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Doing Gender: How Stories in an Organization Help to Create and Maintain Gender

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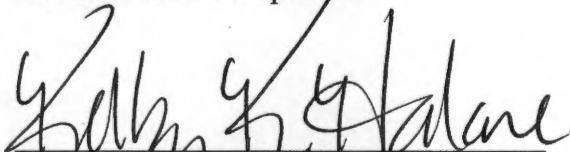
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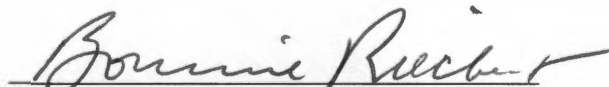
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**DOING GENDER: HOW STORIES IN AN ORGANIZATION
HELP TO CREATE AND MAINTAIN GENDER**

**A Thesis
Presented for the
Master's of Science Degree
University of Tennessee, Knoxville**

**linda pyscher jurczak
May 2003**

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Abstract

This study examines how stories told within an organization help to create and maintain gender within that organization. It focuses on similarities and differences of stories told by males and females in the organization, particularly whether stories indicate a unified culture and if stories indicate a common perception of the rise of men and women through the ranks. Four locations of a major chain of national travel centers participated in the study. Qualitative research methods were used to gather data about the organizational culture, specifically, one Southeastern location was observed and nineteen in-depth interviews were conducted resulting in 136 stories. Stories were analyzed to determine if and how the culture of the organization contributes to the gendering of the organization. This study builds on work in this area that argues that organizational culture creates and maintains gender within the organization. Specifically, the study found that categories of stories told by men and women are generally the same, but the themes running through the stories are not.

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Chapter 1

Men, Women, and Organizational Stories

A popular movie of the early 1980s takes a comedic look at organizational culture and pokes fun at the patriarchal hierarchy of the company. Dabney Coleman, as the stereotypical middle-aged, white, executive, lords over his female subordinates. Lily Tomlin is the hard-working, devoted, supervisor who keeps getting passed over for promotion. Dolly Parton is the voluptuous secretary who is continuously “sexually” harassed by Coleman and “good-naturedly” laughs it off just to keep her job. Jane Fonda, educated but unskilled, returns to work after her husband leaves her for a younger woman. In one of those strange twists of Hollywood fate, the women take over the executive position, do a total makeover of the organization (i.e., making it woman-friendly) and gain attention from the parent company. Coleman takes credit for the turnaround, gets promoted to South America, and everyone else works happily ever after.

In this movie, art imitated life. Hollywood captured the interactive, communicative nature of organizational culture at about the same time that there began to be a strong scholarly interest in organizational culture. In retrospect, the characters in the movie are representative of the times, as is the division of labor in the organization. Women occupied the lower levels of the hierarchy—receptionists, secretaries, office managers—which allegedly happened to be “acceptable” jobs for women, and men were at the top. As would be expected of a highly structured organization, the rules for the worker bees were strict and behavior was dictated by position. Stereotypical masculine behaviors such as aggressiveness and task-orientation were the accepted standard (Cartwright & Gale, 1995). So accepted, in fact, that even women trying to break through

into management adopted masculine behaviors, as is evidenced by Coleman's assistant who spies on women in the ladies room so she can report their activities to him as a way of gaining favor. *Nine to Five* paints a very good picture of organizational culture.

As previously noted, Hollywood people were not the only ones interested in organizational culture in the early 1980s. Researchers also began looking at the effects of organizational culture (Deal & Kennedy, 1982; Hofstede, 1980). Interest in this phenomenon has grown since that time, with studies examining organizational culture in many ways (e. g., Alvesson & Billing, 1997; Calás & Smircich, 1999; Cooke & Rousseau, 1988). It has been examined quantitatively and qualitatively, through the use of observation, interviews, and surveys, yet our understanding of organizational culture remains limited. Many researchers have defined organizational culture. Martin, (2002, pp. 57-58) lists 12 definitions, but there is no one unified or accepted definition. Clearly, there are many ways of approaching a study of organizational culture. This study uses Deal and Kennedy's (1982) definition: "Corporate culture, the cohesion of values, myths, heroes, and symbols that has come to mean a great deal to the people who work there" (p. 4).

