feminist standpoint generated knowledge is more inclusive than androcentric accounts and therefore 'truer' (Lather, 1988).

However, feminist standpoint approaches, especially early work in this area, such as Gilligan (1982) have been criticised for sustaining universal and essentialist notions of

women (Spelman, 1988; Calas and Smircich, 1992a). By presenting one notion of an essential woman, feminist standpoint approaches result in silencing many women who are not in the privileged position of theory making (Stanley and Wise, 1990). It has been the tendency to take the experiences of white western women as speaking for all women, with any deviation from this norm being regarded as 'other'. As Stanley and Wise (1990) point out "once the existence of several feminist standpoints is admitted, then it becomes impossible to talk about 'strong' objectivity as a means of establishing superior or 'better' knowledge because there will, necessarily, be contested truth claims arising from the contextually grounded knowledge of the different standpoints" (*ibid.*:20). The main limitation of feminist standpoint theories, then, is this notion of the essential women. Both empiricist and standpoint approaches can be criticised for replacing one partial theory, that of the white western androcentric theory with another partial perspective, i.e., that of the white western middle-class heterosexual woman (Flax, 1987; Nicholson, 1990). The limitations of both approaches, therefore, can be seen to be the tendency to produce false generalisations about knowledge, on the basis of a limited perspective and thus presenting as universal a certain perspective, which ignores and silences those who do not conform to this norm. Furthermore, it is argued that white middle-class female academics are slow to recognise their privileged position when engaged in theory creation. This is not only in talking in essentialist terms about women's experiences, but also in the tendency to ignore the influence of their own situatedness and how this shapes their beliefs as well as how their privileged position enables them to participate in and benefit from the structures of domination (Strickland, 1992). It is suggested that the reason for this essentialist tendency lies in the fact that feminist theory lies locked in Enlightenment

thinking and the quest for the ultimate truth underlying women's marginalisation and subordination, whatever that might be (Flax, 1987; Nicholson, 1990). This critique of essentialism has heralded the moves towards an approach to feminist theory which recognises the partiality of theory generation and which demands a reflexive approach on behalf of the 'knower' in generating this theory. However, Harding (1990:19) counters the accusation of essentialism in feminist standpoint approaches, stating that the purpose is to "analyse" the ways in which androcentric theories assign women to subordinate positions, putting forward ways to challenge this. Similarly, Scott (1988) argues that feminist standpoint theory recognises that there are diverse ranges of experiences, both between women as well as between men and women and it is this recognition of difference which enables the alternative, more effective ways of thinking and acting, to be presented. Thus feminist standpoint theory offers a challenge and critique of malestream theories from a position of difference. Feminist standpoint theory, more recently, has argued that different groups of women have different experiences (mediated by class, race, ableness and sexuality) and the theory of, say a Black woman, may not only differ from that of a white woman's but also be a critique of it which will require that person to revise her own theory as a consequence (Strickland, 1992). The key focus of the critique of feminist standpoint approaches is the assumption that women hold the key to ultimate truth - that they have 'perfect vision'. As Kelly *et al* (1992, p.29/30) comment:

Experience is substituted for, or deemed to be equivalent to, politics, as if critical awareness and understanding are inscribed on a person through forms of oppression, with an implicit or explicit presumption that such awareness is inaccessible to those who have not 'lived' such experiences (quoted in Maynard and Purvis, 1994:6)

It is this particular issue which has attracted some feminists to postmodern philosophies.

Postmodern Feminism

Those feminist writers identifying themselves as postmodern feminists can be roughly split into two camps. Firstly, writers such as Flax (1987) who argue that feminism *is* postmodernism and a truly feminist 'theory' must be situated within postmodernism. Secondly, there are a greater number of feminists who would argue that elements of postmodernism may be usefully appropriated by feminists, with each approach cancelling out the weaknesses in the other (Weedon, 1987; Fraser and Nicholson, 1990; Ramazanoglu and Holland, 1993), hence a *postmodern* feminism. As Fraser and Nicholson (1990) argue, postmodernism can be fused with feminism to create a postmodern feminism which dismisses meta-narratives and essentialist notions of the self found in feminist standpoint approaches and yet retains feminism's social criticism and politics of change. In particular, a postmodern feminism has to attend to the criticisms of relativism, individualism, undermining of structural influences, and political inadequacy, looking to feminist standpoint approaches to overcome these. A complex debate has developed of claims and counterclaims over the nature of feminist epistemology so that, as Marshall (1995) aptly comments "creating theory about gender can feel like walking a minefield, with many places not to tread" (1995:55). The main concern is to construct theory which is pragmatic and useful, i.e., it helps us to understand who we are and who we might be, yet is epistemologically coherent and consistent.

Feminists have been attracted to postmodernism because of its critique of the Enlightenment and the opportunities it offers for overcoming the charge of essentialism (Nicholson, 1990). Like feminist standpoint approaches, postmodernism has been aimed at debunking the foundationalist claims of the Enlightenment through the questioning of the stability of knowledge (Calas and Smircich, 1992a, 1992b). Through the technique of deconstruction, for example, postmodernism attempts to reveal the power underlying truth claims. Rather than viewing knowledge as transcendental, transcultural and transhistorical, postmodernism argues that knowledge is partial and situated, culturally and historically. The world is thus made up of subjective experiences. Feminist standpoint theory has also been critical of Enlightenment epistemology. However, this critique is founded on a different base to that of postmodernism, arguing that what is understood as knowledge is, in fact, only the partial, androcentric truth. Hence the basic assumption has been that by including women's voices, we arrive at better theory. Thus, postmodernism argues that all knowledge is unstable, whereas feminist standpoint is stating that existing androcentric knowledge is unstable; re-writing this from women's perspectives would create more complete knowledge, but grounded in cultural and historical locations.

However, it is the aim of each approach which highlights the fundamental difference between feminist standpoint theory and postmodern feminism. A postmodern feminist approach, arguing that all knowledge is partial and situated, rejects the notion of foundationalist knowledge and thus would question the ability to create a better world through the valorisation of women's experiences. As Olesen (1994) argues, the

pursuit of fundamental truth is seen to be a destructive illusion. The aim of feminist standpoint theory is seen to be too romantic and Utopian - essential womanhood could only ever be realised outside the structures of patriarchy (Weedon, 1987). The aim should be shifted, it is argued, to an acceptance of 'difference without opposition' (Lather, 1988). A postmodern feminist analysis argues, therefore, that all knowledge is localised and self-referential. There is no Grand Theory by which we can say 'this is the truth'. The consequence of such an assertion is that:

...claims by...radical feminists, that there is in women a shared and enduring humaneness which must be a prominent feature of a true analysis of the world are as misplaced as claims by liberal humanists that rational scientific empiricism is the generator of real knowledge. Both are discourses which offer alternative views of the world: which a person accepts will be partly a matter of historical accident - which brings people into contact with some discourses and not others associated with constituencies exercising varying degrees of power - and partly a matter of personal and political choice. (Coleman, 1991:26).

The crux of this debate lies in the understanding of the self within Enlightenment epistemology and its consequential deconstruction within postmodernism.

Several key features can be identified which make up a postmodern feminist epistemology. These are seen as significant departures from the standpoint approach and have caused considerable debate amongst feminist writers. Crucial to the understanding of a postmodern influenced feminism are the concepts of a decentred self, politics and power.

Decentred self

In a feminist standpoint approach, the individual subject is seen as having a fixed, essential core. Postmodern feminism, however, denies the presence of an essential self which is genetically determined (Weedon, 1987). Rather, it is argued, the subject is a socially constructed one, constituted in social relations, through discourses. The identity of the individual, therefore, is constantly in flux, or in process of becoming, as various discourses vie with one another for supremacy. As Weedon (1987) comments, a postmodern¹ notion of subjectivity is one which is “precarious, contradictory and in process, constantly being reconstituted in discourse each time we think or speak” (1987:33). It is this notion of the decentred self which has probably caused the most debate within the various factions of feminist theory. Feminism has always put women’s experiences and women’s consciousness central to the generation of knowledge, to replace androcentric knowledge. Self awareness, agency, praxis and change, both structural and individual have been fundamental to feminism (Strickland, 1992). However, a postmodern feminism throws out this idea of self-reflective knowledge. Such an approach has been criticised for deconstructing the very concept of gender and thus rendering feminism - the notion of women’s oppression - a redundant project (Harding, 1986; 1990; Di Stefano, 1990). However, the concept of subjectivity influenced by postmodernism, does not mean that gender cannot be referred to as a distinguishing feature, rather that women are *socially*

¹ Weedon uses the term Poststructuralist. I am using the terms Postmodern and Poststructural interchangeably. However, Poststructuralism is often distinguished to signify an approach which rejects the assumptions of structuralist Marxism, Saussurean structural linguistics and Lacanian theory of psychoanalysis. Postmodernist approaches go beyond this to include, in particular, the work of Derrida and Foucault. In fact most of the feminists influenced by postmodernist thinking draw mainly on the work of Derrida and, especially, Foucault.

constituted as different. Women face social relations and processes in ways which are different to men and it is this which determines the ways in which women are constituted; how their identity is constituted and internalised as a product of the exercise of social power. Rather than being a flaw in the approach, it is argued that the notion of a decentred subject in postmodern feminism opens up the possibilities of change. As Weedon (1987) argues, it is the resistance that comes from challenging the ways in which women are socially constituted as subordinate and marginal which gives postmodern feminism its political edge. Thus a postmodern feminism can still retain a gendered notion of subjectivity (Farganis, 1994). The role of language, discussed in Chapter 1, forms the root of a postmodern critique. Through language (defined as discourse) individual subjectivity, social institutions and social processes are defined, constituted and contested. It is through language that we become who we are and it is through language that we can become who we want to be. This therefore offers opportunities for women, and a political project for feminism, through challenging the conventional ways of seeing the world (Sawicki, 1991).

Politics

The other problematic area facing postmodern feminism, like that of the postmodern philosophies it draws from, is the charge of relativism. If there are no fundamental truths, then there are no criteria available, no authority that can say that something is better or worse than something else. Thus the 'oppression of women' is reduced to a localised narrative. As Hawkesworth (1989) comments "in a world of radical inequality, relativist resignation enforces the status quo" (1989:351). If feminists have

no criteria for saying that sexism is wrong then they lose their political project. This leads to the second, linked, criticism of postmodern feminism, that of political inadequacy. If postmodernism denies the existence of meta-narratives then how can it be asserted that a Black woman's experiences of oppression differs from that of a white woman? As Strickland (1992) observes:

If all we are allowed is local language games and narratives, with their own internal rules for what counts as "truth", but no "reality" against which to measure claims made by different groups and interests; then truth is basically a matter of power and of the status quo - this is what counts as "truth" within this context, and you cannot challenge it internally; nor can you challenge it from outside as you are no longer permitted to believe in wider truth, or the possibility of a wider understanding or communication (*ibid.*:13).

However, Morgan (1983) argues that we need to move beyond the quest for fundamental foundational truth and accept that all truth is relative. We must accept, he argues, that there are various and multiple epistemologies available for understanding phenomena, none of which have ultimate superiority. The quest for finding some external criteria of validity which transcend epistemological boundaries is flawed simply because to do so, by definition, relies on the adoption of one such epistemology and its underlying ontological roots and therefore is a self fulfilling prophesy. Hence "it is always possible to establish incontrovertible facts and exact solutions to problems, provided one defines and bounds the domain of experience to which they apply" (Morgan, 1983:395).

It is due to these charges of relativism and political inadequacy, raised by critics of postmodernism, that postmodern feminists have had to tread a careful path in presenting an approach which satisfies the needs of feminist politics while addressing the limitations of feminist standpoint theory. As Harding (1986) observes: "We are in

the puzzling situation where a “successor science” epistemologically robust and powerful enough to underseat an Enlightenment version is in tension with a postmodernism which struggles against claims of totality, certainty and methodological orthodoxy” (*ibid.*:150). However, this epistemology must be able to say that some claims to knowledge are more valuable than others, as without such criteria a feminist project is reduced merely to language games (Benhabib, 1990). Weedon (1987) provides a useful distinction between postmodernism (poststructuralism) and a postmodern feminism. Whilst a postmodern feminism focuses on power, questioning the competing and conflicting meanings underlying the historical and social production of discursive practices, postmodernism, *per se*, also questions the stability of meaning but this is an infinite and never ending deferral of meaning (*ibid.*: 86).

Foucauldian Feminism

As discussed in Chapter 1, it is the work of Foucault which is seen to have offered the most potential for feminist epistemology, being taken up by feminists interested in Foucauldian notions of the body, discourse, power and knowledge, and the subject. To reiterate, a Foucauldian approach argues that, rather than an essential, rational, thinking subject, individual subjectivities are constituted through discourses. Discourses construct individual identity and are thus extremely powerful and it is these effects of power that Foucault was interested in, i.e. the role discourse plays in the production of knowledge and the constitution of individual subjectivity. As individual identities are in a constant flux as they face various competing discourses,

then this offers a politics of change for feminism through the creation of reverse or counter discourses. However, a criticism directed at Foucauldian analysis is that of individualism, the notion that individuals act as free self-determining individuals, unfettered by the social structures of domination. By suggesting that individuals are free to choose between discourses suggests that, firstly, they remain unaffected by the strength of social structures and, secondly, that individuals are free of their own discursively constructed self (contra postmodern assumptions). The problem is, as Strickland (1992) questions, how can we choose which discourses are preferable, when these choices are based themselves on discourses, no more true or objective. However, Weedon argues that choices can be made through exploiting the contradictions, weaknesses and gaps between alternative subject positions: "Where there is a space between the position of subject offered by a discourse and individual interest, a resistance to that subject position is produced" (Weedon, 1987:112-113).

Foucault has also been criticised by some feminists for the political inadequacy of his approach. It is his notion of power as diffuse and non possessive which has been the focus of this critique and which has dogged feminists taking a Foucauldian line of argument. By focusing on the micropolitics of power, then this results in a denial, downplaying or ignoring of the structures of domination in society (Ramazanoglu, 1993). As Hekman (1990) observes: "The obstacle standing in the way of an acceptance of Foucault's perspective is that all but a few feminists believe that the articulation of a feminist voice must be grounded in absolutism...rooted in universal ethical claims" (Hekman, 1990:186, quoted in Jagger, 1992:22). However, this is to misinterpret Foucault's arguments, Hekman argues. An analysis of power must be

upwards, or ascending, from the multitudinous discourses arising out of social relations. It is this “tactical polyvalence of discourses” (Sawicki, 1994) which offers the point of resistance: “Discourse transmits and produces power; it reinforces it, but also undermines and exposes it, renders it fragile and makes it possible to thwart it” (Foucault, 1984:101). Thus feminists can appropriate Foucault’s concept of power and still have a political project. For theorists such as Sawicki and Hekman, it is this focus on the micropolitics of power which offers a way out for feminists disillusioned with theories pointing to a monocausal root of power and oppression. As discourses cut through all levels in society to subordinate women, a focus on Foucault’s conception of power equips women with a “broad based political resistance” (Hekman, 1990:186). A Foucauldian feminism is not concerned with emancipation but resistance and struggle, focusing on “a strategy that deconstructs masculinist discourses/power without attempting to resurrect the Enlightenment project of meta-narratives and liberation” (Hekman, 1990:188). Such an approach learns from the insights offered by Foucault to devise a theoretical framework which is useful and insightful and helps explain particular social and power relations. The concepts of power/knowledge, discourse and the subject offer a useful lens for understanding women’s subordination within organisations. Furthermore, Ramazanoglu and Holland argue that Foucault did not deny that there were macro structures of domination, it just was not the focus of his particular interest. They draw on Foucault’s concept of ‘major dominations’ within society which are produced by power relations (Ramazanoglu and Holland, 1993:240). This was not a concession towards some form of possessive power, however. The idea that men as a unified group could hold power over women would be dismissed by Foucault as a totalising

theory. However, it is something which a Foucauldian feminist epistemology can work with - to fill in and link, what Ramazanoglu and Holland refer to as an “explanatory gap” between Foucault’s micropolitics, or capillary notion of power and his intermittent references to “cleavages” in society resulting from concentrations of power. Thus we have a concentration of power, interwoven with other social divisions which produces discourses which persistently work in favour of men. As Ramazanoglu and Holland argue:

Men’s grip on women may be fragile, shifting, rooted in vulnerability, easily fractured, but this grip has a temporal and geographical ubiquity and tenacity which constitutes men’s power as sturdy and persistent relations of domination and subordination on which women’s resistance has made little impact. (*ibid.*:243)

It may be argued that since Foucault’s analysis is a gender-blind one, we also need to have “feminism’s sense of gender” and its “moral outrage” at male domination (Ramazanoglu and Holland, 1993). This was not the concern of Foucault - he was not writing from a feminist perspective and did not concern himself with the same issues as feminist writers, i.e. a system of patriarchal relations. Some feminists have criticised Foucault for his failure to recognise how partial and situated his own knowledge creation was and by portraying his analysis as neutral further serves to perpetuate male hegemony over knowledge creation (Di Stefano, 1990).

To summarise, therefore, Weedon (1987) comments “a theory is useful if it is able to address the questions of how social power is exercised and how social relations of gender, class and race might be transformed” (*ibid.*:20) By this standard, a Foucauldian feminist epistemology is useful because of its potential in understanding the micropolitics of power, enabling us to analyse how women are constituted as

subordinate and the impact this has on the production of meaning and subjectivity. Rather than being politically inadequate, a Foucauldian feminism offers a practical approach, at ground level, to enable women to understand, challenge and change the ways in which their identities are constituted. It is through this notion of reverse discourse that women are able to challenge the knowledge claims underlying and maintaining patriarchal power - but still accepting the overarching structures of inequality within society. As Sandra Acker (1994) argues, we need to see “both the forest and trees, the patriarchal structures and the everyday forms of maintenance and control” (*ibid.*:70).

This research, then, adopts a Foucauldian feminist epistemology. Weedon (1987) argues that such an approach enables a moving away from macrostructures and transformative change to question “how and why people oppress each other, a theory of subjectivity, of conscious and unconscious thoughts and emotions, which can account for the relationship between the individual and the social” (*ibid.*:3). This epistemological approach then informs the methodology adopted, which in turn, is translated into the particular methods used to understand women academics’ experiences of universities and the functioning of appraisal. The second section in this chapter sets out the particular methodological approach adopted in this research. Following this, a detailed account of the research methods used is presented.

2) Methodology

A positivist informed research methodology would clearly not be appropriate with a postmodern feminism, nor feminist research at all. It has long been established that feminist research methods and qualitative research methods are one and the same thing (Stanley and Wise, 1990; Reinharz, 1992). Whilst this is not necessarily the case (Maynard and Purvis, 1994), and recognising the fact that quantitative research methods do not automatically mean the adoption of a positivist epistemology (Bryman, 1988), qualitative research, especially the use of semi-structured interviews has been the most dominant methodology in feminist research. Whatever method (or group of methods) is adopted, a basic criterion is that they should be sensitive to feminist needs particularly in relation to the power dimension in the research process and to questions of ethics (Harding, 1986; Maynard and Purvis, 1994). Semi-structured interview techniques have been the dominant method as they have afforded the opportunity of understanding women's lives, from a woman's point of view, rather than more quantitative approaches, associated with masculinist, 'objectivist' research which perpetuates the image of value-free research and which serves to perpetuate the patriarchal hegemony over knowledge creation.

Case Studies

The main limitation to case study research, that of the inability to generalise from them, is not an issue in research adopting a postmodernist epistemological stance. Furthermore, such a critique is a misinterpretation of the role of case study research (Mitchell, 1983). Instead, the use of cases allows the researcher to maximise their

understanding of the issues of interest. The aim is not to be representative of a wider population, rather it should be evaluated in terms of the adequacy of the 'theoretical' assumptions generated from such research (Mitchell, 1983; Yin, 1984). The use of single or multiple case study approaches, as in the case of the current research, is to reveal patterns and linkages between various issues which are considered of importance in understanding and revealing women academics' experiences of the gendered academy.

Researcher and Researched

Fundamental to both feminist research, in general, and postmodern feminist research in particular, is the central role of reflexivity. Described by Mead (1934) as the "turning back of the experience of individual upon [her/himself]" (*ibid.*:134), a reflexive approach requires the 'knower' to reflect, analyse and publicly display their own set of assumptions and experience, and their relationship with the 'known' (Stanley and Wise, 1993; King, 1996). Thus, a reflexive approach to research shifts the relationship between the knower and known from the hierarchically privileged researcher (Oakley, 1981) and the passive subject to a more open, ethical one, with a sharing of information, aiming to build a genuine rapport rather than an instrumental relationship.

Therefore, in presenting this research, it is important that I explain my 'state of being' (Coleman, 1991). Being a female academic engaged in research on female academics, it would be impossible (as well as misguided) to attempt to approach the research

from a disinterested, objective stance. In engaging in this research I realise that I too am partly constituted by the discourses of Human Resource Management in Higher Education and, the making of knowledge and reflecting on my theorising, further contributes to this process. As the research has developed, I have come to reflect more and more on the various experiences related to me by the women in the case studies and I have considered their sense-making in the light of my own day-to-day experiences. However, I am aware that I have also, to a certain extent, 'shut out' much of what has been said and written; not to do so would result in despair, working in a male dominated field and Institution, located in a strongly patriarchal Welsh Valleys community. Despite this, there were periods of profound pessimism, when reflecting on the feelings of 'otherness' expressed by the women academics interviewed. I am mindful here of the impact that research undertaken by Stanley and Wise (1991) on obscene telephone calls had on their views on men, patriarchy and feminism. Added to this, on a daily basis, I have trod a careful path in being labelled as 'the feminist' in a decidedly non-feminist department. As Acker (1994), writing, no doubt, from her own experiences, comments: "The gendering of academic practice is a difficult terrain for women academics to write about....because of the danger of being thought to be 'obsessed' or showing pique or disappointment" (*ibid.*:70). Furthermore, whilst there is obviously an instrumental orientation to the research (PhD, career progression, publications, status, and so on), the research is fundamentally political in nature. Again it is not the 'disinterested pursuit of truth and reason' but the interested pursuit of 'truth', focused on praxis, challenge and change.

I have therefore attempted to adopt as open and inclusive a stance as possible when conducting the interviews, which form the basis of this research. As Greed (1990) argues, researching women in surveying and being herself a feminist surveyor:

I see my research as a two-way process of interaction and sharing between myself and the other women. In particular, in trying to encompass both the professional and personal elements of their lives in my research, I need to be willing to give as well as take. If I expect women to tell me what their lives are really like at a personal level, they expect that in return I will share with them information about my personal life and feelings. If I pretend that I have authority to do research because I myself have superior understanding, and have no problems in my life, I would get nowhere because the empathy based on similar life experiences between researcher and researched would no longer exist. (Greed, 1990:145).

This proved to be an easy position to take, given the overwhelming enthusiasm, interest and constructive advice I received from the women academics involved in this research. Thus, as Oakley (1981) argues, a feminist research methodology should be *for* women, i.e., it should be focused on praxis, providing a means whereby women can articulate their lives.

Politics and ethics

The nature of the research topic demanded a strong ethical code, especially in relation to the sensitive nature of the material, the potential vulnerability of the women interviewed and the impact the research might have on their lives. A particular problem was the issue of confidentiality and trust. Together these issues raised a number of ethical, moral and methodological problems which had to be addressed, concerning the process of data collection and its consequential interpretation and dissemination of data. The issue of ethical research had been at the forefront of feminist methodology (Oakley, 1981; Reinharz, 1983; Kelly, 1988; Stanley and Wise,

1990; Finch, 1993), particularly in its critique of masculinist 'rape research' (Reinharz, 1983).

To address these issues in the research, I aimed to be as open as possible in presenting myself to the women interviewed as well as describing that nature and purpose of the research. Initial contact with the women was via a letter requesting their participation in the research. The letter also set out the focus of the research, the results from the pilot study and the fact that the research was for a PhD. Assurances of confidentiality were made at this stage. At the interview, I reiterated the nature and purpose of the research and the fact that the confidentiality would be maintained. The issue of confidentiality was of particular concern, given the fact that the research was sensitive, the academic community small (and publication of the research would often be in the same field as the interviewee's and her colleagues) and that specific instances might be easily traceable back to the person concerned. Thus a rigorous approach to confidentiality had to be maintained throughout the data analysis and in writing up and disseminating the research. In a few cases this meant that information had to be left out or heavily disguised, especially information which the interviewee had specifically requested not to be included. Added to this, to maintain confidentiality, pseudonyms were used in all instances and some specific references to people and places changed (denoted by square brackets in quotes). As all the interviews were tape recorded and fully transcribed, this added further problems with who had access to the information. Transcriptions were done mainly by myself or by individuals who were totally unconnected and geographically distanced from the institutions used as cases. Furthermore, pseudonyms were used at this stage. The commitment to confidentiality

was heightened by the openness and trust displayed by the women academics, who invested valuable time and emotional energy in 'telling their stories' to me. I was continually aware of how indebted I was (and am) to the women involved in the research with the consequential desire to 'do a good job'. As Finch (1993) observes, there is "a real exploitative potential in the easily established trust between women, which makes women especially vulnerable as subjects of research" (Finch, 1993:174). This is due to the ease with which women will open up to a female researcher and reveal sensitive and extremely private information. The duty of care in presenting this research requires a strongly ethical stance, as in all feminist research.

3) The Research Process

This research is based on interviews carried out in three case study universities, named Kingswood, Bridgetown and Maresfield. A total of 53 semi-structured interviews were conducted (lasting between one and one and a half hours). The interviews were fully transcribed and then analysed through a combination of manual techniques and computer software packages.

This section will set out in detail the research methods adopted in this study. It presents the method in, broadly, a chronological manner, from pilot study, case study selection, issues of gaining access, an account of the interview process, the practical issues relating to establishing rapport and self-disclosure, and finally, data analysis and validity.

Pilot study

The pilot study was undertaken for the purpose of generating themes for further investigation, adopting a broadly grounded theory method (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). The basic rubric underlying a grounded theory approach is that by continual movement between the data and the generation of substantive theories, the research 'emerges' from and is 'grounded' in the data researched. However, as Bulmer (1979) notes, the assumption that the researcher approaches the data 'theory free', with a 'blank sheet' is highly questionable. Originally devised very much from a positivistic approach, assuming a 'reality' 'out there', a grounded theory approach nevertheless has value in a postmodern feminist research. The method has proved useful for the generation of categories warranting further investigation, especially in research where little is known about the area being investigated, and it is for this purpose that a grounded theory approach seems to be most widely adopted (Bryman, 1988; Eisenhardt, 1989). For the purpose of the pilot study a fairly loose, semi-structured interview format was adopted, asking the interviewees to reflect on their experiences as female academics and of the appraisal process. In addition to the female academics, interviews were conducted with the personnel director, an equal opportunities committee member, the staff development officer and the AUT branch secretary, to gather background information on the implementation of appraisal within the Institution. A total of 26 interviews were carried out. The aim of the pilot study was to uncover ideas and concepts not revealed in the literature review. Semi-structured interviews were deemed the most appropriate method in order to create a

rapport with the interviewee and to stimulate the free flow of data as well as reducing the impact of a pre-determined set of questions and thus excluding possible areas of information.

The pilot study interviews were content analysed using the software package ETHNOGRAPH (see 'Interpreting the data', page 165). A range of issues were highlighted during the pilot study phase which formed the basis of the research questions in the main case study. Results from the pilot study indicated a variety of responses to appraisal. Firstly, appraisal was seen to yield positive outcomes, in terms of offering career planning advice, providing feedback on performance, providing an arena for highlighting work done and offering the opportunity to formally record structural restrictions to advancement. Secondly, appraisal was seen to have negative outcomes merely reinforcing existing bias and stereotypes. With old certainties about the meaning of universities being challenged, women felt particularly threatened, especially those who were in low positions of power with the institution. Through formalising existing inequalities, appraisal would result in legitimising biased decisions. Finally, some of the women commented that appraisal would have no impact on their current status within the University. Appraisal was seen as having no impact on the existing situation vis-à-vis women in universities as it offered no challenge to the existing system of inequality. Furthermore, appraisal was considered to be time consuming and at best was merely a bureaucratic form filling exercise.

The pilot study informed decisions on the nature of the research sample for the main research. All of the women in the pilot study, regardless of academic discipline, pointed to the ways in which they felt marginalised within the university and the profession. However, for the main research, it was decided that women from the Arts and Social Sciences would be selected for interview (the exception being Bridgetown where, due to the low number of women in the whole university, all women academics were contacted). This meant that, apart from enabling a sharing of experiences, by interviewing several women within the same department, worries about being singled out and therefore feeling vulnerable, were reduced.

Case study selection

Following the pilot study, a key research question was how the climate of equal opportunities had an impact on the design and implementation of appraisal within the institution. This informed the case study selection. Assessment of equal opportunities development within university institutions was determined by means of a telephone survey of all universities in England and Wales. In total, 46 institutions responded, representing 60% of 'old' universities and 62% of 'new' universities. All the institutions contacted had academic appraisal systems up and running. The telephone survey was considered the most expedient method for gathering information, which was made up of fairly simple questions on the formalised system of equal opportunities and its links with the appraisal system. Telephone surveys have the advantage over postal questionnaires of a high response rate accompanied by the

opportunity to clarify questions and responses and the ability to gather other relevant information.

For each telephone interview, the initial point of contact was the academic trade union branch secretary or the union member with special responsibilities for equal opportunities. Attempts to gather the information from the personnel department had been unsuccessful largely due to being 'fobbed off' and being asked to put the request in writing. Union branch secretaries proved much more forthcoming and, as the information was collected for the purpose of selecting the case studies alone, then the problem of relying only on one source of information was not considered to be detrimental to the method. To assess fully the developments of equal opportunities within each university would require in-depth analysis of policy, process and organisational culture. More detailed analysis of these elements would be carried out in the individual case studies selected. In addition to the information provided by the respondents, copies of the university staff handbook, appraisal documentation and equal opportunities policies were collected for each institution.

The questions formulated to assess the developments of equal opportunities (EO) within each university were drawn up using the recommendations from the Williams *et al* (1989) survey of equal opportunities in HE. Whilst acknowledging the fact that there is little evidence indicating the effectiveness of various strategies of EO, Williams *et al* highlight the key areas which have acted as a "catalyst for action" by various institutions. The questions asked related to whether the institution had an EO policy, whether monitoring of staff took place, whether there was an EO committee

and whether an EO audit had been carried out. As well as collecting information on EO, more specific questions were asked about the link between EO and appraisal. The responses from each institution were then coded using SPSS and a numerical 'score' calculated for each institution. From this, a continuum of EO was drawn up, ranging from well developed, scoring 10, to poorly developed, scoring 0 (see Appendix A). Each university was plotted on this continuum. Institutions considered to have well developed EO were the ones who had adopted most of the strategies outlined by Williams *et al* (*op cit*), and had included EO in their appraisal system.

Name	Bridgetown	Kingswood	Maresfield
Type of institution	Old	Old	New
Position on continuum	2 (poor)	5 (average)	7 (more developed)

Profile of case studies and position on EO continuum (See Appendix A)

From this continuum, three institutions were selected, one from each category, 'poor', 'average' and 'more developed', including both new and old universities. The choice of institution from within the category was based on access. As repeat visits needed to be made, institutions which were fairly geographically convenient were selected. It was considered important to include cases from both the traditional university and ex-polytechnic sector, as their contexts are significantly different, in terms of their history, governance, funding, activities and so on, as well as the gender profile, with women employed in greater numbers in the 'new' universities.

Gaining access

Having selected the case studies by means of the EO survey, the initial point of contact was the Personnel Director. Whilst it would have been possible to have interviewed the women without going through Personnel, it was decided that this was the preferred route as it enabled access to staff lists, details of equal opportunities practices and the appraisal scheme. An appreciation of the background to appraisal is important, as discussed in Chapter 3, avoiding the main limitation to research on appraisal, i.e., the ignoring of the wider cultural framework in which appraisal operates (Townley, 1990b). In each case, the Personnel Director was interviewed, concerning the development of EO and functioning of appraisal. In addition, background documentation was gathered, such as a statistical profile of staff, details of EO audits and so on (see individual case chapters, 5, 6 and 7). A full list of women academics, with their job titles (Lecturer, Senior Lecturer, Reader and so on), was also obtained from Personnel, from which a sample was taken for interview. In each case study, women were selected from across the hierarchy. As discussed above, in Kingswood and Maresfield, the sample was limited to Arts and Social Sciences. In Bridgetown, however, given the paucity of women academics, every woman was contacted. Initially, this was done by means of a letter, inviting them for interview and setting out the focus and purpose of the research. For various reasons, including secondment, maternity leave, other commitments, etc., some women were not available for interview. A total of 53 interviews were conducted: 25 in Kingswood and 14 in Bridgetown and Maresfield respectively.

Interviewing

Qualitative research interviews aim to enable the research to focus on the research issues from the perspective of the interviewee and why they have that particular view. They are typified by a low degree of structure, the use of open questions and a focus on the interviewee's day-to-day experiences, rather than on abstract concepts (Bryman, 1988). Therefore, interviews are undertaken not to obtain accurate information but to enable interviewees to participate in the research process, influencing the focus and direction of the interview (King, 1994:15). The use of semi-structured interviews draws on a pre-set schedule or list of themes but allows for deviation by the interviewee to develop areas which she feels are of relevance (Bryman, 1989).

The purpose of adopting a semi-structured interview format was to enable the women academics interviewed to have their own 'voice', enabling them to tell their own story, in their own words, rather than being constrained by pre-set categories and imposed external meanings. However, such a method accepts the fact that all 'stories' are situated within particular cultural and historical sites, consisting of an individual's accounts of events plus her interpretations of the events, as well as the researcher's own interpretations. The interviews were framed around five areas: the women academics' day-to-day experiences of academic life; their life outside the university; their career; their perceptions of the gendered culture of the Institution; and their experiences of appraisal and its effect on other areas questioned. All the interviews were taped. There was never any reluctance or unwillingness to allow the

taping of the interviews, probably because the women themselves often had experience of conducting interview-based research and therefore 'knew the game'.

Semi-structured interviews have been particularly prominent in feminist research, given that women have long been denied a voice in knowledge creation. Whilst there were broad categories to the interviews, each interview started off with a broad 'chat' about the nature of the research in order to 'break the ice'. Following this there was an opening statement: "I am interested in your perceptions and experiences of University life. Can I start off by asking you to reflect on your day-to-day experiences of working at X....." Similarly, throughout the interview, whilst there were some fairly specific questions relating to areas such as choice of appraiser or family commitments, there were many broader questions, for example "Can you reflect on your career to date?". The aim of such an approach was to enable the women interviewees to reflect on their own experiences and feelings. Of particular importance, therefore, was the opportunity for the women to digress during the interview and to highlight what they thought was pertinent.

Documentary evidence

The collection of documentary evidence is essential in qualitative research. This is often to verify and validate information derived from interviews and thus strengthen qualitative data. However, such arguments are contrary to a postmodernist epistemology. The purpose of documentary evidence here is to provide background and context to the individual cases. This included appraisal documentation, the staff

handbook, EO statements and policies, EO audits (where applicable), the gender profile of academic staff and other statistical information, and the University prospectus.

Rapport and Self-disclosure

Feminist research methods emphasise that interviewees should be seen as individuals and not objects of study, and that there should be a close relationship between the interviewer and interviewee, with every attempt being made to reduce the status differentials (Fontana and Frey, 1994). Partly due to the nature of the topic and partly due to the nature of the individuals included in the research, establishing an open rapport with the interviewees was never a problem. The interviews were enjoyable, fascinating and 'rich' in detail. In line with feminist methods, I endeavoured to be as open as possible in explaining my research and role. Despite explaining that I was a lecturer, a large number of the more senior women interviewed clearly saw me as a research student. This meant that, ironically, the power imbalance which feminist researchers aim to reduce was never an issue. If anything, the role was reversed, and I was cast as the young acolyte, receiving wisdom from the established academic - the 'knower' became the interviewee. Many of the women interviewed took on a mentor role, advising me on my methodology, pointing out useful references, and suggesting research contacts and fellow colleagues who would be useful to interview. It was not uncommon for interviews to have comments like: "You should note this down..." and "This will be particularly relevant to your study...". Such comments may raise concerns that the women were 'trying to please' by providing information which fitted

my research focus. However, they were never out of context and were illustrated with specific accounts of their own experiences and their sense making of their everyday lives.

The rapport established with the women was further confirmed by frequent comments made at the end of the interview on how much the interviewee had enjoyed the experience and how nice it was to “get things off my chest” and the indulgence of having time to “talk about myself”. I was frequently praised for my interviewing skills and how much they had enjoyed the experience and had found it to be interesting. Finch (1993) makes similar observations in her research on clergymen’s wives. As she points out, being herself married to a clergyman, this put her in the same position of interviewing people in broadly similar circumstances. Whilst denying that only like can interview like, (*ibid.*:173), she did find that this enabled her to establish immediate rapport by ‘trading on her identity’, especially on the issue of gaining trust.

At the end of the interview it was important not just to ‘pack up and run’. I endeavoured to share the information with the women academics. This was, in fact, automatic in most cases, as the women were engaged in research, often feminist in nature, so discussions of a general nature about the research were common place at the end of the interview. This introduced some rich and revealing data not covered in the original interview.

Interpreting the data

When analysing semi-structured interviews, one of the biggest problems facing the researcher is how to handle the huge quantity of interview data. As Pettigrew (1988) observes, there is the danger of “death by data asphyxiation” (quoted in Eisenhardt, 1989:540). Advice abounds in research texts on the various ways to overcome such dangers, whilst still retaining the richness of the data. Ultimately, however, the process is, at least in the preliminary stages, a laborious one requiring the reading and re-reading of the interviews so as to become “intimately familiar” with the case(s) and so that patterns and themes emerge (Eisenhardt, 1989:540). The analysis of qualitative data can differ, ranging from quasi-statistical approaches, template approaches (using codebooks, categories and themes), editing (searching for meaningful segments) and immersion approaches (analytical reflection and intuitive crystallisation of meaning) (Crabtree and Miller, 1992).

The main data analysis for the research took place sporadically over a period of two years, following the interviews. Taped interviews were transcribed in full, during the months following the interviews. The interviews were typed up on Microsoft Word and stored on disk. Data analysis of both the pilot study and Bridgetown University was undertaken using ETHNOGRAPH a Computer-Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis (CAQDAS) package (Lee and Fielding, 1991). Preliminary data analysis on Maresfield was carried out by means of NUD*IST - a more recent CAQDAS package, using the more ‘user friendly’ windows format. The advantages of using such packages are that they cut down on much of the manual ‘cutting and pasting’ associated with analysing interview material, enabling the researcher to devote her

time to the analysis (Seidel *et al.*, 1988). CAQDAS systems have two main features: firstly, they enable the researcher to 'tag' chunks of data with a code (line, sentence or paragraph); and secondly, it enables retrieval of all data which has been 'tagged' with the same code (Coffey *et al.*, 1996). In other words, it is the speed of carrying out the searches, cutting out the endless sifting through paper-based copies, which is its primary advantage. Furthermore, CAQDAS packages are more thorough than manual analysis, in so far as "the computer does not search the data file until it comes up with the first example that will 'do' to illustrate an argument, nor will it stop after it has found one or a couple of apposite quotes or vignettes" (Coffee *et al.*, 1996: 7.2). Finally, software packages are able to cope with the multiple coding, re-coding and combined code searches (including string searches, for example) and thus facilitates far more sophisticated search and retrieval techniques than can be coped with manually.

However, as the coding of the interviews in the case studies developed, a general feeling of dissatisfaction built up with both packages, leading to their ultimate abandonment in favour of manual/ word-processing methods. Several reasons, both practical and methodological are put forward to account for this dissatisfaction. On a practical note, ironically, considering one of the key merits put forward for CAQDAS systems is their speed, the process of coding proved extremely time consuming. What is more, this became a tedious and mechanical process which resulted in the research becoming 'bogged down' in codes. This was particularly the case with NUD*IST, which works on the use of hierarchical categories (Richards and Richards, 1994). It proved to be impossible to think of the data in hierarchical forms and to do so

required constantly having to give dominance of one theme over another. Overall the process became very limiting. By coding, re-coding, searching and retrieving, I moved further and further away from the individual women academics interviewed, their histories and experiences, towards abstract codes rather than 'rounded individuals' - the women's experiences became fragmented, disembodied chunks of data. The root of this problem lies in the methodological limitations of using CAQDAS techniques. CAQDAS systems seem to meet the needs to content analysis more in line with the quasi-statistical approaches (Crabtree and Miller, 1992), where qualitative data is used in a more quantitative manner. However, this undermines the purpose of semi-structured interview techniques (Bryman, 1988). As Coffey *et al* (1996) observe: "The categorisation of textual data and the use of computer software to search for them appear to render the general approach akin to standardised survey or experimental design procedures" (*ibid.*:7.6) The increased use of CAQDAS methods might be accounted for in their supposed scientific rigour and thus present greater validity to qualitative analysis. However, it is argued that qualitative methods have established a respectability in their own right without recourse to the imposition of spurious standards (Fielding and Lee, 1995).

Consequently, the whole analysis of Kingswood and partial analysis of Maresfield and Bridgetown was conducted using MSWord search function and printed transcripts. This enabled a full immersion in each individual woman's stories, their experiences and accounts. From the reading and re-reading, themes emerged which formed the basis of the theorising.

Validity

Feminist research may be judged according to two main criteria. Firstly, how adequate the interpretation is in terms of selection, organisation and interpretation of the findings. Secondly, how adequate the findings are in terms of whether the research reflects the social life it purports to reflect (Acker *at al*, 1991). The judge of 'adequacy' reflects the underlying epistemological stance. The research should be *for* women; the women interviewed should be permitted to have a voice in the research and to be engaged in the sense making. Acknowledgement must be made of the reflexivity inherent in the research process by an account of the research assumptions, engagement, process and purposes. Being a woman and a member of the academic profession increased the validity of the data as this meant that not only was I familiar with the language used by the women interviewed but I had also had similar experiences and was therefore sensitive to the issues raised which I might otherwise have been unaware of. In line with postmodern feminist research, this research does not aim to speak for all women but presents an analysis of the specific women in the cases at a particular time in history. Thus the aim is not to prove some proposition or set of propositions, and not to present the findings as hard facts.

