

Professor Judith Pringle, Auckland University of Technology and WOW

‘How do gendered workplaces endure?’

In this presentation, Judith will look back over three decades of gender and diversity research tracing common threads, cul de sacs and repetitions. Significant reviews, theories, concepts, and methodologies will be highlighted. Together, attendees can discuss why gender bias is still prevalent and posit strategies that may create advances within an uncertain future.

Drs Irene Ryan and Barbara Myers, Auckland University of Technology

‘Stories and storying to understand transition and change: Two feminist inspired stories’

The overall purpose of the presentation is to highlight the ways two feminist inspired methodologies can open up our thinking as gender researchers on issues of social inequality, vulnerability and opportunity, as we age. To do so, the presentation will be structured as two stories. We hope the stories told will prompt further conversation on the ‘doing’ of gender research.

Part One:

Irene, using an autoethnographic lens, will share some of a background story that shook her. This incident was a stark reminder of the everyday ‘lived reality’ of social inequality, the precariousness of class privilege and how easy it now is to rationalise entitlement. To do so, she draws on Hughes (2004) notion of class travel. Occupational class is arguably the visible expression of women’s exclusion or difference, yet as Acker (2012, p. 221) laments, “almost no one talks about class” in organisation studies.

Autoethnography is one of the few research methods that gives us a way to connect with such introspective conversations. Methodologically, it can raise our self-consciousness and engage in a reflexive process (Hesse-Biber, 2007). This method enables the researcher to meld personal experience with a critique or comments on social structures and/or cultural practices and the knowledge building process (Holman Jones et al., 2013).

Part Two:

Barbara draws on narrative inquiry and the life story to understand the later-life self-initiated expatriation experiences (SIE: a period of autonomous travel and work in a different country) of older women. With a focus on the individual, interpretivism facilitates the exploration and understanding of phenomena, gives concrete form to the 'invisible', and provides space and credibility to stories, reflections and insights not otherwise documented or understood. Using Polkinghorne's 'narrative analysis' (1995) approach, Barbara also discusses the cycle of storying and re-storying she used to engage in a reflexive and interpretive research process.

Acker, J. (2012), "Gendered organisations and intersectionality: problems and possibilities", *Equality, Diversity and Inclusion: An International Journal*, Vol 31 Iss 3, pp.214-224.

Hesse-Biber, S. (2007), *Handbook of Feminist Research: Theory and Praxis*, Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Holman Jones, S., T. E. Adams and C. Ellis (eds.) (2013), *Handbook of Autoethnography*, Walnut Creek, CA: Left Coast Press.

Hughes, C. (2004), "Class and other Identifications in Managerial Careers", *Gender, Work and Organisation*, Vol, 11 No.5, pp.526-543.

Polkinghorne, D. E. (1995). Narrative configuration in qualitative analysis. *Qualitative Studies in Education*, 8, 5–23.

Kim Ball, Griffith University

'Who you know? Women engineers and informal networking in a project-based organisation in Australia'

The retention of women engineers remains problematic despite many decades of research. This innovative critical ethnographic study of engineers contributes to the knowledge of this phenomenon through the following research question:

1. *How do informal networks impact on professionals' ability for attaining interesting, challenging work in an engineering consultancy, which operates as project-based organisation (PBO)?*
2. *How are women engineers at a disadvantage for attaining interesting, challenging work in a PBO?*
3. *Do women and men network differently in a PBO and how do these differences, if any, impact on women engineers attaining interesting, challenging work in a PBO?*

The critical ethnography methodology adopts traditional ethnographic and Social Network Analysis (SNA) research methods, Critical Social Science theory, network theory and theory of networks, and Joan Acker's inequality regimes theory (IRT). Research methods include fieldwork and an online Organisational Network Analysis

(ONA) survey. This study is designed to provide rich and deep insights into the structures of women and men engineers' informal relations and the roles these play in their working lives.

Major findings relate to differences in the structures of women's and men's informal relations, identifying 20 themes of interesting, challenging work for engineers, and establishing that this work is attained through team work in projects. This study develops a model identifying eight factors necessary for attaining opportunities for interesting, challenging work through a project team assignment process and associated powerful and influential roles. Inequalities for women are identified in organising processes related to the general requirements of work and project team assignment through an intra-organisational recruitment and hiring practice. Additional inequalities relating to structural differences in women's and men's informal relations are identified.

Dr Dhara Shah, Griffith University

'Whose career is more important? Decisions of dual-career couples in women led international assignments'

Despite more than fifty years of research into gender and work, the topic is still under-represented in mainstream IHRM literature. Although women's participation in the workforce has increased steadily over the past two decades, they are still underrepresented on international assignments and often occupy lower hierarchical positions in organisations globally (Salamin & Hanappi, 2014). Research exploring the reasons for the low representation of women on international assignments (Hutchings, Metcalfe & Cooper, 2010), has identified family issues as one of the main causes. In recent years, there has been an increase in studies on dual-career couples, a situation where both partners are psychologically committed and invested to their professions (Harvey, Napier & Moeller, 2009). International assignments are particularly challenging for dual-career couple expatriates (Mäkelä, et al., 2011), and this is emphasised in a female led international assignment due to their and their spouses role identities. While female expatriation has grown steadily, only one-third of them are accompanied by their male spouse or partner (Cartos, 2014). Limited research on trailing male partners of expatriate women, have identified men feel socially isolated due to the dependent status in a female breadwinner family, which could be a contributor to the lack of accompanying male expatriate spouse (Selmer & Leung, 2003; Cole, 2012). Thus the challenges that dual-career couples face on international

assignments are unique compared to single career couples (Känsälä, Mäkelä & Suutari, 2015), as the decisions to relocate internationally impacts careers of both partners.