Recently there has been a growing interest in how organizational cultures create and maintain gender within the organization (Aaltio-Marjosola, 1994; Alvesson & Billing, 1997; Ashcraft & Pacanowsky, 1996; Bingham, 1990; Brown, 1989; Countryman, 1995; Fish, 1991; Gherardi & Poggio, 2001; Hawk, 1995; Lamsa & Sintonen, 2001; Martin, 2002; McMillan, 1989; Smith & Rogers, 2000; Swap, Leonard, Shields, Abrams, 2001). Researchers have long been interested in the differences between men and women in organizations, but few have looked at the role of culture in creating

and maintaining gender in the organization. The purpose of this study is to examine ways in which organizational culture dynamics are communicatively responsible for creating and maintaining gender within a traditionally male-dominated organization, a national chain of travel centers (formerly known as truck stops). More specifically, it focuses on stories told within the organization that perpetuate gender. Borrowing from Itzin and Newman (1995), for the purposes of this study gender is defined as:

socially constructed and culturally determined characteristics associated with women and men, the assumption made about the skills and abilities of women and men based on these characteristics, the conditions in which women and men live and work, the relations that exist between women and men, and how these are represented, communicated, transmitted, and maintained. (p. 2)

Or, to put it another way, “Gender should be viewed as a practice and not as a natural phenomenon, as something that is ‘done’ and not something that ‘is’” (Gherardi & Poggio, 2001, p. 256).

Rationale for the Study

Hollywood tells the story of women being sexually harassed, passed over, and starting over at midlife with humor. World War II presented opportunities for women because men went to war and women were allowed to work in non-traditional, female occupations—lumber mills, auto and aircraft factories, munitions industry. The return of men to the workforce brought with it a return to a sex-segregated work force. However, by the 1960s and 1970s economic, social, and technological changes moved women from the fringes to the mainstream and opened doors for women professionally (Cleveland, Stockdale, & Murphy, 2000). The influx of women into the work world brought with it

an increased interest in women as leaders. Some of the earliest studies examined behavioral differences in men and women as leaders and managers (e. g., Chapman, 1975; Chapman & Luthans, 1975; Day & Stogdill, 1972; Denmark, 1977; Schein, 1975).

This line of research continued and grew into a body of literature that reflected society's acceptance of women in leadership roles and the inclusion of women in management positions. However, researchers were particularly interested in the differences between men and women in leadership. They examined a variety of differences between men and women including their styles (Eagly & Johnson, 1990; Ronk, 1993; Rosener, 1990; Smith, 1997), their styles in different organizations (Aldoory, 1998; Birdsall, 1980; Buzzanell, Ellingson, Silvio, Pasch, Dale, Mauro, Smith, Weir & Martin, 1997; Ronk, 1993; Rosener, 1990), how leaders emerged (Eagly & Karau, 1991; Goktepe & Schneier, 1989; Gurman & Long, 1992a; Kent & Moss, 1994; Kolb, 1997; Moss & Kent, 1996; Wentworth & Anderson, 1984), communication styles (Birdsall, 1980), attributions of male and female leaders (Porter et al., 1983; Powell & Butterfield, 1982), effectiveness (Eagly, Karau & Makhijani, 1995; Hackman, Hills, Paterson & Furniss, 1993) and motivation (Chusmir, 1984).

Much of the early research, however, was conducted with members of the dominant class as researchers and/or participants and therefore reflects the white male perspective (Chusmir, 1984; Holmwood, 1995). In other words, the white male created the world according to his needs, to the exclusion of the female perspective.