Conclusions

To summarise then, Chapter 1 argued that an understanding of organisations, organisational processes and management cannot be made from a gender-blind perspective. Organisations, rather, can be understood as sites of gender construction.

This is the case for universities as for any other organisation. Thus, in Chapter 2, it was seen that, contrary to the popular image of the meritocratic academy, universities are patriarchal organisations, made up of a gendered substructure of masculine discourses. The discourses making up the gendered culture of the university together constitute women academics as marginal and subordinate members of the profession. However, it was argued in Chapter 3 that universities have witnessed a period of transformative change over the last two decades, presenting challenges and opportunities for women. As part of this change, a range of new technologies of discipline has been introduced, aimed at achieving greater management and surveillance over the academic process.

The research presented in this study is informed by a Foucauldian feminist epistemology. The approach assumes a socially constructed subject, focusing on the role of discourse in the production of knowledge and individual subjectivity. A Foucauldian feminist epistemology focuses on understanding, revealing, challenging and changing the discourses and discursive practices within the organisation which constitute women as subordinate and marginal. Drawing on this epistemological approach, then, the research, through the use of semi-structured interviews, enables women academics to reflect on their own perspectives and experience. It is argued that the methods adopted, grounded in women academics' experiences, provide a rich insight into the various ways in which individual subjectivity, the academic profession and university institutions are defined, constructed and contested through the various discourses at play. However, it must be recognised that any 'theory' produced as a basis of this research will always be situated, both historically and culturally. The

following three chapters set out the three case studies, examining the women academics' understandings of their day-to-day experiences of the gendered university culture and appraisal.

Chapter 5: Bridgetown University

1) Background to the case study

The University is located on the outskirts of a small, wealthy city (approx. 100,000 population) which has an international reputation as a tourist attraction. The University is one of the smallest in the country, with a student population of 4,700 and 372 full-time academic staff. All teaching takes place on one modern, purpose built, green field campus. The origins of the University can be traced back to the mid 18th century. In 1960 it became a college of advanced technology. Following the acceptance by the government of the recommendations of the Robbins Committee, the college received its royal charter as the Bridgetown Institute of Technology in 1966. In 1971 it changed its name to the Bridgetown University. The University's roots in technology are reflected in the high profile given to science, technology and engineering and the lack of Arts based subjects.

The University is made up of 15 Schools, predominantly from science and engineering disciplines. It has an international reputation for its research and is ranked amongst the top 15 British Universities for research¹. The average ranking for individual departments, following the 1992 RAE, was 4, with several departments gaining a

¹ Source: Times Higher Education Supplement (1996a) Research and Teaching Quality Listings. Table compiled by the THES listing the outcomes for the Teaching Quality Assessment by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) and compared with results (where available) of the 1992 research assessment audit also carried out by the HEFCE. Results from the 1996 RAE, compiled into a 'league table' ranked Bridgetown in the top 10 (THES, 1996b).

grade 5 (THES, 1996a). The staff:student ratio averages out at 9 for the University as a whole, which is average for the 'old' university sector (THES, 1996a). This fairly low staff:student ratio is reflected in the funding for the Institution, with only 20% being derived from student fees. Approximately, 50% of the Institution's funding is from an HEFC recurring grant. Research grants and contracts generate 15%, with the remaining 15% coming from residential and catering income classified as others. Results from the Teaching Quality Assessment exercise indicate that the teaching quality is generally considered to be 'Excellent' in the Institution, with an average score of 85 (position 19 out of 97) (THES, 1996a)¹.

Academic Staff Profile

Women academics make up 10% of the total academic staff in the University and proportion of women academics in the University is significantly worse than the national average of 30%, (see Chapter 2, page 63) and is one of the lowest percentages of women academics in the country. This gender imbalance is reflected across the hierarchy, with only 2 (4%) professors, 9 (7%) Readers and Senior Lecturers and 27(15%) Lecturers being female (see table 4 below). From the table it can be seen that there are 2 Schools with no women academics and a further 6 with only 1, all at Lecturer level. The Schools with the largest number of women are Modern Languages and Social Sciences and these are also the only two Schools with a female professor.

¹ Statistics source: Times Higher Education Supplement (1996a) University League Tables. Internet Databank.

	HOD		Professor		Reader/SL		Lecturer		Total	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Architecture	1(100)	0(0)	2(100)	0(0)	5(100)	0(0)	2(67)	1(33)	10(91)	1(9)
Biol. Science	1(100)	0(0)	4(100)	0(0)	16(94)	1(6)	7(88)	1(12)	28(93)	2(7)
Chemistry	1(100)	0(0)	3(100)	0(0)	7(100)	0(0)	8(100)	0(0)	19(100)	0(0)
Chem. Eng'ing	1(100)	0(0)	2(100)	0(0)	5(100)	0(0)	6(86)	1(14)	14(93)	1(7)
Education	1(100)	0(0)	2(100)	0(0)	3(100)	0(0)	9(69)	4(31)	15(79)	4(21)
Elect. Eng'ing	1(100)	0(0)	3(100)	0(0)	11(100)	0(0)	14(100)	0(0)	29(100)	0(0)
Mech. Eng'ing	1(100)	0(0)	3(100)	0(0)	9(100)	0(0)	13(87)	2(13)	26(93)	2(7)
Medicine	1(100)	0(0)	2(100)	0(0)	2(67)	1(33)	0(50)	0(50)	5(83)	1(17)
Management	1(100)	0(0)	6(100)	0(0)	9(82)	2(18)	20(95)	1(5)	36(92)	3(8)
Mat. Science	1(100)	0(0)	1(100)	0(0)	5(100)	0(0)	2(67)	1(33)	9(90)	1(10)
Mathematics	1(100)	0(0)	8(100)	0(0)	11(100)	0(0)	20(95)	1(5)	40(98)	1(2)
Languages	1(100)	0(0)	2(67)	1(33)	4(80)	1(20)	9(53)	8(47)	16(62)	10(38)
Pharmacy	1(100)	0(0)	4(100)	0(0)	13(93)	1(7)	14(82)	3(18)	32(89)	4(11)
Physics	1(100)	0(0)	2(100)	0(0)	4(100)	0(0)	9(90)	1(10)	16(94)	1(6)
Social Science	1(100)	0(0)	6(86)	1(14)	14(82)	3(18)	18(86)	3(14)	39(85)	7(15)
Total	15(100)	0(0)	50(96)	2(4)	118(93)	9(7)	151(85)	27(15)	334(90)	38(10)

Table 4: Full-time Academic Staff by Gender and Grade (with percentages in brackets). Source: Bridgetown Personnel Department/University Postgraduate Prospectus.

Profile of Interviewees

The case study is made up of interviews from 14 women, from 4 Schools within the University. A profile of the women, in terms of academic discipline and position in hierarchy can be seen in table 5 below:

SCHOOL	SOCIAL SCIENCES	PHARMACY	MODERN LANGUAGES	MANAGEMENT	TOTAL
Professor	1	0	0	0	1
Reader/SL	3	0	0	1	4
Lecturer	2	2	4	1	9
TOTAL	6	2	4	2	14

Table 5: Profile of Interviewees by Grade and School

The turnover of academic staff in the University is low (partially explained by the fact that the city in which the University is situated is considered to be an extremely attractive place to live). 8 out of the 14 women interviewed have worked at the

University for more than 10 years, with 2 out of this 8 having been in the University for more than 20 years. 9 respondents have children, 8 of them having children younger than 18.

2) Equal Opportunities

Bridgetown University scored the lowest out of the three case studies, in terms of its formalised system of equal opportunities¹. It was accepted by the Personnel Manager², interviewed as part of the case study, that issues of equal opportunities within the University were at the early stages of development. However, there was seen to be support from senior management to improve the situation. In accounting for the low numbers of women academics within the institution, it was felt that this was partly due to its roots as a technological college. As the Personnel Manager commented:

I suppose we have several Engineering departments and a number of scientific departments - not that that should mean that they are in any way closed off to women - they're not. But I mean they, traditionally, they certainly are male dominated subjects and a lot of initiatives, my understanding is that that initiatives to increase the number of female students haven't been totally successful in those areas.

An Equal Opportunities Policy and Code of Practice was published in October, 1993, revised from its original form, published in 1990. In addition, there is a Policy Statement on Sexual and Racial Harassment and on Disability. For the purpose of drawing up the revised equal opportunities (EO) policy, a working group on EO was

¹ See Chapter 4 and Appendix A for details of equal opportunities survey.

² The Personnel Director was not available for interview. However, the Personnel Manager with responsibility for EO within the university was interviewed.

established in December 1992. In addition to producing the EO policy, the working group was also responsible for appointing an EO officer, establishing an advisory committee on EO, reviewing EO training, ensuring EO representation of decision making bodies, monitoring and undertaking an EO audit. However, the working group only met twice. Following the publication of the revised EO policy, an EO Advisory Group has now been formed, made up of the Vice Chancellor, the Personnel Director, and representatives from the various Schools and from the student body. No monitoring of academic staff takes place, except for HESA returns. No basic information is collected at recruitment and selection level in terms of ethnicity or disability of applicants. This situation was anticipated to improve once the Personnel Department had installed a computerised personnel information system. Furthermore, there has been no EO audit undertaken, although this was expected to take place, in the future. There was an acknowledgement by Personnel that equal opportunities was limited within the Institution, and before an EO audit could take place, the Personnel Manager felt that “we ought to get our house in order a bit, first”.

There was virtually no training provision for EO awareness and, again, this was an area which Personnel aimed to improve in the future. Whilst there were EO workshops available, there was no insistence that those involved in recruitment attended them and the Personnel Manager commented that attendance on these workshops was poor. She felt that this was due to lack of time available to staff. In addition, there was little consideration of EO in appraisal training and training for appraisers, in general was seen to be sporadic. Not everyone involved in appraisal had been on a training course.

The pressure to address the poor state of EO at the Institution was seen to be partly generated by the CVCP¹, but more from specific Schools within the Institution, notably Modern Languages and Social Sciences. Both these Schools had set up their own internal EO committees to examine recruitment and selection and consider various ways to improve EO within their own Schools.

However, the Personnel Manager did feel that there was an impetus to improve. A new Vice Chancellor had recently been appointed and he was seen to be “very keen to promote equal opportunities”. However, there were seen to be problems:

We’re definitely moving forward. But we’re not moving forward as fast as we and others would like. I think the level of awareness is good. The stumbling block lies in proving it. Certainly the level of awareness is better than it was...but at the moment we haven’t resourced the monitoring to prove that and we haven’t really addressed any issues of positive action or redressing the imbalances, or whatever. I must admit, in terms of gender, I don’t know how we compare with other universities in terms of the percentage of females to males. Or in the various categories of staff.

In terms of the gender balance within the University, the Personnel Manager commented:

I think there has been a conscious effort to attract more applications from women. Having said that I’m not entirely sure how that’s been done. I think that we are very aware as an institution that we don’t have a high number of women academics and there is a will for that to change within what the law will allow us to do.

¹ The CVCP circulated a draft Code of Practice for Equal Opportunities in Employment in Universities (Old sector) for comment, in summer 1990. However, this was withdrawn in November 1990 and in the following February, the code was reissued in the form of a guidance on EO (CVCP, 1991). The guidance sets out best practice for universities in EO, recommending the setting up of formalised EO structures, monitoring, an EO committee and a university officer with the remit for EO. There are also recommendations that EO considerations are taken in training, the use of advertisements to encourage underrepresented groups, the promotion of flexible working and the provision of childcare facilities (Heward and Taylor, 1993).

The feeling of the women interviewed in the case study, when reflecting on the state of equal opportunities, was that it was mainly 'lip service'. It was felt that the University espoused the ideals of equal opportunities but that there was little evidence of this in terms of practical initiatives. Senior management support for EO was dismissed as being mainly 'window dressing', with the impetus for establishing an equal opportunities policy coming more from a desire to be seen to show good management practice rather than from any feeling of urgency to address what was perceived to be, by the interviewees, an overwhelmingly patriarchal culture. Initial responses to the state of equal opportunities within the Institution was summed up, as follows:

...I'd say it was in the dark ages....

...The problem isn't so much the overt discrimination, it's the mindlessness, it's the unawareness....

...Laughable! At the moment it feels a very vague notion as though the University has paid some lip-service to it and really done nothing....

...There isn't a good understanding of it....

...Very unaware and very uncommitted...there's a very predominant culture of lack of interest, lack of awareness and bloody-mindedness....

...No great commitment....

...Well, to put it optimistically, I think it is changing slowly, I think it was very, very bad....

...It's dreadful....

...one of the previous Vice Chancellors said there'd never be a woman professor in this institution - over his dead body!....

There was a perception that the recent developments in EO was mainly "going through the motions", as one woman put it. However, EO was considered to be 'on the agenda' of some members of senior management, particularly the newly appointed

Vice Chancellor. In fact, several women commented on the support from the VC, which was partly accounted for by the fact that he had come from an American university, where affirmative action programmes were in force. However, the professoriat, who were almost exclusively male, were seen to be the major block in raising awareness about EO. For some, it was felt that there was a general attitude of complacency on behalf of the professoriat who had little awareness of problems regarding EO. One woman commented that when the 1993 EO policy was presented to the Senate, the reaction was:

...there are many people on the Senate who said, 'well of course we have equal opportunities here, of course we have it, why do we need an equal opportunities policy?' And arguing it with the largely male professoriat has been actually quite a difficult task - in getting them to accept it and it is really only since our new VC has arrived, who's American and who has real experience in equal opportunities....there is definitely new hope. I mean he has been fantastic, he's been giving the leadership that we need to push this project through, he has spoken positively on the Senate on a number of occasions....

The attitude of complacency over EO was also noted by another woman who, on attending a staff development course on EO, heard the comment expressed by virtually every other (male) course participant that EO was not a problem in the Institution:

...each one said they'd never come across any equal opportunities issue here, didn't think there was anything unequal about the University - and I sat there thinking "we've just appointed our first female professor". And so there's these people saying 'no there's nothing unequal about this institution', and I just couldn't believe it.

Furthermore, it was argued that EO practice did not always correspond with that stated in the policy. One woman commented that the EO policy was not sent out with application forms and on the postgraduate application form, details of marital status and number and ages of children were asked for.

Whilst the general opinion was that formalised EO was fairly limited within the University, there were variations between the Schools. In Languages and Social Sciences, EO developments were considered to be considerably better than the Institution as a whole. Here, internal EO committees had been set up, initiated from within the School:

I think we probably have a different view here in social sciences than some other departments. It would be interesting to know how it feels in some other schools. I would guess that on the whole it is more positive here than in other parts of the University. There are certain people who are very considerate to it, and are genuinely sensitive to the issues. I don't think there is much Institutional encouragement.

I have a feeling that things were very slow here but people around us here in the immediate...in our School, they're quite receptive, although, you know, many steps are not taken fast and that's the view. The feeling I have is that the actual University is very slow, you know, implementing it, you know, all the things they should be working for they are very slow.

These two Schools had the most women within the Institution and it is these women who are seen to have been providing the impetus to drive EO within the School.

In reflecting on the University as a whole, it was suggested by the women who had worked at the University for a long period of time that, while still being poor, EO had improved considerably over the years. Firstly there were more women employed, contributing to less of a feeling of isolation and marginalisation. This gave them the confidence to speak out on issues of EO. For example, one woman, reflecting on her appointment nearly two decades earlier, commented:

At my interview for instance I was asked questions such as 'when you've got a baby how can you possibly consider taking on a job of this nature if you've got a baby?'. And I said my domestic arrangement quite frankly is my own business and its got nothing to do with the job. But that sort of question has gone on for quite a long time and it can't be heard now. At that time I was very uncomfortable about that question and had there been other women

around I might have made a fuss about it and complained so that things got changed a bit faster, but because there was no one else in that situation, because in my first year here when I still went round to these male colleagues saying 'look could you give me some support for a petition for a nursery' and so on, and they said 'who needs a nursery?'. But there wasn't anything. Now I think you have got a lot more support around so it would be possible to get advice on questions like maternity leave and so on.

However, there were still seen to be problems with recruitment and selection within the University. One woman, from Social Sciences commented that whilst in her School, issues of EO within recruitment and selection were at the forefront, this was not the case in other parts of the University:

For example, on the interview panel we have a Chair from another school and, in that last one, it was clear that he just didn't have any comprehension about any of the issues or any commitment to equal opportunities, and at the moment it feels a very vague notion as though the University has paid some lip-service to it and has really done nothing.

Furthermore, there was seen to be a lack of resources backing up initiatives in EO. Firstly, it was felt that there was no figurehead for EO within the Institution and no one person was specifically responsible for EO issues. Personnel were criticised for being too tentative rather than being the driving force behind EO. The issue of lack of resources was also raised in relation to crèche facilities. The University had recently set up a crèche but this was only after many years of campaigning by women.

Overall, the response of the women regarding EO at the University was one of cynicism and frustration. There was felt to be an awareness of EO issues, especially in terms of the poor gender profile of academic staff but it was felt that there was very little substance behind the rhetoric of EO to address the issues. The poor gender profile of the academic staff was raised by the HEFC teaching quality audit of one

department, and it was felt that this might, at least, stimulate some response to the problem.

3) Gendered Culture

Introduction

The women in this case study were very much in a minority, both as a proportion of the total academic staff as well as in the distribution across the hierarchy. Consequently, the women felt that they were a marginalised voice within the Institution, especially in terms of their access to power, authority and decision making. The gendered culture of the Institution could be seen to be predominantly patriarchal, made up of masculine discourses which permeated the layers of the organisation and which served to subordinate women's experiences and women's voices. For some women, there were seen to be differences between the working culture of their immediate department and the wider Institution, with some departments having an atmosphere considered to be more supportive and less gendered along masculine lines. In accounting for their experiences of working within the University, the women felt that there was a gendered division of labour, reflecting this patriarchal culture.

Gendered Division of Labour

a) Sex-role stereotyping

In commenting on their day-to-day activities, most of the women in the case study undertook all three of the main activities of teaching, administration and research. With the exception of two women, the interviewees were all research active and placed a high value on the opportunities to engage in research. In fact, all of the women in the case study cited research as their primary motive for originally being attracted to a career in academia. Several of the women had international reputations for their research. Teaching was also seen to be of great importance, with the women commenting on the pleasure derived from having contact with students. All of the women commented on the lack of time available to the job, especially in recent years where there had been a general intensification in work (see section 4, page 203).

All of the women carried out significant teaching based administrative duties. These included Director of Studies, ERASMUS co-ordinator, Admissions tutor, Placements tutor and so on. For those women who worked in interdisciplinary Schools, where there might only be three or four other lecturers in the same subject area, this meant that everyone had some administrative responsibility within the subject group. There was not seen to be any gender split in terms of the allocation of teaching and administrative duties. In general, it was felt that both men and women did their 'fair share' of the formal administrative tasks and teaching. There was the suggestion, however, that women were expected to sort out most of the informal administrative problems and student difficulties. For example, one woman commented that:

Women will quite often get the mopping up jobs, looking after problems, um, that sort of thing.

However, one significant difference, raised by most of the women was that female members of the department undertook and were expected to undertake most of the pastoral, or student support activities. There was a tendency for students of both sexes to see women lecturers as softer and more approachable, conforming to gendered stereotypes of women being nurturing, caring and supportive. What is more, male colleagues too saw this to be a natural role for female lecturers. This resulted in a significant proportion of the women academics' time being spent dealing with student issues:

We get a hell of a lot of personal tutee stuff... the men tend to shy away from it, you know, they say, you know, 'well they can't talk about their intimate problems with us, they'll have to come and talk to you'. And of course, a lot of students come to talk about things that are trivial, in inverted commas, such as bad periods during their finals, and so on. So they come and see me.

Both students and staff can cry in front of me without being embarrassed. And this has certainly happened, and this is part of going back to what I was saying earlier on about being the maternal role. I mean male and female students can sit in the chair you're sitting in and weep and I will pass them Kleenex and they will be completely unworried by this. Male and female colleagues can as well and they have. I don't think that many male colleagues get that, male students or other male colleagues unless they are very close friends, in that position. So that's something I think, there's a freedom of emotion certainly.

The main problem was that pastoral work and 'being available' for students was extremely time consuming as well as being emotionally draining. Added to this, being available for students meant that research could not be undertaken while in the University:

So in the term time my room is like Paddington station. So it's very busy, there isn't much time, there's no time really for personal research other than the odd ten minutes you squeeze in here and there. So it's horrendous.

It was felt that students were becoming much more demanding in recent years and were therefore much more likely to seek out academic staff for advice and feedback on work. Again, it was felt that there was a tendency to approach women academics more than their male colleagues. Male colleagues were seen to be better at keeping a distance as well as being more able to do so without criticism:

....I think it's something that we all feel and it's something that in conversation with female colleagues here, we have noticed that with this increase in pressure from students on wanting feedback that it tends to go on people who seem more approachable and those tend to be women.

.....I spend more time, probably, seeing students and counselling students than quite a lot of people, I'm not so good at, um, controlling of my boundaries and, um...I don't give, sort of, signals like "piss off", like many of the men do - but I also see some men, not many, who are very good at counselling and do get very involved with the students' affairs.

The demands made by students, along with the teaching, administration and supervising of research students meant that research was something which was increasingly assigned to vacations. The impression given by the women was that they worked at an extremely intensive rate. A frequently made comment by the women was that they were constantly working and had very little free time. Those with children felt that they had no free time at all. With heavier work loads brought on by increased student numbers (and the concomitant increased pastoral burden), research time was being pushed to the vacation periods, placing tremendous pressure on women with domestic commitments. Increasingly, the women felt that they were having to be a 'superwoman', being the perfect academic and the perfect mother, or to compromise on the research activities as this tended to be the area demanding the least urgent attention. As one woman commented, she felt that having children had

meant that she was constantly under pressure. It took a lot of confidence, it was felt, to resist the pressures to overwork:

....it has simply affected the fact that I don't really have free time. When I go home I start all over again, and I have to juggle so many things. Maybe it has affected my work - sometimes I feel that to have the organisation of a family plus the organisation of work, sometimes it drives me mad and I panic and I think who have I let down and what have I forgotten, and that is, I live with this constant sense of panic.

Paradoxically, it was also suggested by one woman that having children had enabled her to produce better work as it helped her to maintain a balance in her life. This had been possible also because of the flexibility of academic life, which enabled late evening work and not being tied down to office hours:

Yes um, I think that my work has improved since my daughter was born, and that, and when I sit down to work, I know that my mind has to be concentrating and I actually feel that the work that I have published since she was born has been, um, a superior quality because it concentrates my mind so much more. And also I think I have a healthier lifestyle because um, before she came along I tended to work sort of, all hours of the day and night really and I think that that isn't really good for you as far as your lifestyle is concerned.

In reflecting further on differences between male and female academics' work patterns, it was also commented on that women academics were often more conscientious than their male colleagues and found it hard to compromise on their standards. This proved to be a particular problem trying to maintain a high standard in all the various aspects of the job. Again, this was doubly difficult for women with a family as well:

It's all the trade offs between home and university and being committed to your family and therefore not being a workaholic and doing the research at home in the evenings. I mean it's those sort of trade offs - wanting to spend time doing the teaching and doing it properly, not liking to take on courses and not seeing them through properly and therefore probably spending too much time on them at the expense of other activities.

Well I suppose I'd like to feel more comfortable so that I can balance these things in a satisfactory way. I suppose there's always the frustration that you never do anything well enough, so I think it's unreasonable to expect people to be very good and efficient in the job on those three levels - people have got to be able to specialise in different areas of it. I mean, what frustrates me is the way that some people have been good at keeping the research time and then they've given the students a bad deal or they've shed the admin., you know, they've done it badly so you end up picking up the pieces.

Added to this tendency to 'overwork', it was also felt that it was more difficult for women academics to have the confidence to say 'no' and not take on too much work. This was something raised particularly by the women with children who felt that they had to be extra careful not to be seen to be compromising their jobs because of their family. Again, the problem of having to juggle the various demands placed on their lives was raised by the women interviewees:

Some people are much better at saying no to things than I am. I have had a lot of opportunity to do research consultancy work and I find it difficult to say no to that because I should be doing the research and I enjoy it. On the other hand I have domestic commitments and at the same time, I can't afford to say no to things that my colleagues can do. Perhaps they are clearer about the boundaries of what they are doing. They are organised enough to say no.

And the usual thing of trying to combine two careers and family and house and so on - my husband is not particularly practical at all and tends not to do much in the house. Apart from that, um, probably the fact that I'm not very ruthless and I'm very bad at saying no I won't um, and again I think now that the younger women are much better at being very ruthless and realising that they have to be.

The consequence of combining all the various demands made on the women was a constant feeling of tiredness. The feeling of tiredness or the fact that the job was draining on their energy was made on many occasions. This was made worse by the demands placed on them by the recent HEFC teaching quality audit, carried out in two of the subject areas in the case study, adding further strains to their work loads

and stress. Thus there was a feeling that the demands of the job had intensified in recent years. As one woman commented:

More and more I rely on being good at doing my 'to do list' and being good at getting things done fast and the cost of that is that these days you can't recover afterwards. I mean, in the old days you could do something fast and then you'd wander around for a few days not really doing anything much in particular. Now you do one thing fast and there's no time and you're off doing the next and I get so tired

b) authority and power

There was the perception expressed by the women that they were very much marginalised when it came to having access to authority and power. There was seen to be a gender split in participation in University decision making and meetings, with most of the important decision making committees being made up of male academics. This was partly explained by the fact that there were only two women professors and the composition of decision-making committees was mainly made up of senior management:

I mean as a body all the power resides at the senior level committees, you only get to be on some of the committees if you're a professor. I mean that's largely your route to Senate unless you get elected to Senate, which takes quite a lot of canvassing and lobbying and, yes okay, there are a few women on the Senate, but to then get from Senate to one of the decision making committees, the real place is Resources Allocation. We actually now have our first woman on one of the Vice Chancellor's three senior committees, but she's actually been nominated by him, he has two appointments that he can make to that particular committee, otherwise they're all either Heads of School or professors. You have to be a professor before you're a Head of School anyway, you know, so at that level in the Institution there is now one woman, and that's an academic staff committee, I mean its not even Resources. I mean Resources Committee is obviously where most of the really important decisions get taken, you know, where we actually want to place our resources in future.

Several women commented on negative atmosphere and reception at meetings, particularly ones in other Schools. When they did take part in meetings often they were ignored and that there was an overwhelming feeling of exclusion. More often than not they would be the only woman taking part and were thus highly visible and yet treated as invisible. This was most pronounced when attending meeting in other Schools:

I have experiences of being in meetings, where it is assumed that I do not speak, but if I do speak, people hold their breath and then they relax when I stop speaking. This is really noticeable when sitting on someone else's Board of Studies. It is difficult to place yourself, either people being patronising or, um, them just discounting me, or it was difficult to speak their language....

As one woman recalled, on her recent attendance at a meeting located in a science school:

Meetings where you are addressed as 'gentlemen...oh, sorry and lady', you know, this sort of thing. I had to go on a Board of Studies for Engineering. Two Engineers came into the room and sniffed the air. They'd never seen a woman in there other than serving the tea and one said 'oh God! It's going to smell of roses in here now!' and it was appalling, absolutely unspeakable. I do think some men find it hard to work with women, especially the older ones, not to treat them in a fairly paternalistic way.

Meetings were also associated with male patterns of communication, being competitive and 'point scoring', especially in the senior level or more high profile committees. Several women commented that they would not like to take part in the Senate, despite the fact that it was good for raising their profile in the University, because it was felt that this would bring them directly into contact with the more patriarchal aspects of the University's culture:

I'm not a member of Senate, and I wouldn't want to be. I don't know how I would react to being in that kind of environment, that kind of atmosphere....It is very much a masculine environment, I should image it is quite antagonistic.

Added to that, participation in meetings was an activity identified by several women as being difficult to take part in because of domestic commitments. Meetings were usually held in the early evening which meant either having to arrange child care or, more often than not, having to miss them altogether. This further contributed to women's feelings of marginalisation and isolation within the University:

For example with one of my colleagues who has 2 children, we have a staff meetings arranged at 5.15 p.m. because we are reviewing our new degree scheme which means she has to get child care cover for that time or make sure her husband gets back in time. Now, some of that seems to some of my male colleagues to be a strange need, you know, they quite happily put the meetings then, without actually thinking is this actually going to be convenient for the women? Is there going to be a problem?

However, in some cases, there were significant differences felt in the immediate environment of the individual department and that of the university as a whole. Whilst the University was seen to be steeped in masculine values and masculine power, there was a feeling for women in Social Sciences and Languages that their own subject group was more enlightened. This was most evident in some of the more applied social science subjects where, by virtue of the subject area, there was the feeling that there was a greater likelihood to find pro-feminist men and men sympathetic to women's needs and women's experiences. Here the women commented that, in terms of their immediate day-to-day working relations with male colleagues, the culture was supportive and positive. This supportive working climate was also attributed to the fact that there were fellow female colleagues and thus less feelings of isolation and being the odd one out. Furthermore, in the School of Social Sciences there were a few women at senior level adding to this feeling of security for the women in this School:

Yes, Yes, having said that, I mean there is a fairly high-number of women within this School. I mean this is, quite apart from the fact that all the support staff are women...um ..and there are a few women in senior positions, far more than in proportion to the University as a whole - there are a few senior lecturers and a Reader and a newly appointed professor

This was something which had evolved over the years, as more women had come into the School:

Very early on in my career, when there were confrontations, basically, there were lots of male young Turks and there was me. And um, there was a sense in which it was a bit of a kind of you know, young male Turks being rather heavy. And although I'm quite tough, and was certainly very assertive and highly vocal, there was a certain sense sometimes of the boys ganging up on the girl in the playground. Now of course there are many more women around, or seem to be more around, and there is a certain female solidarity about this and also a consciousness. I'm talking about in those days - those young Turks have now discovered feminist consciousness, by the way they are terribly nice now and frightfully politically correct and they've all got highly feminist spouses or whatever, and they're wholly into feminism. But at the time, this is sort of late 70's, it wasn't like that. So it's OK now. I think they are rather apologetic for how they behaved in those days.

These comments can be contrasted with the reactions to the gendered culture beyond the immediate group of colleagues:

I think anytime I step outside my own immediate cohort of people that I trust, then I end up not trusting some people and some of that I think is the kind of competitive, snipey, backbiting, stabbing, jealous kind of culture that is there to some extent in the School and um....and that's the kind of culture, so I don't find that I can be relaxed very easily and I think it's partly to do with being a woman. Actually the school is better than it used to be as some of the key players in that have gone. When I first came, lunchtimes used to be awful, I used to hate the idea of someone speaking to me, it was just so cut and thrust and so nasty underneath, which they might not have experienced as nasty, but I certainly did. So there are some colleagues who I just don't trust at all and I find that bit about having a wider School is that kind of level of distrust or nastiness and putting people down, I just don't like um...every so often I come to terms with it, stalk round thinking "I don't trust anyone here.....I know my place" and then for some reason or another I um....I forget, or I relax or I find it wounding that other people are so stupid. I also, it's also not a very aware culture on gender issues, so it's quite possible that my male colleagues would call women "girls" and will be unaware about issues of gender and stuff like that and certainly about race. So it's not terribly comfortable. Then if you move around in the wider circles of the University, it's terribly male dominated, partly because it's a technical institution.

To summarise, there was an overwhelming feeling in the case study of a strongly paternalistic culture. The culture could be seen as being traditional, professional/paternalistic culture, made up of a professoriat of 'good chaps'. Access to decision making was denied to women due to their low status in the hierarchy and the masculine patterns of sociability displayed at meetings. Whilst the female academics interviewed carried out much the same mix of duties as their male colleagues of the same level in the hierarchy, the women also did additional work where there was a clear sexual division of labour based on sex-role demarcations. Here women were stereotyped as carrying out quasi-familial roles of pastoral work and more student support work.

c) Gendered Reward Structure

The reward structure within the Institution was seen to be fairly explicit. The University valued refereed publications in top journals and the generation of research funding, especially from high profile sources, such as the Research Councils. In recent years this had become even more pronounced, with the pressures to maintain high research ratings achieved in the Research Assessment Exercise (RAE) driving the pressure to produce quantifiable research output further. Those departments which had not scored a grade 5 were similarly under pressure to improve their performance before the next RAE. Several women commented on the pressures generated by the HEFC teaching quality audit and the necessity to be good teachers as well as good researchers. However, in terms of promotion and Institutional recognition, it was

generating quantitative research output and bringing in money which had the high profile:

Everything is highlighted according to the money that you get in to the department.

What was clear was that teaching, administration and student support work carried no rewards or status within the University. Two women in the case study had chosen not to be research active in recent years. In the one case this was because the woman found her greatest job satisfaction and felt her strengths to be in student support areas. In addition she had a large teaching load and a major administrative role within the School. This role had been accepted within the School but it clearly would not reap rewards in terms of progression up the hierarchy. The individual concerned felt that a balanced life was of greater importance to her. However, in resisting the discourses of competitive performance, the cost was being seen very much as a second class person within the School and the University. This aim of achieving a balance in life between public and private life was also the reason for the other woman in deciding not to carry on with research. She found that, given the increased demands in teaching and administration, research was the area she had had to abandon. Again, there was no recognition for the work she was doing in terms of material rewards:

It's the research that's had to go in order to do the other things. There is a constant administrative pressure and I mean, in order to do the job properly, you've got to have a realistic slot allocated for it and the frustrating thing is that there is no promotion track which relates to it. In a different world other things - the things I have done - they would have been valued.

Those women who had chosen to devote their energies to the non research aspects of the job had not been promoted and considered it extremely unlikely that they ever would be. In fact, it was argued that no recognition was made for the significant administrative duties and student support work which was done by many of the women:

I was held at the bar for God knows how long, because I wasn't publishing enough, at a time when I had two year old children, a very heavy timetable, several administrative positions in the school, um, and yet none of that was taken into account at all - the fact that I wasn't publishing enough, simply that. And also I had a non supportive head of department, um, so I was held up for a very long time which just made me more and more depressed. I choose to ignore that side of things now and just get on with doing what I value.

A similar response was made by a woman who had spent a lot of energy on student support activities. She derived tremendous job satisfaction from the work she carried out and felt that her role was of crucial importance within the School. However, she was quite accepting that the work would carry no rewards in terms of promotion or status. Referring to the views of her Head of Department, regarding her chosen role:

He can't see that somebody else can have an equally committed view of the University - because what they see is on the actual student side. And that makes it quite interesting from my point of view, because I can see the two sides, but the meeting between us is very slim. There are absolutely no rewards for my work. And that has been made very clear to me, that um, anything I do on that side is entirely in my own time. It is basically, they will accommodate it and will see it as no disadvantage, um but it certainly is not a way of increasing their, you know, kudos or anything like that. It is certainly not seen as a wonderful career move.

Other women, too, commented on the lack of recognition given to their counselling work:

I think particularly women in this University tend to be, um, consulted by students, especially for their personal problems. I think that we shore up the personal counselling service which actually is very poor at Bridgetown, in terms that the number of hours of available counsellor time is available is very poor um, and I think that there is no credit given to the people who do that work, either in promotion or in appraisal. Um, and I would like to see

that change but even though we sometimes talk about it publicly there is no evidence that anybody is going to do anything about that.

For those women who had been promoted within the University their research profile was identified as being the reason for achieving promotion. Accompanying the more explicit criteria of having a good research profile, there was also seen to be a more covert criteria bound up with the notions of being seen to have management potential and fitting the role.

There was the feeling that there was a strong system of patronage and mentoring going on informally within the Institution and that certain individuals were being groomed for promotion. There was also the perception that the 'old boy network' and informal socialising at the bar contributed significantly, especially in seeking out the sponsorship of a professor to 'put your name forward' for promotion:

I think you have to work harder to make sure that you have covered everything. You can't rely on the 'old boy network' or whatever...you can't rely on all that bullshit... and you can't rely on contacts made in the bar to put your name forward....

Part of the process of getting on in the Institution involved getting yourself known to the professors:

...you know, it makes life very complicated and very exhausting at times and so consequently there is a lot of lobbying going on because people, other people feel in the same boat, because there is a lot of competitive lobbying for recognition.

The women in this case study found it very difficult to engage in the informal socialising and networking that was seen to be the route to building up contacts. Firstly, there were the practical problems brought about by family demands which made evening socialising extremely difficult. Added to this, the women commented

that they were often too busy during the day to spend an hour over lunch in the Senior Common Room. Secondly, there were feelings of exclusion from these informal networks which were made up of male academics and where women were not particularly welcome. Finally, such activities were seen to conform to male patterns of sociability which the women found difficult to take part in and if they did were seen to be 'out of role'.

Senior management within the institution was seen to be extremely patriarchal. The professoriat were associated with strongly masculine images, involved in power games, politicking and images of macho style management. The majority of women did not have their sights focused on gaining a Chair as this would involve adopting a role and forms of behaviour which they found to be alien to their way of working and which, for those with family demands proved very difficult:

It would decrease the hours of teaching but I think to do it properly especially nowadays you really have to project yourself forward and outward, go to committees a lot, go to conferences, go abroad, perhaps you can have a sabbatical to try and get a fellowship in the United States or something like that. I can see that it's becoming more and more the part of the role of a professor, and that for me would mean major difficulties because of my family. So I suppose I would like to become a Reader.

What became clear from the interviewees was that they were not prepared to respond to the new discourses of performance and management if this meant compromising on what they valued in the job. Similarly, the women were not prepared to change their behaviour and become more focused on career progression alone. There was also the perception that to achieve promotion, either to Senior Lecturer or Professor grade, involved being extremely single minded and ruthless, and therefore compromising on aspects of their work and home life which they valued:

I suppose I'd love to get a senior lectureship, but I'm not going to in any way modify my behaviour to do so. Um, so I think I've got, I've got a few things that I want to research into and as long as I can get the same enthusiastic response in what I do in classes.... I suppose I shall, that will do in the end, it's still more important than the rest, you know, I'd like to earn a bit more money, because I'm very broke.

To get promoted I'd have to change things I believe in, which is exactly what I'm not going to do right now - its not worth it.

Well absolutely not - I do not want a Chair and I'll tell you why. I don't want a Chair because at the moment it's going back to the question of how universities have changed. Um, having a Chair at the moment in a British university means sitting on committees and worrying about money and what colour to paint lavatory walls, that is a little crude but that basically is what it amounts to. I have no desire to worry about money or, I have had enough of management for a while, I don't want to do the management bit any longer. I'm not interested in power, I have this sort of party game that I play with my friends which is, consider four things you might want and rank order them money, fame, sex and power. It's a very interesting game you should try playing it. Leaving aside sex for the moment, power is very low in my hierarchy and so is money, but fame is quite high. So I'm not interested in power the kind of power you get from in a Chair. So in that sense I'm not interested at all in certain kinds of ladder things. However I'm highly ambitious in that I want to write the kinds of books that people remember and change peoples lives and have an effect on policy and generally impact on culture.

Contrary to Kanter's (1977) assertion that it is because women cannot gain access to power that they behave in self limiting ways, these women were making a firm choice and resisting the discourses of performativity (Lyotard, 1984) as this would mean compromising on what they valued from academic work. For many women, their career aims were not associated with moving up the hierarchy. They were motivated by the desire to do good research and to improve practice within their subject profession. For example:

I don't have some notion of working towards becoming a Senior Lecturer, Reader or a Chair. I am interested in the publications because I do recognise that over and above the awful thing of other people ticking them off, when they look at me at appraisal....I have a general commitment towards the dissemination and improving practice. I don't feel I am doing it to be jumping through hoops for other people. It's not with that view in mind, it's not, you know, how many publications you ought to be doing to keep going up the ladder, I generally think it is about disseminating.

I think I would be happy if I became a senior lecturer when the time comes but I'm not going to be um, I'm not going to make myself ill to try and become a senior lecturer. Having become a senior lecturer, if I ever become one, I would probably like to become a Reader just for the recognition of research thing but I'm not, I'm not going to I don't feel I want to be better than anybody else or I don't want to compare myself to other people although I do compare myself in the sense that I wish I could publish as much as these people publish but I'm not going to make myself miserable to try and publish. But I do have the ambition of publishing as much as possible um, but I see it less in terms of actually become powerful.....but it would be humiliating to me I think if I was stuck at the top of the lecturer scale. But I also understand that, you might be doing alright but it might not be what is needed for promotion. Men do seem to get more promotion than women or more men get promoted than women so I don't know.

Several women commented that if they did change their behaviour and had a more instrumental outlook then promotion would be possible. The crux lay not in their lack of access to power but more the fact that they would have to behave in ways associated with strongly masculine notions of single-mindedness, ruthlessness and instrumentality:

Because I feel that, I think, my feeling is that somebody who is appointed as a Professor has to live and breath the departmental work and for me there are other things that are more important, or as important, and therefore I do not want to be a Professor, I have never wanted that. So I think I could deserve one, um, what I'm not sure is that I want to take the strain of being a Professor in the traditional sense of, now you end up in organisational politics, because I think it's still so male dominated. I think the pressures on life are so great and I have, I have got to the stage of thinking that, while I've worked very hard all this time, I don't actually want to not have some other life. There are other things that I might have done some of the last few years that - certainly with the children and my own personal interests - they have actually had to be snipped quite severely....I don't want a life where I can't do those things. Sounds like really stereotyped women's stuff, but anyway...! So and also I don't know that I really want to Headbang with the male professionals for power around and about.