In light of this the present study aims to increase an understanding of dual career expatriates experiences in women led international assignments. It responds to Schutter and Boerner's (2013) call for more research on female expatriates, and addresses identified gaps in the literature about women expatriates and repatriates from an emerging economy (India). The current study looks at the career prioritising impact on IT women's decision-making when undertaking international assignments. In particular, it investigated whether identity theories elucidates the changing role-identities of women and their work-life interface. The study is under-pinned by career-hierarchy and identity theories to identify motivations, experiences and work-life interface of married Indian IT women who travel for international projects. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 25 married women IT professionals who had returned from medium to long-term international assignments. Our research suggests that most of the women had travelled for short to medium term international assignments by themselves, while leaving their husbands and children behind in India. Moreover while husband's support was the key, extended family (parents and parents in law) and host nationals can facilitate or hinder women to successfully complete an international assignments.

Cartos Corporation (2014). 2014 trends in global relocation: global mobility policy & practices, Cartos Corporation, Danbury, CT.

Cartos Corporation (2016). *Trends in Global Relocation*, Global Mobility policy and practices, 2016 Survey Report, Cartos Corporation, Danbury, CT

Cole, N.D. (2011). Managing global talent: solving the spousal adjustment problem. *International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 22(7), 1504-1530.

Harvey, M., Napier, N. & Moeller, M. (2009). Interpreting Dual Career Couples' family life-cycles: Identifying strategic windows of global career opportunity. *Research and Practice in Human Resource Management*, 17(2), 14-35

Hutchings, K., Metcalfe, B. & Cooper, B. (2010). Exploring Middle Eastern women's perceptions of barriers to, and facilitators of, international management opportunities. *International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 21(1), 61-83.

Känsälä, M., Mäkelä, L. & Suutari, V. (2015). Career coordination strategies among dual career expatriate couples. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 26(17), 2187-2210

Mäkelä, L., Känsälä, M. & Suutari, V. (2011). Dual career couples and international assignments: The different roles of expatriates' partners. *International Journal of Cross Cultural Management*, 18, 185-197.

Salamin, X. & Hanappi, D. (2014). Women and international assignments. *Journal of Global Mobility*, 2(3), 343-374.

Schutter, H. & Boerner, S. (2013). Illuminating the work-family interface on international assignments: an exploratory approach. *Journal of Global Mobility*, 1(1), 46-71.

Selmer, J. & Leung, A.S.M. (2003). International adjustment of female vs male business expatriates. *International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 14(7), 1117-1131.

Professor Ruth McPhail, Griffith University

'Lesbian and gay expatriation: Opportunities, barriers and challenges for global mobility'

This paper addresses an important gap in the expatriation literature in examining perceptions of opportunities, barriers and challenges for expatriation of lesbian and gay (LG) expatriates. This is an area that is under-researched despite such individuals representing a growing sector of the global talent pool. Based on an analysis of interviews with 20 LG expatriates, the study draws on social capital theory as a lens for highlighting LG expatriates' unique attributes and networks. The research is significant in suggesting that the expatriates' sexual minority status is viewed as both a disabler and enabler in expatriation. We suggest that there is a corporate ceiling for LG expatriates, and that they experience discrimination and stereotyping, and often times limited organizational and host-country support. Significantly, the findings also extend research in suggesting that LG workers may have more opportunities in global staffing than previously thought and a valuable role in contributing to inclusivity debates and policy development on the global business stage. Furthermore, LG expatriates may be accepted in host countries when homosexuality is deemed legally or socially unacceptable for locals, and legal and financial independence within LG partnerships may provide them with more mobility than their heterosexual counterparts.

Dr Kaye Broadbent, University of Technology Sydney, and Professor Emeritus Glenda Strachan, Griffith University

Gender and the Professions: International and Contemporary Perspectives

Historically, academic scholarship on the 'professions' focused on the delineation of this group of occupations which were open to men only. In the last 50 years the scholarship has widened, though very little of it deals with issues of gender, and studies of the feminised 'professions' such as nursing (previously often referred to as 'semi-professions') have been separated from the broader debates on 'professions'. This paper introduces the major ideas presented in the new book *Gender and the*

Professions: International and Contemporary Perspectives, (Routledge 2018) edited by Kaye Broadbent, Glenda Strachan and Geraldine Healy.

Historically, working in a profession, by definition skilled and credentialed work, was thought to ensure that the worker was immune to the vicissitudes of work such as precarity and uncertain income faced by other workers. However, studies in this book, such as those of academic staff in Australia or architects in Spain, show that highly educated groups are now feeling the impact of this precarity, albeit in different ways. All the studies present a gendered analysis of the profession examined. It is clear that while 'skill is an expectation that professional status will protect women from the worst effects of gendered organisations and of occupational segregation', this is not the reality. Indeed, 'a convergence of gendered experiences mediated by gendered structures are evident in the professions', and these disadvantage women. The chapters in the book cover a range of professions in a range of national settings, and all explore in detail particular gendered experiences, which in the end demonstrate the resilience of inequality regimes.

It is a special pleasure to talk about the book at the seminar, as the ideas for it were formulated over discussions in many wEDGE seminars.