Some of the many studies conducted throughout the years on leadership have found no significant differences to exist between women and men as leaders (e. g. Donnell & Hall, 1980; Eagly et al., 1995). However, in the context of organizational

culture the explanation for no significant difference could have more to do with the assimilation of the dominant culture and less to do with the preferred leadership style (Cartwright & Gale, 1995). When a manager is hired or promoted, she becomes a role model for the corporate culture. As such, she is responsible for behaving in a manner consistent with the values of the organization. As Alvesson (2002, p. 106) points out: “Arguably culture forms leadership rather than the other way around. So is at least the case for the large majority of all people designated as or emerging as leaders.” This is consistent with early studies in feminine leadership suggesting that women may have adapted and accepted stereotypically masculine characteristics to succeed in management (Birdsall, 1980; Schein, 1975).

After more than a quarter of a century of women pursuing careers in earnest, the “glass ceiling” remains intact. Women account for only three to five percent of top management in the United States (U. S. Department of Labor, 1998), indicating that a problem continues to exist. A Business Week survey of 400 American women in management found that 70 percent cited “the male dominated corporate culture as an obstacle to their success (Segal & Zellner, 1992, p. 74). Obviously something is keeping women out of the upper echelons of corporate management, perhaps that “something” is hegemony. Littlejohn (2002) defines hegemony as “the process of domination, in which one set of ideas subverts or co-opts another” (p. 211). One example of this can be seen in the behaviors of leaders.

According to previous research, the accepted socially appropriate behavior for leaders was to be aggressive, authoritative, dominant, competitive, assertive, task-oriented, logical, organized, direct, dominating, independent, rational, analytical

autocratic and directive (Aldoory, 1998; Arkkelin, 1985; Cann & Siegfried, 1987, 1990; Chapman, 1975; Chapman & Luthans, 1975; Denmark, 1977; Eagly et al., 1995; Korabik & Ayman, 1989; Ronk, 1993; Sargent & Stupak, 1989). Again, this portrait of the leader was based on white, heterosexual men only. White women and minorities were excluded from the research, which resulted in them trying to level the playing field by adopting the traits and behaviors of the dominant class. Rather than accepting their differences, they tried to fit the mold of the dominant class (Coppolino & Seath, 1987; Korabik & Ayman, 1989).

Many have speculated about the lack of advancement for women, but there have been “few empirical studies examining the relationship between organizational culture and women’s advancement” (Bajdo & Dickson, 2001, p. 409). If, as claimed by feminists and others, the world has been shaped and dictated by the dominant male class (e. g. Gilligan, 1983; Harding, 1985), would this not include organizational culture? And, if organizational culture is defined by the dominant male class, is it not possible that it leads to the perpetuation of gender within organizations? In this context, gender is a social construction rather than a natural phenomenon.

Much of the current discussion regarding gender and organizational culture focuses on the “glass ceiling” and career barriers faced by women (Bajdo & Dickson, 2001; Cartwright & Gale, 1995; Simpson, 2000; Veale & Gold, 1998). These barriers include different hiring and promoting practices (Badjo & Dickson, 2001), continued stereotyping of women and women’s roles (Hultin & Szulkin, 1999), hostile environments created by gender imbalance (Ely, 1994; Simpson, 2000), and responsibilities in the home. Although much has been written about this problem in the

United States (Glass Ceiling Commission 1995), it seems to be global and pervasive in many parts of Europe as well (Cartwright & Gale, 1995; Simpson, 2000).

Organizational culture is viewed as something an organization does rather than what it is (Smircich, 1985). Furthermore, it is used as an instrument of the male hierarchy to keep women from achieving equality because they are different and they do not embrace the same values. In fact, organizational reality can be viewed as a socially constructed context for human experiences, and gender as a socially constructed category that evolved within its boundaries (Calas & Smircich, 1992). If, as noted in the literature, men tend to promote power cultures—cultures that dictate the “do as I say” or “my way or the highway” mentality and women tend to promote teamwork and participatory management (Cartwright & Gale, 1995), then it is reasonable to assume that culture is shared. In other words as suggested by Louis (1985), “Culture is a set of understandings or meanings shared by a group of people. The meanings are largely tacit among the members, are clearly relevant to a particular group, and are distinctive to the group” (p. 74).