Gendered Symbols

The women in the case study felt that they had to manage their gender, having to blend in and not draw attention to their gender. At the same time, however, they faced a range of sex-role based stereotypes which controlled their behaviour and identity. Moving out of these roles was seen to cause problems within the strongly paternalistic culture of the senior levels within the organisation. In particular, the women were constituted in a quasi-familial role, seen to be more caring and supportive and hence the expectation that they would undertake the majority of the pastoral type work within the Schools. As one woman commented:

It is difficult to be taken seriously in the University hierarchy....A lot of men here are fine about women members of staff as long as they keep in their place.

What became clear from the case study was the variety of identities which the women had to manage. Conforming to stereotype was seen where the women carried out the supportive work within the School. However, at the same time, conforming to the academic profile meant having to project oneself as a research oriented person:

You do get slightly cast in what I call the senior mistress role. I mean in the context of school rather than the sexual context of a mistress. Um, the older I get the more I find myself being placed in that role, of the slightly maternal role, you know. Gentle and coping. I do feel quite happy in that role so I don't mind being cast in it really. I mean I am an established researcher and productive writer and an internationally accepted scholar, but I get cast in a sort of admin., Director of Studies, caring, senior woman role. And I'm not really that. I'm a senior academic and I do a lot of research and publishing.

However, women who did not conform to the stereotypical feminine behaviour were seen to cause problems for men in the University:

I mean there are many men in other Schools who are actually quite terrified of women and they certainly can't handle women in positions of authority. And they retreat into the usual kind of in group clubs that are defensive, which is the way men handle this fear. For example, I think that I terrify quite a lot of the Engineers. I've been told I terrify a lot of Engineers which I'm quite pleased about. And no doubt they will try to exclude me if they could but they don't usually succeed.

For the women who had been at the University for a long time, the culture was seen to be much improved and more pleasant for women than when they were first appointed 15 or 20 years earlier. Being a woman academic was alien to the culture then and this was most pronounced when their gender was brought to the foreground, such as with motherhood:

Um, things like being, being able to say, um, I have a child, I need to collect my child and leave which you couldn't do, it's simply, you know, the men in the department just huffed! I don't think they approved of there being a woman in the department anyway. When I was pregnant there were huge problems, um, I was put on maternity um pay, half pay at that time but the department said they couldn't cope if I didn't do the teaching and as I didn't want to let them down because I was the only woman in the department, I in fact carried out my full teaching timetable until the day Richard was born, well the day before. And I was back a week later with stitches still in to do a lecture to the first years. Um, I was also being hassled at home um, I wasn't away for twenty four hours and I was getting phone calls saying 'why haven't you marked these exam papers yet?' So, I mean, when I look back at it now I can't believe I was so stupid, and I should, of course, have said 'I'm a woman I'm having a baby, I'm going to have my leave' and so on, which is now quite normal. But I think because it was all seen as terribly shameful and terribly letting the side down and proving the fact that they shouldn't employ women. So I think that, that instances such as that were dreadful, and I'd got an enormous inferiority complex at that time because of that, which meant that I never put myself forward in a situation I would sort of sit at the back and feel embarrassed and thinking I probably shouldn't be there, which I regret very much now. Um, but it seemed to me important at that time not to let down colleagues who then would have to do your own teaching.

In recent years, the changes in the management of universities were leading to a more competitive culture. There was a feeling that the University had a more competitive, managerialist climate, with an intensification of work. This was making it an increasingly difficult culture within which to work.

Gendered Social Relations

A whole range of issues were raised which related to the strongly gendered nature of the social relations within the Institution. Through a variety of mechanisms, the women felt excluded from the informal decision making and networking systems in the Institution. Commonly referred to was the perception that women were excluded from information by virtue of the fact that many conversations took place in the male toilets (!), which were on the same floor as the Vice Chancellor's office. As one woman commented, she was told by her partner who also worked at the University that he derived a lot of useful information this way:

Well I understand that quite a lot of conversation takes place in the gents actually...they are actually beside the Vice Chancellor's office and the administration block, so all the men on the top floor use the same gents as the Vice Chancellor and my partner does occasionally comment 'Oh, you'd never guess what so and so said....', you know, and 'I overheard that....', you know....

As frequent as the comments made about the male toilets were those made about the Senior Common Room, which was seen to be like a gentleman's club. The women chose to avoid the Senior Common Room as it was seen to be very much a male preserve. However, there was a feeling that much of the decision making took place informally there:

I don't go to the bar much, um, but when I do I see groups of men there and they only talk to each other, and in the Senior Common room - the area where they take coffee, there are just men there and they are areas where one would never dream to go and sit because that is where the people from Engineering sit....and so I think that is probably mainly why I don't get access to some information because I'm a woman and because I'm in the lower ranks I suppose.

I try to go to lunch periodically because I think that that's where the business is done over lunch and in the men's loos. Um, although I don't always go to lunch because I'm obviously too busy.

Similarly, on the golf course:

I sometimes feel excluded because I know my male colleagues play golf at lunch time because they do a lot of business on the golf course. Um, I wish I had time, you know, like my neighbours. I often go and get a sandwich and carry on and I really wish that I could find two hours at lunch time to do something like that which would bring me into contact, informal contact with my male colleagues a bit more at those sorts of activities and they do do a lot of, you know, information exchange and gossip and so on and they do work out their projects that way - networking.

Self Identity

In their current jobs, most of the women saw themselves to be complying with the norms of performance, carrying out research as well as teaching and administration. They chose to do research, they emphasised, from interest rather than any instrumental motives. However, it was proving to be increasingly difficult to manage all the demands of the job. The women faced a range of discourses which contradicted those making up the image of the ruthless, focused researcher, producing a high output of publications. They were expected to have time and emotional energy for the needs of the students and, in some cases, colleagues. Secondly, and linked to this, it was more difficult for women to be, and be seen to be, ruthless, single-minded and self-serving. Finally, some of the activities required to establish a profile within the institution, such as meetings, committees and informal networking, were less accessible to women, complying with masculine patterns of sociability and communication. There were also the practical problems of juggling the demands of the intensified workload with those of home life. Increasingly, therefore, the women

found it difficult to maintain their identity as full academics. Struggling to maintain this identity, the women felt that they had to act like 'superwomen' and suffer feelings of constant tiredness as well as having no life of their own.

The women in this case study faced a constant struggle not to be labelled and classified as subordinate members of the University. The majority felt that they could claim a rightful place as members of the academic community, however, being in a minority led to questioning on value and ability and a struggle to maintain self confidence. Several women commented that it was difficult to know if they were good at their job:

Men always seem to be more efficient - you always have the impression that the others are better than you are if you are a woman, you know, you are never good enough and this is something that I feel about myself all the time - that the others are always doing more than I do or they can speak better in meetings, that kind of thing but by talking to other women and saying this and it seems that they think the same.

I also wonder it's very difficult to know whether I'm any good. I have found it a constant struggle to know whether I am any good.

It was felt that to achieve promotion would require a shift in behaviour and role to a more masculine model. This was identified by the women as being more ruthless, single minded, political, instrumental and competitive. However, what was clear was that the women valued the opportunities to work in a collegiate and supportive manner and felt that this was something which was increasingly difficult to do in the new climate of performance and accountability.

Clearly within this case study, the women were marginalised in terms of their numbers and representation at senior levels.

Ummm...I think if we are looking at the sort of micro-group of the Social worker group no - I think that as soon as you step outside that towards the way the University operates, it's very much the male-models of, er, lets say management, and I think it's more broad than that. It feels to me that it is harder to be part of some of the University process as a woman. If you are going to work with them, you are going to have to adapt, well take on certain male ways of doing things.

However, several women here were quite accepting of their low profile and marginalised status within the University as they gained their feedback and recognition from the wider academic community. This was most noticeable with two women who had established reputations in feminist research. They felt that their research had little recognition with their peers:

But in the end I am a woman who has studied these issues and I am also very interested in those things and, Yeah, they will stereotype you before you even open your mouth. I think my male colleagues probably treat me strangely partly because of that, but then there are some that I'd have nothing much to do with so it doesn't matter. I'd like to work somewhere where there is better sense of community but - there is some sense of community, but its not widespread, I have to accept that. So I get my support from outside the University - the wider academic community, if you like.

Those women who had chosen not to carry on with research felt like second class citizens within the University, leading to feelings of frustration and increased isolation both within the School and the University as a whole:

I think they just treat me as me. I am comfortable with being me. But they think it's a terrible shame.

4) Discourses of New Public Management

There was an overwhelming feeling expressed by the women that the culture of the Institution had become much more managerialist with strong pressures of accountability and measurement placed upon individuals and schools. Schools now

operated as cost centres, facing competition for funding and with each subject having to justify its existence and, in effect, 'earn its keep'. As one woman observed:

There is more an atmosphere of people understanding what we do, as we go towards Cost Centred Accounting and, you know, much tighter funding, there is much more a sense of people looking towards other groups along the lines of 'oh, what are you bringing in?'. So all the knock-on effects of cost-centred accounting and so it does feel a little bit, it has felt a little bit like that balloon debate, when you argue who to throw over the edge to get rid of ballast - and there is the feeling that our subject is on the edge.

This changing culture, driven by wider government changes in the management of universities, was seen to have had a tremendous impact on the nature of the individual women's jobs. The changing discourse of HRM were seen to have the three-fold effect of an intensification of work, increased accountability of job performance, leading to a worsening climate and a less attractive job. It was felt that the job demands had intensified considerably over the years.

Firstly, all the women commented on the general intensification of work. It was not so much that the basic makeup of the job had changed, more that each element of it had grown, resulting in feelings of tremendous pressure and stress:

When I came seventeen years ago people used to sit over in the Senior Common Room at this time of the morning having a cup of coffee and talking about issues that academics should be talking about and they would sit there for half an hour and some people would say that that is a terrible waste of taxes philosophising but they were talking about research and ideas and books they'd read and, you know, there was a genuine interchange of ideas going on and um, an atmosphere of um, yes, genuine interest really. People don't sit and talk to each other any more, except in meetings, and they don't come to the meetings many of them are too busy to go to the meetings as well. They are just too busy getting on with grant proposals and their publications because they know that that's what's going to count in the end. So I think it has had a quite a profound, um, long term attrition on university life.

The demands to produce research had grown tremendously and this had resulted in a pressure to be superficial and to produce research output quickly. Added to this, the student numbers had increased significantly, with no increased staffing resource and hence a worsening staff:student ratio. In the quest to attract more students, more courses were available, which resulted in a far greater administrative burden for academic staff.

The women felt that the nature of the teaching experience had worsened as it was impossible to have a close relationship with students due to their numbers. What is more, students were seen to be much more demanding and were more likely to appeal against marks leading to further pressures to provide detailed feedback on assessed work. The teaching quality audit added further pressures not just in meeting standards of performance but also in terms of the huge administrative and emotional demands associated with the actual assessment exercise.

Along with the general intensification of work, there was also the pressure of accountability and monitoring of performance. Having to account for performance brought with it increased amounts of bureaucracy and paperwork. The stronger focus on measuring performance was seen to be leading to a championing of those aspects of the job which could be measured quantitatively:

Now it's much more pressured in the sense that you always have to account for what it is you are doing all the time, and how many papers you're going to write by this time next year etc. Some of the things are very hard to quantify but it seems that we are being measured much more on those things that you can count, and I don't think this is a job which you can count.

Women who had been in the Institution for a long time argued that there was far more freedom in the academic career in the past, with more freedom to pursue a variety of facets of the job. This did mean that for some academics, very little was done and that those who did produce were somewhat resented. In this case, accountability for performance was of benefit. However, it was felt that the increased focus on performance and measurement and the narrowing of the area for which academics were now judged was leading to important aspects of the job being ignored:

Reluctant though I might be to admit it, I think that some of the pressures that came out of the Thatcher years, awful though they were, and for quite the wrong reasons, may have had the effect of making us realise how many people in Universities were actually doing absolutely fuck all basically. And um, no-one was sort of noticing you know. However, the pressure to produce according to the book, which is, you know, in certain kinds of journals - only the sort that count, I mean somebody told me about five years ago book reviews don't count in appraisals, book reviews don't count on the then HEFC returns and I thought "my God, I have done so many book reviews" - an art form I like. I've also done some extremely interesting, in my own view, some of my most interesting work has been done in essay type book reviews. I like the format of writing a book review which turns into an essay. And I just think that is very valuable, and I just was so furious that because of some kind of bureaucratic distinction it wasn't going to count so I said basically "to hell with it" and went on writing book reviews. Um, but on the other hand that's fine for me because I can get away with it but my 27 year old colleagues can't, they have to do things by the book and it seems an awful restraint on them, you know an awful constraint. That there are certain things they have to do, and the money thing you know, you get credit for bringing in lots of money and so if you're a researcher in a field which is highly productive of money, or if you're into grantsmanship which I'm not as it happens, I had very little money really, research money, a lot of research but basically on a shoestring. But I don't like, I hate, I hate grant applications, I'm not good at it and I just feel again, personally annoyed that I'm supposed to play that game and again pretty annoyed that my colleagues have to play that game. It might not be the best way for them to go about doing their research. So that's the, it's just the accountancy mind that's pervading the universities.

This led to a feeling that the norms of performance had narrowed significantly. What was seen to be the academic role had become far narrower and more gendered along masculine lines. There was the perception that the environment had become much

more competitive, with individuals focused far more on building up their own research profiles and this climate was seen to be one which was far more easily adapted to by male colleagues:

Um, it's much more orientated, it's, sort of, ambition orientated now. We're not doing things because you love them - that's not the idea. It's much more to get on with the activity. And so that means that a lot of colleagues aren't prepared to put much time into teaching or to look after students because they don't see it as advancing of their careers. So that's a change.

I think the constraints on the academic world - it's turning more instrumental, turning more and more towards those idealised masculine values and I think there is less place for the human and the generative and less creativity in many ways and I think it's more conformist. In a lot of places it's more conformist because your research model has to be of this sort, you know, your findings have to be of this sort...

Several women commented on how the environment had become far less pleasant, more hostile and less comfortable in recent years:

I do think the academic world at the moment is incredibly unhealthy, and from a work point of view, and an organising point of view I don't think it encourages a healthy environment. It has always been primarily for individuals, particularly those with large egos, but the current system of measurement, and it's all to do with money actually, just makes it even more the case, so there's actually, no sense of a community of practice or anything collaborative about it or anything co-operative. I think the way things have shifted in the last fifteen years and certainly in my experience in the last five, you know its become very much more unhealthy that's the best way to describe it.

There's far more administration, pressures are phenomenal, everybody is very tense and depressed, um, it isn't a friendly environment as it was, it's very competitive, basically, liable to be a fairly hostile environment.

It's very prickly. I think academic life these days is not at all an environment of tolerance.

Part of the changes taking place in recent years is the introduction of academic appraisal. The final section of this case study focuses specifically on the women's experiences of appraisal and its role in driving in the new culture of higher education management.

5) Academic Appraisal

Background to the appraisal scheme

Appraisal has been running for six years and takes place annually. As with most universities, it is a top-down system. There is no choice of appraiser, with Heads of School, or Heads of Group (professorial level) appraising all academic staff within a School. At the time of the interviews, there was only one female appraiser within the Institution and so for most women, the choice of having a female appraiser was not possible. Appraisal training was seen to be somewhat sporadic according to the Personnel Manager. Formal appraisal documentation is used, which again is of a standard type found in universities. The same documentation and format is used for all the Schools. Quantitative performance indicators, measuring student feedback, publications and research money are also included.

Constituting the new academic

Appraisal at the University was seen to be reinforcing and reflecting wider changes in university management placing a far greater emphasis on quantifiable outputs. The women all commented on a stronger presence of "management" and on being managed, with many of the old certainties about the job being challenged. The general intensification of work and the pressures to perform were seen to be perpetuated and encouraged in the appraisal process. One woman felt that appraisal

tended to 'suck you in' to the new climate of competition and that it was assumed that this work standard was the norm for everyone:

I don't want work to be the most important thing in my life but it is very easy to keep promising more and more and it ends up your life. Everybody just thinks we just strive for the best no matter what the cost to other people and your self.

This narrowing down of the norms of performance was reflected in the appraisal interview, where there was seen to be a constant pressure to increase publication rates and generate research money:

It seems to be about counting and it is in fact playing the numbers game of how many papers have you written, how much money have you raised. It's not actually about development.

Everything you do.. everything has to be oriented towards a particular outcome - you're always doing things for a particular purpose - not going to have a look to see what might be there.

There were departmental variations towards how appraisal was being used, with one department, in particular, appearing to have taken a more managerialist stance with appraisal. This department was emphasising the measurable elements within the appraisal document, such as output of publications and the achievement of pre-determined performance objectives - and these therefore become the main focus of the appraisal interview. This coupled with Research Selectivity Exercises and the Total Quality Audit, put tremendous pressures on all staff to work long hours and have high research output. In this move towards increased accountability of performance, appraisal seemed to be making the academic more analysable, calculable, capable of comparison, and therefore more manageable. It can be seen that under this 'moral technology' of management (Foucault, 1979), appraisal is aimed as managing and reconstituting academics as efficient, productive workers:

I suppose that in some ways I'm more inclined to accept the sort of, doing the sorts of things that I know are going to go on the appraisal form. If there's a choice, in the course of a year, I am much more likely to agree to do things that would go on the appraisal form and to reject offers to do other things when I know that I can't put them on the appraisal form.

The gendered gaze

The normalising gaze of appraisal was seen to be producing a narrow and specific view of academic work. The respondent's experience of this varied according to their specific circumstances. Some women responded positively to the new academic norms. Appraisal was regarded as being an opportunity to receive a "nice pat on the back". These women were active in research, had long lists of publications and research grants and therefore were already doing those things that were most valued by senior management within the department and the University. In the competitive climate of the new "Macho Culture" (Maddock and Parkin, 1993) women academics' performance can be visible if they comply with the norms set down in appraisal and this is one of intensified work with measurable output. Within this case study, then, the model "new academic" can be seen to be a strongly gendered one.

For those women who cannot, or will not compete in this new macho culture, several alternatives were revealed in the study. For some women interviewees, the experience of appraisal was seen in a more negative light. Clearly those women with domestic responsibilities of childcare, dependent relatives and other domestic duties find it hard to cope with the increased pressures. Several women felt that their domestic demands were not considered in their appraisal. As one woman observed,

reflecting on the general reluctance of colleagues to accommodate women's domestic restrictions in the allocation and timing of work:

There may be good reasons why someone doesn't achieve their objectives. Those who do well in this department...their personal life is under a lot of pressure - there's no getting away from that - they look like they're on cocaine!

The new academic norm assumes that men and women experience organisations in the same way and face the same experiences in life. However, the assumption that men and women start from a "level playing field" is based on a model which is "gender blind" (Maddock and Parkin, 1993).

One of the women interviewed said she approached her appraisal with trepidation. She was not research active, choosing to devote her time to teaching and administration as well as doing most of the pastoral/student counselling work within the school. Through many years of negotiation, the school had come to accept her role as teacher/administrator in return for her accepting that no recognition or promotion would come from such activities. Her appraisal lasted, on average, 15 minutes, compared with a departmental average of 1 hour:

The actual appraisal was treated as a bit of a joke - very much 'what is the point of appraising someone in my position?'

Whilst this respondent was content for her current appraiser to be dismissive of her in this way, she found in previous appraisals there had been a constant battle to have her role within the department accepted. Reflecting on these previous appraisals, she commented:

...it was dreadful. And I would go in feeling sick and come out feeling sick - because what I feel is important.... to him it's totally impossible to anything that he could get his little mind round!

Clearly, those who do not fit in with the appropriate institutional values and norms (where research is in ascendancy), are viewed as being unambitious, unsuccessful and, therefore, unpromotable. This was expressed with great resentment by the two women who were not research active. Their excellence in teaching and pastoral support had little or no recognition with the appraiser, who either discounted them totally or urged them to change the focus of their activities towards research. Their methods of coping with this were either to dismiss appraisal, being resigned never to be promoted, or to feel extremely angry and frustrated by the whole process. One of the mechanisms adopted by women for handling this dissonance between their values and those of the dominant (masculine) culture was to 'opt out', with the psychologically negative consequences of watching other people's careers advance, eroding their self-confidence and self-worth.

Several women raised the issue of the role of the appraiser in reinforcing gender biased attitudes about women academics' role within the University. As one woman observed, recalling her horror when allocated a particular appraiser:

...he has the reputation for not liking women - a complete misogynist - even distrusts men in kilts!

As the appraisal process is essentially a negotiating process between two individuals (Townley 1990b), women may feel at a disadvantage in appraisal where the appraiser is likely to be male with masculine values and frames of reference. Stereotypical views were particularly noted with the issue of expertise in teaching and pastoral activities. It was accepted that women undertook most of the pastoral work and that this work went largely unrecognised and unrewarded. Compared with research such

activities are difficult to measure and this partly contributed to their invisibility. Moreover, as women are seen to be 'naturally' emotional, caring and empathetic this behaviour is not regarded as a skill, merely 'normal' behaviour. This too serves to render such work invisible. What is more, as noted earlier, the societal stereotyping of women's 'natural' role is of the homemaker and mother. Associated with the private realm of the home, women's 'natural' caring skills are the antithesis of all that is regarded as 'business like', managerial, efficient, i.e., the rhetoric of "New Public Management".

Visibility and Voice

The impact of the gendered gaze of appraisal on women can be seen to be operating in three ways within the case institution: firstly, as a disciplinary technology, normalising women academics' activities; secondly, for some women as a confirmation of self identity; and, thirdly, as a means whereby the gender regime which constitutes women academics as secondary, might be challenged.

Firstly, some of the women's response to appraisal could be seen to be more the accepting of, and being included within, the prevailing norms. Several respondents found appraisal to be an opportunity to have their voice heard within the department. It was argued that much of their work was "hidden" and they welcomed the opportunity to have an annual meeting to "set the record straight" and highlight the work they had been doing. As one woman commented:

It is an opportunity to present what you're doing in some systematic way, and inform, so that it debugs rumour and provides the opportunity to put the record straight.

Linked to this argument, two respondents cited examples that suggests that appraisal could be used in evidence in the case of promotion through the provision of a formal document of work done over a period:

It would give a come back, a safe guard because I would say what I wanted to do and it's written down on a form and approved of.... so in the future, if I'm criticised, I've got the evidence.

Appraisal therefore allows the opportunity to formalise assessment procedures and recast women as ambitious, productive academics. One woman, who had recently been promoted had, in her words, "used appraisal" to raise the issue of promotion with her appraiser (head of school).

On a more pragmatic note, under appraisal, the normalising gaze was seen to be more visible. It was clearer to see what the 'perfect professional' was meant to do. In sum, appraisal provided women with the opportunity to clarify best practice, making explicit what is valued and rewarded in the job. However, despite all the respondents stating that they had never received any career advice either in their appraisal or otherwise, most women appreciated the benefits of reflection afforded by appraisal, encouraging them to think about their careers more strategically. It was generally accepted that publishing research and bringing in grant money was what was most valued and rewarded by management and some women felt that appraisal offered the opportunity to reflect on priorities in the job and discuss work loads and timetabling (although the interview rarely brought forward any tangible results in terms of reduced timetables).

Secondly, for some women, the appraisal interview provided the opportunity to receive feedback on performance by reinforcing and providing a 'pat on the back' for work done, and for receiving guidance for future activities. Appraisal can be seen to act as a disciplinary technology, in so far as it rewards those who accept and internalise the prescribed norms. Here appraisal can be understood as benefiting women academics by confirming a sense of identity, providing feedback on where they fit into the academy (Townley, 1994). Appraisal functions to render visible the academic norm. It also places the individual academic within the "web of objective codification" (Rabinow, 1986:22), thus confirming identity, rendering the individual 'known'. For those women who were conforming to the new norms of performance, appraisal, through providing feedback on performance, may provide a confirmation of identity as a member of the academic profession. This reduces the feelings of being 'out of role' brought about through being a minority. Appraisal's benefit was the "feel good factor" it brought on:

If you accept it within its limited horizons, then it can give you a short term buzz.

Thirdly, for other women in the case study, those with a different agenda than the productive, output focused academic, the ability to put forward an alternative model proved somewhat limited. However, despite their seeming insignificance, the interviewees did cite several incidences where appraisal had enabled them to have their voice heard in the shaping of academic work. However, the impact of this on the overwhelming normalising effect of the appraisal instrument and the gendered culture of the University was considered to be minimal. There was a feeling,

expressed by one respondent, who was an active researcher in gender issues, that there had been a missed opportunity to reap something positive from appraisal:

I think that appraisal could be used in very positive ways and could be a help. It's a bit like a little game at the moment here because there's all these forms you have to fill in, you go along to your interview, come out and nothing has actually changed. You go along and have your little chat and you come out and nothing is really changed. So it's a very gentlemanly polite little thing that really gets you nowhere.

Appraisal has the biases present in the system. I don't think it is going to be different for better or worse. Quite honestly, I can't see anything that will get rid of the biases or make them greater. The same people are making the judgements in appraisal as would be discussing things informally.

6) Conclusion

In conclusion, the women academics at Bridgetown were already successful according to the gendered reward structures of the academic profession, given the fact that they were employed in a high ranking university. Many of the women interviewed had national, even international reputations in their area. The women were undertaking all three elements to the job (with a few exceptions, discussed above). However, in recent years, there had been an intensification of the work regime, with increased pressures to produce research publications, generate income, achieve high quality ratings in teaching and, due to the rise in student numbers, greater demands from administration and student related activities. The women interviewed were finding it increasingly difficult to maintain satisfactory standards in all aspects of the job. Added to this, through the functioning of appraisal, they were being encouraged to adapt their activities to concentrate on those aspects of the job which were specifically measured, mainly research related performance indicators. For a variety of reasons, this was problematic for the women. Firstly, the intensified work rate was difficult to

maintain, leading to concerns over neglected families, stress-related illness and impoverished lifestyles. Secondly, there were pressures from students and colleagues to maintain an open access, student support function, complying with discourses of femininity. Thirdly, many women valued the diversity of the job and the teaching/student contact was seen to be of fundamental importance. However, the message from management and through appraisal was that time devoted to these should be an optional extra. Overall, it was felt that the new climate in the Institution was one of individualism, competition, self promotion and accountability. This was difficult for all academics but doubly difficult for women. Appraisal was strongly linked with the new regime, seen to be driving the push for individual accountability and engineering a narrower, more gendered academic profile.

Chapter 6: Maresfield University

1) Background to the case study

The university is located in a small (pop. 133,400), cosmopolitan city in the south of England. Its roots date back to the late C19, as a college of Art. In 1970, Maresfield was one of the first polytechnics to be created, following a merger with a college of technology. During the 1970s, further mergers took place with two colleges of education. In 1989, the Institution was granted corporate status and in 1992, in line with other polytechnics, became a university. At the time of the interviews, the Institution was in the process of rapid change, following its transformation from polytechnic to university status. This included the introduction of new contracts for all academic staff, with academic appraisal forming part of this new contract.

The university has six faculties: Art, Design and Humanities; Business School; Education, Sport and Leisure; Engineering and Environmental Studies; Health; and Information Technology. These faculties are then further broken down into a number of schools, or departments, with teaching taking place on 4 geographically dispersed main campuses. Like most former polytechnics, Maresfield has traditionally developed its strengths in teaching and consultancy based work (with several of the Business School senior posts being sponsored by large corporations). Research is less developed, with the average score from the 1992 research assessment exercise being

2.6 (THES, 1996a)¹. The student population is 11,000, with 33% of the Institution's funding coming from student fees and 34% from an HEFC recurrent grant (with remaining funding coming from various sources such as education contracts, catering, other income generating activities and so on). The staff:student ratio is fairly high, being 1:16 (THES, 1996a). Average Teaching Assessment score for the case is 66 (81st position, out of 97)(THES, 1996a)².

Academic Staff Profile

There is roughly a 70/30 split of male to female members of the academic staff. Table 6 provides details of academic staff and gender across the six faculties and the hierarchy, compiled by an equal opportunities audit undertaken by the personnel department (for full details of equal opportunities at Maresfield, see section 2 below).

	Dean/HOD		PL		SL		L		Total	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Business School	7 (100)	0 (0)	18(75)	6 (25)	45(56)	35 (44)	5 (29)	12 (71)	75 (60)	53 (40)
Engineering	6 (100)	0 (0)	25(100)	0 (0)	48 (89)	6 (11)	20 (71)	8 (29)	99 (88)	14 (12)
Health	3 (50)	3 (50)	16 (84)	3 (16)	23 (56)	18 (44)	9 (50)	9 (50)	51 (61)	33 (39)
I.T.	4 (80)	1 (20)	19 (90)	2 (10)	32 (70)	14 (30)	10 (91)	1 (9)	65 (78)	18 (22)
Education	2 (50)	2 (50)	10 (56)	8 (44)	29 (47)	33 (53)	5 (56)	4 (44)	46 (49)	47 (51)
Arts/Humanities	3 (100)	0 (0)	12 (75)	4 (25)	21 (72)	8 (28)	2 (25)	6 (75)	38 (68)	18 (32)
TOTAL	25 (81)	6 (19)	100(81)	23 (19)	198(63)	114(37)	51 (56)	40 (44)	374(67)	183(33)

Table 6: Full-time Academic Staff by Faculty, Grade and Gender (with percentages in brackets). Source: Maresfield Equal Opportunities Audit, Personnel Department.

¹ Source: Times Higher Education Supplement (1996a). Results from the 1996 RAE, ranked in an 'league table', placed Maresfield in a position three quarters of the way down the list (THES, 1996b).

² Source: Times Higher Education Supplement (1996a) University League Tables. Internet Databank.

Despite the University having one of the highest proportion of female academic staff in the country, there is a clear gender imbalance across the hierarchy, with only 6 women (19%) above the PL level. Not surprisingly, the highest proportion of women, at all levels, is to be found in the Education department, where there is an approximately 50:50 split (reflecting gendered and cultural values about specific subject areas). Similarly, the lowest proportion of women is found in Engineering and I.T.

Profile of Interviewees

In total, 14 respondents make up the Maresfield University case study. The profile of the women interviewed in the case, according to subject area and position in the hierarchy can be seen in table 7 below:

FACULTY	HEALTH	EDUCATION SPORT & LEISURE	BUSINESS SCHOOL	BUSINESS SCHOOL	BUSINESS SCHOOL	TOTAL
School	Community Studies	Education	Business Management	Accounting and Finance	Language Centre	
PL	1	0	0	1	0	2
SL	2	4	0	2	2	10
L	0	0	2	0	0	2
Total	3	4	2	3	2	14

Table 7: Profile of Interviewees by Grade and School

2) Equal opportunities

In contrast to other universities¹, there is a well developed, formalised system of equal opportunities procedures at Maresfield. An Equal Opportunities policy and general supporting statement, together with a draft Code of Practice was published in 1991. This was accompanied by an equal opportunities leaflet, published in December 1992, setting out basic aims and covering areas such as recruitment, selection and promotion of staff, student recruitment, staff development, curriculum, childcare facilities and behaviour in terms of harassment and sexist language. Each faculty is also responsible for producing statistics on staffing profiles. However, formalised monitoring of recruitment, selection and promotion does not take place due to inadequate computer facilities in the Personnel Department. It is anticipated to take place in the future, when Personnel is fully computerised. A small amount of monitoring of the staff profile takes place for annual returns to the Higher Education Statistics Agency. In addition to the EO policy, statement and code of practice, there is also an EO committee, headed by the Assistant Director of Academic Affairs and made up of the Personnel Director, and staff representatives from each faculty as well as from academic support staff. By way of disseminating the EO policy and establishing good practice, all Deans and HOD's are required to attend a 3 day EO workshop on Equal Opportunities Awareness. There are also Recruitment and Selection Workshops, designed to focus on EO.

¹ Following the telephone survey of equal opportunities in universities, Maresfield was one of the highest scoring universities in terms of having a formalised and developed system of equal opportunities, according to the criteria of Williams *et al* (1989) (See Appendix A).

Each faculty was required to undertake an EO audit, in 1993, reporting back to the EO committee. The extent of the audit varied with each faculty, some merely profiling the make up of staff, whilst others provided a detailed report with recommendations. General conclusions from the audits of the various faculties, however, revealed a clear gender imbalance at senior levels within the institution, with senior management being dominated by men. Issues relating to recruitment, selection and promotion of staff were also raised in the audit. In particular, there was the perception, expressed by staff, that career development was a low priority in the Institution, with many staff being 'stuck' on their current grade. This was compounded by the fact that promotions criteria were seen to be vague and difficult to interpret, resulting in the feeling that decision making on such matters was open to subjectivity and prejudice. There was also an impression that research was something only open to younger members of staff, and staff with significant teaching and administrative duties felt frustrated at not having time for research. Inappropriate use of language and sexist behaviour was brought up, with evidence of the use of jokes and language to undermine confidence and make people feel isolated. The use of patronising language was also noted when addressing female members of staff.

In reflecting on the day-to-day experiences of working within the institution, the women interviewed acknowledged the fact that EO was 'on the agenda', with several women noting support from senior management. However, whilst it was accepted that a system of formalised EO procedures was well established within the Institution, it had failed to have any real impact on the gendered culture. In other words, whilst there were bureaucratic based procedures relating to EO, this had little impact on the

norms of behaviour and wider societal assumptions about women's roles and women's work:

I think some members in senior management are genuinely concerned that our equal opportunity policy works in practice. But I think the reality is that it is a policy that has quite a lot of lip service paid to it.

I suppose my gut feeling is that it's not bad. I think they're beginning to take it reasonably seriously. They're not equal opportunities mad but they are taking an interest. It would be nice to see one or two more women amongst the people who are making the policies, it's fairly male dominated and that's not right.

I'm on the committee, I have been for the last year and a half. It seems to get bogged down on very peripheral issues. I suppose I see equal opportunities as a political gesture. The real difficulties lie in such intangible and subtle things that the policies don't cover them. Maybe by drawing it to people's attention we can gradually change the climate. I think the committee gets bogged down on issues of harassment. I think it is going to be a long time before we reach the fundamental issues.

Commenting on EO, there was an acknowledgement that there was a "layer of concern", as one woman put it, but generally, the institution was seen to be patriarchal in nature, with stereotypical attitudes about women and men's roles being embedded in the thinking and the language of the institution:

I am conscious of there being a real marginalisation of women's voices here at the moment, and of feminism in particular - in this Institution and in general.

A key problem in implementing EO within the Institution, which was commented on in the audit, was seen to be the attitude that EO was an imposition, an extra burden rather than something designed to help people in their working lives. This issue was also implied by the Personnel Director, who suggested that EO had to be approached in a fairly 'softly softly' manner so as not to alienate people:

If we start setting targets it's going to come over a lot harder. At the moment people are doing a relatively good job and my feel for it is that if we are jolly along quite nicely, then the last thing I want to

do is to go and trip up something...[...]...I suppose we've been particularly careful about what we've been doing - we haven't been, shall I say, shouting from the roof tops, or been right up at the front of the leading edge - we've been fairly careful what we've done....

However, for the women interviewed, the establishment of such a detailed and formalised approach to EO resulted in high expectations for EO which in turn led to greater dissatisfaction. In particular, there was a general feeling that superficially issues of EO were espoused but that this was more of a political gesture. The main criticism was that whilst EO focused on certain procedures within the Institution, it failed to affect the entrenched attitudes and underlying structures. So for some women, EO was considered to be extremely bad:

I find the level of discussion appalling. The trouble is that I don't fight any more, I just go along with things. It's not embedded in people's way of thinking and talking, it's on the surface.

In summary, however, there was a general opinion that, whilst formalised EO policies were fairly well developed and that Personnel were pro-active in EO, these initiatives were failing to address the underlying gendered substructure within the Institution. The next section examines the various elements seen to make up the gendered culture of Maresfield.

3) Gendered Culture

In reflecting on their experiences as women academics at Maresfield, the women interviewees commented that the day-to-day working atmosphere was a fairly pleasant one to work in. In other words, it was argued that the working climate was not overtly hostile to women; there were not the sexist jokes, derogatory remarks and

other forms of overt sexual harassment than might be expected in some organisations. The fact that there were female colleagues and that women were present, albeit in the lower levels in the hierarchy was the main contributor to this 'comfortable' working atmosphere. However, sexual discrimination was operating at a more subtle level. The underlying substructure was considered to be patriarchal, reflecting wider societal assumptions and expectations about women. The complex hierarchy of gendered discourses making up an organisational culture may be seen to be manifested in a range of gendered processes (Acker, 1990) which determine the extent to which women are marginalised within the institution. These processes may be divided into four interrelated areas: the gendered division of labour; gendered symbols; gendered social relations; and the constitution and reconstitution of self identity.

Gendered division of labour

a) sex-role stereotyping

From the perception of the women interviewees within the case study, there was seen to be a gender based division in the work carried out within the departments, with women academics being involved more with emotional type work. The main area of activity for all of the interviewees was that of teaching and teaching-related administration. In comparison with universities in general, class contact hours were high, averaging out at approx. 14 hours for all the interviewees and rising, in one instance to 30 hours per week, for one semester. However, for 'new' universities, these were fairly normal teaching loads and thus the high teaching loads partly reflect the traditions of the former polytechnic sector which has always had higher class

contact hours and higher staff:student ratios than the old university sector. Teaching, teaching related activities, student contact and student support were all highly valued by the interviewees. Teaching was the primary reason, in all but one instance, for choosing a career in higher education. Being a good teacher was seen to be of the utmost importance to the interviewees and it was also the activity, along with course administration, which they all considered themselves to be best at. This high value placed on teaching was most pronounced, not surprisingly, in the Education department. As one woman commented:

My background dictates that my first area of interest is my relationship with the students and their professional development towards becoming teachers. If a student knocks on my door and asks for help, or needs help with an assignment, I like to make time for my students when they need me. I think that if I can't find the time to help a student who needs me then what am I doing here? Once you start with that policy they all come. I feel it is my job to make time for them. That really cuts out the research for me, I really don't do very much in terms of academic research other than trying to keep up with what is going on in my field.

Similar comments, regarding the high value placed on teaching and student support, were made by the majority of the interviewees. In addition to undertaking large teaching loads, all the interviewees had significant teaching related administrative duties, including course leadership, ERASMUS co-ordinator, admissions tutor and year tutor. Like teaching, this was seen to be extremely time consuming, leaving no time for research related activities. Several women commented that course leadership was largely carried out by women as they were seen to be reliable and dependable. There was the perception that, in general, women worked harder than their male colleagues. As one woman commented, there was a general feeling in her department

that women were better at administration because they could be relied upon to ‘get the job done’:

What I find is that the people I work best with are women because my experience has been that you can rely on them. They come up with the goods. We understand the pressures we are under and we take responsibility for what we are doing....[...]I don't get that with my male colleagues. I don't get the kind of commitment that I get from working with other women. Now I don't know why, they tend.....my perception of working with my particular male colleagues has been that they seem to be a bit more self satisfied, you know, on the whole, um, and that annoys me.

It was felt that the reason why women were more likely to be involved in course administration, year tutorships and similar activities was because these tasks were associated with women’s stereotypical ‘mothering’ image, carrying out more supportive and maintenance roles. As one woman observed, most of the course leadership roles in her faculty were undertaken by women, leaving the male colleagues to engage in more high profile work, oriented towards building up their c.v. What is regarded as skill may be understood as a masculine discourse, with so-called women’s abilities of nurturing and empathy being considered ‘natural’ rather than acquired and therefore being unrecognised and unrewarded:

If you look at all the course leaders across the faculty, you will find that they are nearly all female and yet women are in the minority. That’s a largely administrative role which gets you few brownie points but it is more of a caring and nurturing post. So it could be that women spend all their time supporting students and running courses and taking care of things while men can ignore all of that and get on with the high profile, more highly recognised work, such as writing books, getting articles published and bringing in lots of money.

What became clear from the interviewees was that there was a gendered division of labour within the University academic staff. Male colleagues were seen to be “self-protecting” and “self serving”, focused on the more high profile work with women involved in the more supportive work. Several women made references to how male

colleagues found it easier to operate a 'closed door' policy with the students, how they were engaged in more research related activities, attended high profile meetings and involved themselves less with teaching related activities and student problems in general. What is more, this self protection was considered to be far easier for men to do without raising criticism from students and peers. There were many comments made along these lines. For example:

Women work differently and find it harder in some areas because they care about what is happening. The men in this department are better at telling students not to disturb them. If you establish yourself as someone who doesn't like to deal with student problems then you're much less likely to get disturbed with them.

I think that students are less demanding of male lecturers than female lecturers. There seems to be..., they accept laxness from male colleagues, for example, they won't pressure them into returning assignments and so on. I just feel that they are much more demanding of women than men. It's a cultural thing, isn't it?.

The men, I think, are aspiring towards PL's. It's hard to generalise but I think some have a different approach. I think they would be glad just to do their teaching and do their research and get their c.v.'s up rather than roll up their sleeves and get involved in stuff like course admin.

And I think men are good at shutting the door. Some of my male colleagues here seem to be less interested with the day to day dealings with students and they won't get as involved with students' personal concerns, they won't lose sleep over a mark they've given them for an assignment. The men do tend to shut the door much easier than women.

When accounting for this perceived gender difference in work activities, several explanations were put forward. Only two of the interviewees were research active. Several women, whilst expressing the desire to do research did not want to undertake research at the expense of their teaching and good student relationships. The main motivation for doing research, too, was not seen to be instrumental in nature, focused on improving career opportunities, but to engage in interesting work and to improve practice in their professional area. In Education, in particular, research was seen to be

strongly linked with being a better teacher trainer. Research was increasingly being encouraged within the University, which had traditionally put as much emphasis on teaching and administration. Whilst many men too did not have a research profile, it was felt that male colleagues were more research active than women. Again a principal problem for women was juggling the various demands placed upon them. Several women expressed the desire to do research - in fact three had received minor timetable abatement for research - but found that the teaching and administration demands left little time for research:

I had a research post this year. I had some time officially on my timetable for research. It got to April and I had my Staff Development and Review. I was then asked why I hadn't done my research. I felt really de-motivated because I thought "Why haven't I done it?". Then I tried to think if I had had any spare days but I couldn't think of any. I literally couldn't think back to a time when I had been lazy or not busy. I then thought it was to do with my time management. I thought I mustn't have had it right. Now I think that it was totally unreasonable to be asking me why I hadn't done the research that I agreed to do in September because in the intermediate two terms it just wasn't possible. Research doesn't need an hour here and there, it needs days at a time.

In particular, women with childcare commitments felt that research was an area which had to be forgone. The demands of an academic career placed great pressures to work very long hours at the expense of home life. In fact the two respondents with young children said it was difficult to manage the teaching and administrative duties alone:

They all think it is all right, because there is only one other person with young children. I think the feeling is that people get into higher education when they are older. It is very unusual for a woman of my age to have a young child. One of my colleagues has 2 young children and I think she feels that basically her family suffers. She feels awful about the weekends when she doesn't have the time to see the children and her partner has to see them. Whereas I say to hell with it, I just don't give in. I will say I find it absolutely shocking that when I was very concerned about whether I would be able to do this job on effectively a 9 to 5 working day and the response of absolutely everybody was how to find creative ways to work in the evening on top of the 9 to 5 working day. Nobody, but nobody was saying that it is outrageous that you

are unable to do the job between 9 and 5. It was completely accepted that it couldn't be done and that I would have to find extra time somewhere.

Apart from time constraints, it was also felt that access to research was not possible.

One woman commented that access to research funding, the opportunities to engage in joint research were effectively ruled out because she was seen as a teacher rather than a researcher. This was partly historical as she felt she had made the wrong decisions early on in her career and it was now too late to change direction

[For] some people once they have established their research, it seems that they can apply for bigger and bigger research allowances. At the moment I feel that I am in a catch 22 situation because I haven't got the nerve to apply for a research allowance because I haven't got a research profile. I am not considered to be a researcher.

Issues of confidence were tied up with starting research and putting oneself forward as someone with research potential:

The research world still feels as though it is quite a closed sphere. But I think that is a question of where your interests lie. It is very difficult to undertake a research project on your own. You need help from your colleagues. It doesn't feel like deliberate exclusion. It is also a question of experience, establishing your name.

There was seen to be a 'vicious circle' to the teaching and administration related activities in that success at them resulted in an increased workload, rendering it even more difficult to break into the research activities.

In order to progress further in this institution I would have to write a book or I would have to be getting myself internationally recognised, or even regionally recognised. And although people say I do a good job and that they couldn't do without me, recognise that I do a good job with the students, the reality of that is that I get more and more jobs at that same level.

Finally, several women had made a positive decision not to be 'press ganged' into attempting to do research as this would result in an unbearable workload. This was becoming an increasingly difficult decision to justify, however, in the current climate,

where there was a pronounced increase in the emphasis on research within the University.

b) Access to power and authority

Apart from engaging in research, it was also felt that male colleagues had greater access to power and decision making within the University. This was partly by virtue of the gender imbalance across the hierarchy but was also seen to be due to the dominance of men on University committees. Like research, participation on committees was seen to help raise your profile and therefore improve promotion chances. Again, domestic commitments meant that evening meetings were difficult for some women to attend. This problem was further compounded by the fact that men were more likely to be nominated for committees as it was assumed that women could not attend due to family commitments. For women in the Education and Community Services departments, the professional nature of their courses meant that they were teaching on Wednesday afternoons, when meetings were often held, effectively ruling out the option to attend. As these departments have a larger proportion of female to male staff, this further marginalised women's voices within the Institution.

c) Gendered reward structures

The gendered division of labour can be seen to legitimate and perpetuate the gender imbalance across the University hierarchy. Whilst women academics are represented in significant numbers in several departments, their presence falls away rapidly at PL

level and higher. Only in the Faculties of Education and Health were there a female Dean and Assistant HOD.

In accounting for what was valued and rewarded within the University, it became clear that promotion was achieved through a variety of measures which, together, contributed to having a high profile within the Institution and the wider professional community. This was achieved through establishing a research name, sitting on committees, generating income and, in sum, 'putting your name about':

I often ask myself 'why do the men get all the promotions?' - It does seem that way. But then I suppose the men are on more committees, they have a higher profile within the University. It is difficult to pin it down really.

The way to get a PL here is to embark on a major piece of research. I would also have to put myself forward for nomination onto a faculty board and the top management committees.

There was the perception that to gain promotion would, for most of the interviewees, involve changing their activities and behaviour. Teaching and course administration, except for high profile course administration, such as major scheme leader, went unrewarded:

You would get brownie points for administration, for research. Certainly not teaching. So I took the wrong route. I'm a wonderful example really of someone who has taken the wrong route! The people who succeed in this faculty, success comes with research, you have got to be seen on committees, and be seen to initiate and run new courses.

At one time it was course management but they keep changing the goal posts. I am responsible for about 80 final year students but as it's only a year tutor it has no profile. There's no rewards for it so why the hell am I doing it? Being an excellent teacher is pointless too - you don't get any more brownie points than you do [for] being satisfactory.

There was a degree of cynicism over the suggestion that the Teaching Quality Assessment exercise would raise the profile of teaching. What is more, recent developments in teaching quality audits was not seen to raise the profile of teaching, but would be more likely create two tiers within the faculty and profession along a core/periphery divide with women likely to be on the periphery, carrying out the teaching and administration, whilst male colleagues undertook the high profile research and management work. As one woman observed:

Being cynical, maybe the university will shrug their shoulders and say "Well sorry, we're too busy concentrating on research." I think there will be very definitely different types of institution and different levels within the academic profession, ones which concentrate on research and one which concentrate on teaching.

The gendered notions of skill, where stereotypical 'women's work' was seen to be 'natural', rather than skilled, were seen to be most pronounced when comparing the role of the researcher with that of the teacher. Being a good teacher, 'being available' and having a good relationship with students was seen to conflict with the image of the serious academic, and associated with feminine traits such as nurturing and caring rather than the ruthless, insurgent, tough, rational, macho image of the instrumental researcher. Being a good teacher was seen therefore to stand antithetical with that of being a good researcher engaged in the cut and thrust of intellectual debate:

I realise that it's a sweeping generalisation...but I feel, and I think that this is a general attitude... that men here are seen as slightly more masters of the intellectual domain.

They seem to think that women are naturally good at teaching so don't need the recognition. The student welfare work is seen as me being a mother, and not as real work.

Whilst the majority of the women stated that they would like the rewards and status associated with becoming a Professor (or a Principal Lecturer), they felt that to

achieve this would only be possible through compromising what they valued most in the job:

In terms of where my career will take me, the next step will have to be head of department and I don't want to do it because you spend all your time arguing and trying to get resources and trying to solve conflicts that are unresolvable. I prefer to just get on with the teaching, - it is not without problems but it is easier than being Head. I have a policy of doing what I want to do because I find it interesting

... if I was to move up the hierarchy, I'd have to change my way of working in regards to the students. I too easily let off things that are considered more important in terms of brownie points, to do things that don't have a lasting value. I like to be there for students, that's why I came in to teaching here. I'm not keen on doing that. I'd also have to develop a political role. I'd have to go down that route in order to get promoted, but that conflicts with why I came here so I don't want to do that.

However, three women had received a merit pay award of £500 for their work as course leaders. This was generally dismissed by them and was regarded as an insult for all the work they carried out. It was felt that the money was a “sweetener” to keep them doing these jobs. However, these administrative tasks were not seen to enhance one's c.v. and there was the perception that, by doing these jobs, the women were enabling other, more strategic colleagues to devote their attentions to the more high profile work, notably research. The merit awards were certainly not interpreted as recognition, on behalf of the Institution for their roles within the University.

Thus, the reward structure within the institution favoured high profile research over teaching. This was seen to have changed since incorporation, from high profile administration being seen as the main route to promotion. Male colleagues were seen to be more adept at raising their profile and self promotion and this was put forward as a possible explanation by the women for the gender imbalance within the hierarchy.

In addition, the demands of the 'greedy institutions' of home life as well as the day-to-day demands of teaching and administration meant that for some women establishing a research profile would mean devoting their entire life to their job, neglecting family life. For example, one woman, who was a single parent with a child of pre-school age commented:

I haven't really thought about it, I suppose because it is impossible. I can't find the time to do research. How can I do any? I think it is just out of sight, there just isn't the time to do any - and I would love to have the time

In fact, the majority of the women interviewed declared (often in apology) to having no career ambitions, in terms of moving up the hierarchy:

I didn't have any career ambitions, I just wanted to get married. I have since realised that there's far more to life. So I've never had a career because I have never had any ambitions. I've always done what I had to do, and done it well, and people have asked me to move on. I was offered all my positions, I've always been very lucky in that way. I don't have any ambitions for any status, I don't want to be a manager, and I'm not bothered about pay at all. As long as I can pay my rent I'm not that bothered about security either. My ambition for myself is to do what I do to the best of my ability. I've moved into a phase where I want to be a better teacher, I want to be somebody who can support students, to help and encourage them. I also want to do some writing and research. I think that I have got a good brain but I haven't used it, I have a natural talent and I want to do some research and communicate that. Those are my ambitions.

My strategy is to do things that are interesting. The job takes over my life so it might as well be interesting. I don't know if men are more instrumental and say "I want promotion and I shall do this route to get it" I don't know.

Why should we apologise for it and then profess to not having any ambitions. I just stumbled into this, I never really had a career plan. I won't say it is terrible. I will say quite positively I do not want to climb the ladder but if I wasn't paying child minding expenses I would be earning enough money and I would simply like to get on with the job and do it well.

Several reasons may be put forward to account for this. Firstly, as already stated, the women's motivation for entering higher education, in most instances, was to teach.

Several of them had left higher paid, more senior positions, to come into higher education and so moving up the hierarchy was not a primary motive:

I have no ambitions to move up into a more senior position. I am a senior lecturer now and I don't wish to go any further than that. Having come from headship and being almost as senior as I could be in a school, I don't have a feeling of ambition in that respect here. I think I just really want to do my job well and I like training teachers. I like the personal contact with students. I would not move into a position that would take that away from me.

Promotion, especially to professorial level was regarded as something which would significantly alter their work activities. Moving up the hierarchy was seen to be moving into more political activities, being involved with "management games" and dealing with "lots of aggro" as one woman put it. Thus strongly gendered notions of macho management were associated with senior management within the school.

What emerged from the case study was a complex picture of a gendered division of labour and a gendered reward structure whereby women were engaged in low status work which was neither recognised nor rewarded by the Institution. Due to a combination of factors, including lack of time, lack of sponsorship, lack of opportunity and through choice, in selecting to concentrate on aspects of the job they valued most, the women were locked into those activities which perpetuated their marginalised status within the Institution.

Gendered Symbols

The gendered division of labour can be seen to be attributed partly to certain gendered discourses, reflecting wider common sense stereotypes. The women interviewees

could be seen to be constituted under a range of discourses which contradicted with the image of an academic. Firstly, reflecting wider societal stereotypes about women's work, there was a tendency for both students and colleagues to see women within the department in a supporting, or 'mothering' role, i.e., someone who could be relied upon to organise activities and provide support. For example, one woman commented that her role as course leader constituted her identity as 'Mother Hen' within the department, rather than a more managerial identity :

I do find it, an attitude from my other male colleagues that they almost, like, they see me almost as a mother. "Oh don't worry Joan will pick up the pieces." I had one today, I could have screamed! He said "Do I have to come to the course board meeting?" I mean I nearly literally, nearly exploded, I thought, you know, these are meetings that the course team is supposed to get together to discuss a number of things, the agenda has been out two weeks. "Do I have to come?" I mean he is like a bloody little child "do I have to come to the course meeting, can't I bunk off?" "Will you please give me the permission to bunk off? You don't really need me, tell me why I have to come." And I think "damn it!", you know, "why are you asking me if you feel there is nothing there for you and there is something else that you need to do?".. You have to take the responsibility to defend your apologies to not come and sort of "Oh please would it be OK if.." you know, " Please Miss" and I have a problem with that.

This image was frequently referred to by the women interviewees who felt that, whilst they were perceived of as being good administrators, they were not considered for management roles. Again reflecting the dominant gendered discourses of organisations and wider society women here are constituted as carers, nurturers and supporters rather than efficient managers, embodied in notions of macho management:

I think if it had been left to X, who was the Head of School, I don't think he would have had me on that committee because he doesn't consider me to be top management. He doesn't see me as thrusting. He sees me as a good solid trouper, someone who will deliver the goods, do the job well, I'm not a problem, and I think that has been a mistake in my career.

A key factor in reducing their status as 'serious academics' was seen by some to be their subject specialism. Most notably in Education and to a lesser extent in Languages and Community Services, the women commented on a general attitude that their subject area was regarded as being not quite academic enough and rather than being full members of the academic profession, they were more akin to technician's role or skills trainers. Again the women felt that this reinforced their marginalised status. Several felt that their subject area was also one where women were represented in greater numbers than average, leading them to question whether it was of low status because of the number of women in it or whether women had greater access to it because of its lower status. Either way, the women felt that there was a perception from other departments and the Institution as a whole that they were not 'real academics'. For example, reflecting on attitudes towards Languages teaching, one interviewee observed that:

I feel that language teaching in higher education has always been considered as almost like, um.. somehow, you know, language teachers are grouped together with technicians, secretaries, typists, as it were, and again this is partly to do with being women, um, academics of the traditional types tend to look down their noses and they happen to be men and the people doing language teaching happen to be women and I have always felt terribly strongly and angry about that. And I have wanted to fight and show that there is more than that, that you know that language teachers can work in higher education, can be involved in research. I just can't stand it when people are condescending to me, or anybody else and I do think that traditional academics tend to be, yes.

and, from a woman in the Education department:

I think my subject area has hindered me. I would say that if I had been a straight forward teacher of English Literature and I had been in the English department I think I would have been accepted as a much more thoroughbred academic than I am now.

In summary, therefore, the women academics faced various discourses of wider society which constituted their identities along the lines of quasi-familial roles, rather than those of the serious academic, or manager.

Gendered Social Relations

In reflecting on the day-to-day working atmosphere within the institution, it was commented that the climate was 'comfortable'. In several departments in the study, notably in the faculties of Education and of Health, there were plenty of opportunities to work with fellow women colleagues and generally, the climate was seen to be supportive, reducing the problems of isolation and estrangement often associated with women working in male dominated organisations. In Education and Community Services (faculty of Health) the women frequently raised the point that, due to the relatively high numbers of female colleagues, the notion of a female academic seemed less aberrant than in some of the more male dominated subject disciplines. In the case of Education, the Dean of Faculty and Assistant Head of Department were female and thus the image of a successful female academic was less extraordinary. However, despite the climate being comfortable, there were references made by the women to the use of sexist language and chauvinistic attitudes held by some of their male colleagues.

Whilst not feeling isolated in terms of the number of women present in some of the departments, there was a feeling of being isolated in terms of access to power. The issue of networking was raised by several women. There was a perception that men were more adept at promoting themselves via an informal network:

And promoting themselves within this very, not subversive, but very complicated sort of network, whom you talk to and whom you.... I'm not that bothered but I am a very much aware of it

Self Identity

The women in this case study were consciously resisting the discourses promoting a new academic norm of the instrumentally, research oriented, output focused academic. In effect they were opting out of their 'habitus' (Delamont, 1989), by not competing in the 'academic game'. However, the activities in which they were engaged were not ones carrying material rewards, in terms of promotion. The consequence of this was a conflict in terms of an academic identity which was personally valued and the one increasingly promoted by the new disciplinary practices of appraisal, Research Assessment and 'teaching more for less'. Thus, there was a conflict over the women's individual identity as effective members of the organisation. One reason for the women devoting their energies to teaching, in particular, was that it provided them with positive feedback. If women are constantly being hit by cultural cues which tell them that are a lesser organisational member, gaining feedback from teaching provides them with a sense of identity, confirming a role, albeit a second rate one, within the institution. As one woman commented, reflecting on why women devoted their energies to teaching and the reluctance in compromising on teaching:

We do it because someone flatters you into it saying you would be good at it and can do it. Then you think - why? I think it is very hard to do the job badly and that is what I need to do this year - to survive is to do it badly. I know what I am doing is adequate but it is not good. It is easy points to earn [being good at teaching] compared with some of the other aspects of the job - like meetings - those are the things which I find very hard and don't like doing and so I sort of opt out of it. This is the problem you are involved in psycho-analysing and saying "I don't like what I see.

Whilst the women commented that the day-to-day working climate was generally supportive, they also faced a range of discourses which challenged their role as effective members of the profession, questioned their commitment and devalued their contribution. Not only were there the practical problems of juggling the 'greedy institutions' of home and work but also the mother identity, with its emphasis on nurturing and caring further distanced them from the image of the serious, efficient academic. The University was not seen to be particularly sympathetic over women with childcare needs and it was not considered to be appropriate behaviour to even mention children:

I am sitting in a meeting here and I have agreed with my husband to pick him [their child] up from school, but you can't say "I've got to go so that I can pick William up from school", you have to wrap it up and say "sorry I've got to go because I have a meeting", you tell a lie in other words. In all the time that I have been here I have never found a male colleague who has had that sort of problem.

The constitution of the women academic as a teacher and administrator was an identity which the women were comfortable with but it was an identity seen to be second rate in the profession as the reward structures increasingly valued areas of work which the women either would not or could not participate in.

The women here were effectively resisting the discourses of performance and management. Whilst acknowledging that promotion came from conforming to the normalised pattern of behaviour, they were choosing and were able to choose to work according to their own model:

.....I feel much more confident than, in the sense that I don't have to be pigeon-holed - and they want to pigeon hole people. And I am much more confident now - I have an administrative role as course leader role, um and I think that I can give as good as I can get. I don't care if I don't have a huge research record, and I don't care if I can't, if I am not responding to what they

feel is academia and what academics should be doing. Both as a women and as a rather different kind of academic, I feel much more confident about that now than I, you know, used to but I've always got to be quite combative with them over it.

In a sense, maybe women need to learn to value their capacity to do that kind of work....They need to be more up front about what they think matters. I think it is about self confidence.

The issue of having the confidence to sustain a self image of being a valued member of the organisation, despite not being research oriented was raised by several women. This was made possible because the women were not focused on promotion. Moving up the hierarchy would involve changing behaviour and reconstituting oneself along the lines of a more ruthless, self-serving individual.

4) Discourses of New Public Management

In reflecting on recent changes in the working environment, there was a feeling of an overall intensification of work, brought about by a huge increase in student numbers and a marked shift towards rewarding the production of quantifiable research output and income generating activities, as well as increasing course administration duties. The feeling was that working conditions had worsened and that the job was far less pleasurable, with longer hours, greater stress and greater pressure to perform. The women commented on a huge increase in forms of accountability for their activities, with increased monitoring, ranking, assessing and quantifying of performance. This feeling of increased pressure and intensification of work was frequently commented on during the interviews:

Yes. It's certainly changed in that it is much more demanding. We could do with more time to do things, a little bit less pressure.

It's changed enormously, it is nothing like it was when I first came into it - especially the increase in student numbers.

So yes I think the work load has increased. The administration and paper work has also definitely increased, and the accountability has increased. There is much more emphasis on monitoring and evaluation in written form than when I first arrived.

The women commented on how recent changes had not only intensified work but had also shifted the focus of activities towards a self-serving model of career enhancement, which was through "churning out the publications". This had resulted, it was felt, in an impoverished academic service. Not only was there less time for critical reflection, leading to a fall in quality of research, but also the students' needs, in particular, were neglected:

When you think of the amount of preparation and administration, where is the thinking time? Where is all this wonderful time we are supposed to have to reflect and to think, to write?, which as you know is a very time consuming activity.

Terrible. Absolutely dreadful. You don't have time to get to know the students. You don't have time to reflect on anything. It is awful, absolutely awful. And then obviously you have got such variety of students

Yes I think it is. There is a lot of pressure coming down to perform, whatever that means. To me it is just part of a cost cutting exercise. For instance student levels go up and staff levels are, at best, kept as they are. Things certainly have changed. Work is not as pleasurable as it was when I first joined.

The recent developments in the management of universities were seen to have brought about an intensification of work and a narrowing of the academic function, with a more instrumental, self seeking academic profile being rewarded in the new system. The women here faced a range of conflicting and competing discourses with what they valued as being important in providing an academic service coming increasingly under strain in the current climate. One feature of the new disciplinary technologies

introduced into higher education management is academic appraisal, seen to promote the new discourses of managerialism and accountability.

5) Academic Appraisal

Background to the appraisal scheme

The appraisal system, named Staff Development and Review (SDR) at Maresfield, was originally introduced in 1991. Its format is fairly loose and unstructured, with a University-wide recommended model, but with each department following their own scheme. This varies from a formal review and objectives system through to a mere 'casual chat' about timetables. As with most university appraisal systems, it is annual and top-down, with HOD's and deputy HOD's being the appraisers. This effectively means that there is no choice involved in who an appraiser might be and, given the relatively few numbers of women in senior positions, results in very few (9) appraisers being female with only one from an ethnic minority. Appraisal documentation is kept only by the appraiser and appraisee - with no paperwork being held in Personnel. According to the Personnel Director, there are no formal links with promotion or performance related pay (prp) and the scheme is "at the staff development end of the spectrum, rather than the prp end". Appraisal training is offered to both appraisers and appraisees, focusing mainly on interview and counselling techniques. The aims of the appraisal scheme at Maresfield, according to the Personnel Director, are mainly those of communication and feedback. However, the focus of the scheme is clearly

on tying individual goals in line with those of the institutional culture. As the Personnel Director commented:

The main aims are to do with communication and to do with helping people to do their jobs". It's also about feedback. I always explain by saying something like "I always like to know how I'm doing and what I can do better" - it's a learning process. It's also mutual feedback because if I'm sat with a member of staff and I say "I didn't do that too well but I know that I didn't", I mean, "if you help me to do X, Y, and Z, I will be able to do that better" - it's good for them and good for the organisation and the department when we both know where we stand.

A review of the appraisal system was carried out by the Personnel Director in 1994, with the main criticisms relating to the appraisal not being carried out at all, too much time being taken over it and in a few instances, reports of a misuse of power by the HOD carrying out the appraisal. However no specific details were provided by the Personnel Director on these criticisms.

Constituting the new academic

To what extent can academic appraisal at Maresfield be seen to be spearheading the introduction of the new discourses of performance and managerialism noted by the women interviewees? Clearly, with such a loosely prescribed appraisal instrument, there are wide variations between the departments concerning the implementation and functioning of appraisal. In general, the women did not associate the functioning of appraisal within the individual departments as being used primarily to promote the new discourses of managerialism and accountability. Appraisal was not seen, therefore, as being directly linked with a strongly managerialist function. In broad terms, it was associated more with a staff development model although there was a feeling that this was changing, reflecting a wider cultural change within the institution

towards individual and departmental accountability and measurable performance. Superficially, however, the appraisal scheme at Maresfield was not seen to be functioning as a strongly normalising disciplinary technology. However, several women did feel that appraisal operated at a more subtle level as a surveillance mechanism, directing and controlling academic work. Furthermore, the symbolic aspect of appraisal, as an emblem of 'good management practice' was commented on. In other words, appraisal was carried out in the department so that management could be seen to be 'going through the motions' of managing academic staff.

Gendered Gaze

The application of appraisal within the Institution varied considerably between departments, ranging from extremely low key 'chat' through to a much more formalised interview focusing on staff development and performance feedback. Appraisal was seen to be operating in three different forms within the various departments, with this variation being largely determined by the appraiser (including their gender) and the appraiser/appraisee relationship. Several women commented on appraisal being an extremely positive and supportive experience. These women all had the same appraiser, who was female (Deputy Head of the department). In particular, the women felt that the appraisal interview was constructive, open and constructive. The women felt that what they valued in their jobs, while not conforming to the new norms of research publications, was valued and encouraged:

It just gives you the opportunity to talk. I trust her and I think she has my welfare and development at heart. I find she is very interested in what I am doing and I appreciate that. I also find her a very good counsellor, she advises me very well. I feel that she respects, values and admires what I do.

So for me it is a very good experience. I feel that I can trust her and I can say whatever I feel like saying to her. It is also very sound because she is very perceptive and she knows the institution very well. Being top management she has got her finger on the pulse. Over the past four years she has started to accept that I think in a different way to her.

I feel they are quite well done. They also take into account my personal ambitions and the work I am being asked to do. So there is an element of career advice within the appraisal. So I might well be asked if I would like to do research, it is very much a part of the appraisal and I would be very willing to undertake some if I had time. In a way there has to be an answer to that, it is not acceptable for me to refuse to do any just because, say, I was not interested in research. But I can say that I ought to have time to do that.

Very positive. The person who conducts it does it very well and has made it her business to undertake appraisal in a very serious manner and prepares herself for each individual appraisal beforehand. I have felt very positive in them for the last two years. They are conducted in such a way that it makes you feel that you are the only person in the department that matters which makes you feel very good about yourself. It is done very well in that respect. We cover all the areas that have been agreed, and I have the opportunity to be very honest and say exactly what I want on and off the record, and I did say some of the things that I've just talked to you about, concerning grievances.

However, for the women in other departments, appraisal was seen to be a less positive experience. In one department, the reaction of the women towards appraisal was disappointment at a missed opportunity, due to the low key nature of appraisal. In effect, it was seen as a non-event, merely an annual meeting to discuss the timetable for the following academic year:

It's as low key as possible and nobody really takes any notice of it. It is maybe there just for 'window dressing' so that senior management can say that we have got one.

Well it is not appraisal as such. It is just a case of going in once a year and having a chat about what you are doing and what courses you want to do.

It was felt that appraisal could have been used to provide advice on career progression and feedback on performance, something that several of the women

interviewed expressed regret at having not received during their career. As one woman commented:

My fantasy is that if appraisal were about conducting a review honestly of what I have done over the past year, what I felt had occurred, what I felt had not occurred, what I would like to change, what I could get from the Department, what directions I really would like to develop in, what new things I would like to do, what old things I would like to ditch and to have a really good discussion around that and to feel valued and accepted and all this stuff, it might be really good. I would also like to have some feel of where I stood. I have no idea of whether I am perceived to do my job well, I have no idea whatsoever. I know that I don't meet deadlines and I will be very firm about that, I don't meet deadlines and I am sorry. If you are lucky I will meet them. I got some vague feedback on the documentation of a new course being all right but I just don't know how I am perceived at all.

There was very little evidence within the department of appraisal operating in a normalising sense, creating and sustaining the individual's sense of identity, with several women saying that they would benefit from far clearer indication of performance and direction:

I'd like there to be more on the lines of career advice and to be given advice on whether what I am doing is right.

It's hard to say really - I suppose it would be nice to have a bit more feedback on what the Head of Department thinks should be your future development.

I cannot recollect anyone saying "Yes you have done a good job there" or "No you have not done that very well".

Furthermore, it was argued that appraisal offered the opportunity for women to highlight the work they had done, in a formal setting, providing the opportunity to raise their visibility within the department. Hence, the women here felt that they could benefit from a more formalised system of appraisal:

I think for women, it is encouraging to recognise just what we can do. Men are just culturally more conditioned to shout about how wonderful they are. I think that there is still resistance to women pushing themselves forward which has implications for appraisal.

Here the role of appraisal can be seen in creating and sustaining an individual's self identity confirming competency in the job and as a member of the academic profession.

In the other departments making up the case study, appraisal was seen to be operating in a more managerialist light, promoting the discourses of new management. In particular, appraisal was seen to be promoting an intensification of work and driving a change in behaviour towards research publications and income generation. Several women found the appraisal interview to be undermining as the main emphasis was on directing their activities towards the new discourses of performance, while ignoring all the work they had been involved in during the year:

Because what you have achieved is taken for granted, and the emphasis seems to be on what are you going to come up with next year, and are you filling in all your hours of teaching that you should be. The contractual hours are supposedly broken up into various compartments, it's all highly artificial. Some time is spent on that but it is very unproductive. It just feels that the work and effort you put in is not appreciated and that all the Head is looking for is ways that you are going to enhance the department next year.

The general feeling is that it is a burden, a pressure. Apart from not being valued for the work you do, you are constantly being told where you are not fulfilling what the Head of Department wants.

Some of the colleagues come out and they are really upset, they had sensed that their work was not recognised. It tends to be 'well you ought to be doing this or you ought to be doing that and you ought to be doing the other.' I know this is only reporting hear-say, but, I have had three female colleagues who have been in the department - two of them no more than two years, who have actually come to see me afterwards to say, "it was horrible. I feel unhappy about it, he wouldn't accept this", or "I tried to say I wanted to do this and he said no you can't, or you have got to do this".

The role of the appraiser was raised on several occasions. In particular, several women who had had different appraisers over the years found that the appraiser's role

was crucial to the appraisal experience. For example, one of the women who had received two extremely supportive appraisals from the female appraiser, reflecting on an earlier appraisal, commented that:

My first appraisal was not a very good experience and that was down to the person and their style. I'd say it wasn't a good experience, it was a non event really. If I said that I wanted to do something it would be agreed but nothing would happen whereas with the appraiser I have now if something is not possible then she will tell me.

The fact that the appraiser was female was seen to be of importance here. It was felt that women were more appreciative of the work undertaken on a day-to-day basis in the department and that there was more understanding of individual women's specific needs and experiences.

Visibility and Voice

For some of the women interviewed, the new discourses of management conflicted with their notions of academic service. They were seen to be directing them towards what was perceived to be a particularly instrumental academic norm, focused on a high output of research publications and devaluing the role of teaching and administration. The research questions the extent to which these women were able to resist the normalising discourses. Despite its espoused aims and original intentions, appraisal takes on different forms reflecting the local culture at departmental level. Several women felt that they were able to control and direct the appraisal process to their own advantage. As Townley (1990b) argues, the outcomes of appraisal are determined by the relative strength of power of the actors involved. The issue of

confidence was raised here, especially the confidence to sustain their own conception of their worth and identity as effective teachers and administrators:

I have gone in there with the attitude that I am dictating the agenda and if I dictate the agenda then I control what work I can get. I am okay because I feel confident about my position and to begin with I developed a methodology for coping with it which I have to say was helpful, my husband actually talked that through with me. I went in very, very prepared.....So every year what I do now is that I do in with my calculator and I say 'now Andrew I have got these hours and those hours and we are talking about twelve weeks not five and so that does not add up. If you want me to reduce where do you want me to reduce.' But of course you don't go in like that if you don't have the confidence.

However, it was acknowledged that this was possible because the woman concerned had effectively chosen to opt out of progressing further up the hierarchy. Resisting the normalising gaze is possible, it seemed, but at the expense of career progression:

I think the way it operates here now is fine and I can't envisage any problems because it is not a painful experience in any way. If I was a highly ambitious person and had my sights set on a certain position I suppose the appraisal might be a much more important event for me.

Um...I think about 10 years ago I could have said lots - it is just not personally problematic for me now although I could see that it is for loads of other people, who are more ambitious.

The normalising effects of appraisal were not being felt here as the women concerned were choosing not to identify themselves with the new output oriented academic. However, there was the feeling that the opportunity to follow a variety of different career models might change in the future as appraisal became more managerialist in focus. Several women noted the increased climate of accountability, reflecting the changing management of higher education:

I think the new philosophy of management in the institution is to be much more authoritarian and when the department was appraised a couple of weeks ago I sensed that what they were getting at was a managerial style and trying to hammer it home.

When we first embarked on appraisal the emphasis was on staff development. I think it has been true in that that has worked. I personally feel that there is

an element of staff development within that. But it has got to be more about accountability as well. There is definitely a move towards increased accountability for what you're doing and I'm sure that will be reflected in appraisal.

This shift towards accountability was further emphasised by the anticipated links with performance related pay (prp). Several women commented on the likelihood that ultimately appraisal would be used to allocate prp and this would clearly shift its focus away from development and feedback:

If appraisal was used just to help develop people that would be fine. I don't think anyone could object to that and also it depends on who has carried the thing out. I would want someone like the head of department, or someone I trusted who would give me good feedback so that I could use it. I think that within the university, at the end of the day, it is something that is going to be linked to pay.

6) Conclusions

The effects of appraisal within the Institution differ within the different departments but, in general, the impact was considered to be marginal. Appraisal was seen to be an integral part of the 'new order', however, its functioning was not associated with the strongly panoptic effects of appraisal, controlling and shaping day-to-day activities towards the new discourses of management. Having said that, however, there was evidence that appraisal was spreading and reinforcing a more managerialist culture of accountability for performance and a new organisational order, evidenced by the intensification of work and driven by the achievement of quantifiable performance indicators. The women interviewed here were resisting the pressures to conform to the new culture. So far, the extent to which the women in this case study were internalising the new norms was limited. It was felt that this would become more

difficult in the future, with the new discourses of higher education management increasingly impacting on their lives and identities as members of the Institution and academic profession.

The women in the case study were choosing and were able to choose not to internalise the new discourses of competitive culture. In one department, the women were able to put forward alternative discourses which constitute a different form of normalised activity. Here appraisal can be seen to be working to create a climate more receptive to women's needs and experiences, recognising the important role played by women (and men) who devote their time to teaching and pastoral duties. However, this has not gone so far as to challenge the reward structures which recognises the more masculine values of competitive management coming from central government. Many of the women in this case study were resisting the new norms of performance, choosing to concentrate on aspects of the job which complied with their own value system. However, as Ferguson observes, when it comes to resisting the dominant discourses "one can resist and survive, but one seldom both resists and prospers" (*ibid.* 1984:191).

Chapter 7: Kingswood University

1) Background to the case study

Kingswood University was established in the latter half of the 19th century and, following mergers with the Kingswood Medical College and the Kingswood Technical College, received its Royal Charter as a university at the start of this century. The University is located in a large, cosmopolitan city with a population of 375,000. The area around the city is highly industrialised and the region has a strong industrial and maritime history. Kingswood is a large university, with a student population of 11,000. The main University campus is located in the city in various imposing buildings, built in the early part of the century and typical of civic universities established during this era.

The University has 6 Faculties, which subdivide into 54 departments. It has an international reputation for its research and is ranked amongst the top 15 for research. However, its status in research had dropped as a result of the 1992 RAE, from the top 5, resulting in a renewed vigour to promote research output within the University¹. Kingswood is considered to be a highly prestigious university and demands high grades for entry onto its courses. The average results from the 1992 RAE was 4, with several departments achieving a grade 5 (THES, 1996a). Results from the HEFC Teaching Quality Audit, ranked by the THES (1996a) into a league table,

¹ In the 1996 RAE, the Institution only managed to maintain its top 15 position (THES, 1996b).

shows that teaching 'scores' were high, with the University achieving an average score of 84 and therefore ranked 21 out of a total of 97. The staff:student ratio is 7, which is low even for the 'old' university sector. This low ratio is reflected in the University's funding, with 17% of income coming from student fees, 40% from HEFC grants, 27% from research and consultancy and 16% from other sources.

Academic Staff Profile

The total number of academic staff at Kingswood is 818¹, of which, women make up 16% of the total academic staff, which is significantly below the national average of 30% (HESA, 1996). The low proportion of women is also the case across the hierarchy, where at every level the percentage of women is lower than the national average (see table 8). There are 8 (4%) women professors (figure made up of the HOD and Professor columns on table 8), 32 (10%) Reader/Senior Lecturers and 94(27%) Lecturers. The pattern of women academics across faculties corresponds with national trends, with the lowest number of women being found in the Engineering Faculty (3%) and Science (8%). Full details are set out in the table 8 below:

¹ This figure includes only full-time academic staff. It does not include those who are classified as research only staff.

	HOD*		Professor		Reader/SL		Lecturer		Total	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Arts	11(85)	2(15)	12(92)	1(8)	45(90)	5(10)	34(63)	20(37)	102(78)	28(22)
Eng'ing	5(100)	0(0)	9(100)	0(0)	30(100)	0(0)	27(93)	2(7)	71(97)	2(3)
Law	1(50)	1(50)	4(80)	1(20)	5(83)	1(17)	16(50)	16(50)	26(58)	19(42)
Medicine	12(100)	0(0)	27(100)	0(0)	70(91)	7(9)	48(76)	15(24)	157(88)	22(12)
Science	9(100)	0(0)	36(100)	0(0)	84(91)	8(9)	76(88)	10(12)	205(92)	18(8)
S. Science	7(70)	3(30)	20(100)	0(0)	41(79)	11(21)	55(64)	31(36)	123(73)	45(27)
Total	45(88)*	6(12)*	108(98)	2(2)	275(90)	32(10)	256(73)	94(27)	684(84)	134(16)

Table 8: Full-time Academic Staff by Gender and Grade (with percentages in brackets). Source: Kingswood Personnel Department/ Commonwealth Universities Yearbook (1995)

Note: There is also one Dean of Faculty for each faculty. These are all male.

*HOD: This post may be at either Professorial level or at Reader/Senior Lecturer level. The break down of the figure is as follows: Male: Prof. 35, Reader/SL 10. Female: Prof. 6, Reader/SL 0.

Profile of Interviewees

Kingswood is the largest case study in this research, comprising 25 women. The women interviewed come from two faculties, Social Science and Law and represent ten different departments. The profile of the women interviewees, showing faculty and position in hierarchy can be seen in table 9 below:

	Head of Dept.	Professor (not HOD)	Reader/SL	Lecturer	Total
Law	0	0	0	4	4
Social Science	1	0	4	16	21
Total	1	0	4	16	25

Table 9: Profile of Interviewees by Grade and School

The average period of time working at Kingswood, for the women interviewed is 7 years, ranging from 18 months to 24 years. 15 of the women have children and 12 of these women had children under the age of 18. One woman has a dependent relative living with her.

2) Equal Opportunities

From the equal opportunities survey carried out to determine case study selection (see Chapter 4), Kingswood University came roughly half way along the continuum, in terms of its formalised EO procedures. The University has an EO policy, an EO committee and co-ordinator and carries out basic monitoring of staff (recruitment and gender profile of existing staff). The Personnel Director at Kingswood, interviewed as part of the case study, stated that the climate of EO had improved significantly over recent years. He argued that since the publication of the EO policy, in 1989, and the setting up of an EO committee in the following year, the issue of EO had taken on a far higher profile:

It is something that I think that in my day-to-day activities with academic managers, is an issue that they regularly raise themselves, you know, 'what are the EO implications of this?'. And this is not something that...a few years ago they would need to be reminded of it. Now it is, you know, the pressure is coming from the academic managers, not the centre.

The University published its EO policy and statement in 1989, along with a summarised EO leaflet. In addition, an EO committee was set up in 1990 responsible for overseeing EO matters within the University. The Committee is chaired by a lay member of the University's Council, with the Deputy Chair being the Senior Pro Vice Chancellor. The committee members comprise representatives from the various trade

unions, departmental representatives and a member of the Student Union. The EO committee meets once a term and produces an annual report on the state of EO, which is reported to the University Staff Committee and through this committee to the Council of the University. Some basic monitoring also takes place. The annual report prepared by the EO committee includes the drawing up of a profile of existing staff, in terms of gender and ethnicity. In addition, some monitoring of job applications is carried out. This is aided by a computerised personnel system which enables the generation of basic statistics. Results of this monitoring has revealed that whilst the University clearly has a gender imbalance in total numbers and across the hierarchy, in recent years, the numbers of women appointments has risen and is now taking place at a higher rate than their current representation within the University, estimated at 25%, compared with a current average of 16% across the hierarchy. However, it was acknowledged that most of the low paid clerical, cleaning and catering staff were women and women were very much the minority in senior levels. Positive action has been taken to redress the low numbers of ethnic minorities amongst clerical and academic support staff by developing links with local job centres to encourage more applications from these sections of the community.

Monitoring has also enabled analysis of the discretionary pay awards. The HOD's were invited to nominate potential recipients to a panel made up of two Pro Vice Chancellors and two Deans. However, having analysed the distribution of discretionary pay, a gender imbalance was revealed with the number of women receiving less than their proportion within their grade. The Personnel Director argued that this was partly due to the fact that it was awarded mainly to staff at the top of the

scale and there were few women in this position, either because they had been recently promoted to SL or because they were recent appointments at Lecturer level.

In addition, recruitment and selection practices have been revised to promote EO. For the appointment of professors, wherever possible, at least one woman academic is required to sit on the selection committee. In addition, in an attempt to award equal status to teaching and administration to that given to research, applicants for promotions are now awarded a 'score' out of 5 for these three aspects of their job. Thus, in principle, those individuals who were excellent teachers and carried out large administration roles should receive recognition for the work done and this should contribute towards their promotion. The Personnel Director also noted that there were formal procedures for taking career breaks into consideration, when making recruitment and selection decisions. However, despite these developments in the promotions procedures, the Personnel Director felt that the basic criterion for initial appointment and promotion of academic staff was primarily that of research and this was unlikely to change:

We are a research based institution and the centre might say that the criteria is research and, to a lesser extent, admin. Teaching will not be given the same status no matter how hard we push, especially with the Research Assessment Exercise, you know, research has to have priority.

However, the Personnel Director did not feel that there was any EO implications from this as he argued that there was no sex based division of labour within the Institution:

I don't think that there is a gender difference between interest, productivity and quality of research, as opposed to teaching. So I don't think that women are good teachers and the men are good researchers. I mean, I don't think that the women here are being held back because they're not interested in research. We appoint women because they've got a good track record. I mean you get appointed here because you're good at research and that's the reality.

The University, at the time of the case study, was in the process for being registered for Opportunity 2000. However, there were no plans to set any form of targets regarding redressing the gender imbalance at senior level. The Personnel Director was of the opinion that the gender imbalance would rectify itself as more women worked their way up through the hierarchy. However, a mentoring system had been established in the University, so that every new member of staff would be assigned a senior member. This includes, again where possible, the option to have a female mentor, if requested.