Guiding Questions

There are many ways of studying organizational culture and the method chosen depends in large part on the particular topic of interest within a culture and on the researcher herself. Some approaches study from the more traditional quantitative stance while others use qualitative methods. Much of organizational culture research is done qualitatively, including gender and organizational culture research. One methodology employed by researchers is the use of stories as systematic inquiry (Martin & Powers, 1983; Peters & Waterman, 1982; Wilkens, 1983).

There are several reasons why stories are gaining importance for researchers. The use of stories is provocative because organizational values are conveyed through storytelling (Dhunpath, 2000; Martin, Feldman, Hatch & Sitkin, 1983; Meyer, 1995; Morgan & Dennehy, 1997) and relationships within the organization are easily explained through them; stories are a quick way to socialize new employees into an organization (Brown, 1985; Kaye & Jacobson, 1999, Kreps, 1989; Swap et al., 2001). They are also entertaining and easy to follow and remember (Martin & Powers, 1983).

Clearly, the literature suggests that organizational cultures do create and maintain gender. It suggests that men are the gatekeepers hierarchically in positions of power and influence. “Men’s norms have obviously steered (and still steer) the culture which pervades the decision-making world, i.e. the top strata in the many hierarchies around us” (Asplund, 1988, p. 46). Men also maintain the structure of the “good ol’ boys network” by making deals in men’s rooms and on golf courses.

Also, several organizations have very clear divisions of labor. Women are still found in many stereotypical women’s jobs (i.e., receptionist, administrative assistant, bookkeeper) (U. S. Department of Labor, 1998). Whether organizations are “gendered” is no longer a question. However, the question remains as to how different organizational cultures create and maintain gender. This has not been answered in the available literature and requires additional studies of organizational cultures. Additionally, there are relatively few existing studies about organizational culture and gender. Thus, this study seeks to add to the existing body of literature with the study of gender in a male-dominated organization through the use of personal interviews guided by the following questions.

- 1) What kinds of stories do women and men tell in the organization—how are they similar or different?
- 2) Do women's and men's stories about the organization indicate an understanding of a unified culture?
- 3) What kinds of stories are told about the rise of men versus the rise of women through the ranks?
- 4) Do men's and women's stories reveal changes within the organization?

Chapter 2

Gender, Stories, and Organizational Culture

Although the number of scholarly articles and books devoted to organizational culture is large, relatively few of those address gender and organizational culture. Within those that do focus on organizational culture and gender, there are several major issues addressed repeatedly. Given this, I will discuss those major issues rather than provide a comprehensive review. First I will explore how and why organizations use culture to maintain gender. Next, I will examine the role of subcultures in creating and maintaining gender. Finally, I will discuss stories in organizational culture and the ways in which they help to perpetuate an organization's culture, including gender.

Gendering within Organizations

Gender and the Status Quo

One of the overarching themes of the literature is the desire and the ability of the dominant class to maintain power. The dominant class is defined as white, heterosexual, non-handicapped, and male. Why is it important to maintain a gendered organizational culture? The simple answer is tradition; a more accurate explanation is power. The dominant class is used to making the rules. "Men's norms have obviously steered (and still steer) the culture which pervades the decision-making world, i.e. the top strata in the many hierarchies around us" (Asplund, 1988, p. 46). Men are the gatekeepers who are hierarchically in positions of power and influence. Veale and Gold (1998, p. 25) reported a particular emphasis on culture and the way the male councillors and managers "reproduced an anti-female ethos." Specifically, they found that the male-dominated, top

levels of the organization perpetuated a working atmosphere and management style contrary to the team working, collaborative style preferred by women managers, creating a hindrance to women's progress. In fact, men's norms have been in place for so long that when values are in conflict, male values are deemed the non-gendered norm (Gherardi & Poggio, 2001).