Finally, there were staff development courses available on EO but this was purely voluntary and there was no obligation for those involved in decision making to attend. The Personnel Director felt this would be “tightened up” soon and there would be “greater encouragement” for attendance on EO courses. However, it was felt that attendance on such courses could only be encouraged, not enforced.

In summary, the University was seen to be much more active in implementing EO procedures in recent years, which had led, in the view of the Personnel Director, to a general awareness of EO issues:

I think that the culture has changed. It is something that more people now do without thinking, almost. As I said, we don't have to remind people that there are women around or that we should take that into account. It seems to come much more naturally, and seems to be part of the culture.

However, the Personnel Director felt that a balance had to be achieved when developing a system of formalised EO; EO was more of an ‘add on’ activity than something which should drive the whole institution:

I think it is something that is seen as an important part of the day-to-day activities. It is not something...I'd say that we do not want to do a Lambeth or GLC on it - we're not that sort of organisation, but I think there is a genuine concern.

Contrasting with the fairly positive view that academic management were much more active in EO issues, as expressed by the Personnel Director, the women interviewed in the case study felt that EO was paid mainly "lip service", that the state of EO within the University was "appalling" and "laughable" and that the University lagged very much behind general developments in this area. Despite having established a formalised procedure for equal opportunities, the feelings expressed by the women, in relation to equal opportunities and gender, were largely negative. There was an acknowledgement that a formal system of EO was in place but this was seen to be having very little, if no impact, on what was seen to be an overwhelmingly masculine culture. The key problem with the formalised system of EO within the University was that it failed to have any impact on what was seen, by the women, to be an extremely traditional, conservative university, with decision making being dominated by male academics with a strong 'old boy network' operating:

I think it's a funny mixture of unreconstructed dinosaurs, and new men, and I think it's rather significant that when I'm saying this to you I'm thinking of the attitudes of the men towards it [EO]. Because this is a male dominated university.

The image of Sir Humphrey Appleby¹ springs to mind!! This institution is a very much a misogynistic one. I think that there are plenty of senior people inside this University, it's not only academics it's also senior administrative staff, who are terrified of women, absolutely terrified of them...of us...and, um, just go out of their way to make life as difficult as possible really. And they simply don't, just don't begin to understand what equality of opportunity is.

¹ Sir Humphrey Appleby is a fictitious character in the BBC sitcom "Yes Prime Minister". The character is a top Civil Servant, who displays extremely patronising attitudes and behaviour towards women.

This general feeling of dissatisfaction with EO was partly due to the fact that several recent monitoring exercises and work done in raising the profile of EO within the Institution had served to highlight the inequality and in doing so had raised expectations. The women interviewed felt that attitudes towards women academics and EO issues were largely dismissive, with only those departments traditionally associated with more 'pro-feminist' attitudes, such as social work, social policy and sociology, having a marginally more positive working environment for women. EO issues were not seen to be embedded in day-to-day working practices. There was the perception that for most members of the Institution, EO was not an issue, seen to be very much the preserve of Personnel and a few 'extremist' women. As one woman commented:

I think it is seen as a province...an area which attracts cranks and extremists. Unfortunately because it is always women, and partly because men couldn't give a shit, you know, it's always women who are into it, and it's just seen as a women's thing - that they "go nagging on about for no particular reason".... "It would be much nicer if they would all shut up"... That's the view here. You know, it is rather a ridiculous, laughable thing which is seen as a good subject of jokes rather than anything serious.

Symptomatic of this attitude, as one woman commented, were the reactions taken by many male colleagues over the adoption of a gender neutral language policy in formal documentation, course notes and examinations. These tended to be flippant and dismissive:

It's seen to be me on my hobby horse....and something to have a giggle over, you know.... colleagues in the department coming up and saying "Oh, I told off one of my tutees today for saying 'man', ha, ha, ha" - well, I suppose at least he's noticed...So I think there is a little bit of that.

However, despite being seen as an overwhelmingly patriarchal institution, there was some variation within individual departments, with the feeling that some departments

were slightly better than the University as a whole, in attitudes towards women academics and in the promotion of EO initiatives. Firstly, in some of the social science departments included in the case study, there were a greater number of women than in other parts of the Institution, leading to less of a feeling of isolation and providing a more supportive working atmosphere. These were also subject areas which tended to have a greater awareness of equal opportunities, often being part of the curriculum, and often taught by male members of the department. Thus there was more chance of working with pro-feminist male colleagues:

There have always been more female members of staff here. We have had equal amounts of male and female students since the early seventies. We have some senior members of staff who I think are genuinely trying. They're men so they don't always deliver. They do occasionally do things that are crassly stupidly sexist but I think they are trying.

We're much better. I think we are good. Within this department, because the ex-head of department was married to someone who was strongly into feminist issues and was therefore constantly being kicked in the shins any time he said anything or did anything that was anti-women. And because the current head of department's partner is also in academic life on a half time basis and there are two small children and she insists that he does his share. She is studying gender studies and both of them are desperate to be considered liberal rather than sexist. I think in this department it is good.

Added to this, in three of the departments included in the case study, there were female HOD's and this was seen to provide a far stronger support for EO as well as a far more supportive atmosphere generally. This response may be contrasted with one from a woman working in a predominantly male department. Here, the issue of EO was seen to be very much a marginalised one, even more than in the University in general:

Um.. well I think it is below average, but not a lot, because I think that this University, being one of the traditional ones is probably pretty poor. Um, you know the areas... well a) there aren't that many women - and these are all part-time, low paid and generally treated appallingly, you know, in ways which men would never be. This is a very male oriented department. There are very few women here.

In summary, the feelings expressed by the women interviewed towards the state of EO was that the University had set up the basic procedures but these had done very little to challenge what was seen to be entrenched patriarchal attitudes present in the University culture.

3) Gendered Culture

Introduction: Paternalist Culture

The culture of Kingswood University was regarded as being a strongly patriarchal one, with clear sex-role demarcations. In reflecting on their experiences of working at Kingswood, the women interviewed commented on their feelings of being marginalised, not only in terms of the lack of women academics within the Institution, but also their lack of access to decision making and the influencing of University policy. There was a general feeling that women's experiences, women's needs and women's contributions to the overall shaping of the organisational culture, were ignored. The women frequently referred to a male 'club-like' atmosphere, where the Senior Common Room served as a metaphor for the overall culture of the University, summed up in the following quotes:

The University is amazingly male dominated - it really shocked me when I first came here from [X - University overseas]. It felt like I'd stepped back twenty years, um, because the power in the University is very much in the hands of men, you know, right through the management levels and through the professorial, senior Lecturer and Reader structure. I'm sure that it would be very hard to prove that I am explicitly excluded, but I think there are other factors that go into the fact that I am excluded due to my sex. Um, for example, the senior common room - all men, almost ninety nine percent will be sitting there smoking, reading papers, not talking, mostly. And if I was to go in there with a group of women (which I don't actually do because it's a

very uncomfortable atmosphere), I would want to talk, I'd go there to talk, and I feel like it's some kind of club - an exclusive men's club. And you know, they all seem to be in grey suits - they probably aren't - but there does seem to be that sort of greyness to it.

I would not dream of going into the Senior Common Room because at Kingswood University the men and also the senior people, are very elitist and very exclusive, and I imagine it would be a huge problem then, they just don't take any notice of you, you know, you feel you shouldn't be there....

The culture of the University corresponds with that of the Gentleman's Club (Maddock and Parkin, 1993), where the gendered discourses of the organisation confirm and reinforce the wider societal discourses of women as homemakers and nurturers. Within this patriarchal culture, women are accepted as long as they comply with the feminine norm. The patriarchal culture at Kingswood was not the aggressive, bullying form of culture, and many of the women's comments related to the fact that working relationships were often very pleasant. However, male attitudes towards women working within the Institution tended to be extremely paternalistic and patronising and this presented a variety of problems for the women academics in being accepted in the academic role.

There were departmental variations in the women's reflections of their day-to-day working climate. What was clear from the interviewees' comments was that there was a tremendous feeling of separation between the culture of the University as a central body and the culture of the individual departments where they worked. The central body of the University was seen to be the preserve of senior academic managers, very few of which were women and therefore reflected images of masculine styles of management and social relations. The clear exception was the one department (Education) in the case study which had a female HOD:

Um, well no within the department I've really felt relatively satisfied, I say relatively...Um, our professor, who I have enormous respect for...enormous respect for the work she's done and enormous respect for what she's achieved. Um, I think where my dissatisfaction lies - and this is something that is shared by a number of women staff - is to do with the wider University. Um, but you know generally within the department I have found the department to be a much more collegial, collaborative in a non hierarchical kind of way. So my concerns within Kingswood are much more to do with the wider university than the department...

The supportive nature of the individual department was raised by all of the women interviewed in Education, where the HOD was female and this was seen to be crucial to the positive working atmosphere.

To summarise then, the Institution was characterised by the women interviewed as being a strongly gendered culture. This culture may be split down into various interrelated and interconnected gendered processes (Acker, 1990). Firstly, the gendered division of labour and the allocation of tasks. These include the day-to-day activities carried out by academic staff, the reward structures, access to power and authority, and the public/private division of duties and its impact on the nature of work undertaken. Secondly, the gendered processes include various gendered symbols within the Institution which together serve to justify and legitimise the gendered division of labour, including assumptions about, and attitudes towards, male and female roles within the departments and Institution as a whole. Thirdly, the gendered social relations and the forms of communicating and language used and its impact on the gendered culture. Finally, these processes together serve to shape the gendered identity of the academic norm and the extent to which individual academics conform to this norm.

Gendered division of labour

a) Sex-role stereotyping

In reflecting on their day-to-day activities, all of the women interviewed (with the exception of one who was on a two year research sabbatical) were involved in all the three main activities of the academic role, i.e., teaching, research and administration. The women all cited the opportunity to do research as being their primary motive for coming into the academic profession and, in particular, the opportunities to engage in critical research. As research was considered to be the primary function of the Institution, then in order to be appointed in the first place, the women would have had to have had a strong research profile.

In addition to their research duties, the women all had significant administrative roles, such as course directorship, admissions tutor, year tutor and so on. During term time, most of the women felt that with the teaching and administration demands, the more in-depth research tended to get relegated to vacations and the summer term. It was becoming common practice to 'front load' timetables so that all the teaching would be done in one term, leaving the remains of the year for research. However, administrative duties tended to take place all year round. Most of the women estimated about 50% of their time, during the term being taken up with teaching, preparation and marking. A further 40% was devoted to teaching-related or departmental administration (including student pastoral work), leaving roughly 10% for research related activities. When reflecting on their day-to-day activities during the term time, a typical response was:

Lecturing takes the most preparation. I probably spend more time on my final year option, which is a two hour session. I can spend a whole day each week preparing for that. As second year tutor a lot of my time is spent dealing with little niggly problems that people have - and we've had quite a few fairly big problems with students having psychological problems and so on. And that takes up an immense amount of time. I don't mind doing that up to a point but I am not a trained counsellor. On the one hand I want to pass them on the counsellor but know that the counselling service is very overworked and that they don't have the time to give them full attention. I would say that a lot of my time is spent doing little bits and pieces of administration, sometimes on student matters - I've just spent two hours writing references, for example. We have committee meetings a couple of hours every two weeks. The pastoral side of things takes me an awful long time and a lot of time is spent trying to do something. You think, 'right I've got two hours to do this' and probably an hour of that is spent with interruptions and student queries. Within each week there are at least five big things that I have to do on the administration side. At the moment I am designing a course for a Masters degree and can I find time to actually sit down and do it? So I'm trying to get some work together for that. I would like some time for just thinking.

Generally, reflecting on the formal allocation of work, there was not seen to be any discernible gender differences in the duties carried out in the various departments in the case study. It was agreed that both male and female colleagues were expected to teach (with timetables generally being allocated on an equitable and open basis), undertake departmental administrative duties and generate research outputs. The difference in the division of labour was seen to arise more informally. There was the feeling that women took on more administrative responsibilities and undertook these duties more thoroughly than male colleagues. There were strong expectations that women 'naturally' were more able to do this work, confirming sex role stereotyping casting women in quasi-familial roles:

Women here take on more responsibility. Basically, if there is something which is boring or too trivial but nevertheless needs to be done, like washing up,... anything that is the equivalent to housework, the men just don't bother to do it. And the two women here generally tend to run round clearing up the mess. I don't know whether that is a division of the sexes or whether it is just what we are like, I don't know. It does seem to mirror what happens in households to a large extent.

There were frequent comments made by the interviewees that it was easier for male colleagues to have a 'closed door' policy, doing the 'bare minimum' of the teaching and thus freeing up their time to do the more high profile research activities:

I think there's also something more insidious, which is about ways in which I think women generally... and certainly I tend to... notice things that need to be done and therefore assume that I ought to do them. Um, I think that I actually need to work harder at deciding that it's not my job and if the place falls apart, it falls apart. But it's quite hard to do and I think that, you know, I have over the years done a lot of mopping up of things that colleagues have not done - like the guy who's in charge of timetables just disappeared for six weeks and there were all kinds of crises about it and I was here so I dealt with them. Um, so it's not that I'm required to do them because I'm a woman but I think that women are actually more responsible.

I think there is probably more asked of us. I think women are expected to do more jobs that service other people and they are expected to complete those jobs whereas men will take on some of them but manage to control how many of those sort of jobs they do.

The women felt that they were seen as the departmental 'foot soldiers', relied upon to carry out all the mundane administrative duties within the department.

Of particular note were the frequently made references to the amount of student counselling work undertaken by the women and, again, the expectation that women were 'naturally' more able to do this. What was clear again was that women were more willing to undertake pastoral duties than many of their male colleagues. Several women commented on the importance of pastoral provision within their job and how their work was an essential service within the department. However, the work carried no remission from other duties, and carried no recognition by management when promotion decisions were made. Most of the women, however, took on the role because no one else (male colleagues) was willing to:

I do see them [students] quite a lot and I actually end up, as I'm sure you've heard from other people, frequently seeing other students who I'm not supposed to have anything to do with because I am, I suppose, someone they

find more sympathetic to their problems than other colleagues of mine so I frequently have students just turning up out of the blue, even though I'm not really supposed to be involved in that at the moment because, as I say, I'm supposed to be on research leave.

Um, pastoral work... I get quite a lot and that can be quite time consuming. For example, yesterday I had a letter from one of our second year's mother saying, you know, her daughter is in a terrible state and um, I'm not her personal tutor but she felt that I was the member of staff who she might be able to talk to. So I picked that up and I think that um, it's quite clear that the women in this department - we've picked up an awful lot of the pastoral work. In particular, I've ended up talking to students who've been sexually abused, raped, students who are pregnant, you know, are they going to have the baby or not?.... If they're going to have the baby how can they go on with their courses?... We, in fact, tend to get all of that.

In view of the fact that this work was often very time consuming, emotionally draining and took time away from research, a few of the women interviewed had made a conscious effort in recent years not to take on the pastoral role within the department. Recent changes in management of academic performance (discussed, in section 4 below) had put increasing pressures on all academic staff to refocus their activities around those areas which produced measurable, visible outputs. Some of the women interviewed were changing their behaviour and becoming more focused on research output, being less available for students and operating a 'closed door policy'. However, this had been met with criticism because of the expectation by staff and students that they would provide the student support service:

I'm sure I don't invite it, because I've been very keen to stop being a maternal figure and do my own thing, so I tend to keep a closed door rather than an open door but that doesn't mean that they don't come in, they do quite a lot. I would imagine they are probably more prepared to come and see a woman in some circumstances - I think you do get more for that reason and they do reckon on a slightly more sympathetic, um, response.

Yes, I mean, um, I think you get sucked into more, I know you do, more pastoral work - I think you are also... I think there's an expectation from colleagues that you will do it but on the other hand it's not an expectation that they extend to their male colleagues and this is the nasty bit. I'm just aware that this one colleague who expects me to give him appropriate help, which I do but there's the nasty bit at the back of my head that says I haven't really

got time to. And I give it willingly at one level but not quite so willingly at another level.

The women commented on the constant pressure to meet all the various demands of the job and keep up their research activities. In recent years, there had been increased pressure exerted on all individuals to improve the research profile of the Institution, following its falling ratings in the RAE. Several women expressed the opinion that their male colleagues were able to be more instrumentally orientated in their activities, often at the expense of other (often female) colleagues who had to pick up the pieces of their neglect of teaching and administration duties:

Um.. I certainly do much more of the pastoral type work, which many of my male colleagues think is a complete waste of my time - I mean they would be quite happy to ignore the students completely. Um, and I think that I very often get administrative things to do because I'm just good at doing administration. So I get a completely unfair burden of admin. because there are people who, again, ignore administration and so if things were left up to them it would just never get done. So at the same time I'm expected to do the same amount of research as my male colleagues, um.. and really at the end of the day that's what... I mean because of this problem in universities that we're assessed according to our research output, it's not entirely the department's fault, you know, one is just expected to carry on regardless, doing the research. Um...and what's happened is that most of our male colleagues have therefore downed tools and refused to take on any new teaching - they do.. what teaching they do do they put less time into than they used to. Um.. and they just ignore the administration past an absolute, sort of, minimal level. And I think we're largely left to pick up the pieces.

Furthermore, this instrumental orientation was condoned, even encouraged by academic management, as the primary concern was improving research ratings and generating research income:

I would say that ambitious people probably do about 60% research component and 30% teaching, and 10% admin. would be usual. To be a bad teacher is actually a good thing really because you get less students in your options and you do less work, and so you have less marking to do. And in the end that gives you a lot more time for other things...

For various reasons, it was felt that it was much more difficult for women academics at Kingswood to adopt more instrumental forms of behaviour. Firstly, there was a great pressure exerted on them, from their male and female colleagues, students and, even students' families to be well prepared, reliable and conscientious lecturers and to be available for students. Even where they had bought out their teaching from research grants, they still had large administrative and student counselling demands which took up much of their time. Furthermore, the women themselves were unhappy about adopting a more instrumental, single purpose role. Many commented on the pleasures received from teaching and student contact and they were unwilling to compromise on this.

In terms of their day-to-day activities, therefore, both male and female academics at Kingswood were research active and had well developed research profiles. However, there was a feeling that women worked harder than their male counterparts in many aspects of the job, whereas male academics often were more single-mindedly and ruthlessly concentrating on research.

b) Gendered Reward Structures

It was these research related activities which were seen to be the most valued by the Institution, certainly in terms of career development. There appeared to be quite a complex relationship between the various aspects of the job undertaken by the women interviewed. Whilst they were fully aware of the high value assigned to research output and income generation by senior management and the government, and whilst

most of the women enjoyed research and valued the opportunity to engage in it, they also were, by choice and expectation, committed to teaching and administration. This feeling that there were strong expectations to be dedicated to teaching and the students' needs, it was felt, was due to the strongly paternalistic culture of the University where there were clearly gendered discourses of female and male roles. To do all aspects of the job resulted in intolerable work loads, which increasingly women ended up with through not wanting to compromise.

Um...Well I suppose I'm reasonably happy with the research I've done um, in the sense that I've published quite a bit now and I've managed to run this quite large research project that I got funding for. Um and I've become reasonably well known in academic circles because I've given quite a lot of papers over the last few years... So I'm not unhappy about what I have achieved but I think that it has been at a huge cost and that I've actually been doing sort of, like one and a half jobs. I mean I am not very happy in this job - you've come at a bad time really! I actually think that the work load that I and the other permanent female colleague - we both feel we've been treated appallingly, um, in that we've both been sort of, expected to take on a lot, as women without them even realising what they're doing. They're so sort of in the dark age, you know, in that we do an enormously unfair amount of pastoral work. So that, I mean we've both actually done reasonably well - in fact my female colleague has been promoted to Reader - research-wise.. but we've done all these other things that the men haven't done at the same time like care about the teaching and do the teaching well and do a lot more admin. that any of them individually ever do. Um, and it's just this sort of vicious circle, you know, in that neither of us are very happy. In fact we both sort of think of leaving every now and then...

What was clear from the case study was the academic norm was one of being research oriented focused on quantitative outputs. Whilst this academic norm was one which most of the women academics interviewed conformed to, the gendered discourses of female work meant that there were pressures too to undertake other aspects of the academic job to a greater extent than their male colleagues. The part of the academic job carrying most recognition and most likely to bring material rewards in terms of movement up the hierarchy was research related activities, notably, producing

publications in top ranking journals, and generating income. This was seen to be very explicit and, in recent years, had become more so, given the link between research output and university funding. The women all commented on the value assigned to research. However, a distinction was made between research (associated with output) and scholarship (associated with academic excellence), with the former being the main performance criterion in recent years:

Research.... They're very keen for people to publish here although I know people in other departments and it's not quite so...they're not chasing you all the time here. But you are conscious of the fact that research is most valued.

Oh publication, nothing else, I... if you push them on it, good administrators make their life easier, but publications make all the difference for all the exercises that matter for the departmental profile.

Well, I think that what's most valued here by senior management is the capacity to pull in research grants - without a doubt - money. When I came here they were more interested in scholarship. It was always research that was valued more highly than teaching but I think the research was scholarship then and this was much more highly valued. But now it's money.

Yes. There is an ongoing debate about the extent to which we ought to value teaching and research and administration, that sort of thing. Especially as there is more and more pressure on people to produce more research. There is always the pressure to down value teaching.....

Teaching and teaching related activities, such as student counselling and less prestigious administrative work, for example year tutorship, examinations officer etc., carried no material reward. The perception was that senior management and many of their peers accepted these to be necessary aspects of the job, which needed to be maintained at an acceptable level, but devoting too much energy to them, especially at the expense of research related activities, was at best misguided. Some women felt that, in fact, being good at these aspects of the job, resulted in contempt from some of their colleagues, as it might result in compromising the department's research profile. Consequently, there was a clear message that if you were to advance in the

organisation, there was a minimum acceptable level of effort required in these activities, with the main focus being on improving the research ratings:

They're very, very heavily into research. I don't think it's unfair to say that. And I don't think I'd get shot down. The pressure is on to do research and everybody around, say, in all these offices, um, are first and foremost I think into research and the teaching is secondary. But don't let the students hear.

If you were achievement motivated you would forget the teaching wouldn't you, because who knows if you were making crap lectures except the students and they don't count do they...

You know the only thing that matters in this department, at the end of the day, is research. You can be crap at teaching. And I mean that...I can't say that too strongly. You could be appalling, and indeed, some of them are. In fact, I mean, the latest professor is notoriously dreadful at teaching. I mean, not just no good at it, so bad that the students that are put near him are up in arms. That's almost like a brownie point. You know, it's quite dreadful.

However, most of the women interviewed considered themselves to be above average, often excellent, teachers. They valued this aspect of the job and invested a lot of energy into the preparation and delivery of lectures and tutorials. Whilst it would be misleading to suggest that there was a clear gender split between research and teaching, there was certainly perceived to be a gender split in terms of the value placed on, and energies devoted to teaching. There was a general perception that the women interviewed, and their female colleagues, were more conscientious over teaching and administration. They also felt that women, by and large, from the attention given to teaching, came out best on student evaluation questionnaires. However, it was very clear that such activities, carried none of the kudos of research:

I mean they just couldn't give a damn here about people's teaching. And that's made absolutely clear, including to all the temporary lecturers.

Well, I have yes - I mean I suppose I feel I have met criteria that have been set by the University and internally by the department but a lot of what I've done has not been recognised, i.e., the admin. and the teaching. I mean it has been recognised because they agree that I'm a very good teacher but they just ignore that in terms of.. yes, it's just not valued at all.

I know a lot of women, at least five women in other departments whose teaching and administration were good - their non research commitments - just weren't acknowledged and they got nowhere.

However, government policy, linking funding to research output and the generation of income from consultancy, was seen to be the main motive underlying the devalued aspects of the job. With this increased pressure to do research, it was becoming increasingly difficult to juggle all the demands of the job. The women commented that to meet all the requirements of the job meant that they had to work constantly, in the evenings and at weekends. This was the same for their male colleagues too:

My feet hardly touch the ground - I mean I never work less than twelve hours a day, including at least one day at the weekend...

The women were reluctant to compromise on the teaching and administration aspects but were increasingly facing pressures, notably from appraisal, to do exactly that. There was a feeling that the norms of performance were increasingly being narrowed down to a single profile against which there were increasing pressures to conform to:

There's also the conflict over teaching and our HOD has actually said in a meeting that we have to accept that undergraduate teaching is something we should give as little attention to as possible. And I said I'm not prepared to treat my teaching in that way - I think it's very short sighted anyway because, um with this stuff about satisfactory and excellence - whether the quality of teaching is going to figure....but I feel there's a real difficulty in that it is not possible to teach well, to do good research and to, um, fulfil all the administrative demands. So there's actually um, I mean I think there's a necessary conflict because the job is full of conflicting demands.

I have received career guidance that I don't agree with. The career guidance is always you've got to jump through these particular hoops.. For example it tells me to stop concentrating on teaching stop doing all this other stuff that you do that's time wasting and sit down and write some straight heavy weight articles then you'll be all right and will be promoted. And that is really what the career guidance is all the time - just don't do what you're doing, do something else because what you're doing is not as valuable as these other things and it's a question of principle, although I think I could do it if I really wanted to desperately enough. It's not that I am not capable of writing these things I just feel there is an issue of principle. So it's not so much incidences but more an accumulation of petty exclusion, I guess. You know, nobody here has set out I think to do anything positively nasty to other members of staff.

It's just a lack of recognition - feeling invisible. You have to conform to a norm that's been decided

Furthermore, several women felt that there was peer pressure from their colleagues to compromise on teaching and concentrate more on research publications:

Yes because the teaching is completely unvalued. You can be an appalling teacher as most of them are and it doesn't make any difference to anything. You can be an extremely good teacher, which in fact [X - the other woman in the department] and I both are and we spend hours preparing lectures and classes. Our colleagues think we are stupid. So we are stupid... We don't get any credit for it. I mean, it's not that we don't... I mean they think "Oh they're a good teacher" but you don't actually get recognised for it and it is not considered worth spending time on.

I don't like that. I don't like the fact that I could never put myself out for this institution at all. I could stay at home almost all of the time, um, I could look only to my own future and not, kind of, put myself on the line for the University and I would get promoted fifty times quicker than I'm doing at the moment. I'll never get promoted doing what I am at the moment. Um even though I work really hard, I work very hard, you know for this place. Um so, and also, also what I'm doing is very unpopular in terms of building the research future of this University. Um so I won't win brownie points that way either. So I can't think why I am doing it really! Ha, ha, ha!!!

Deviation from this narrowing academic norm was becoming more and more difficult as the pressure to produce quantifiable research output had increased in recent years.

The majority of the women interviewed enjoyed teaching and student contact and valued this aspect of the job immensely. It was felt that not to do so would be letting students down:

I mean I happen to think that, um, students who come to a university such as this deserve, um, a good research environment but they also deserve to be treated with respect and they deserve to get attention, they deserve to have a good quality environment in which to operate. And I think those are really important and I don't, that's rewarded by senior management in the extent to which you might produce a programme that sells and that brings money in, but as an individual it is perfectly obvious that nobody is ever going to reward me at all for doing what I am doing at the moment. So um, you know, in career terms my best bet is to stop doing this, shut the door and get on with some research.

Added to this, several women appreciated the positive feedback they received from students, which was lacking from the department and University. Furthermore, some women felt that there was a University mandate expecting women to do a good job in front of the class. In effect, it was easier, they felt, for male colleagues to be bad teachers and to 'get away' with doing the bare minimum. Similar comments were made regarding administrative tasks undertaken by the women. Generally, it was felt that women were better at organising things. Consequently, they felt that they were heavily burdened with departmental administration. Again, as with teaching, being good at administration (except for high profile administration such as course directorship) carried no recognition in terms of promotion:

I'm good at the admin. But I think that that's a bad thing because the fact that I'm good at it means I'm just landed with more and more of it. If I actually.. and I mean I suppose it is recognised on my SDR forms [Staff Development & Review] that I'm good at all of these things....it's just that that's not what promotion is dependent on. You know, sort of, it's recognised on one level but not on another.

I'd change the administrative load, and I'm actually quite good at doing that but it doesn't count and I tend to get it because I'm good at it.

Output focused research, instrumentally oriented, corresponded with the male stereotypes of the ambitious, career focused academic. Teaching and lower profile administrative duties corresponded with images of home life, nurturing and caring. Consequently, such activities were seen to be natural talents of women, rather than acquired skills, and carried less (no) value or reward:

I would say that good teaching is occasionally thought to be useful like when there's a quality assessment. Apart from that it is seen as things that women are naturally good at it and so don't need to put work into them, you know, things like student welfare, they say "well that's just you being a mother" and "you like to talk, so, that's not hard - it's not work". Same with teaching in a way - they say "well that's your personality, you don't have to work at it" - in fact to give a lecture properly structured is a lot of work but they see it as something that I just do naturally and therefore doesn't require the same recognition as something that you have to produce through laborious work

The issue of teaching quality audit was raised by several of the women interviewed. At the time of the interviews, several departments in the University were about to have, or had recently been through, the teaching quality audit. There was much cynicism and disappointment expressed over what was felt to be a lost opportunity to raise the profile of teaching and reward excellence in teaching. It was argued that the exercise was open to abuse and was concerned more with bureaucracy and documentation rather than a genuine desire to address issues of teaching excellence. Added to this, as long as there was no direct relationship between teaching and funding, teaching would never have the status of research:

....of course the quality audits about teaching are mostly about documentation of teaching - they're not about teaching. It's about what handbooks there are rather than what the classes are like.

At the end of the day, teaching quality hasn't the relationship to funding that research quality does. In other words, the teaching quality exercise is mediated by student choices and students do not choose on the basis of teaching quality they choose, for a whole host of reasons, one place or another and maybe of nothing whatever to do with the course I'm afraid to say it um, so that's much more of an unknown quantity um.

However, there was seen to be a desire from Personnel and senior management to address the lack of recognition given to non-research aspects of the job. The promotions system within the University had recently been revised so as to assign equal weighting to the three main aspects of the job, namely the research, teaching and administration. This was seen to enable those individuals who had contributed significantly to teaching and administration, often at the expense of building up a strong research profile to be recognised and rewarded for the work done. However, in practice, the new promotions procedure failed to address the gendered reward

systems within the University, with several women commenting that, if anything, it had actually worked in the opposite way:

In terms of promotion it has always been the case that research is what is counted. I know of people who have got promoted who were not merely not good teachers but diabolic communicators - absolutely appalling on any basis. This last year, officially, we have changed the promotion procedures so that, officially, teaching, admin. and research are given equal value. What's happened is that people are more ready to give their colleague a 'five' for teaching. Everything is marked out of five but what has happened is that very few people got less than five for teaching. So when you've got an absolutely fantastic teacher like [name], she still only gets 5, the same as your average common and garden, average, mediocre bloke. The same is true for admin. Whereas on the research you get the full range of marks. So, on the face of it it is more equal in practice is very heavily research biased.

Well I think the way we've experienced it last time, the feeling is very strong that it's still research, in fact in a way it may lay more heavily on research because the way it's weighted looks apparently fair but it's very difficult to say that somebody isn't a good teacher everybody assumes that people are good teachers unless proved otherwise and the opposite works for research. So it does mean that showing you're a supposedly good teacher is going to be far easier than showing that you're a supposedly good researcher which means that people who do research, it will be taken for granted that they are good teachers and administrators as well.

Despite the formalised system placing equal value on teaching, research and administration, therefore, the pressures to publish and to bring in money into the department were ultimately what mattered. Consequently, the system was abused in most instances and positively resisted in a few:

This department was refusing to implement it - they must be seen to implement it so they were pretending that they were doing so but at the end of the day they'd torn up the pieces of paper that were to do with administration and teaching. What's happening here and in science is that they will never put forward the people that they wouldn't previously, you know, so all they're caring about is research - they're just refusing to take what they're supposed to be taking into account, into account. At the same time they're supposed to produce a grade 5 research department, which is why the science, I mean some people here and in science - some professors have said they will leave if they are made to actually implement this new system. And to some extent I can see that there are conflicts because we would lose a considerable amount of resources were we not a grade 5 department. And all that matters to get that ranking is research. So that, you know, the system doesn't really work. I mean people have seriously threatened to resign - some of the professors here and in science, if they are made to take into account

administration and teaching in assessing somebody's suitability for promotion.

Furthermore, rather than promoting EO, the new promotions procedure was seen as emphasising the narrow, gendered academic norm, to which every individual had to conform. No consideration was seen to be taken of women's experiences or needs within the promotions procedure. Certainly, there was seen to be no recognition made of all the informal counselling work undertaken by women academics. In bureaucratising the promotions procedure, the single academic profile had become further legitimated and seen as normal:

In terms of attitude, I think there is a complete lack of understanding as to what equal opportunities means. I think they feel that with equal opportunities, everybody has the same opportunity to compete for promotion providing they can all reach the single norm profile. And everyone who can do that - the nearer you can be to a white man the more chance you have and if you try really hard and be exactly like one - so that we don't notice that you're different - then we'll treat you the same way. There's no recognition, I think, that there might be different skills and contributions that you can make.

Attempts to take into account women's experiences, such as career breaks were seen as merely lip service:

So we're supposed to have allowances for domestic responsibilities well that's a joke, you know, I mean there's no real way in which it can be they are having all these nice little categories and all these lovely sheets of paper, but actually it doesn't force people to change their attitudes.

To summarise, therefore, the norms of performance were strongly gendered ones, and, since the recent research audit, this was becoming more so. Despite external teaching quality audit as well as the internal changes in promotions procedures, the attitude of senior and middle management within the departments and the University as a whole, was that research was paramount. The Institution was considered to be primarily a research based one. Interestingly, despite the low status of teaching, the

University scored well in the teaching quality audit, falling into the top 25% in the THES ratings (THES, 1996a). However, for Institutional recognition, it was very clear that it carried little weight:

I could walk into the lecture tomorrow and spew it out for an hour and a half no problem. They would probably - well, they might notice a little. It wouldn't be very satisfactory to me. And you could actually, and then you could do more research related activities and not care about the students. And you could actually say "right you've all got one time to see me this term, tell me now when it is. Don't come otherwise because I'm very well immersed in my own stuff and there will be a notice on my door please don't ignore it". You know you could. I can see that.

c) Access to authority and power

The statistics showing the gender profile of the University clearly illustrates the paucity of women academics in senior positions in the hierarchy. One of the consequences of this is that women academics have little opportunity to have a say in decision making and have a general influence on policy, by virtue of their inferior status. However, not only did women academics lack representation on many senior level decision making committees, the women interviewed showed a general reluctance to become involved in such activities. Two main reasons were put forward for this. Firstly, there were the practical barriers associated with lack of time to devote to committees and meetings, most pronounced for those women with domestic commitments. Secondly, several women had had negative experiences at meetings where, they felt that their contributions had been ignored. Meetings were dominated by men, and were seen to conform to macho forms of communication, being competitive and 'point scoring':

I think the thing I personally I find difficult is, um, is meetings. I find it difficult to speak in large meetings - not in small departmental meetings but going to Senate, or something, I would find - there are some things I don't like doing, partly I hate meetings because I hate the boredom of them and I

get so angry at people who have to extend them by rabbiting on - somebody says I would like to comment on so and so I just feel desperate, um so its partly about I don't like wasting my time but I think also I'm conscious of the fact that I'm in a sense, sort of, young and I'm also female - and when I do speak (which is hardly ever) no-one listens and if they do they just look embarrassed and I think it's because, you know, they think why is she here?

There was also the perception that women academics faced difficulties in gaining access to committees. There was a tendency automatically to nominate male colleagues for committees, even the EO committee:

From time to time you become aware that there is a, um, that the sort of male, senior male, in the University will, at the professor level, will sometimes decide that they've had enough of these women meddling or don't consider women when you're having these sort of policy discussions. I was talking to a colleague of mine, I recently joined two working parties, one because people in this department, myself included, got cross that there is the automatic assumption that the most senior men in the department should join this working party rather than what is us deciding that we should be the representative. And another, actually I was invited to join this other one because I seemed to be the representative of our department for a meeting that was setting up the EO working party but I was talking to a women colleague of mine - I was talking to her about this and she said that yes in fact the same thing had happened to her - that she had to push her way into one of these working parties. Now she is the Head of Department, so she was within that kind of senior management, um, field but there is the automatic assumption that men should be the ones who get on to it.

The image of the professoriat, as a body, was very much one of masculinity and exclusivity. This was made up of the "the old school tie network", involved in "petty politicking" and "point scoring". The majority of the women interviewed expressed no desire in becoming a professor, unless it was a personal Chair which exempted them from taking part in such professorial activities.

In fact, there were frequent references made about not being ambitious in terms of moving up the hierarchy. Those women that did want to be promoted wanted it for

recognition of the work they had done and the legitimacy gained from having the title, rather than having access to power and decision making:

Having said that, I wouldn't mind...., I would like to get a senior lectureship, mostly because having that kind of reward from the institution to say it values what you are doing. I would never, I would never want a professorship I cannot imagine any way in which, you know, I would want to do what that involves. Um, so I can't think why I would want to, because it's very..., I know it's supposed to be a position of academic leadership but as far as I can see it's much more to do with, um.... fighting political battles within the University.

I wouldn't like to be a professor because I would have to do more admin. and that would tempt me away from what I like which is the teaching. I think the research is important for that and um, I'm not power hungry I just like enjoying what I do now. So I mean, I would want that, rather than any great ambition to be a professor or go up the career ladder.

I am ambitious but not in the way I normally think of ambition, which is for me it is having the recognition by the 'man in the street' as it were. I mean if you go up to someone in a party it doesn't impress them if you say you are a Reader, or whatever, all that impresses them is if you say I'm a Professor - you know to have a label that impresses the layman. I would like recognition from my colleagues and yes, in that way, I have ambitions. Ambition tends to mean to me the yuppie thing of beating everybody else and it is not beating everybody else that I'm interested in, it's the value. I just do what I want in my job.

Rather than being focused on moving up the hierarchy, the most commonly cited career aim was to do interesting work and to enjoy work, which was either teaching and/or research. Having a professorial appointment was seen, therefore, as moving away from this into activities more related to organisational politics. A frequently made comment by the women was that they were not ambitious in the conventional sense, and have never had a strategic approach towards promotion:

I've been cured of all ambition of being a professor. All I want to achieve is to have a nice life basically. I have no career ambitions.

I've always been ambivalent about my career and I still am. I came thinking "I'll see if I enjoy it." I didn't have a strict ambition to make it to professor by the age of forty.

The professor included in the case study also commented that she had doubts as to whether to put herself forward for promotion not so much because of questions of ability but whether she was willing to take part in the what was seen to be an extremely male way of working and a male culture. In fact, many of her friends and colleagues, both within the University and in the wider academic community had tried to talk her out of accepting the promotion:

It is actually a job which I took on with considerable trepidation. In fact a lot of my very good friends and colleagues in other fields and universities all said it is one thing that I should avoid is becoming a Head of Department or a professor because you will get bogged down with administration and you won't be able to do all the things that you're good at. The people who really were good friends and on my side were still counselling me quite hard not to go for being a professor, let alone Head of Department. They felt that, that wasn't one's strength. It could have been an individual thing. They might have said that to a man but one wonders. It certainly wasn't motivated by the desire to put one down. It was motivated by the desire to boost one up.

In fact the idea of being ambitious and careerist was seen as being very much a gendered one, with men cast as being instrumental, single minded and ambitious whereas women were seen to be more focused on doing their existing job as well as possible:

I mean it seems to me that women working within this university fall into two categories really. There are people like me who... have never kind of seriously thought about their careers, have never really targeted what they are going to do, have not been very, um well I was going to say not purposeful, but I don't mean that at all because most people I know are extremely purposeful on how to run their lives but are not very career goal orientated, about how they go about things. And certainly I'm not, from my brief description of my career you can see that my, you know, it's been very opportune, really things that I have done. Um, there's that category and then there's the other category who are very, very goal orientated, um very targeted about what pieces of research they do and how they handle their careers and they are very, well I suppose handling their careers very much like male academics do.

What I think is very much a male style if you like, a male approach to a career, you know I'm actually shifting to that, um, I've become a more active, um, I'm thinking in career terms although I don't think any further ahead than being a senior lecturer. Um, not more than one step ahead if you like.

However, not being focused on gaining a Chair might be partly explained by the lack of opportunities for women academics within the Institution. Thus, in line with Kanter's (1977) thesis, women academics act in self limiting ways as the opportunities to gain promotion to senior positions do not present themselves. However, contrary to this assertion, this was not the reason put forward by the women, who argued that rather than having a single minded career strategy, there were multiple aims from their job, more to do with doing interesting, fulfilling and enjoyable work and being good at what they do:

I don't think strategically enough and I think that's useful for me to be made aware of although I'm also resistant to turning everything into a kind of strategic operation. You see what's seen as strategic and instrumental action tends to assume certain kinds of careerist goals. But that if you actually have a kind of political objection to those goals it doesn't necessarily follow that not acting in what appears to be a strategic way is unreasonable - it may actually be strategic in terms of some different set of goals - um, whereas I think it is also true that I tend not to think strategically enough, um... So I suppose um, I am beginning to think now more specifically about what do I actually want to do.

However, the exception to this was the professor interviewed in the case study. She argued that she had been very focused and strategic in her actions in order to achieve her Chair:

I think I decided when I had been here four or five years that I probably was capable of being a professor. I mean other people that I regarded as my equals male and female, most often male were beginning to get Chairs... And I thought right that's what I am going to do. So I think at some point, I can't remember exactly when, I made a fairly clear commitment to myself of getting a chair more or less by the time I was about forty, which is the sort of time when people normally get them. I have more or less managed to achieve that. I wouldn't say I cold bloodedly sat down and thought what have I got to do to become a professor though I know a number of people who have. I did certainly periodically weigh up what I was doing, you know, is this a useful thing to spend my time on is this going to take me anywhere, and other things.... I mean things had to be either intrinsically rewarding because I was interested in them, or financially rewarding, or strategically rewarding. Things that didn't fit into any of those categories I didn't do. It sounds very cold blooded.

Several women drew attention to factors which they felt had had negative impact on their careers in terms of career progression. Apart from not acting in strategic ways, the issue of mentorship was raised. In fact, the woman professor interviewed, felt that the mentorship she had received had been a crucial factor in her career progression:

It's not without significance, I have to say, that at various points in my career, especially early on, I had two or three senior males who acted as mentors and advised me. So the existence of people in your life whom you work closely with but who are much more senior than you is a huge advantage in giving you a picture of where you want to go.

For the other women interviewed, there was a feeling of generally having lacked career guidance and advice on which career moves to take, which it was felt, many of their male colleagues had received. This covered many aspects of the job from opportunities to engage in collaborative research through to informal advice about which administrative duties were worth doing and which carried little or no status:

I don't think they would say that women can't do something. It's not that sort of sexism. At a more fundamental level, if you look at the sorts of jobs women get to do, you have admin. posts within the faculty, it is quite interesting to look at the sorts of jobs that men get given compared to the sorts of admin. jobs that women get given which tend to be the marginalised ones. For example, I have been safety officer in the faculty for three years so I am giving it up. A bright young thing has been told that he has to do more admin. if he wants to get promoted so he immediately volunteered to take on that post. The head of department told me what he said to the person concerned was "Yes you need to do some admin. for your career profile to get promoted but doing that job won't get you promoted", i.e. don't do it. And I felt that some other gullible female will end up doing that job.

On the whole, looking at women coming into this place I think women are less directed in career terms in the first place and they do actually need somebody to sit down and say "where are you trying to go, if that's where you want to get to, then this is how - these are the steps you need to fulfil. Because I think the chaps that have got promoted quickly, looking at them coming in, they've understood the game. That's all. It's not necessarily that we're biased in favour of them, it's just that they are more game oriented in the first place.

Again, the issue of female roles was raised in relation to promotion. Male colleagues were mentored, it was felt, because they fitted the image and conformed to the norm of what an academic should behave like. Within the strongly paternalist culture of the University, those conforming to the norms were mainly male academics as they fitted the strongly gendered images of masculine instrumentality:

There is no doubt that you can still get promoted by being a 'clubable chap' by being on the right committees and people knowing who you are and thinking that you are a good thing. There is no doubt that that still happens. It is very difficult to work your way up through the hierarchy if you don't conform. I think I feel very pessimistic towards the University structure - I would have more to do with it, but I know what it is like and so I don't.

The thing that has affected my career the most is the departmental culture. If anything has hindered me as I was describing to you earlier, for the first n years I was here there was a very, very male dominated senior staff who were responsible for deciding who should get promoted and certainly I was at one time in competition with one male colleague who was very definitely being sponsored in a way that I wasn't. So if there's been any hindering - yeah I think there was a lot of people from outside, for a number of years, who said "gosh, you know, Kingswood is really.. you know, you really ought to have done something about your promotion..." Being a woman I didn't go and make myself a nuisance and jump up and down. I just took it on the chin and lived with it. I remember speaking to the HOD at the time and - a nice man who was very supportive but he said "I can't think why you're bothered about promotion, it doesn't make any difference, you know, it's just the same job.

d) Public private divide

Out of the 25 women interviewed, 19 had domestic commitments which impacted on their academic work. 18 of the women had children under the age of 18 and one woman had a dependant relative living with her. These domestic commitments presented a variety of practical problems of managing the demands of a family with that of an academic career. Added to this, the paternalistic culture of the Institution was seen to constitute women academics who were mothers as being less ambitious

and less committed. Many comments were made about how academic mothers tended to put in more hours and had to be seen to be working more diligently in order to compensate for this attitude:

I suppose you're in this double bind in that you have to be twice as good, twice as wonderful and twice as committed as ... I mean I have always taken at least one day a week where I work at home if not two which has been frowned on by a lot of my colleagues.

And um, the,...the way in which I worked, initially for those first years, when I just had one child, I was determined that no one was ever going to say that I wasn't pulling my weight because I've got a young child. So basically I over compensated and became, sort of, super efficient and everything was, kind of done, you know, within minutes of receiving it - this type of approach. And then when I had the second one, er, I kept going, working, and it was OK because I think by then you begin to routinise it. And now I have three. You know, I think, the only thing it's done for me is that I basically work all the time because if I'm not working at my job I'm working at home and I've got a computer at home and I work most of the evenings. And you're very conscious of being efficient. Any sort of short cuts - like microwave chips are brilliant inventions. You can get tea on the table in about five minutes. Um, and at the weekends of course, you work all the weekends. Um, and that is the problem, it's my choice. But I think... I don't feel it so much now but I certainly felt initially that no one was ever going to say "Oh, she doesn't do that because she's got kids".. And it made me.. I just have this, um, determination, really to succeed and I still have that. I mean everything that comes in to our house - you know, the children bring stuff home from school, letters or they want money for swimming or violin - it's always done straight away and it goes straight back. And that's just the way we operate.

The academic norm was seen to be very much a male gender based one which did not account for domestic demands; in fact there was the feeling that academic mothers were more vulnerable and open to negative comments over commitment:

Colleagues treat you fine if you produce the goods on the criteria defined by all these various people and it is suggested that I do but at a price - I mean obviously I've made a decision and a choice but there are impacts on other roles that anybody takesfor women that is....it isn't for men and that's why it is an issue here because the traditional academic life is for men - there is no equivalent of the wife for women academics, um, there can be no assumption that somebody else will handle that and even if there was the assumption of sharing it, um, I think a whole range of social pressures etc. would still put the onus on woman, you know, the bit about being a bad mother is a considerably greater worry than being the bad father. Um, so yes it infringes on your decisions on the way you live your life.

The culture here is very strongly work all the time, you know, people come in at week ends and the top men are physically hard workers, and that's the culture and that's been the case since I came here. And that again is a very anti female culture.

There was a feeling of having to juggle the various images of femininity. On the one hand, women were expected to conform to the gendered stereotypes of caring and nurturing, non instrumental and non assertive. However, they also felt that they had to manage their femininity when dealing with issues such as pregnancy and parenting. In other words, women's needs and experiences were not recognised nor accommodated within the Institution. An example of this can be seen in the attitudes towards maternity leave. None of the women interviewed, who had had their children whilst working at Kingswood, had taken full maternity leave. In fact several of them had purposively timed the arrival of their children to coincide with the summer vacation so as to cause minimum disruption. There were accounts of teaching right up to the delivery, being frequently phoned at home:

I think on the whole the women here have gone out of their way to fit in with the men rather than to make any demands. All the time I have been here and I suspect for many years beforehand, no woman has ever taken maternity leave, in fact in the whole history of this faculty I think only one woman has taken maternity leave and she came back after weeks - you know, it wasn't 6 months. And the mentality of the place would not support women taking time off.

The problems associated with meeting the demands of home and work were raised by all of the women with children. There was a constant need to be extremely organised in juggling all the various demands. This meant that the time available to engage in academic work, such as research, was limited:

Yes, of course I mean when I leave here I walk out of the door, I go home, I walk in, I put down my coat, I start to cook - you know we have a meal, we wash up, I run the baths, you know, I read stories. Um I go to the supermarket, I spend most of the weekend, not only, kind of, doing domestic things but, you know, going out with the kids and things like that. You know, I could not, would not, couldn't see how I could spend hour after hour, um,

studying, you know, things to do with my career, I just don't know how to do it.

I mean, it means that I can't be so single minded and selfish about it. Not that I have any regrets about having them. Um, I think... I suppose it's always a balance, it's a juggling act. I know that one day my kids will turn around and say "Ah, but you were never there - you were always working" Ha ha ha!.

I work harder in that I juggle a lot of domestic life - without a doubt. In fact they're the first to say that. Um, I have male colleagues that just can't believe... you know like taking my child to the nursery every day ... they sort of come in, go home, have dinner on the table and that's it and they just can't... they're very, um.. what's the word?... congratulatory really. To go home and.. you know as soon as I get home I have to cook food for three people, well even just to get out in the mornings.. I get four people out through the front door I mean that's quite an effort if one of them's feeling bolshy. Um, but when you go home it all starts again the laundry is what finishes me off. The laundry and the getting of a cooked meal for four people.

The only thing I really might need to monitor and constantly do monitor, you know, is my family life. I've got a lot of support there, so that does free me up if you like, um, where I need to obtain um a few brownie points it's terrible American expression, anyway, um, is in the area of publications and I've got a standing commitment to write a book and to go for a PhD by publication not dissertation. Um, now all that can very well and does eat in to family time, there's no way I can do all that within a sort of nine to five or whatever the equivalent is, um and I'm not prepared to, I'm not in such a rush that I have to do it all now and it's very important for me to have um, to have time with the family and to have leisure time - to have time to myself, so although I am fairly confident I am going to be able to achieve a senior lectureship I don't think its going to happen within the next, it's not going to happen in the short term, I'll have to wait 'til later.

Certainly, having children was seen to have a negative effect on career progression.

There was a clear choice presented to women, it was felt, between career and family,

with one always suffering in order to satisfy the demands of the other:

I think the thing I hadn't realised at the time when I was making that decision was the sheer pressure of other activities which reduces research time and therefore in order to achieve that aim, a fairly narrowly defined research, um, extremely long hours would have to go in to the job in order to maintain that against all the other demands and pressures on your time, um, again also reflects the previous things I said about family life. So 15 even 18 hour days, 6 days of the week for a period of time was certainly a norm I mean it isn't now - I've modified that. Or you have to modify your research...

I don't know what other women have said about kids, but there is one thing that I missed particularly with my daughter was that I really missed out on her from the age of six months through to two or three. I am very sorry about that but I think that, particularly if you're a female academic you are faced with choices. Yes I feel bad about that and it is something that I missed totally and I just have to live with it. I see that as a counterbalance, if you like, to women who feel that because they had babies they missed out on an academic career. If my partners had had a regular income and we could have relied on it I might have chosen differently. The big difference in my point of view is between a women without a child and a women with children, whether or not there is a partner. I handed my baby over and I know women who just can't do it. The response being "Well I'll just take my chance on the career front" which is fair enough. One lives with these regrets in life....

It's a very heavy burden. There's no getting away from it. It is interesting how few of my professorial colleagues, who are female, actually have families. I'm quite depressed that, in the end, it still seems to be that the women who make it are the ones who have decided not to have children. I think a lot of people chose not to have children because of their careers. Which means that we haven't really made progress if you've got to choose between those two things in the way that men don't.

Added to this, the sacrifice was to have no free time or time to relax at all. This was becoming much more pronounced in recent years with the increased pressure to perform and produce research output:

I think I'm going to have to have to absolutely brutal in the very near future and sit down and decide what it is humanly possible to continue doing. Because you asked about my private life, I don't have a private life, um, you know I virtually have no social life at all, I have no hobbies other than the garden.

Those women who were managing to meet all the various demands placed on them attributed their ability to do so to hired help in the home, supportive husbands and the flexibility of working hours. A lot of the women with children felt that it had only been possible for them to maintain their research output due to the support provided by their husbands. In particular, quite a number of women interviewed had partners

working from home, which made a key difference in terms of sharing childcare responsibilities:

My partner made a lifestyle decision and gave that up and wanted to work for himself and work at home and be able to spend more time with the family. That has worked wonderfully for me because he's based at home and he is supporting me enormously, um, I mean we very much do share household tasks, he does all the cooking virtually, I do all the other things, you know, we share. It would be impossible for me to be in my current post and working at the level I am working if I didn't have that kind of support at home. If I did not have that kind of support, at home I would almost certainly still be in a part-time post. Um, assuming that my partner was then generating enough money for me to do a part time post - because I do also very much value family life, all that that means um, my children are still relatively young and have a lot of needs um, I would give that priority. So, um, my, the way my family life is, is enabling me to do what I'm doing now. I consider myself really fortunate. I really don't think I could do it. I could only do it by um, really ignoring the needs of the children you know, not doing things with them at the weekend. If I didn't have that support, I would be running myself ragged trying to um cope with what are heavy demands of an academic career in addition to the demands of a partner and children. I probably, I mean one of my solutions would be probably to try and pay for relief, you know, pay for a cleaner, pay for ready cooked meals etc.

The flexibility offered in managing the working day alleviated some of the problems of juggling home life and career. In fact several women had been attracted to an academic career precisely because of the flexibility of hours it offered which had not been available in their previous career. This flexibility was seen to be invaluable by the women with children:

Um it's fine, for me because this job is so very flexible, its absolutely ideal and not only do we live close to here, the children's school is close by as well, so it's absolutely marvellous you know from that point of view.

Gendered Symbols

A range of gendered symbols can be identified which underpin the sex based division of labour within Kingswood. These cover a range of cultural practices such as visible artefacts, norms of behaviour, attitudes and assumptions, which reinforce and

legitimate the gendered roles and norms. The image of the academic was seen to be that of the white middle class and middle aged male. The women interviewed drew attention to a range of factors which reinforced the image that women were not legitimate members of the academic community, again, corresponding with the gendered stereotypes of women as support workers, secretaries and wives to the established male academic:

I think male colleagues do... particularly the older ones..., yes, undoubtedly I think.... there's still that tendency to treat you as if you were a secretary without really being at all aware that they are, but the older they are the more prone they are to do that, just assume that women are going to take a second place and not want go for the high profile things.

Frequently, the women made reference to the difficulties they faced in being accepted as fully fledged academics:

What is harder for women academics, and that is across the board, in other words from administration to teaching to research, is to carry any authority or weight for what you do or to carry equivalent authority or weight for what you do whether that's in front of the class, whether that's on a committee in the administrative block, or whether that's at a research meeting. I think there is an assumption on the part of the assembled participants, that if you are a woman, you are either there to make the tea, take the minutes or you don't carry the authority... For example, um, a large number of public school people who come here who make up the average class, probably have never encountered a female academic or such a figure in their lives before, and find it very hard to deal with.

There is an assumption that you must be junior or a less authoritative figure - whether that's because people quite literally miss-cast you on the basis of your gender as someone who is not an academic, who must be a post graduate, or who must be the secretary. So that I think the whole business of formal status if you like, for women is even more important than for men, in other words you need formal endorsement of, um, authority, in various kinds of ways, to carry any conviction...

But I just think that women are up against it even in that sort of aspect of the work because they're viewed with suspicion. Even when you get down to the nitty gritty of doing this research - you know, what they do is view you differently. So I'm absolutely sure if I'm doing a joint paper with a male econometrician colleague and we've both, interestingly got to present this paper to different audiences and I'm sure that when I give it it will be viewed differently than when David presents it. 'Cos they are just so prejudiced.

You know, and they're sort of viewing you and they're assessing you in a way which is completely different to the way in which you would be seen if you were a man.

Much more common was the propensity to construct women along quasi-familial roles, as mother figures. Having academic labels denoting status and legitimacy was seen to be important, such as a PhD, being a Reader or Senior Lecturer:

Well it helps to be called Dr, silly things like that which absolutely are irrelevant in most senses but yes, that and being promoted, a whole variety of things being simply devices which bring people's assumptions about you up short so you could be the most dynamic productive person in your department, but unless you are called Dr., Professor, Reader, or whatever it is, nobody is going to make that assumption on the first meeting or in the sort of contact that you have over a meeting table or to a large undergraduate audience.

There was also the added problem of being marginalised and therefore being highly visible, due to the general lack of women in academic positions. For those women who were very much the minority in their departments, there was a feeling that they had to justify and account for their movements and behaviour, in ways which their male colleagues did not:

... And [women] are expected to, um, I think, expected to be answerable to what they're doing. I mean our existing HOD seems to think he's entitled to demand far more of account of where the women are and what they're doing with their time and why they're not here when they're not here. Um, I would say that that's an attitude that's been fairly consistent....um, but there's, yes, there's somehow there's...my current HOD seems to have an assumption that if I'm not here I'm skiving - whereas his assumption would appear to be if male members of staff are not here then they're working. It is certainly the case that he's currently behaving like that very strongly towards another female member of staff who's on study leave. He wants to monitor what she's doing, which he's never done with anyone else...

They [male colleagues] do very much keep their own doors closed and if they see students they say I'll see students between 10 and 11 on Monday mornings. So consequently they don't have to put the energy into some of the things that I do. I have to be seen to be working long hours, you know, if I was missing for an afternoon, I think that would be commented on, in a way, if a man was away for an afternoon it would be presumed that he was away

doing research, if I was absent it would be assumed that one of my children was ill - there would be assumptions made. I certainly do work harder than many of my male colleagues. Whether I have to is another matter.

A strong influence on the gendered norms of behaviour was seen to be attitudes about age. The more mature women all commented on the frequency in which they were constituted in the 'mother' figure role. However, for younger members of staff the paternalistic culture was felt most strongly. As one woman commented:

I think that the male members of the department do feel a bit paternalistic sometimes, you know, "are you all right?", "students treating you OK?", kind of thing...

Being young and female was seen to be a double bind in attempting to be accepted as a legitimate member of the academic staff:

The atmosphere here is distinctly paternalistic. One of my younger colleagues always checks when I am about to go home and asks "have you got some money in case you get stranded?" - So yes, it is a bit patronising. It's meant well - he doesn't mean it in a terrible way. And the older people who have made comments about - oh I don't know, just standard sort of older men and the way in which they react to single women, you know, they pat you or they say "ooh, you look nice today", you know, they wouldn't dream of saying it to somebody else, a bloke my age even. So there's a bit of that.

There was also a feeling that there was an age divide in attitudes towards women, with senior, older male academics being characterised as being paternalistic, whereas younger male academics, those who were in the departments selected for the case study were seen to be more pro-feminist in their attitudes and generally more understanding of equal opportunities issues. For them, women academics were seen to be "the competition".

However, if women were to act out of role and challenge the normalising discourses by acting in ways considered to be gender inappropriate behaviour, then they

encounter a range of hostile responses from overt exclusion through to sexist jokes and innuendo:

I remember one female member of staff here, her husband was a professor here and two or three of us women used to go out to lunch just to find out what was going on, as far as I was concerned, just to chat. And this professor said "don't do it too much" - he said it in a kindly sort of way to me, "don't go out with women too much because it's regarded as odd", or something of that sort, whereas the men sit around the Common Room perfectly normally - that's normal. But women going out together was seen as slightly threatening, and I'm sure it was. There were lots of feelings like that and when I came here. I very strongly had the impression that women had to conform to the male stereotypes, typical old-fashioned sort of view, um, and if they didn't they were generally regarded as, in inverted commas, "mad", you know, that's still one of the catchwords here. But now we can talk about mad women in the common room, and you have slightly embarrassed comments over it. It's bit of a joke. Things are definitely changing here - but it's threatening - women's presence here, um, it's threatening for the men, and I think there's actually a backlash.

I think to cope here you have to take on a quasi-male role...I do know that I am sometimes accused of being, um, aggressive when I'm simply being rather assertive compared with some of my male colleagues. The old, you know, triangular thing: 'I'm assertive, you're aggressive, she's shrill', um, is alive and well here. And the exclusion system is so well sewn up here that often I don't even know...I'm not even aware of being excluded until much later....

In addition, several women commented on the perception that their subject area carried less prestige and status within the Institution. Many senior academics, and the academic traditions of the Institution, were seen to place a strong emphasis on positivist discourses of the pure sciences, corresponding with masculine modes of enquiry and male dominated subject areas:

It is a very male orientated department. There are hardly any women. It is very mathematically orientated and for whatever reason very few women seem to go into maths or are attracted by maths. If you do non-mathematical work it is seen as the girlie soft option. So they are probably worse here than in other departments. You know, I mean it's a stereotypical thing, if you went to the English department, or Drama Department or Sociology then of course, they're all terribly liberal and it's all full of women. If you go to Physics, Engineering and Maths then it's the typical balance...

Together, these various practices build up a strong feeling of exclusion expressed by the women interviewed. The exclusion process and the struggle to gain acceptance was also seen to be exacerbated by what was perceived to be an informal mentoring system which operated between senior established academics and new male members of staff. Again, there was a perception that new young male members of the department were being 'groomed' for future senior positions by male colleagues. This included being offered collaborative research opportunities and being advised on the 'right steps' to take in terms of departmental administration activities:

I think I am excluded from certain opportunities, um, most of the opportunities for major research comes to the senior professors because of their name and then they distribute it, and they don't distribute it amongst the women. They always distribute it amongst their young up-and-coming, you know, people they've identified.. as being high flyers. They're not aware of it being a gender thing... They think they have just identified the high fliers and they never identify women as high flyers. They don't see it as having a gender aspect. They see it as being their ability to pick out a high flyer at a young age.

Yes I'm sure that, um, it does pay for, you know, for particular examples that we've seen here is favours young men who've dedicated themselves very strongly to producing books and whereas women that have worked for years and years and years and done a good solid job with lots of achievement but no achievements in any sort of research sense or not as many are going to be seriously handicapped, are seriously handicapped. I don't think you ever are judged in the same light quite honestly and yes you would have to work very hard but then you'd be put down as very conscientious and just doing what you know the sort of middle of the road woman type thing instead of being the high flying go getting energetic male. I think it's just different stereotypes.

Such actions were not seen to be overt sexism on behalf of male colleagues, more symptomatic of the embeddedness of masculinist discourses within the culture of the University.

Finally, one woman commented on having to face a male only interview panel when appointed, which they had felt highlighted their abnormality and exclusion and served to emphasise the patriarchal culture of the institution:

I mean, I would say if you asked any person consciously what they think, they'd say we are equal and would probably genuinely think that. But from an unconscious point of view they probably do treat us differently. I suppose it is not deliberate. For example, when I came here for the interview there were no women there on the panel. There were six men, made up of professors and so on. It was my first academic interview. You walk in - there's six men sitting there, sort of, down a long table, interrogating you and it's obviously never occurred to them that that's much more terrifying than if there's six women sitting there. So it's more just, it doesn't occur to them because everything is male orientated and continues to be male orientated and there's no reason for it to be changed. It doesn't even cross their mind that there should be a reason for it to change. They aren't aware of it.

Gendered Social Relations

A range of references were made relating to the nature of social relations within the University which, again, were regarded as corresponding with strongly masculine patterns. Corresponding with the 'male-club' like culture, it was felt that there was a strong 'old boys network' and system of patronage in operation, to which the women were excluded. Senior levels of academic management were most commonly associated with this. As the woman professor in the case study commented:

Quite certainly informally, um, there's the old boys' network and a current boys' network. I have had to steel myself to go up to people and chat. There are numerous occasions where you feel you don't fit there, and I'm not particularly shy and retiring - I'm not as confident as some other people but I'm not a shrinking violet...

Added to this, there were comments made about exclusion from informal male social activities, such as evenings in the bar and playing sports:

Within the University, it's quite hard a road to play on - there's lots of informal networks based on pubs and rugby clubs and sport activities and stuff like that which, you know, I just can't penetrate.

Certainly my male colleagues both, um, within the department and outside treat me very differently. It's er, I mean you simply don't belong. But, er, an instance of this would be, um a few weeks ago we had a visiting speaker and we took the speaker out for a meal. And there was me and another woman member of staff, er, this speaker and three other male members of the department. And when we broke up at the end of this, the other woman was going off - the speaker was actually staying with her, so they left and these three men made it quite plain that they were going to the pub and they didn't invite me. In fact they quite pointedly didn't invite me. I mean I wouldn't have actually gone anyway but there is quite a clear exclusion, um, there.

Several women commented on the difficulties faced when socialising with the opposite sex, due to the comments with sexual innuendo:

The sort of social networking type thing which is the same elsewhere - you know the men can say "let's go down the pub, or play squash - if they're yuppies, or whatever, but particularly because I'm a single woman and practically everyone here is a married man, I mean a married man can't sort of say, "oh let's go down to the pub" and a single man can only say that if he has intentions towards you or has so little intentions that there can't possibly be a mistake of what is intended. You know, I mean the sexual thing is there so it's not easy socially...

And it's a male sort of culture with us. When the Dean came and talked to us about [x] and said "I'm quite happy to talk to any of you over a bottle of wine. Well, it just felt like..., you know, it's much easier for a man to go and do that with another man, but for a woman, and maybe that's silly on my part, but....So there's something about the culture that doesn't feel... that makes you feel that you don't quite fit in.

Much of the 'profile raising' activities associated with networking were also seen to conform with male patterns of communication and therefore much more difficult for women. In particular, the conference circuit was seen to be an important way of self-promotion and picking up research opportunities. However, this posed problems for some women:

I find it very difficult to go to conferences - to go up to a lecturer and say 'Hello my name is [x] I want to work with you'. I have gone up to a couple of people to say 'I am interested in what you are doing' and to talk to them but I mean again, I don't, I look like a student, I mean I do when I go to a conference. And I am sure that they think I am a student on a PhD research because I'm young and female or it might be personality that I won't go straight in there, so I find it quite hard I think.

In addition, the whole issue of travel and taking part in the conference circuit was more difficult for women academics, especially those with childcare commitments:

I think...I mean I think there are difficulties about um, participating in wider academic life which we're sort of not supposed to admit to. Um, which are not...which are not to do with the family responsibilities which are a separate issue but to do with simply being a woman. Because I personally find international travel on my own quite difficult. There's something I want to do which entails going and staying in the States for several weeks and I think that's actually a very hard thing to do. And, of course, it's not legitimate to say this is more difficult for women to do. Um, and I do find it very hard - I seem to find it harder than a lot of other women do but I do find it very difficult landing up in strange places and having to get from A to B so that's an issue to. And all those things about travelling and finding places to stay, which are, you know, it's OK for men to just sort of stay in any bed and breakfast place and not worry about what it's like. Um, I've a colleague who's just come back from Liverpool and saying of course, you know, she's been doing some research in Liverpool um, and you run into that thing of where do you eat in the evening, if you're on your own. So I think there are all sorts of things like that which are more difficult and, which, in a way it's become...you're not allowed to mention it, um, really, you're expected to just do it. And if you don't do it it's obviously that you're just pathetic. So I sometimes feel that I'm a bit pathetic about this....Quite apart from the whole question about family responsibilities. I mean when [son] was younger, it was very difficult for me to be able to go away without making arrangements for where he's going to stay, which I could always find plenty of people who would have him, but, um, I think on the whole, men just don't have to do that, they just go and their wives will look after the kids. So all of that which is about women's freedom to... so yes, lots of things.

Furthermore, women with domestic responsibilities had limited opportunities to take part in social activities, especially if they were in the evening. One woman in the case study, who worked part-time hours, (and who had children) felt this isolation from informal networks particularly, and even though efforts had been made to include part time staff in departmental meetings, it was often not possible to attend these, due to childcare responsibilities:

The main problem is that I cannot have the informal, very vital... important networks for being part-time and so, you know, the decision making in the corridors and the tea room and the important things that are discussed and debated over lunch, the information gathering, the support, generally the

support network. On the whole I can't be part of it, because the nature of the role and the pressures on me and the working part-time means that its not physically viable its just not feasible to be part of that. So that makes a huge impact on how isolated I think people feel.

In addition to this exclusively male network, several comments were made about the general informal acceptance of the use of masculine forms of language, inappropriate behaviour towards female students and colleagues, and the use of jokes and innuendo to denigrate women:

I mean it's...don't get me wrong, it's not unfriendly, um, in fact this is a very friendly department, but I do get a bit tired on, you know, sexist, ageist and sometimes even racist jokes. They're a funny lot in a way, because they deny to the death that they have such a base thought in their head, but when you hear them... nudge, nudge, wink, wink.. even telling off colour jokes in front of women

I mean, if you go into the Senior Common Room, men really dominate it in terms of discussing all sorts of things - but it's a male way of discussing things, the whole conversational style is male and even for somebody in a relatively senior position like me, it's still very hard to penetrate - you still feel very kind of stupid and an outsider.

There was a feeling, expressed by several women, that female working relationships were more collaborative, supportive and generally less competitive:

Some of the older colleagues can't cope with how to relate with female academics. Especially ones who are threatening like me. One who threatens their status. Other colleagues are no problem at all. I must say, I find, in general, my female colleagues are easier to work with. We have an instant unspoken rapport that I suppose men have among men and it is more difficult to construct that between men and women.

Overall, the patterns of sociability correspond with the overarching patriarchal culture of the Institution.

Self Identity

In what way does the gendered culture shape the work identities of the women academics? The women commented on a range of difficulties they faced in forming their identities as academics. Being very much in a minority, there were several comments about lacking confidence and having to question their ability and rightful place as a member of the academic community:

There is always that sense as being undervalued and I do find the sense of being totally undervalued in the University and largely in the Department. I find it very undermining to my confidence - you know I'm sort of constantly wondering whether I have anything to say at all, about stuff that I think men would just, kind of, assume. So I think it is a real problem.

Added to this, again from the lack of women in senior positions in the hierarchy, there were issues of confidence relating to women's individual identities as members of the academic profession. This was most often to do with research. It was felt that women tended to concentrate a lot of their energies on teaching as this gave them instant feedback, confirming a role for them within the Institution. Research, on the other hand was a much longer process, and the confidence needed to write often only came after receiving positive responses from published work:

And also I think when they are younger, men have a certain confidence that they know - they assume that people want to listen to what they want to say. I know I spent years, not writing because I thought people don't want to hear what I have to say. It was only eventually when somebody actually said to me... they actually said to me during an appraisal, "what do you think of the articles you read" and I said "on the whole I thought they were crap - they were wrong and simplistic" and he said "well why aren't you contributing? And that is probably a female trait, this reluctance..."

Therefore, in terms of the women's self identity, the normalising discourses presented an academic model which was often more difficult for women to conform to. In addition, it was a model which many women in the case study consciously resisted.

There were many examples where the women could be seen to be resisting the pressures to conform to what was perceived to be a narrow, masculine academic ideal-type. However, there was the acknowledgement that to do so resulted in them becoming less valued members of the institution as well as reducing their ability to be promoted:

There is something, which is much more nebulous, which is in a way to do with my choice. There are certain assumptions about what it is to be an academic which seem to be modelled on a certain set of practices and procedures which I think men are happier with than women. By which I mean that sort of notion to be an academic is the pursuit of pure knowledge, individual research, being a scholar, knowing everything there is to know about a minute area. Being specialist and being rather prestigious. That sort of mentality really does structure what is to be a good academic. That is not a model which I aspire to. I know my talents are much more to do with facilitating debate with people, making connections with different sorts of people, organising conferences, editing books etc. They are very different sorts of skills. In my experience those are the sorts of skills that women are more likely to feel at ease with than men because those are the sorts of skills that you are more likely to be encouraged to develop. It seems to me that there are certain things that it doesn't make sense for me to be included in given what I am interested in doing. It's not people saying that I can't do it. I've no desire to be part of the university hierarchy, it doesn't appeal to me at all so I don't feel excluded from that. What is interesting is how different facets of the job are valued. Why it is that certain aspects of the job are valued more than others. The ones that I am interested in tend to be the ones which are valued least. It is difficult to pin these things down to an issue of gender because it is to do with different aspects of the job but it does map on to certain tendencies in gender.

The knock-on effect of having less status was that of constantly feeling inadequate and a second class member of the organisation. It was difficult not to internalise the discourses resulting in a constant struggle to maintain a sense of self worth and value:

....on the other hand there are a couple of male colleagues I can think of that do have what I call a very, um, macho, very masculine approach to the kind of competition that I have referred to, um, and in a sense I guess that feels exclusive, but its in no way distressing because I don't want to be part of it, so in a way because I'm not competing I can be comfortable with it. Um, now if , and maybe I don't know how unusual I am, I mean if I was here and actively seeking to pursue an academic career and knowing that um I was trying hard to carve out a full time permanent post here then I think it would be very different, and I'm not actually in that position, which does perhaps make it quite different. Nevertheless even not being in that position what's

very, very hard is um, with particularly my male colleagues... that what the department is forced to value with is not what I do, so just kind of holding my head up and remaining, keeping a sense of my own worth and my own value is extremely difficult here and saying, you know, that I'm not choosing to be in that race, I'm not competing on those terms, I can understand in my head all that's going on and yet there can be several times when you're just finding it hard not to crawl around. I just have to seek a lot of support and affirmation from students which is quite interesting because mostly that comes through teaching, because I do find my input on the programme is very well received and so that gives you a good boost, but there is the contradiction that um teaching on this programme and teaching in general isn't what's valued, so it wouldn't matter how good an evaluation and good my teaching was it still wouldn't be valued to this department.

Finally, two women interviewed who saw themselves as conforming to the academic norm commented on their worries that by doing so they merely reinforce the myth that such criteria are gender neutral. However, resisting the discourses of performance resulted in remaining marginalised voices within the Institution, unable of influencing future policy:

It's due to a large measure of my own increasing awareness, understanding and knowledge of my experience of women and my, um, absolute clarity that unless we work within the system, if you like, we are destined to remain sort of in the back seat or second rate, or whatever.

I can remember when I was promoted and it was made public that my colleague rushed in and said "Aaah, you have made history!" Ha, Ha. She was very congratulatory and there I was - it... there was, sort of, a sense of um, to that degree, women were very much aware of themselves as women. Um, my goodness, you know one breach in the castle wall. Um but I think its very hard for, all those kinds of issues are actually more ambiguous than they actually appear on the surface because, in many cases and um, my darker moments I see in my own as an example of it um, the breaches are made by women who for one reason or another are seen to conform to male criteria, in other words to what extent are you actually challenging this and to what extent are you reproducing it. Now, the consoling argument is that 'oh well now, of course you are in a position of greater authority and heavens, you can change it'. I don't know. I'd like to think I could do that, try to, if the opportunities present themselves to do so but I'm not sure in the cases of people that I know who have got Chairs, that that is necessarily the case. And I shall be monitoring my own activities.

To conclude, the Institutional culture can be seen to be made up of a range of gendered discourses which produce a masculine academic norm. Whilst the women interviewed had strong research profiles, there were a range of factors which reduced their ability to 'fit in' to this academic norm. Firstly, there are the gendered stereotypes about women's roles which resulted in the strong expectation and pressure to undertake the majority of the pastoral work in the department, be conscientious administrators and good teachers. Secondly, there were the informal networking systems which excluded women and left them feeling isolated. Thirdly, the women lacked a voice in the University decision making structures. Added to this, the narrow academic norm allowed no deviation and thus those women who had alternative career aims were further marginalised within the gendered culture, receiving no reward nor status for the work they undertook.

4) Discourses of New Public Management

In line with the wider changes in higher education management, the women interviewed all commented on the transformation in the management of academics, which had had a major impact on the nature of their jobs in recent years. There was a perceived change in the working conditions and Institutional climate leading to an overall intensification of work, a greater feeling of accountability and a stronger focus on, and narrowing of, certain defined norms of performance. The climate was characterised as having become much more competitive, with individual academics more accountable for their own performance. This was most marked with the changing nature of funding and the linking of funding to research output, seen to have

a profound impact on the management of human resources. The consequence was a move towards more competitive, individualistic and less collegiate working relationships:

...and what I find here is quite distinctively worse - a quite interesting difference is that the competition, the divide and rule is so severe that I don't find a forum for discussing issues among my other colleagues because they're far too busy competing, um so there's never any sense of solidarity....

Many of the women commented on the general intensification of all aspects of the job, with pressures to publish and maintain teaching quality alongside increased administration brought about through new courses and increased student numbers

I think that with the massification, so called, of higher education, the old model of the gentleman scholar has gone forever. The pressure for accountability and the whole quality agenda has really impacted on people. They not only have to be good now, and they have to be typically better than they used to have to be, they have to show they are. And when I first came here there were a number of people doing not very much, you know, and getting away with murder, both in terms of quality and quantity and those people are being weeded out and those people who don't perform are shown the door now and quite rightly so, I think. But it's the pendulum that has certainly swung almost to a point where I suspect it is going to be hard for people to sustain the quality of their scholarship because they are so damn busy.

Alongside the increased pressures to publish, student numbers had also risen in some departments. There was a greater choice of courses available, leading to a more course related administration. The actual teaching experience had worsened with rising student numbers. Class sizes were larger, students more remote and consequently a less fulfilling teaching experience. Furthermore, despite the teaching quality audit, the value assigned to good teaching seemed to be as low as ever, as management increasingly put greater importance to research:

Oh yes...it's changed definitely in terms of the push towards research. Because, um, the department is so afraid that it's not going to do so well in the next research selectivity exercise that we were told, for example, that we've got to have at least two papers in, er, senior journals for 1995, which means they've got to be written now. And yes, I mean, to...when I first joined they...you...you weren't told that you must spend a day a week on research or

whatever. I mean I, when I had my Staff Review and Development it was suggested that I worked at home more because I would get more done because I wouldn't get bugged by students. Um, the suggestion was, either spend X number of days working at home or come in every day at 11.30 and always do two hours or three hours at home, before you leave the house.

What is more, there was seen to be a changing relationship with research, moving to a more output focused, short term research, rather than traditional scholarly activity. As research was increasingly funded by private agencies, there had also been a move away from critical research, seen by some women as a fundamental challenge to notions of academic freedom:

There's a lot more administration. Um, and a lot more silly bureaucratic nonsense. And I think that the pressure to publish means that actually even the research activity is different because everything that you do, everything has to be oriented towards a particular outcome - you're always doing things for a particular purpose - not going to have a look to see what might be there. There's a much stronger, much stronger, um, emphasis on quick output as well rather than letting things mature, which I think is a bad thing because actually an awful lot of stuff that's published might as well not have been. There's a competitive large volume to what you can put out. I think that really wasn't the case ten years ago - you could do much more interesting qualitative stuff - you wrote a really good book, that was fine and there wasn't an expectation to follow it with another one two years later, necessarily. And now there's sort of an expectation that you keep on producing and increasing and increasing. Um, rather than thinking you might produce a small amount of really good pieces of work.

Added to this there was a general rise in the feelings of being managed, being monitored and having to account for performance:

It is just more and more monitoring of what you are doing. It is this idea of it being a managerialist environment which is business orientated, it is very much here. I think there is a bit of a contradiction there because in some senses I welcome it, it helps to have a structure, but it also could be used for other things.

Finally, there was evidence of the academic job splitting around a core periphery relationship, with tenured core academics managing research, serviced by a cohort of

short contract and part-time academics fulfilling the teaching roles in the department. There was a feeling that the periphery roles were being ghettoised by women, in line with traditional dual labour market models, leading to women's further low status and marginalisation within the University and the profession as a whole:

We have about 5 or 6 mums at home with young children who are all qualified accountants or economists and who come in on a daily basis, are paid a complete pittance which I honestly believe they would never dream of offering to a man and they do, like 8 hours teaching a week - some of them come for 2 mornings, or 2 days, and are paid on this, sort of, part time rate. So they are effectively doing more in some cases than a normal teaching load.. um, you wouldn't come across them because they are not the 'normal staff' in inverted commas. And that happens more and more here - and they are exploited in a sort of ever increasing way.. Um.. and I just feel that in other professions and in other sort of institutions that would never be allowed to happen. But because women have such low bargaining power in academic circles. You know, they're made to sort of undermine their own confidence. It just doesn't help them really and they find it very difficult to stand up for themselves. So that they all individually feel that they're being treated quite appallingly but there's not real channels of communication for them for anything to change. Because nobody else would accept the financial terms. And more importantly, I just don't think they would ever dream of offering something like that to a man. You know, they've singled out that there are these women at home who can teach very well. They do it much better than any of our permanent staff - they're incredibly conscientious.

This, it was suggested that with the pressure to publish, some academics were concentrating more and more on research areas with the teaching and administration being done by a second tier of lecturers who, due to the male academic profile and patriarchal culture, were mostly women.

5) Academic Appraisal

Background to the appraisal scheme

Part of the transformation is the introduction of academic appraisal, introduced in the late 1980s. The appraisal scheme is a fairly typical example of a university appraisal scheme, found in most universities (Bryman *et al*, 1991), taking place annually and being top down. In most departments, appraisees are allocated their appraiser, usually the HOD or, in the case of larger departments, a Senior Lecturer or Reader. Given the lack of women at senior level, this means that for most women in the University, the opportunity of having a female appraiser is fairly limited. The appraisal documentation was described by the Personnel Director as being a “blank sheet of paper”, upon which the following years objectives are set out. The original reasons for introducing appraisal were to comply with government requirements. However, the Personnel Director did feel that there were positive benefits to be derived from appraisal, in terms of improved communication and feedback on performance:

My view is that the object is to get boss and subordinate sitting down and talking in a constructive way with the hope that realistic feedback and action plans are agreed to help the subordinate to develop appropriately.

What is more, the Personnel Director felt that appraisal could have positive rewards for EO in that it helps to formalise the promotion procedures but also felt that there were possibilities for abuse too:

The HOD can use it to encourage women to actually think about promotion, development and so on.....I suppose, however, if you've got a male HOD of the old school, then there's not much you can do about them having negative views about women.... If you've got the wrong attitude you can identify all the negative things.

However, he felt that overall appraisal would benefit female academics through the provision of a formal mechanism for career planning from a more experienced, senior academic.

Constituting the new academic

To what extent was the functioning of appraisal at Kingswood seen to be part of the new order of managerialism and accountability? The purpose of appraisal at Kingswood was seen, by the women interviewed, to be largely that of complying with the government, as set down by the Jarratt Report (CVCP, 1985). It was therefore seen to be very much part of the government agenda of managing universities, directing individual academic performance to certain prescribed norms. These norms were translated at Institution level to be research related activities, since this was linked to funding. Teaching quality initiatives implemented by the government, were not regarded as part of these new discourses of performance, since teaching quality had no impact on funding. Reactions towards appraisal, by the women in the case study confirmed this, with the general view that the principle focus of the appraisal interview was on narrowing down performance criteria to principally those of publications and generating research funding. It was very clear in the appraisal interview, therefore, that the purpose of appraisal was to focus individual activity in line with the departmental goals of improving research profile. Thus the norms of performance were extremely transparent in the appraisal. In effect, appraisal could be seen to be an emblem of the new regime, spearheading the drive to produce quantifiable research outputs. However, as the norms of performance were infused

within the departmental culture, appraisal was seen to be part and parcel of a wider set of performance indicators, including research audits and income targets (operating in one department). The norms of performance were seen to have narrowed down to a single academic profile, with no recognition being made of any alternatives. Thus there was a strong normalising effect of appraisal:

I think the main problem is that it is yet another means of trying to mould every one to a particular norm. It is just telling you these are the hoops you have to jump through, it's not a two way negotiation process where you have an opportunity to influence the way the place is run or criteria or anything else. It's just another opportunity for them to formally tell you what you have to do to be more and more like the standard norm. It's just another opportunity for them to brain wash you into what they think you should be. I think in a way it works against anyone who wants to treat the job in a different way or to change the system at all.