The question is how is this possible in a world with government sanctioned equality and laws against discrimination? It is possible because the "good ol' boys" network remains intact. Many organizational cultures have been shaped by men (Marshall, 1993), and tend to reinforce the value system of the dominant gender (Klenke, 1996). Sources of power in organizations are frequently biased towards men as a result of generations of socialization and internalization effects that produce organizational structures, norms, and cultures with built-in power balances toward men (Mann, 1995, p. 10). Women have difficulty achieving positions of power because they are not part of the male community—a community where men have similar backgrounds and belonged to the same fraternities (Asplund, 1988; Itzin, 1995). Men meet informally in hallways, the parking lot, golf courses, and even the rest room (Mann, 1995, p. 10). Not all business takes place within the confines of an office. " 'Drinking with the boys' was recognized by men and women as an important way of being part of the informal network" (Simpson, 2000, p. 10). It is easy for men to withhold information and put women at a disadvantage.

Gender and the Sexual Division of Labor

Another important way that organizational culture perpetuates gender is in a sexual division of labor (Itzin, 1995; Harlow, Hearn & Perkin, 1995). Gottfried and

Graham (1993, p. 617) describe the dichotomy of an automobile manufacturing plant. Men typically monopolized the operation of heavy machines and left the devalued tasks, such as taping wiring harnesses, to the women. Only when it suited them did they allow the women to perform dangerous jobs. One example given is when the men allowed the women to go outside to move cars in freezing temperatures while they stayed inside. This division of labor can be seen in many businesses and industries. Typically women are not found on the sales floor in car dealerships, managing the grocery department, or in the CEO's office. Women are generally found in the bookkeepers office, the health and beauty department, and at the receptionist's desk. In fact, Bose and Whaley (2001) point out that seven of the ten most common jobs for women are sex segregated (secretaries, cashiers, registered nurses, nursing aids/orderlies/assistants, elementary school teachers, and servers).

Gender and Sex Segregation

In addition to a sexual division of labor, there is also sex segregation in the workplace. Women are over represented in lower levels of organizations and underrepresented in higher levels (Bajdo & Dickson, 2001; Gale & Cartwright, 1995; Itzin, 1995; Snyder, Verderber, Langmeyer & Myers, 1992). Women managers are typically found in the middle. President George H. W. Bush appointed the *Glass Ceiling Commission*. Women have been told that inequities exist only in their imaginations, however, the commission's findings substantiate the inequalities women have been claiming. The commission reported the following:

Although white men constitute only 37% of the American population, they hold 95% of the top managerial jobs in Fortune 1000 corporations. If one looks beyond the realm of senior management in American corporations, 8.5% of working women hold jobs that are classified as executive/managerial, compared to 20% of working men. While 60% of American women who work full time outside the home are in clerical and service sector jobs, compared to 15% of working men. (Hacker, 1992, in Hawkesworth 1999)

Gender and Stereotyping

Organizational culture also contributes to the gendering of the organization by a prevalence of stereotyping. Two persistent stereotypes involving women revolve around family life. One is that women are going to leave for marriage and/or family; the other is that there will be conflicts between work and family and women will always choose family. Women were not and should not be considered for promotions because the long hours expected of senior managers are incompatible with domestic responsibilities (Harlow, Hearn & Perkin, 1995; Itzin, 1995; Mann, 1995; Veale & Gold, 1998). There continues to be an assumption in Western culture that women are the caretakers. If and when a female manager has children it is assumed that she will be the one to deal with the difficulties of child care, everyday occurrences, and unexpected illnesses. Because women have traditionally been viewed as the “caretaker,” it is also assumed that they will be the ones to deal with the needs of elderly parents. Some women managers shared that they felt guilty if their career interfered with housework and household responsibilities (Veale & Gold, 1998).