The pressures to publish and bring in prestigious research grants were part of a general intensification of work and feelings of greater individual accountability and management of individual performance. All of the women interviewed commented on how appraisal was part and parcel of a general push to increase work loads, especially to push individual academics to produce more research:

Um, I think that the way the current HOD is treating it is to put the screws on people to be more productive. Um, and, you know, clearly I'm in favour of helping people to be more productive. Um, but I don't actually think that it's best done by bullying people.

Alongside this, the appraisal system was clearly a mechanism by which women were encouraged to re-evaluate their job profile, concentrating on research rather than teaching:

And it was made very explicit, I mean, in my last appraisal, it was made very explicit that I am hugely valued for the work that I do on teaching-practice placements and am hugely valued for the work that I do around teaching, and that all of that will be irrelevant to my future career, it's quite annoying.

We were talking about changing priorities and how I could give things up. How to cut down on teaching and how to give up admin. I came out with the decision I'm really cutting down drastically. My teaching allocation this year is so small, deliberately walking away from teaching, walking away from admin. just to see what happens. To see if we deliberately and self-consciously say we will stop teaching, stop administrating, whether that will suddenly produce research or whether I'm using it as an excuse. I'm not at all convinced. I don't know whether I'm not researching because I'm too busy teaching or because I'm using that as an excuse. So we talked about how to do that.

There was a general feeling of an increase in performance accountability and surveillance. What is more, the appraisal was not only functioning to control the individual academic but also the appraiser and therefore the department and the University:

I think it has a double purpose.. I think it is partly to make sure that you're....it is a self disciplining mechanism but it is also a disciplining mechanism that the appraiser can use, even though it is all couched in terms of the individual, that's what it's about.

Without doubt appraisal is a managerial tool. In other words, it's about, or it's partly about, um, managers within universities um, doing a surveillance operation from being so vague over who's doing what - and as a tool of their managerial task, which is increasingly centred around an ethos not about parity, everyone does a bit of this, bit of this and a bit of this, but around how, departmentally, do I maximise the things which count through all these external evaluation procedures, i.e., research output and who are the staff who are doing that and how do I reallocate all the other things to other people who aren't contributing to that? How do I balance the rewards and incentives to get to those goals in ways which are going to effectively get my staff to produce the goods, to raise the quality of the research output?

The appraisal process could be seen to be functioning as a disciplinary mechanism, rendering the individual academic accountable to a prescribed norm of performance. However, whilst the panoptic effect of appraisal could be described as being quite strong, in this case, with the women feeling that appraisal was very much part and parcel of the new order, this surveillance effect was not considered by all the women in a totally negative sense. For those women who were conforming to the new norms

of performance, producing research output, then appraisal was not seen in a negative light. In fact, most of the women interviewed found appraisal to be a positive experience, providing feedback and direction. In particular, the women interviewed appreciated the career advice and mentorship they had received in the appraisal interview. For women academics, it was felt, this had always been lacking and appraisal provided a formal opportunity to receive advice on how to approach their career development in more strategic ways, from a senior academic. In fact, this was an area which was considered to be of particular importance to women academics, as it provided the opportunity to 'explain the game', especially to younger members of staff:

What I see as being the aim of appraisal is not necessarily what the appraiser might see as being the aim of appraisal. The appraiser probably sees it as man management. I see it as a much more individualistic process. It is about being able to have somebody to sit down and talk to. It gives you a really selfish opportunity to sit down with somebody who's been around longer and say "this is how I reckon I'm going, this is where I want to be... Do you agree with how I'm going - do you agree with... It's having the opportunity of having a sounding block - a person to tell it to, even if they don't necessarily advise you on what you should do because most of the time they're going to be saying "well, of course it's up to you what you decide to do but"....

Most notably, were comments by younger members of staff who were looking to appraisal to provide them with advice on publications, research grants, etc.:

I haven't got anybody who is a more senior and experienced academic than I am, saying to me "Ah well what we could do is this, you could use it like this, you know have you thought of,...", you know. That is what I drastically need and I have not got.

I've been working here for a year, so to actually sit down with someone, [asking] "what are you doing, OK these bits are good, these bits need work...", from someone who can see the wood instead of trees. See actually, that's what I wanted to get and then to say in future, what I should be doing and what I really want was someone to talk to me.

I think appraisal has lots of potential as a process when they set it in a sort of positive way, that you were talking about before, I think it really does. I think people..., I think one of the things of about academic life has been the isolation and the competition, and sort of fighting to get articles out and all

the rest of it and against each other, and they're strongly competitive people aren't they a lot of them, this provides a cushion for the people who feel they're not doing so well, and as you say it can provide encouragement for them and sort of giving them I mean not me, but there is the opportunity of the senior people who are clued up and experts for giving hints to junior people how to get on and just for somewhere where each individual person can bring their worries and anxieties, and talk about them sensibly.

For two women interviewed, who had both recently been appointed as lecturers, appraisal proved to be a disappointing experience because it failed to provide them with much needed advice and mentorship. In both cases the appraisers were male colleagues who, they both felt, did not consider women academics in career terms.

As one of the women observed:

My career was not discussed at all. He seemed to be completely unaware of what I've given up to come here, which is a very highly paid secure career to a temporary job with no security at all and half the pay - that doesn't seem to occur to them that the insecurity might actually be quite worrying, which sometimes I think that there might be a feeling that I'll just get married and so what? So I think the view of me having a career is not the same as a man having a career.

Gendered Gaze

The women commented that they were much more aware of whether certain activities contributed towards their appraisal and generally found the working relationship with their colleagues had become more competitive and instrumental. However, the norms of performance, driven by appraisal, were seen to be highly gendered ones. The general intensification of work alongside the pressures to publish were much harder for women to conform to, given their extra departmental duties of pastoral work and doubly difficult for those women with domestic responsibilities. Increasingly, work was taking up evening and weekend time, something which was impossible for

women with childcare commitments. It was felt that no recognition was made of this in the appraisal process:

However it isn't just an individual thing, there is a huge political agenda for women here, in that the advice I'm given is so to ensure that research and publications happen in my time, and I don't find, as a part time working mother, that acceptable advice, so that's the advice I'm given its very clear, very straightforward, um, I'm becoming increasingly pressurised that this year the advice is along the lines of, you know, if research and publications are not forthcoming within this academic year in your own time then there may not be future contracts for you, because I am vulnerable in having a short contract. And I'm choosing not to confirm with that because what I know is that they constantly have to, um, cover the teaching programme here...

Um, and I think that the feedback, to be fair, has made me feel that I am appreciated on one level. You know, that it isn't that they completely ignore what goes on. Um, and so I have no sense of sort of...not being valued at all. I know that people are very happy with the work I do. It's just that the way they assess what you should do doesn't fit in with what I would want to see! I mean they're quite happy to recognise things within their own framework. But they're not happy to address whether or not that's the right framework when they have women in the department. They would rather just ignore the fact that we are women and, in both a positive and a negative sense, they won't look at equal opportunities. They won't even consider equal opportunities and they certainly won't look at the needs of women and they won't look at the differences in a positive way in terms of how we approach the job in a collective sort of sense. So none of that is addressed. But they... that's not to say that they don't think we're good at our job. They just don't want to think about any of the differences, um, or problems.

It was clear that the academic 'game' was very much a masculine one:

Certainly I personally think it is an invaluable asset for people who want to plan a career. It may well be that if the appraiser is more interventionist from the word go, rather than letting you set your own objectives and saying "Look! Come on, you ought to be wanting a career. You ought to be wanting that." Over a long period some gender equalisation work in terms of making sure that women are playing the game. It's awful that we have to play that game but if that's the game we've got to play..... This is probably the opposite to what most people are saying - that it is actually about reinforcing but I really do think that it could be useful. If they are willing to say "Ok. I want to play whatever the game is" Probably, the problem is that is going to be a chaps game. I think appraisal is a way of learning what the rules of the game are. If you come into this place as a female, nobody sits down and says "Look here is the game", whereas the chaps - it's not going to the pub but there is a club mentality - a sociability between the blokes that they do talk to each other about the game.

This career advice, therefore, assumed a single model of the academic, seen to be an extremely narrow one. Any activities, despite being essential to the running of the department, which deviated from this norm, carried no recognition within the appraisal process. In effect, the supposed staff development/ surveillance dichotomy was a false distinction since to conform to the norms put forward as career advice brought the individual academic under the panoptic gaze.

Several women found appraisal to be a positive and useful experience mainly because it provided a formal forum wherein they could receive career advice on improving their research output, raising their profile and thereby enhancing their promotions prospects. In effect, the appraisal interview was seen to meet the need for a senior academic mentor, which many of the women felt was invaluable in making the right decisions in your career. Furthermore, several women commented on the fact that appraisal was useful in providing them with feedback on performance and the opportunity to highlight the work they had been doing:

I like to know what people expect of me because I am a terribly angst ridden person and otherwise I always think I do a lousy job so I like to be clear what it is that is expected from me. I got a high poll rating from the students so I know I am a good teacher. Appraisal is a bit like that, it gives you clear markers so you don't end up feeling guilty about things you are doing OK.

Added to this, there was the feeling that appraisal was used to gain promotion by drawing attention to work done and generally raising your profile with a senior member of the department:

People just don't know you're doing - all these exciting research or something or another, there are those kinds of circumstances. I can imagine that it is quite a useful exercise to go through literally to draw people's attention to what, you know, I've been doing this.... This is a formal space to write it down you cannot contradict that.

Crucial to the appraisal outcomes was seen to be the role of the appraiser. It was felt that appraisal could provide invaluable help to women academics, in terms of providing mentorship, career advice and feedback on performance but the key determining factor was the appraiser. It was commented on by several women that female appraisers were more able to understand women's needs and women's experiences as well as being less likely to have stereotypical attitudes about women's motives:

The most important thing that would change the situation for women is sponsorship, having women in senior positions. It could change the way that business is done, and make women feel more comfortable. The more senior women we had as appraisers the better it would be for the younger female staff members to find a way forward. There's a desperate need among staff at all levels for strategic advice. There are all sorts of areas in which people don't know how to solve their problems and our more senior people can help them. But, if it is all senior men appraising junior women then I don't think the senior men understand what the world looks like from the woman's point of view.

If I had a senior woman who was not keen on competition, or who was very sentimental about women's ambitions, stuff like that...it may have been difficult. I hit lucky, if you like. Um but I don't think men have the same view of how women's careers should progress as women. Even if they're trendy right on men, I think that they just don't conceptualise it in the same way - there isn't an understanding. And also, I think there is a gender problem. I actually think, and they'd kill me - they'd kill me for saying this - and they would deny it, but I think that this thing about attractiveness and sexuality is in there somewhere. I actually think that it is unhelpful for women to have people who are senior to them who may not comprehend, who may not encourage them to go all out on their career, and I think that a lot of men may not encourage women to go all out on their career 'cos they think it may not matter to them. I think there is a sort of patronising relationship even with all the men who are, you know, they're smashing, great men, here...

Several women commented on the benefit of receiving advice from senior women academics on adopting a more strategic approach to their careers. There did seem to be a gender split here, with women appraisers providing a much more positive and purposeful appraisal experience, than male appraisers:

Um, the HOD was very good at that and as I understand it so too did my colleagues use that space as one in which to talk through what are your ambitions and if you want to be promoted then these are the things you need to focus in on and can we find ways for allowing to focus our energy by that by reducing this, that or the other... So it's both strategic in the sense that there is a discussion about long-term objectives about the individual's career and it's tactical in the sense that, OK, that's the objective what can we do in the immediate future to get closer to that. Yes and there are, I seem to remember, as well, that there is a longer term time plan where you set out your goals.

Um, I think one thing I think the appraisal process clarified the fact that I was promotable and that I should be going for it. I wasn't thinking about it and [x - female appraiser] said "you must. You've got to show that there are women willing to put themselves forward". My first appraisal - the HOD - who was a man said "You don't really want to be promoted do you?", and I said "no I don't really want to be promoted" and that was the end of it. It was when I came to fifty that [x - female appraiser] said you really must put in for it, so I did. And that got me thinking that maybe I could be promoted. Um, and it coincides with the setting up of the SD&R programme and it was then I began to think, yes, it's the way to go.

The University system of appraisal formally allocates individuals an appraiser, who, given the fact that it is a superior, subordinate system, is almost invariably male. The opportunity to change your appraiser to a woman had only arisen in one instance out of the women interviewed and this proved to be an extremely unpleasant experience, resulting in the breakdown of the working relationship between the woman concerned and her male HOD. Added to this, for many women the opportunity to have a female appraiser did not arise as there were no senior women within their department:

Visibility and Voice

It was clear in the case study that appraisal was promoting a particular model of academic performance which, for a variety of reasons, was more difficult for women to pursue than men. There was a feeling of disappointment and frustration expressed

by some of the women over appraisal. There were feelings of pessimism over the lack of tangible appraisal outcomes. It was felt that appraisal had great potential in terms of staff development, support and mentorship for women but the implementation within the University had been a 'lost opportunity':

I mean, I suppose it can either be the kind of punitive way to get people to publish more, which I suppose is mostly why it's around to make sure people are performing adequately but it does actually seem to me that all the way through it has the potential if properly used to be enormously helpful and constructive - if people are allowed to choose who their appraisers are - and to talk about the difficulties they're having and how they might manage those better. Um, which until 1990 was something that you know, nobody ever asked me about how I was getting on really.

I've got experience in other organisations of appraisal to be a hugely powerful potential for women, um, to alter organisational culture which is just really sadly lacking, certainly in this department and this University and in academia generally, I don't know why it is that it somehow can't happen.

Thus, despite frequent references to the need for women academics to receive the mentorship and career advice that male colleagues appeared to have, especially in earlier stages of their career, appraisal as it functioned at Kingswood was seen as failing to fulfil these needs. Instead it was seen to be part of the general move towards a worsening climate for women academics, as well as academics in general, with an intensification of work, alongside an increasingly competitive and individualistic culture. For those women who were able to perform to the new norms of performance, appraisal provided the opportunity to confirm their role and identity and was therefore a pleasant experience. However, for those women choosing an alternative to this academic norm, the appraisal process was a much more negative experience. Here it was seen to be a strongly normalising mechanism:

If I could have an appraiser that was sympathetic to my objectives and who could talk through how realistic things were and make suggestions on how things could be done. But we don't really talk about my objectives except to say that they're a waste of time. And so it's really two parallel strings - me trying to talk about one set of objectives and my appraiser trying to be helpful

and saying no, that's a waste of time - if you really want to take this career seriously you have to have these objectives and we don't really meet in the middle very much.

One woman interviewed refused to change her behaviour and abandon the teaching and administration aspects of the job, which she valued greatly. Having been turned down for promotion on several occasions and frequently advised to concentrate on publications, she was refusing to take part in appraisal, due to her general disillusionment with the whole process. There had been no reaction from the department over her decision:

I know what they think I should be doing and I know what I think I should be doing and whereas I used to make more of a token effort to look like I was doing what they think I should be doing, I have become much more adamant in defending what I actually do - I defend it very loudly at every opportunity.

However, the cost of this was being frequently turned down for promotion. Despite the recent changes in the promotions procedures, she felt that this would continue in the future.

6) Conclusions

As in the other two case studies making up this research, Kingswood illustrated many of the gendered processes making up the academic culture, which together contributed to feelings of marginalisation, or 'otherness' (Acker, 1980). In recent years, however, efforts had been made by senior management to develop a formal response to the gender imbalance (as well as race and disability) in the University, via the setting up of an equal opportunities structure. Hence, the University now has an EO policy, statement and committee. In addition, several initiatives have been taken to focus specifically on the paucity of women in senior positions, through the

monitoring of recruitment, selection and promotion, registration with Opportunity 2000, and the creation of a formal academic mentoring system. It was felt that together, this had led to a greater awareness of EO in the Institution. However, in reflecting on EO, the women interviewed in this case study commented on the overwhelmingly masculine culture, on which the formal EO policy had failed to impact. The University can be seen to be made up of strongly embedded masculine discourses, based on patronage and patriarchy, embodied in the image of the 'gentleman's club'. Despite the fact that most of the women had established reputations in their academic field, many of them commented on facing a constant struggle to be accepted as legitimate members of the profession. The gendered processes underlying this patriarchal culture constitute women in quasi-familial roles. Women colleagues were more likely to take on extra administration, student matters and counselling. Not only was this work time consuming and emotionally draining, it also lacked any recognition.

However, recent changes in the management of academics had had a significant impact on academic norms. Academics were being urged to be much more focused in the activities which were measurable and visible, i.e., research outputs and getting in research grants. Generally there was seen to be a move towards a more competitive, individualistic and less collegiate working relationship. However, the women in this case were responding to the new discourses of management in a variety of ways. Some women interviewed were choosing to internalise these new discourses of performance, being more focused, and devoting less time to students and the aspects of the job which did not 'earn brownie points'. However, it was felt that this was

more difficult for women academics than their male colleagues. Those that try to 'play the man's game' face conflicting discourses; the new disciplinary technologies of the university management direct activities towards instrumentality, yet the discourses of femininity determine that a female academic will be more sympathetic to students' needs and will 'be available' to deal with student problems. Other women interviewed were reluctant to compromise on those less visible aspects of the job, resulting in an almost unbearable workload and leading to an impoverished personal life, strains on their health and a questioning of their long term commitment to the profession. Finally there were women interviewed who regarded their main contribution to the academic service to be teaching and student related. For these women, the new discourses of management created two problems. Firstly, the work they were doing carried no recognition in the gendered reward structure, despite attempts by Personnel to rank equally contributions made to teaching, administration and research. Their marginalised status as women academics is further institutionalised as they are pushed to the periphery/secondary labour market, classified as 'teaching only' staff. Secondly, linked to this, through appraisal, academics are being pressurised to compromise on the less quantifiable aspects of the service or be labelled as a second rate.

Chapter 8: Understanding Women Academics

A Discussion of the Cases

Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to draw out some of the specific conclusions arising from the three cases. Chapter 9 will then address the wider conclusions arising from the research and the theoretical implications for understanding women academics. The specific focus of this chapter, then, is to compare and contrast the experiences of the women academics in the three case studies. This is not, however, to produce generalisable 'facts' about women academics within the changing university environment. Rather, the chapter aims to identify linkages between the various issues arising out of the three cases which are considered to be useful in revealing and understanding the women academics' experiences of the gendered academy.

The chapter is organised around four interrelated themes arising from the data chapters. Firstly, as was argued in Chapter 2, universities can be understood as gendered cultures, made up of a range of discursive practices which construct female academic identity as subordinate. This can be seen clearly in the three case study chapters, where the women academics highlight a range of gendered processes making up the patriarchal institution. The first section of this chapter draws together the key gendered processes making up the cultures of the three cases. The second section of the chapter discusses the changing nature of academic institutions and of the academic role and identity, examining the new discourses of management and

accountability. Focusing specifically on the workings of appraisal, the section examines the impact of the normalising and subjectivising nature of appraisal on the academic process. The third section examines the changing nature of academic management and the new gender culture evolving in the three cases. Finally, the chapter discusses the ways in which women academics have responded to the normalising discourses of new public management.

Before examining these issues in more detail, a brief overview of the background of the cases and the extent of development of a formalised system of equal opportunities (EO) is presented, to provide the context in which the women's various experiences may be understood.

Reviewing the context

It was noted in Chapter 2, that a limitation of much of the analysis of women academics' marginalisation is its failure to locate the so-called 'barriers' facing women in a wider social, economic and political context (Morley, 1994). An appreciation of the different context of the individual cases is fundamental, therefore, to understanding the nature of the gendered culture. The different history, status, funding arrangements, focus of activities, and mix of disciplines in the cases all influence, therefore, the nature of the gendered culture and the women's identities as academics.

The three cases have quite different histories, which were seen to shape the particular gendered symbols underlying their cultures. In Kingswood, the women interviewed drew attention to how tradition, ritual and ceremonies, language, and the University buildings all contributed to the emphasis on exclusivity, elitism, class and patriarchy, bound up in the notions of the 'gentleman scholar'. The culture of the Institution as a whole, corresponded with that of Maddock and Parkin's (1993) "Gentleman's Club", where women were accepted as long as they conformed to the discourses of femininity. This very traditional 'Oxbridge' image can be contrasted with the other 'old' university in the study, Bridgetown. Here, the University was housed in modern, 'hi-tech' buildings, and had an international reputation in applied sciences, technology and industry-based consultancy. Again, the cultural symbols making up the Institution could be seen to be masculine, but in this case they were ones asserting positivist discourses of rationality, logic and efficiency. Both these cases have a very high status in research. Academic appointments require an established reputation, with a good publications record. Both universities score highly in the RAE and receive a significant portion of their funding from research related activities. Thus research is the main area of activity in both institutions.

The culture of Maresfield is integrally bound up with its former status as a polytechnic. Maresfield lacks the regalia, rituals and ceremonies, traditionally associated with the old university sector, and highly prized in Kingswood. The University buildings are functional and unimpressive and the student body is more diverse in terms of class, ethnicity, age, mode of study, with subjects taught having a vocational orientation. Research activities are marginal to the main purpose of the

Institution, which is teaching. This is reflected in its funding, where the Institution is reliant on 33% of its income from student fees (17% Kingswood and 20% Bridgetown). Staff:student ratios are significantly higher than the old universities, being 1:16, compared with 1:7 and 1:9 in Kingswood and Bridgetown respectively. The subject mix and the greater number of non-traditional students mean that women are less of a minority than in the old universities. Women are less isolated as they are present in greater numbers. However, the Institution was seen to have a strong informal system of networking and mentorship, in which women were largely excluded.

One aspect common to all three institutions is that female academics are the minority both in proportion to male academics as a whole and, particularly, in senior positions in the hierarchy¹. The highest concentration of women in the three cases was in Maresfield, making up 30% of academic staff. Bridgetown university has one of the lowest proportions of women academics in the country, comprising only 10% of academic staff. Kingswood, like Bridgetown, falls below the national average, with 16% of the academic staff being female. Reasons for the gender imbalance are varied and complex, reflecting and reinforcing the gendered culture. In Maresfield, the relatively high numbers of women may be partly explained by the presence of 'female' subjects in Health Care and Primary Education, with women being present in greater numbers in these faculties than elsewhere in the Institution. Similarly, the lack of

¹ In common with all universities, women undertake most of the non-academic work in the cases, mainly low paid clerical, cleaning and catering work, which is often 'contracted out'. These women form a 'sub class' in the organisation, in the print rooms, general offices, cleaning, canteens and so on, collectively given the status of "the girls" (Newman, 1994).

women in Bridgetown may also be attributed to the discipline mix and the Institution's reputation for applied sciences, technology and industrial research. However, when discussing EO initiatives with the women in Bridgetown, several women referred to a history of misogyny in senior management, which contributed to, and perpetuated the lack of women academics in the Institution. Finally, when considering the paucity of women in Kingswood, especially in the Professoriat, the women commented on the strong system of patronage at play in the Institution, where senior academics perpetuate the gender imbalance through the practice of 'recruiting in their own image'.

The stage of development of a system of equal opportunities in the three cases can be attributed to their different histories of governance (institutional or local authority). In Maresfield the system of EO was the most developed of the three institutions, achieving the highest score on the EO survey (see Chapter 4 and Appendix A). The relatively well developed state of EO within Maresfield can be explained by its former polytechnic status (Farish *et al*, 1995). As part of the change to self management, following incorporation, in 1992, EO systems were set up and seen to be part of a package of good management practice. A systems approach can also be understood as reflecting the traditions of personnel management in local authorities, where personnel systems are based on bureaucratic control (Mackay, 1995). However, despite being fairly advanced compared with other universities, the formalised EO system within the Institution was seen as having little impact on the gendered culture. The general response of the women was that EO was failing to address the male dominated structure and culture of the organisation and there were feelings of

frustration and cynicism expressed by the women over the inability of EO to address this. The relatively high profile of EO, especially since the recent departmental EO audits may have served to heighten awareness of women's marginalised status and therefore raise levels of dissatisfaction.

Despite achieving a midpoint position on the EO continuum (see Appendix A), the response from women academics at Kingswood, when assessing the state of EO within the Institution was largely cynical. Again, as with Maresfield, the main criticism was that formalised EO was little more than 'window dressing' and EO initiatives had no impact on the gendered culture of the Institution. It was felt that EO was generally seen as peripheral, the concern of 'feminist cranks'. Attempts made by the Personnel Director to set up, for example, a more formalised system for judging suitability for promotion, through the 'scoring' of performance in research, teaching and administration, had been widely abused by the professoriat, who still only considered research as the criterion for selection. Again, therefore, the argument was that EO only scratched the surface and was failing to address the underlying embedded masculine discourses upon which the University is based.

In Bridgetown, the cynicism over the effectiveness of formalised EO to address what was regarded to be an overwhelmingly male dominated culture was most pronounced. The Institution lagged behind in the development of EO, scoring the lowest out of the three on the EO survey, with EO procedures only just beginning to be set up within the organisation (see Appendix A). Consequently, the women interviewees felt that EO was not even 'on the agenda' for most of the decision-making within the

university. Furthermore, it was argued that the recent developments in the managing of academics and higher education had resulted in a more competitive and hostile environment and a move towards a more competitive, macho management culture (discussed in section 2 below).

Thus, the three institutions come from diverse backgrounds and display different contexts in terms of their status, the priority given to research and teaching, the mix of disciplines and so on. However, common to all the women in the cases was that the university was very much a 'man's world'. The various ways in which the university cases were seen to be structured on gendered lines are set out in the following sections.

1. Gendered Profession, Gendered Cultures

In Chapter 2, it was seen that there is now a well established feminist critique of the gender inequality of universities. Rather than being liberal, meritocratic organisations, where the principles of EO are embedded in the structures, processes and curricula, universities are patriarchal organisations, made up of masculine discourses which are taken as natural and unquestioned (Morley and Walsh, 1995, 1996). Liberal analysis of women academics' marginalised status has highlighted the many real problems facing women academics in their day-to-day lives as members of the academic profession (Acker, 1994). The women in these cases, too, all cited examples which may be interpreted as barriers to their participation and

advancement¹. However, these barriers can be understood, not so much as the causes but the symptoms of an underlying gendered culture, based on maleness and masculinity. Rather than the blame lying with women academics - that they fail to amass the human capital of research publications or that they lack the 'killer instinct' of their male colleagues - the cause can be attributed to the asymmetrical power relations within the institution and the profession (Morley, 1994). This current research further adds to the critical literature on women academics, arguing that liberal analysis can neither fully explain nor fully address women's marginalised status in the academy

Emotional Work

All three case studies illustrated how gender is a key basis for ordering and allocating work. This gendered division of labour, where women academics take on more of the pastoral/course maintenance/student support work, can be traced back to quasi-familial roles of caring and maintenance. The women interviewed felt that there was an informal and generally unquestioned sexual division of labour. Women academics are constituted under the discourses of femininity and mothering and thus were expected to undertake a variety of tasks which equated with the 'common sense stereotypes' (McAuley, 1987) of 'women's work'. This amounted to undertaking most of the pastoral work within the department, as well as dealing with un-

¹ As noted in Chapter 4, the aims of case study research is to note patterns and linkages between the various issues which might be considered useful and important in understanding women academics' experiences. This analysis does not therefore aim to produce generalisable facts for all women academics. Furthermore, in referring to "the women", I am not intending to suggest that the women interviewed all spoke with the one voice, merely that there were themes common to the majority of women interviewed.

timetabled student problems, and being available to deal with student-related issues. Added to this, the women commented on how they undertook much more of the mundane 'housekeeping' duties within the department, such as dealing with petty administration issues, 'chasing up' colleagues for various pieces of departmental administration, and so on. Contrasting with Sutherland's (1985) survey, where she found that women academics were stereotyped as being unreliable and less committed, a frequently made comment was that women academics were seen to be more conscientious, reliable and better at administration and student related issues. It was felt that women were not only more likely to take on these jobs but that they were also much more likely to notice that these jobs required doing.

As well as the discourses of 'women's work', there were also the discourses of professional service. A frequently made comment was that the institution expected no more than a satisfactory student service but many of the women interviewed were unwilling to do this, priding themselves on their high quality and innovation in teaching and 'being there' for the student. It was felt that women academics tended to be far less self serving than their male colleagues. Male colleagues were seen to be much more adept at, or more able to 'shut the door' and engage in self promoting activities, without attracting adverse comments from students and colleagues. Added to this, students were more likely to approach female members of staff with informal requests and personal problems. It was felt that it was far more difficult and unacceptable for women academics to be dismissive of student problems. To do so would be to 'act out of role', contradicting the discourses of the family under which women academics' identities were partially constructed.

Several factors were seen to contribute to the propensity for women academics to undertake the main share of pastoral and informal student work within the department. Firstly, the academic discipline was an important determining factor. For those women in Education, for example, there was an expectation that they would be 'good teachers', which included being available to deal with student problems. Furthermore, for women academics working in male dominated disciplines, their lack of numbers meant that they were much more likely to receive most of the pastoral work from students as there were fewer female colleagues with whom to share the work. In Bridgetown, due to the sparse numbers of women academics in the University as a whole, the women interviewed found that most of their time on campus, when not teaching, was taken up with student problems.

Part of the reason why women were seen to be more conscientious and caring with student matters can also be attributed to the career aims of the women interviewed. These differed between Maresfield and the two 'old' universities, reflecting the different history, nature and role of the two sectors. In Maresfield, the women interviewed saw their primary role to be that of teaching. This reflects the traditional role of the polytechnic lecturer, where teaching was the primary function for most academics and where teaching loads were always significantly higher than in the university counterpart. The women interviewed had originally been attracted to higher education in order to teach, often leaving industry or professional practice in order to do this. Several women commented that they had moved into higher education in order to move out of the macho, individualist and competitive culture of

industry. For those who wished to do research, it was of a more applied nature, aimed at improving practice. Traditional recruitment patterns in polytechnics tended to emphasise the importance of industrial experience, rather than a research record. Most of the women interviewed placed a high value on the teaching aspect of the job, seeing teaching as the core activity. Their criterion for success in their career was being good, innovative teachers and providing a positive student experience.

Mentors, Networks and Reputations

The role of informal male networks has been raised in earlier studies on women academics (Sutherland, 1985; Delamont, 1989; Bagilhole, 1993; Beers and Mantel, 1994). An important feature contributing to the gendered discourses of labour within all three cases was the role of mentoring and informal networks. These cases all raised issues relating to the gatekeeping role of senior academics (Bourdieu, 1988; Bagilhole, 1993; Heward, 1996), the importance of self-promotion, networking and socialisation (Delamont, 1989) and the gaining of sponsorship from key members of the organisation as essential routes to establishing a reputation, upon which an academic career is built.

While the informal gendered structuring of work could be seen in all three cases, in Maresfield it was seen to be taking place on a more formalised basis. In recent years, the shift in the academic process towards the focusing on quantifiable outputs, (discussed in Chapter 3) had resulted in a split in activities with a reclassification of 'research and teaching' and 'teaching only'. The women interviewed felt that it was

much more difficult for established female members of staff to take on research activities. Firstly, there were the practical difficulties of lack of time, due to large teaching loads, administrative tasks and student support work. This was made more difficult again for women with families. For those without domestic commitments, research was possible, it was argued, if done over and above the daily activities of teaching and administration. Added to this, there was a more subtle network of discrimination noted by the women interviewees. There was seen to be an informal system of patronage operating within the University, whereby certain individuals were singled out as having research potential. Like many former polytechnics, Maresfield was at the early stages in developing a research profile and resources were being channelled into certain areas and to certain people. The perception of the women interviewed was that the research opportunities were going to male colleagues, who were part of the informal network within the Institution. It was felt that research was a 'closed sphere', which women found difficult to penetrate. Furthermore, in line with Thomas' (1990) research, which examined how disciplines and the curriculum reinforce gendered subjectivities, the women here faced a 'double bind' of competing discourses: maintaining a feminine identity in an overtly masculine world of competition, instrumentality and ruthlessness conflicting with the sex-role stereotyping of women as caring, empathetic and supportive. The research activities promoted by the university were seen to emphasise output rather than quality and thus a research orientation was seen to go in hand with a ruthless, self-serving profile. Kettle's (1996) research also found that women feel ill at ease with the new values of performance.

The issue of self confidence was seen to be fundamental to breaking into the world of research. As Heward (1996) found in her research on academics in law and biology disciplines, “seeing yourself and being seen as academically able” (*ibid.*:17) was crucial. This demands self confidence in one’s abilities, which is derived from the people and the discursive field which constructs an individual’s identity. In Maresfield, therefore, moving into research seemed to require considerable levels of self confidence in academic ability. Such confidence is seen to be derived from mentorship, patronage and encouragement from senior gatekeepers. However, the women here commented on the propensity for young male colleagues to be singled out as highflyers. Such gendered social relations serve to reinforce the gendered division of labour, feminising ‘lesser status’ teaching and administration aspects, institutionalising a two tier faculty in the academic profession, and leading to a consequential negative impact on women academics’ identities as effective academics. A vicious circle is then effected whereby those without research records are least able to undertake research. In recent developments in the management of higher education, there was a feeling that the culture had become more gendered, with a ‘two tier’ faculty of women academics as maintenance workers, or ‘departmental foot soldiers’ to male academics self-promoting and self-serving ‘high fliers’. Whilst there was the feeling that some of the younger female appointments might fall into the ‘high flier’ category (those without family commitments, prepared and able to work at a highly intensified work rate), this was not open to the more established female academic. However, male colleagues were seen to be ‘switching behaviour’ becoming more single focused, ruthless and engaged in career enhancing activities.

In both of the 'old' university cases, most of the women had taken up a career in higher education primarily to undertake research. Given the high research profile of both institutions, and the importance attached to research, the women would not have been appointed had they not had a research profile. Thus, it was the opportunity to engage in research, particularly critical research, which was the primary motive underlying the reasons for entering the profession. Most of the women interviewed had gone through a doctoral route rather than coming from industry. However, those in the more applied, or vocational disciplines, such as Social Work had come from professional practice, but their return to higher education had been to take up a doctoral programme/research.

In the old universities, mentoring and networks were both highlighted as reinforcing the exclusionary culture. This ranged from the male preserve of the Senior Common Room in the two old universities and, prevalent in all three cases, the exchange of informal gossip relating to research, contacts and so on on the golf course, in the men's toilets, drinks down the pub and the squash circuit. In Kingswood, the functioning of the male network was seen to be particularly strong, where the 'gentleman's club' culture served to promote and reinforce a system of patronage and networking, based on sex and class. The presence of a strong 'old boys network' was frequently referred to by the women at Kingswood, which was very difficult for the women (even senior female academics) to break into. It was within these networks that senior male academics operated their gatekeeping role, identifying the high fliers within the department and grooming them for future success. Advice on research opportunities, which jobs to do and which to avoid, setting out the right steps to take

for career success was exchanged this way. The women interviewed commented that it was young male academics who were most likely to receive such mentorship, matching the gendered stereotype of the potential high flier.

In all three cases, therefore, the informal male networks reinforced the culture of exclusion, where essential details about research, career tip-offs and building up contacts took place. Such activities are seen to be essential in raising an individual's visibility (Delamont, 1989) but were mostly inaccessible to women. Furthermore, such activities were seen to correspond with male forms of socialising and were difficult for women with family commitments to take part in, due to time constraints and being seen to be 'out of role'.

Identity

It was argued, in Chapter 3, that as part of the new discourses of management in universities, academics are being urged to reconstruct their identity, from that of the self-governing collegium to notions of incorporation into the political and economic structures of their society (Henkel, 1995). From these cases, one outcome of this reconstruction of identity is that the academic profession is being restructured in an increasingly stratified manner. Rather than talking of one profession (and for many women academics, this was never the case), professional identity can be seen to be increasingly divided into various categories, each with different status and benefits. Writers have identified the emergence of an academic 'underclass', a super-league of academics and institutions, teaching-only contracts, and so on (Kogan *et al*, 1994;

Ainley, 1994; Buchbinder and Rajagopal, 1995). However, analysis on the changing professional identity of academics and the impact of new public management on the academic profession has ignored the issue of gender. While noting the formation of a new academic proletariat, deprofessionalisation and loss of status, no consideration of gender has been made in this research. The analysis fails to identify the gendered structuring of the academy and fails to acknowledge that with the new "...caste distinction [...] emerging between the "have" and the "have-not" groups..." (Kogan *et al*, 1994:62), this underclass is likely to be women.

In this research, the women in all three cases commented on the propensity of some male colleagues to classify them as inferior by virtue of their sex. It was felt that women were out of place in the profession, or were accepted in a secondary, supportive role. Academic identity, through the various discursive practices in the organisation, such as notions of merit and the identification of 'high flyers', is constructed along gendered distinctions, therefore, where women are constituted as secondary, 'solid troupers' rather than academics at the cutting edge of knowledge production. The implications of this in the new stratified profession is that women academics are more likely to make up the new underclass.

However, added to this, a strong message coming through in the cases is the women academics' attempts to construct their own identity, to have their own voices, against a backdrop of increased control, surveillance and normalising discourses. The women interviewed were keen to stress the importance of teaching in its own right and the need for this to be recognised as part of the academic role. Many of the women

interviewed valued the opportunity to teach as well as to engage in critical research. Not only did this profile clash with the new academic norms of the instrumental output-orientated academic, but it was also seen to be antithetical to the role of academic management. A clear theme coming from all three cases was that the women were not focused on advancing to senior management positions in the hierarchy (professorial level). This was not because of 'fear of success' (Jacklin and Maccoby, 1975). The women interviewed frequently expressed the wish to receive the status, pay and recognition derived from promotion. Their ambivalence towards, in particular, gaining a Chair was the almost unanimous perception that a professorial post involved taking part in activities which the women were neither interested in nor comfortable doing. Senior management was associated with 'playing power games', 'aggro', 'being pushy', 'self-promotion' and taking part in 'organisational politics'. Gaining a professorial post (unless it was a personal chair) also meant moving away from the aspects of the job which they most enjoyed and valued. The most frequently espoused career aim was to be involved in work which was enjoyable, which was teaching, and/or less instrumentally orientated research. The female head of department at Kingswood, commented on how her promotion had thrust her into the University-wide network. This she found to be extremely male dominated and, at first, daunting. She commented on the numerous occasions where she felt out of place and that she frequently felt that she did not fit in, as well as having to "steel myself up" to speak on these occasions.

2. Discourses of Performativity

In what ways could the new discourses of public management be seen to be affecting the gendered culture of the academic process? It was argued, in Chapter 3, that since the early 1980s, academics have faced a range of techniques designed to control and direct academic work according to a more circumscribed model of performance. Recent government led initiatives in the management of higher education and the academic profession were seen to have resulted in an overall intensification of work, leading to feelings of low morale and greater stress (Carroll and Cross, 1990; Farnham, 1991; Halsey, 1992). This has led to some of the women interviewed questioning their long term commitment to the profession. This intensification of work was attributed to the increased student numbers, shrinking resources, the changing nature of the academic task, increased administration and greater accountability for performance. In all three institutions, there had been an enormous rise in student numbers, and an accompanying worsening of staff-student ratios. Added to this, in order to attract students, the type, range and mode of delivery of courses had increased and so too had the accompanying administration. Students were seen to be more demanding of lecturers' time and more aware of their rights as customers. The pressures on students to achieve a good degree resulted in greater demands for detailed feedback on assessment and more detailed justification of grades awarded, leading to greater demands on lecturers' time. In all three cases there was seen to be a huge increase in paper-work. This was partly due to the increase in numbers of courses and of students but the main focus of criticism was the increased monitoring of academic performance and accountability of work. The Teaching Quality Audit, appraisal, Research Assessment Exercise, student feedback

questionnaires and internal academic audit were all seen to contribute to an overwhelming increase in paperwork and monitoring of academic performance.

In Maresfield, there was also seen to be a worsening in the terms and conditions of work, brought about by the imposition of new contracts which had resulted in greater classroom hours and requirements to be on campus during working hours. Added to this, modularisation and semesterisation along with the increased student numbers had resulted in a huge growth in administration as well as a loss of contact with students. The teaching experience, therefore, was not as enjoyable as it had once been.

Normalising Discourses

Not only had recent developments in higher education management brought about an overall intensification of work, increasingly it was research based activities which were seen to be the main criteria against which individual performance was judged. In all three cases, there was seen to be a general shift in the academic norm towards that of generating research output and research income. Thus there was the perception that the academic process had become narrowed down to a single norm, that of the instrumental, output orientated, competitive individual.

In Maresfield, the new performance criteria were less clear than in the old universities and the reward structure within the Institution seemed to be neither transparent nor fixed. However, there was a feeling that in recent years, research related activities had been pushed to the fore with those colleagues generating the research being seen

as the 'high fliers' within the department. In confirmation of Pritchard's (1996) speculation over the emerging management of universities, in Maresfield, it could be seen that the course management role was being redefined in the new regime. Those seen as 'high flyers' were directed into research; course management was recast as administration and seen to be feminised along with the role of teaching, carrying little recognition or reward. As Newman (1994) notes, with the restructuring of public sector, women are positioned at the interface between a declining professional service and the needs of the customer, who is increasingly demanding within a 'customer care' culture.

Several women interviewed expressed the desire to undertake research and had received, in two instances, a small timetable abatement to do so. However, due to the large administrative demands and other timetable commitments, the abatement was considered worthless, it being virtually impossible to produce research, it was argued, without a clear day in the week. Amongst the women interviewed, there was the perception that it was women who were doing the maintenance work. Women developing a research profile were doing so in addition to their other demands, leading to intolerable work loads. Those women with family commitments found that it was the research which had to be foregone. Thus, in Maresfield there was the suggestion that the new discourses of higher education management were changing the nature and role of the academic process. The impact of this was a perceived split in academic profiles and the creation of the new research orientated academic, focused solely on the generation of publications. For the women interviewed, this

was not a profile which they chose, or were able, to conform to and yet it was seen to be the route to material reward and status within the Institution.

In the old universities, however, the new discourses of higher education management were associated much more with the generation of a more normalised and narrowed academic profile. In both cases, there was the feeling that the culture of the university had become far more instrumental, individual and competitive, with the pressure to publish and generate income resulting in a self protecting, self serving, less collegiate and more 'divide and rule' atmosphere. In recent years, therefore, there was a discernible change in behaviour towards a competitive, culture of 'churning out the publications'. In Bridgetown, in particular, several women commented on a worsening in the terms and conditions of work and a shift towards a more hostile, unpleasant and intolerant working culture. In Kingswood, too, there were feelings that the culture had become much more competitive and individualised. Added to this, there was a far stronger feeling of being managed and having less freedom, both in terms of day-to-day activities, as well as the type and nature of research.

In both the old universities, it was the competition to maintain a high RAE score which was seen to be driving this new individualised and competitive culture, with the new academic norm narrowed down to the research-orientated, output-focused academic. In both cases, there were women who were more accepting of the new norms of performance. They had strong research profiles and were able to produce the output. However, there were anxieties that by doing so they might reinforce the myth that the new norms were gender neutral. One woman who was at professorial

level commented that there was a tendency amongst other female professors to 'forget the struggle'.

It was clear that, in all three cases, the new norms of performance were promoting a more competitive, instrumentally-orientated academic profile. This was a profile which was seen to be a more gendered one, based on masculinist discourses and therefore one in which, for a range of reasons, women find it more difficult to compete. Firstly, the new profile was seen to comply with masculine discourses of competitiveness, ruthlessness, instrumentality and individuality which conflicts with the feminine discourses of empathy, supportiveness and consensus. Women who do rise to the challenge of the new regime, focusing on the research and compromising on the teaching/student aspects of the job are seen as being 'out of role' in the gendered academy. Furthermore, some of the women in the cases argued that the shift in focus meant abandoning aspects of the job which they valued and were good at and which were fundamental to maintaining a professional service. Not to compromise on teaching meant having to reduce research output, pushing it to the weekend, and vacations and creating further problems for women with family commitments.

Appraisal as Panopticon

To what extent was appraisal identified as being integral to the new technologies of discipline within the academy? In particular, in what ways are the subjectivising and normalising aspects of appraisal, outlined in Chapter 3, functioning to create a new

academic norm? While appraisal was seen to be functioning differently in the three cases, generally it was viewed from a more hard managerialist perspective, designed to monitor and control academics rather than a softer staff development model.

In the old universities, the introduction of appraisal was associated with the Jarratt Report (CVCP, 1985) and a drawn out dispute between academics and the government over pay and conditions of work. Consequently, appraisal was seen as part and parcel of the move towards increased accountability and surveillance of academic staff, as well as being associated with what was generally understood as worsening terms and conditions of work within universities. In both Bridgetown and Kingswood, appraisal was seen to be driving the change in the academic process towards a more quantitative, output orientated norm. In Bridgetown, appraisal was strongly linked with feelings of increased professional accountability and measurement of performance. The functioning of appraisal, as a disciplinary technology was apparent in the way it reduced academic performance to a series of performance indicators, by which the individual could be measured, ranked and judged. Furthermore, it was the research output which was measured in appraisal. The panoptic gaze of appraisal was functioning to drive in this new narrow and specific academic profile. In Kingswood, appraisal was also seen to be driving in and reinforcing this single academic profile. Appraisal was seen as symbolic of the new regime of individualism and instrumentality.

In both cases, therefore, the women academics saw the role and functioning of appraisal as driving in the new regime of intensified work and individual accountability

for performance to prescribed norms of research and income generation. However, it was not only seen in terms of a tool for management control but also a self disciplining mechanism, changing academic professional identity away from what was perceived to be a more collaborative, generative form of inquiry towards one of output and quantity over quality.

In Maresfield, however, appraisal was seen to be far less uniform across the Institution. The system seemed to be much more ad hoc, informal and devolved, implemented by each department according to its own design and needs. This ranged from a low key form-filling exercise and timetable discussion through to a more managerialist, disciplining mechanism, emblematic of the new ethos of higher education and directing performance. However, whilst not being identified with promoting a clearly narrowed norm, as in the other two cases, appraisal was seen to be driving in a new, more intensified work regime.

3. New Gender Regime

From all three cases, therefore, the new discourses of higher education management shaped the social relations within the institutions around a more gendered norm. The new work regime was not only more intensified, it was also a more gendered one, based on macho, competitive management. The new discourses of macho management were seen to be antithetical to the image of the female academic. The women found it difficult to fit in with the new macho culture and faced a constant

battle not to become further marginalised within the institution which increasingly promoted a single, narrow academic profile.

Within a culture where their presence was marginalised and where it was increasingly difficult to compete, several women felt that being good at teaching was a role they could fit into fairly easily; they were 'easier points to earn' and provided them with a sense of identity and purpose, albeit a second class one. However, the push to publish and the pressure to 'satisfice' on the other aspects of the job meant that, in the old universities in particular, it was difficult to maintain all aspects of the job and those women choosing not to perform to the new norms were finding it increasingly difficult to state that their way of working was valid. This resulted in a constant questioning of their ability and role leading to a lowering of self confidence and increased marginalisation within the Institution.

The new academic identity can be seen to be an increasingly gendered one, despite the image of gender neutrality. The women in these cases had extra demands placed on them from students and domestic commitments, reducing the time available. Furthermore, their exclusion from informal networks meant that they missed out on research opportunities and mentorship. The new narrowed norm makes no recognition of the other work undertaken in the running of the department. Like human capital theory, the supposed gender neutrality of the new performance criteria suggests that those who 'fail to get on' lack ability, drive and commitment. The gender-neutral image of individual merit creates and perpetuates therefore an image that it is women themselves who are at fault, by having fewer publications (Halsey,

1992), for failing to network (Delamont, 1989), for not taking part in meetings and so on. However, such analysis ignores the wider cultural factors which account for women's so-called failure to compete in the 'academic game' (McAuley, 1987).

In Maresfield, following incorporation and the change in the basis of funding, there was a perceived shift in the nature of the job and a formal separating out of the academic labour process broadly along gendered lines. In the past, the route to career progression had been through administration and having a high profile within the department. However, there was now a shift in focus towards research output and income generation.

Unlike Maresfield, the women in both 'old' university cases felt that the formal allocation of work was evenly spread between male and female colleagues. However, informally, as has already been noted, women were seen to take on most of the pastoral and student support activities, in line with sex-role stereotyping. Added to this, despite having a research profile, the women also valued the teaching aspects of the job and again, as in Maresfield, valued the fact that they were considered to be good teachers and wanted to maintain and improve on their teaching quality. Being a good teacher also meant being available for students, rather than having a 'closed door' policy. However, for most of the women in Bridgetown and Kingswood, the energies devoted to teaching and student support were in addition to research related activities, rather than instead of them. In the past, such a mix had been made possible by the relatively few class contact hours in the 'old' university sector but, in recent years, the increased student numbers, increased range and number of courses on offer

(and the concomitant rise in course administration) meant that it was becoming increasingly difficult to maintain a high standard in all aspects of the job.

Added to this intensification of work, in both the old universities, was the perception that in recent years, there had been an increase in the pressure from senior management to focus much more on producing research outputs. In Kingswood, this was most pronounced as the Institution had fallen in the research ratings from top 5 to top 15. This meant that individual departments and individual academics had to 'earn their keep' and be seen to be 'earning their keep'. Several women commented on the difficulties they faced in taking on a more instrumental, single purposed role, focused mainly on high research output and generating income from grants awards. There was seen to be a split in activities, along similar lines to that of Maresfield, with women frequently 'picking up the pieces' of their more instrumental (male) colleagues. Thus the women commented that they were even more than before providing the student service which many of their male colleagues had opted out of. The consequences of this was that the women were facing further pressures on their time and emotions due to a refusal to compromise on the student/teaching aspects of the job.

This intensification of work placed great pressures on women with domestic commitments. In Maresfield, the general increase in workload meant that research was considered effectively ruled out for women who were mothers. As research had to be carried out over and above the main academic tasks, it was considered to be a luxury which many women could not aspire to. Several women felt that the sacrifice

to their home life from pursuing a more careerist strategy of research and high profile networking within the Institution was too great. There was the feeling, one woman argued, that individuals were expected to be professionally dedicated to the job and “to hell with your private life”. Therefore a choice was effectively being forced on women academics who had young children. In Bridgetown too, the intensification of work was seen to be most difficult for those with childcare commitments. However, there was not the choice between research and other aspects of the job, as in Maresfield. Maintaining a research output was considered fundamental to the academic role. The intensification of work was across the board, therefore, and meant ‘more balls to juggle’. The women commented on having no free time, with research being pushed to the weekends and vacation time. Effectively, this meant that the women in Bridgetown with domestic commitments faced the choice of being ‘superwoman’, working at a constantly intensified pace, juggling the various demands of public and private life, or compromising on research as this was the area requiring the least immediate attention. However, it was the flexibility of academic life which enabled the women to work at an intensified rate, often picking up the work after the children had gone to bed.

Apart from the general intensification of work, associated with recent government led initiatives, in both of the old universities, the strongly patriarchal gendered culture was seen to create pressures on the women to overwork. This was particularly pronounced with those women who were mothers. It was felt that the mothering image portrayed women as being less committed and less ambitious and therefore left them more vulnerable to negative comments and attitudes. In both these institutions,

therefore the culture was seen to be strongly anti-family and anti-mothering. There were costs paid for having a successful career, such as missing out on the children's formative years, not having children, having no relaxation time, or having to compromise on research and therefore sticking on the 'academic career ladder'. Within the gendered cultures of both Kingswood and Bridgetown, therefore, there were stark choices for the women between career and family.

The experiences of the women in the three cases illustrate how power relations can operate in appraisal to define a highly gendered model of the 'new academic'. Seen within its wider context, as part of a package of change in managing academics in universities, appraisal can be perceived as spreading and reinforcing a more managerialist culture, creating a new form of organisational order. It therefore serves as a form of disciplinary technology establishing what is valued (and what is discarded), making explicit a certain view of the organisation, outlining which characteristics, norms and values the individual should adopt, and communicating this to all members of the organisation. In these cases, the new organisational order appears to emphasise an intensification of work, driven by the achievement of quantifiable performance indicators. In this way, appraisal creates, assesses, and ranks the 'new academic'. What is made visible in appraisal is output in terms of research publications and funding, with those complying with this "new academic" norm being rewarded accordingly.

4. Incorporation, Alienation and Resistance

It can be seen, therefore, that the women in the three cases have responded in a number of ways to the new gender regime within the university. Some women have internalised the new discourses and been incorporated into the new culture. Other women have not conformed, for a variety of reasons, to the new academic norms. For some, the new gender regime has resulted in feelings of alienation, with falling morale and a questioning of commitment. For others, there is evidence in the cases of a positive resistance of the new gendered discourses. Here, women have asserted their own values and roles as being equally valid and legitimate as those promoted in the discourses of new public management. In this final section of the chapter, these issues of 'incorporation', 'alienation' and 'resistance' are explored.

Within the liberal EO discourse, HR techniques, such as appraisal, are identified as part of good management practice, bureaucratising judgements of merit with the aim of removing subjectivity and bias. As part of the discourses of HRM, appraisal contributes to the maximising of the contribution of all categories of staff, and thus addresses the various 'barriers' which inhibit or block women's full participation (Newman, 1994). Seen within the liberal framework, therefore, appraisal can be seen as a technique for promoting EO, enabling women academics to be fully integrated into the academic process. In other words, as the Hansard Society Report on Women at the Top (1990) argued, a formalised system of appraisal enables the bureaucratisation of decision making, the use of objective criteria, formalising promotion decisions and diffusing the gatekeeper role. Furthermore, it could be argued that appraisal can provide a forum whereby the woman academic can receive

advice on career planning, feedback on performance, can highlight their achievements and therefore break down negative attitudes. Thus, within the liberal framework, good practice emphasises the need for appraisers to be trained in EO and to be aware of stereotypical attitudes about women's role and women's work.

Within the cases, therefore, for those women who were complying with the new norms of performance, appraisal could be seen as providing them with the opportunity to raise their profile, draw attention to their performance and enable them to 'claim their rightful place' as efficient, productive academics. Appraisal was seen to provide the means by which women could co-opt into the new managerialist culture, by encouraging them to think and act more strategically and more instrumentally. Appraisal was seen to make it clear what the norms of performance were - telling the women which 'hoops to jump through'. Thus those women who are able to choose to 'rise to the challenge' may actually benefit from appraisal.

Those who had a female appraiser (in both Maresfield and Kingswood, several women had the same female appraiser), also found appraisal to be a positive experience. This was attributed to the fact that the appraiser was female and a senior member of the department. In Maresfield, those appraised by the female appraiser found the experience to be open, honest and constructive. For women wishing to engage in research, there was encouragement, useful advice on career planning, and practical help such as putting forward names for committees, generating research opportunities and providing research contacts. There was a feeling that the appraiser had a genuine concern for individual staff development. In addition, it was felt that

there was mutual respect for individual's different qualities and strengths and an acceptance of different academic profiles. There was also encouragement and respect for those who wished to devote their energies to teaching and student related activities. It was argued that even though the chosen career profile might not gain them the material status and rewards, there was at least an acknowledgement of the work done and, for those wishing to engage in research, support and encouragement. However, despite taking personal aims into account, there was still the pressure to undertake research activities as well.

In Kingswood, too, several women pointed to the positive experience they had from their female appraiser (woman professor). It was felt that a female appraiser was better placed to understand women's experiences and was also less likely to hold stereotypical assumptions about women. However, it was acknowledged, that there was the danger that a woman who had reached a senior position might be dismissive of other women's difficulties, being a product of the gendered system, having internalised the dominant discourses (Ferguson, 1984). Thus the role of the appraiser was seen to be of crucial importance to the appraisal process.

For many of the women academics in the cases appraisal was a less positive experience, being seen as a frustrating and disappointing experience. Disappointment with appraisal was particularly pronounced in Maresfield, where it was felt that the operation of appraisal was a 'lost opportunity' to promote equal opportunities within the Institution. The women interviewed were looking to appraisal to provide feedback on performance and to provide the opportunity to 'set the record straight'

about their individual performance, to 'flag up' the work that they had been doing during the year. It was felt that appraisal could be used to drive EO within the Institution. However, because of the dismissive way in which it was treated in many departments, appraisal was viewed more as an annual form-filling exercise and little more than this. There was frustration over the lack of effort put into appraisal, with women commenting on the need to receive advice on careers and feedback on performance, especially during a period of rapid change. Far from rendering the norms of performance visible to the appraisee, it was unclear exactly what appraisal was aiming to achieve, with little indication as to the norms of performance and little feedback on how individuals were ranked in comparison with other academics.

The 'incorporation' argument has limitations, both at a practical and an epistemological level. At a practical level, the work of Jewson and Mason (1986) on EO policies and Beers and Mantel's (1994) research on EO and decision making in Dutch universities, illustrate the potential for HR techniques such as appraisal to do no more than to legitimate and institutionalise existing inequalities. The informal selection criteria are adhered to, it is argued, but justified under the guise of 'objective' and fair methods. Furthermore, focusing on the functioning of the appraisal interview, the removal of subjectivity and bias from the process is impossible. As Grint (1993) argues, (discussed in Chapter 3) the perfect appraisal system is as illusory as ever. Taking a social constructionist interpretation of appraisal, it can be better understood in the management of meaning (Smircich and Morgan, 1982). This shifts the focus from removing subjectivity and bias to that of the role of appraisal in the construction of identities.

At an epistemological level, there are limitations to the assumptions underlying the liberal framework, discussed in Chapter 2. The liberal equal opportunities approach to appraisal, putting forward strategies for women to compete with men, plays down, obscures and naturalises the norms of performance. Incorporation merely enables the women to be 'surrogate men' (Crompton and Le Feuvre, 1992); it leaves unchallenged the masculinist discourses upon which the gendered academy is constructed.

Some women felt that appraisal was seen to be promoting the shift towards a more managed university, particularly as a conduit for driving in the new intensified work regime. Appraisal was seen to be working to normalise the academic profile to a narrowly focused activity of publications and research grant generation. For example, several women felt that it was taken for granted that their teaching and administration was satisfactory and that they were being pushed to direct their energies towards research. A few women commented on 'getting told off' for not doing research, despite having heavy teaching loads.

In the old universities, appraisal was seen to be much more symbolic of the new order, closely identified with increased surveillance, accountability and discipline. Appraisal was seen to function as a catalyst for changing, creating and reinforcing the new culture. In both old universities, the strength of the panoptic gaze was felt by the women academics, where appraisal emphasised the managerialist thrust coming from central government, imbued with masculine values of competitive management.

Consequently, the women were much more aware of appraisal in their day-to-day activities and the permanent power effect of the panopticon. Appraisal was seen to be pushing forward a more gendered norm, which favoured masculine identities.

In all three cases there were women who were endeavouring to resist the normalising discourses of new public management, promoted through appraisal. This was particularly the case for those women who had devoted their energies to teaching and student issues. The increased student numbers, and the feeling that this had led to an erosion in teaching standards - "putting as many students as possible through the sausage machine", as one woman put it - was perceived to be a further attack on their identity as members of the academic profession. Many women interviewees were questioning the new discourses of competition, asserting their choice of academic profile as valid and important to professional service. A frequent comment made by the women was that their career aims were to "enjoy my work" and "to be good at my job". This meant providing a good service to students, having time for reflexive and critical thought, and working in a collegial and mutually supportive environment. In the three cases forming this research, resistance equated to 'opting out' of the competition, accepting that this would lead to further marginalisation and bringing with it the psychologically negative consequences of watching other academics' careers advance, and thus further eroding self confidence and self worth. In a few instances, this had led to feelings of alienation and questioning of commitment to the profession.

However, the extent to which women could choose to 'opt out' differed in the cases and between individuals. In the old universities, the pressure to publish and keep research output up meant that developing an alternative career plan was becoming increasingly difficult due to the pressures generated in appraisal to reconceptualise oneself as the output-oriented academic. Whereas in the past it was agreed that research was always the most valued aspect of the academic role, this had been in a far less competitive manner. In addition, those individuals who concentrated on other aspects of the job had still been accepted within the culture. This had now changed and the pressures to conform to the new norms of performance were very evident. In Maresfield, there was, however, still accommodation made for those devoting their energies to teaching; but this had never been seen as a route to promotion.

The three cases illustrate how the new discourses of higher education are promoting more gendered cultures where the norms of performance emphasise a particular culture of macho, competitive management. There were women who were able to 'opt in' to the new cultural norms. Under appraisal, it was felt that the normalising gaze was made more visible and it was clearer to see what the 'perfect professional' was meant to do. Thus appraisal was the ideal mechanism for women to "shout about their achievements", as one woman put it. Appraisal offered the opportunity to highlight work that had been done, to "set the record straight". Women who were active researchers, had long publications lists, with highly productive research profiles found it easiest to comply with the new competitive climate. However, whilst this macho culture may be considered 'gender-blind' (Maddock and Parkin, 1993), the

underlying traditional culture of academia dictates feminine-appropriate behaviour. As Newman (1994) comments, referring to the impact of the discourses of public management on women's identities: "At one moment they must be daughterly and decorous, at another pushy and tough" (*ibid.*: 195).

The strategy of 'opting out', on the other hand, results in further isolation for women academics and perpetuates male dominance within the culture. What is more, it sustains women academics' silence in the decision making process. As Morley (1994) comments "Women are then caught in a paradoxical situation where resistance reproduces discrimination (*ibid.*:198).

Conclusions

This chapter has drawn out some of the specific themes arising from the three case study institutions. It has been argued that all three universities are gendered cultures, where masculine discourses make up the gendered substructure and where women academics' identities are constituted as subordinate and inferior. The impact of the new discourse of public sector management have reinforced the dominant masculine discourses, asserting a new academic profile of competitiveness and instrumentality. Appraisal can be understood as being integral to this new regime, driving in the new norms of performance. Contrary to liberal interpretations of appraisal, emphasising the bureaucratising and removal of subjectivity and bias in decision making, appraisal here is promoting a new 'virility culture' (Walsh, 1994). Some women interviewed have been able to 'opt in' to the new norms of performance. It is argued that

incorporation fails to challenge the hegemonic masculine discourses of the university. The liberal model merely permits women to perform to the gendered norms. There were women who were resisting the normalising discourses. However, the material outcome of this resistance was one which perpetuates women academics' marginalised status.

In the final chapter, the themes raised in this chapter will be examined as part of the wider conclusions relating to the theoretical and methodological implications for understanding women academics.

Chapter 9: Conclusions

Introduction

The aim of this final chapter is to outline the main conclusions arising from the research. In doing so, it takes the substantive conclusions relating to the three case studies, set out in Chapter 8, and discusses their implications in the light of wider theoretical explanations for understanding women in organisations. The chapter is divided into three sections. In the first section the main aims of the research are reiterated, together with a discussion of the key areas of literature which have informed the study. In the second section, an appreciation of the methodology adopted in this research is presented. The section is divided into two parts: firstly the contribution of a Foucauldian feminist framework is considered and, secondly, the merits of the specific methods used in addressing the research questions are examined. Finally, in the third section, the wider theoretical issues arising from the research are presented along with suggestions for future research which might develop and strengthen the arguments raised.

1. Aims of the Research

The main aim of this research was to understand how the dominant discourses making up the gendered culture constitute the identities of women, in the most part, as subordinate. The research is informed by critical feminist literature on organisations which questions the gender blind nature of organisational theory, the masculine

constructs underlying organisational knowledge and management, and the lack of women's voices in the generation of theory (Hearn and Parkin, 1983; Jacobson and Jacques, 1990; Collinson and Hearn, 1994; Calas and Smircich, 1996). A particular focus of this critique has been the deconstructing and challenging of the truth claims underlying existing knowledge about organisations and a rewriting of organisational theory through the lens of gender. This is not merely to include women within existing knowledge but to rewrite organisational theory from a more inclusive perspective, based on diversity (Calas and Smircich, 1996).

This research is located within the context of higher education, aimed at understanding the gendered discourses making up the university organisation. There is now a well established literature which seeks to document and explain women academics' marginalised status. Much of this work comes from liberal equal opportunities assumptions and therefore underplays or ignores the underlying gendered discourses of the university which maintain, reproduce and perpetuate male dominance. However, in recent years, in line with wider developments in the feminist critique of organisations, writers have argued that the university organisation needs to be understood as a gendered culture, made up of masculine discourses which disempower women academics materially and psychologically (Davies and Holloway, 1995; Morley, 1994). Drawing on the notion of the gendered university culture, this research has sought to understand how the discursive practices of the university organisation constitute women academics as "the other" (Acker, 1980) during a period of transformative change in the management of universities.

The context of higher education has undergone radical change in recent years. It has been argued that much of what is valued in traditional notions of the university and the academic profession has been challenged by the introduction of 'new public management' initiatives. There is an ongoing debate in the literature on the nature and impact of new public management on public sector organisations and public sector workers (Isaac-Henry *et al*, 1993; Clarke *et al*, 1994; Pollitt, 1995; Ferlie *et al*, 1996). This research has drawn, in particular, on the literature examining the impact of 'new public management' on academics and other public sector professional workers (Pollitt, 1990a; Crompton, 1990; Wilson, 1991; Willmott 1995; Miller, 1996). The general message coming from the literature is that university education is being commodified and academics are struggling to secure a degree of self-regulation over their work in the face of pressures to replace the traditional ethic of collegiality with that of managerialism. One aspect of the changing management of universities has been the introduction of appraisal, forming part of a disciplinary matrix in the management and directing of academic activities. This research has been informed by recent developments in the literature which view appraisal from a social constructionist perspective (Grint, 1993), examining the role of appraisal in creating, confirming and contesting individual identity. In particular, this research has attempted to understand the role of appraisal in promoting the new discourses of public management. The aim was to identify the new academic norms put forward in appraisal and the impact this has on individual academics. In other words, the research aimed to understand how individual subjectivity, the academic profession and university cultures are defined, constructed and contested through the new discourses of management.

An understanding of the recent developments in the management of academics, from a gender perspective, has been largely neglected in the literature. Several writers have, however, speculated on the impact of the discourses of new public management on women academics (Walsh, 1994; Morley and Walsh, 1994; Davies and Holloway, 1995; Pritchard, 1996). It has been suggested that the new gender relations emerging in higher education promote a 'virility culture' (Walsh, 1994), of 'macho' competitive management. This new culture, it may be argued, is one which perpetuates male hegemonic power relations. As Newman (1994) observes, the 'old fiefdoms' of traditional professional identity are undermined by a new 'slash and burn' competitive management. Under these new norms, the academic profession is increasingly stratified, where women academics make up an underclass of teachers and course administrators (Davies and Holloway, 1995). New male dominated 'enclaves' are formed around the high profile aspects of the job, in research publications and income generation.

However, it is also suggested in the literature that the entry of the discourses of new public management into universities may open up discursive spaces which women academics might exploit. Firstly, the traditional gendered notions of academic merit, often applied in informal and arbitrary ways, may be undermined by new, more transparent and bureaucratic measures of merit, found in quantitative performance indicators and academic appraisal (Morley and Walsh, 1994). Furthermore, it is suggested that women may be able to position themselves as change agents within the evolving culture and challenge the embedded masculine discourses (Pritchard, 1996).

Thus it could be argued that the changes in higher education management may offer opportunities for women to voice their needs and express their organisational realities, leading to resistance, challenge and change.

2. Critical Appraisal of the Research

a) Epistemological Issues

This thesis has adopted a Foucauldian feminist framework for understanding women academics' experiences of the gendered university culture. In particular, it has drawn on the notion of discourse to explain how women academics' identities are constituted as subordinate and secondary and the impact this has on the production of meaning and subjectivity. Furthermore, it has used the concept of 'reverse discourse' (Weedon, 1987) to examine the ways in which women academics have challenged the 'truth claims' of the gendered culture. In recent years, the contributions of Foucault and other postmodern writers have been taken up by feminist writers, offering new insights into understanding women's oppression and overcoming some of the limitations presented in liberal and feminist standpoint perspectives. Liberal perspectives fail to acknowledge the underlying gendered substructure of the organisation. Sex discrimination is treated as a mere aberration which "the equal opportunities police" (Davies, 1992) will eradicate. Feminist standpoint perspectives, on the other hand, aimed at emancipation through the ending of patriarchal society, can be criticised for being too Utopian and not offering a practical focus for feminists (Weedon, 1987). The attraction of a Foucauldian feminism is its focus on the every

day forms of oppression. Therefore, it provides an epistemological basis for understanding women's everyday experiences of the gendered culture as a first step towards challenge and change.

It was argued in Chapter 4 that the main benefit of adopting a Foucauldian feminist framework to understand women in organisations was the opportunities it offered for praxis and change. Resistance, according to Weedon (1987) is brought about through the exploiting of the contradictions between an individual's own notion of subjectivity and those offered by the dominant discourses. In other words, the attraction of a Foucauldian notion of power is its practical focus on resistance and struggle at a localised level rather than the more Utopian radical feminist project of emancipation. Through deconstructing the truth claims of the organisation, which label women as inferior, and through establishing alternative, or reverse discourses this will ultimately lead to an organisational form which is non-exploitative, non-hierarchical, based on difference, mutuality and reflexivity (Ferguson, 1984; Acker, 1990; Coleman, 1991; Townley, 1994). Long term resistance is through challenging the supremacy of the discourses of rationality, of public over private and of organisational goals over wider societal goals, and reflects an assertion of the private domain and the subjective experience as being valid (Acker, 1990; Calas and Smircich, 1992a). The short term route to this longer term goal is "to take control of the textual tools of management" (Calas and Smircich, 1992a) in the organisation, to challenge the gender stereotypes and to understand, reveal, deconstruct and expose the masculinist discourses of the organisation.

The evidence presented in this research would suggest that the opportunity for women to challenge the dominant discourses of the organisation is more difficult than would seem to be suggested in the Foucauldian/Postmodern feminist literature. The introduction of the new discourses of public sector management has reinforced and reasserted the gendered culture and the gendered notions of academic merit and academic identity. The opportunity to exploit the “textual tools of management”, such as appraisal, have been limited. The women interviewed cited instances where they had used appraisal to challenge the gendered stereotypes of the academy, which constitute women academics as less committed, less ambitious and less able. At a practical level, therefore, appraisal might be seen as having a role in challenging the gendered stereotypes of the organisation. Fundamental to this, is the role of the appraiser. One issue raised in Chapter 8 was the positive experience of appraisal felt by women who had a female appraiser. Here the women drew attention to the open and respectful atmosphere of the interview, the opportunities for mentorship and an acknowledgement, even appreciation, of the individual’s values, even if they conflicted with the dominant norms of performance. However, for the most part, this challenging of stereotypes has been so as to permit women academics to play a part in the gendered culture. In other words, appraisal may enable women to ‘flag up’ their achievements but this does nothing to challenge the masculinist discourses underpinning the university culture. At best, women are permitted to ‘play the (white) man’s game’, participating in the gendered culture in which they will always be disadvantaged.

For those women who were resisting the gendered discourses of performance and asserting their values and choices, this was not leading to a challenging of the truth claims nor a radical reconceptualisation of the notions of professional service and academic identity. Rather, it was serving to reinforce their marginalised status in an increasingly stratified profession of 'successful' researchers and an underclass of teachers/administrators.

In these cases, appraisal can be seen to be failing the women academics in the masculinist culture of the university. This research suggests that there is a need to reconceptualise academic careers to accommodate different career strategies and different organisational realities. Appraisal can be used to create a culture more receptive to women academics' needs and experiences, emphasising a more balanced profile of the academic job. This holds the potential to allow individuals (both women and men) to concentrate on different aspects of the job and to recognise the important role played by those individuals who devote their energies to teaching and pastoral duties. Many women respondents carried out essential work within the department but this was neither valued nor rewarded. The implications from this research suggests that women academics may have to face stark choices. The women in these cases face a constant struggle of having to prove themselves as legitimate members of the organisation and not accept the disabling discourses and thereby 'internalise the oppression' (Morley, 1994).

The conclusions from this research indicate that the possibilities for women to be able to challenge the ubiquity of masculine discourses are more difficult than is suggested in Foucault's work. In these three cases, the opportunities to exploit the discursive gaps generated by the introduction of the new discourses of management have been small. The masculine discourses making up the gendered university culture are deeply entrenched and the opportunities for women to resist disciplinary power are few. The women in the cases have been able to use appraisal for their own agenda only in the extent to which it has permitted their entry into the male club. For other women in these cases, resistance results in alienation and further material and psychological marginalisation. Similar difficulties with the Foucauldian understanding of resistance are noted by Ramazanoglu and Holland (1993):

Foucault does not take seriously the entrenchment of men's power in every area of social life as a problem for women (and so for men too). The political experience of women daily subordinated by men, by masculinity, by the social construction of their bodies, makes resistance and change much more complex and problematic than Foucault seems to allow...he leaves us unable to deal with the immensity of the consolidation of men's power (*ibid*: 260).

This would suggest that a Foucauldian notion of resistance may offer little for women in terms of real change, merely the unseating of certain, localised truth claims. This demands a reconceptualising of the notion of resistance with a move away from totalising approaches focused on emancipation and freedom from male oppression. A Foucauldian feminist approach is of value, therefore, as an analytical tool for explaining and revealing the social and power relations of the organisation. In other words, a Foucauldian feminist perspective is useful in analysing *how* women are constituted as subordinate as a first step towards change.

b) Methodological Issues

In Chapter 4, it was argued that the combination of postmodern and feminist assumptions making up the epistemological base to this research dictated a qualitative approach to the research methodology. The most appropriate method in addressing the research questions was deemed to be semi-structured interviews. Semi-structured interviews have proved to be successful in other studies of a similar nature, for example in understanding gendered cultures (Cassell and Walsh, 1994) and women academics' experiences of the gendered university (Bagilhole, 1993; Morley, 1994). The key advantage of semi-structured interviews over survey methods (also used in the study of women academics (Jackson, 1990; Aziz, 1990; Halsey, 1992)) is that they include the women in the knowledge creation, telling their own stories and engaging in their own sense making. This has enabled the generation of rich 'data' and insights into the gendered processes of the university culture. A survey based method would fail to satisfy the needs of the research questions, either substantively or epistemologically. This is because the reliance on fixed categories and externally imposed meanings would have denied the women the opportunity to articulate their experiences in their own voices. Furthermore, quantitative approaches perpetuate the image of value-free research and external realities which both feminism and postmodernism refute.

Several methodological issues have arisen from this research, relating to the nature and design of the research and the analysis of the data. Firstly, the interviews on which the research is based, were only carried out with female academics. This may

lead some observers to question why male academics were not also interviewed so as to enable comparison¹. Certainly many male academics are finding the new climate of performativity, competitiveness and instrumentality to be one which conflicts with their values (Willmott, 1995). Had the research been informed by a liberal equal opportunities framework, focusing on the 'barriers' limiting women academics' full participation, then a comparative approach might have been appropriate. However, as was argued in Chapter 4, liberal approaches tend to take the male perspective as normal against which the female, as abnormal, can be compared. The research question becomes one of devising strategies and techniques which enable women to compete in the male academy while the underlying gendered discourses remain unquestioned. Therefore, as discussed in Chapter 1, this methodological approach actually works to reinforce, embed and naturalise the discourses of the university which neglect and subordinate women's voices.

A second issue, arising out of the methodology, adopted in this research, was the difficulties in handling such a large amount of data. At times the problems of "death by data asphyxiation" (Pettigrew, 1988) became almost overwhelming. Part of the root of this problem lay in the decision to transcribe fully the interviews, and hence the generating of huge quantities of data not directly related to the research questions. However, often this 'extra' information proved extremely insightful and revealing. Partial transcription would have missed this data as well as undermining the integrity

¹ On initially engaging in this research I was advised by the Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC), whom I contacted for information, to interview male and female academics to enable comparisons. The same issue was also raised in a question at a conference where I was presenting preliminary findings of this research (Thomas, 1994).

of the research method which aimed to give women academics their own voice in the sense making. The potential for reducing the more laborious aspects of analysis, offered by software packages such as The Ethnograph and NUD*IST, did not materialise. Instead they added to the problems by reducing the original scripts to disembodied and fragmented chunks. These problems would have been alleviated with fewer interviews, however, this would have been at the expense of generating such rich and detailed data.

Finally, methodological problems can be identified in the analysis of the interviews. Two interrelated issues arise when discussing “the women” in the analysis. Firstly, in stating that the women in the cases are different/have different voices (Gilligan, 1982), there is the risk that this might be ‘hijacked’ by those looking for a reason to state that women are inferior. This sustains the stereotypical views of women academics’ so-called failure to get on in the gendered academy found in Human Capital Theory. There is a need to emphasise the hierarchical relationship whereby female and feminine is seen as secondary to male and masculine. A related problem arises with the tendency to treat women’s voices as speaking in unison, playing down the contextual differences (Calas and Smircich, 1992a). To a certain extent, the analysis presented here is guilty of this. However, there is a need to take a broad brush approach in characterising the various stories the women have told. This approach has been taken in other research, drawing on a similar methodology (see, for example, Coleman’s (1991) study on women’s understandings of organisations and Acker’s (1994) analysis of women academics). The conclusions drawn from this study are representative of the stories told and also have wider applicability in understanding the

nature of gendered organisations and how the normalising discourses work to marginalise and exclude women.

3. Theoretical Implications and Future Research

This research has contributed to the knowledge on women in organisations in a number of ways. These can be split into substantive conclusions, specific to the study on women academics, and wider epistemological conclusions on the nature of organisations. In other words, the research contributes to knowledge on the nature of the subject (in this case, women academics) and on the nature of theory (the understanding of organisations). However, it must be reiterated that this research does not aim to produce the 'truth', rather, it accepts that any knowledge created will always be situated, historically and culturally.

Focusing on the specific study of women academics, this research builds on the work of other research (see Morley, 1994; Davies and Holloway, 1995; Morley and Walsh, 1995, 1996; Heward, 1996) in documenting the gendered processes making up the patriarchal university organisation. It is argued here that the understanding and theory creation on managing university organisations cannot be made without reference to gender. The notion of the gendered culture has proved to be an effective framework from which the gendered processes within the university can be understood. While some of the recent literature on women academics has raised the issue of gendered cultures (Acker, 1994; Morley, 1994; Cassell and Walsh, 1994), this has not been developed, nor backed up with detailed in-depth research. This research

has developed the notion of the university organisation as a gendered culture, providing rich insights into the various gendered processes at play in the individual institutions studied.

Furthermore, as Pritchard (1996) concludes, there is a need to provide empirical work on the many questions raised over the impact of the 'new' discourses of public sector management on the gendered nature of university organisations. In particular, there is a need for in-depth analysis of the changing character of the university sector and the impact on women academics' identities. This research, in focusing on women academics' experiences of appraisal, provides rich insights into the gender regimes emerging in university institutions and the impact on academic values and identities. Therefore, it has added to the wider literature on the nature and processes of gendered cultures and more specifically to the impact of new public management on public sector professionals. The notion of the gendered culture has been taken up to examine the impact of new public management on women working in other parts of the public sector (Lupton, 1992; Maddock and Parkin, 1993; John, 1994; Newman, 1994). While this research has noted the rise in macho management in public sector organisations, there are examples, too, where women have positioned themselves as change agents and have been able to challenge some of the embedded discourses of the organisational culture (Maddock and Parkin, 1993). However, the extent to which these are "side shows to the major drama" (Pritchard, 1996) of the reiteration of the asymmetrical power relations remains to be seen. To take this current research forward, therefore, there are issues which need to be investigated pertaining to the nature of the changing gendered university culture, to the wider changes in public

sector management, and to the impact of these changes on the roles and identities of female professional workers.

Firstly, the responses from the women in the ex-polytechnic, Maresfield, implied that the normalising discourses of management were less narrow and less strongly asserted than in the old university sector. This raised interesting questions on the nature and impact of the new discourses in different university settings. At the time of the interviews, the university had only recently changed from its polytechnic status. In addition, new contracts of employment had been introduced, following a drawn out dispute over terms and conditions. This meant that the interviews were conducted during a period of heightened uncertainty and speculation over the impact such developments might bring in the future, which would have influenced the women's responses. This is not to deny the validity of their realities at that time. However, longitudinal research, over a period of several years, with a sample of women from the original study, would provide further insights into how the new discourses have materialised and thus enable further elaboration on the findings set out in Chapter 8.

The conclusions of this research have indicated that the current climate in higher education remains fundamentally hostile to women academics' needs. Research is required which widens the debate to examine the impact on other female public sector professionals of the changes in public sector management. While some work has been undertaken on examining the impact of new managerialism on female health service professionals (John, 1994; Cassell and Walsh, 1994), female social workers (Lupton, 1992), female university librarians (Davies and Kirkpatrick, 1995) and female

secondary education teachers (Cassell and Walsh, 1994), there is a need for a meta-analysis which examines the wider implications of the changes on female professionals' values and identities. In particular, further research is needed examining areas where the Foucauldian notion of reversed discourses can be seen to be operationalised in specific organisational instances.

At a wider epistemological level, the research has contributed to the debate on the gendering of organisational theory. Through the use of semi-structured interviews, this research has enabled the women academics to share in their sense making and knowledge creation, and thus enabled women to voice their own organisational realities. These voices have presented images of the university culture which contrast greatly with the dominant image of the meritocratic organisation. They serve to challenge the dominant ways of understanding university organisations and therefore help to "loosen the hold of the universal male discourse" (Ferguson, 1985:76) on the nature of university organisations, and of organisations in general. However, the research has gone beyond the deconstruction of the masculine discourses making up the academy and academic profession, it has also drawn on a postmodern framework as a means for deconstructing the knowledge about organisations and management. This is not merely to add gender to existing knowledge but to create new and equally valid ways of understanding organisations. Rather than being reduced to a sterile world of relativism therefore, the deconstruction and challenging of the dominant discourses of the organisation can offer new ways of 'knowing' which reflect women's experiences. In giving a voice, and enabling the articulation of stories by the silenced and oppressed, the stating of alternative discourses may not lead to new

forms of non-exploitative organisations, which value difference, but at least it is a start¹. The articulation of alternative discourses will never tell the whole story (recognising that all theory is partial, contested and situated) but it does enable us to have different visions of an 'elusive problem' (Acker, 1994). Such an articulation, on the one hand, helps us to realise how difficult the situation is and, on the other, how difficult it is for us to change it.

¹ This may be equally applied to black men and women, homosexual men and lesbians, disabled men and women and many white men with alternative subjectivities.

Appendix A

Institutional Scores for Equal Opportunities Development

	<i>Poorly developed</i>			<i>Average</i>						<i>More Developed</i>		
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Old	2	1	5	6	3	5	3	0	0	0	0	
New	2	2	3	4	3	2	1	1	3	0	0	
Total	4	3	8	10	6	7	4	1	3	0	0	

Notes:

Stage of development of equal opportunities scored according to the stage of development of a system of equal opportunities. According to Williams *et al* (1989), the Institution was ranked on whether they had the following features:

- * EO policy
- * EO committee
- * EO co-ordinator
- * Monitoring (gender)
- * EO training for decision makers
- * EO statement in appraisal documentation
- * EO training for appraisers

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