Also included under the umbrella of sexual ways that organizations perpetuate culture is sexual harassment, which can take different forms. "Emergent and potentially powerful women are often cut down to size by sexual means" (Cockburn, 1991, p. 141). Sexist humor, which is generally demeaning to women and reduces their status, is often bantered around in organizations and women are not seen as part of the team if they refuse to take part in it (Simpson, 2000, p. 12). A study of organizational standpoints was undertaken by Dougherty (2001), in which she examined sexual harassment in organizations from differing standpoints. Similar to the broader societal standpoints identified by Hartsock (1989), an organizational standpoint is the view one has of the organization depending on position within the organization. She found that sexual harassment may be a functional part of the organizing process for dominant members of organizations. Sexual harassment appears to be a coping mechanism for stress, caring, and camaraderie. However, for female participants it did not serve a functional purpose and appeared to be either nonfunctional or dysfunctional.

Organizations and Subcultures

According to Deal and Kennedy (1982), every business, every organization, has a culture. "Corporate culture, the cohesion of values, myths, heroes, and symbols that has come to mean a great deal to the people who work there" (Deal & Kennedy, 1982, p. 4). It has also been argued that organizational culture is powerfully enduring and has a pervasive influence on behavior. It affects the language, dress, and physical layout of the organization (Schein, 1985). This would suggest that if a common organizational culture

was at work influencing people within the organization, subcultures would also exist, which would affect particular groups differently.

What is a subculture? Van Maanen and Barley (1985) define subcultures as “a subset of an organizations members who interact regularly with one another, identify themselves as a distinct group within the organization, share a set of problems commonly defined to be the problems of all and routinely taking action on the basis of collective understandings unique to the group (p. 38). Based on this definition, it would be reasonable to assume that subcultures evolve within organizations for a variety of reasons. Subcultures could result, for example, on the basis of departments, jobs, hierarchical levels, or sex.

Cartwright and Gale (1995) noted that the literature suggests masculine cultures are likely to be dominated by power relationships and are results oriented, and feminine cultures are likely to be more concerned with interpersonal relationships and process oriented. This distinction can also be seen in masculine and feminine subcultures. Mulac, Bradac and Gibbons (2001) found that the use of language contributes to two distinct subcultures. They suggest that masculine and feminine subcultures result from different uses of the same language. Although boys and girls learn the same language, they learn to use that language differently. The masculine style is more direct, succinct, and instrumental as opposed to the indirect, elaborate, and affective feminine style. Direct features include judgmental adjectives (e.g., “good” and “dumb”) and directives (e.g., “write that down”), and indirect features include uncertainty verbs (e.g., “it seems to

be...”), oppositions (e.g., “it’s peaceful, yet full of movement”), negations (e.g., “it’s not a...”), hedges (e.g., “kind of”), and questions (e.g., “what’s that?”) (p. 125).

One research study found the existence of subcultures within a University setting; Kramer and Berman (1998) found a strong student subculture. Specifically, they found that both the dominant culture and the student subculture told stories revolving around two themes: traditions and heritage. However, the themes were the only similarities. The students’ stories represented the antithesis of the conservative tradition of the University (p. 302). They suggest that the differing stories are indicative of clashes between the two cultures, which leads to conflict over espoused values. A subculture’s stories can affect the dominant culture in two ways, which may help to explain how subcultures can contribute to creating and maintaining gender within organizations. One, they may create and recreate an unsatisfactory culture that has nothing to do with the dominant culture, and two, the stories can actually undermine management’s efforts at influencing the organizational culture. They also noted in that any group can appropriate stories for their own use. This supports the idea that the same story can be interpreted differently by different subcultures within the same organization (Martin & Siehl, 1983).

Clearly the label “dominant” culture implies a power structure. Sinclair (1993) points out that “by relinquishing power to subcultures, communally-mediated control is effectively increased; by sponsoring autonomy, commitment can be nourished; by encouraging connections between organizational subcultures and wider community groups, the organization’s reserves are enhanced not undermined (p. 69). She also noted

that the subculture can act as a source of surveillance and critique over other groupings in the organization, who may enjoy a privileged position.

Orbe (1998) addressed the question of power within cultures. Although he referred to the much broader societal structure, his ideas could easily also be applied to organizational cultures. He points out that the term subculture is in itself problematic. It implies subordination and has a negative connotation. Use of the term co-culture rather than subculture eliminates the negative connotation “while acknowledging great diversity of influential cultures that simultaneously exist in the United States” (p. 2). Interestingly he points out that “co-cultural” suggests that although many cultures exist within the United States, no one culture is any better than any other culture or in any way superior. Similarly, within organizations, employees in differing departments and at different levels of the hierarchy each have a different yet equally important job to perform.

Wilkof et al. (1995) support the idea that power is generally found at the top of the hierarchy, resulting in camaraderie and cooperation within lower levels of the organization. “Although there was a fairly cooperative spirit among lower levels in the organization, an adversarial norm of control and domination over the organization and its environment pervaded the top management level” (p. 381).

Clearly both subcultures and co-cultures exist within organizations and they contribute to the gendering of those organizations. They do this through language used and stories told. Obviously stories told play an important role in shaping and maintaining organizational culture. The following section looks at the organizational story literature and the role of stories in helping to create and re-create gender in organizations.

Stories in the Organization

What are stories? Stories are discursive artifacts produced by members of an organization (Alvesson & Billing, 1997; Brown, 1989; Countryman, 1995; Gherardi & Poggio, 2001; Martin, 2002; Swap, Leonard, Shields, Abrams, 2001). Many definitions of stories can be found in the literature. There is no one, all-encompassing, globally accepted definition of organizational stories. They have been variously defined as “a detailed narrative of past management actions, employee interactions, or other intro-or extra-organizational events that are communicated informally within the organization” (Swap et al., 2001, p. 103) and “Any sequence of events (a plot) together in time or causally related, with organization-related characters, which takes place in a setting somehow related to the organization” (Meyer, 1995). Martin noted that they “consist of two elements: a narrative, describing a sequence of events, and a set of meanings or interpretations—the morals to the story” (Martin, 2002, p. 71). It has also been noted that they differ from gossip because they have a setting, a cast of characters, and a plot that resolves some sort of crisis (Hansen & Kahnweiler, 1993). The literature does suggest that certain elements are common to all organizational stories: 1) that they have a beginning, middle, and end and 2) that they are somehow related to the organization.

Why are stories such an integral part of organizational culture? One reason is that stories make a message memorable, they “promote collaborations (i.e. connections), which allow the listener to retain the memory” (Swap et. al., 2001). Not surprisingly, storytelling can bring the reader or the listener into the scene and allow for feeling the emotions that the characters in the story feel. It is this visual imagery and emotion that

make stories likely to be remembered (Morgan & Dennehy, 1997). Stories are powerful because they are vivid and memorable; they help us to understand.

Cognitive science research tells us that memorable information is more likely to be acted upon than is information that remains unconscious and not retrieved from memory. Therefore, anything that tends to make information more memorable will have a greater likelihood of assuming significance. Because stories are more vivid, engaging, entertaining, and easily related to personal experience than rules or directives, the research would predict they would be more memorable, be given more weight, and be more likely to guide behavior. In addition, because of the rich contextual details encoded in stories, they are ideal carriers of tacit dimensions of knowledge (although what is ultimately encoded by the listener may not correspond closely to the intentions of the storyteller. (Schank, 1990, p.103)

Although it is important to understand what organizational stories are and why they are important, it is equally important to understand what they do because, as Countryman notes, “they are a predominant feature of all established organizations (Countryman, 1995, p. 18). Stories function within an organizational culture in a variety of ways. First, they give the culture an identity and personality. According to Countryman, narrative is a form of conversation with the past, they are dynamic, social constructions, and as such give life to the organization. Second, they are a repository of a common cultural intelligence and emotion. Stories are one way for organizational members to pass on knowledge of past occurrences and to convey shared emotions.

Third, the story form inherently helps to construct and reconstruct the culture. They do this by providing a shared reality and allowing for the communication of a corporate vision. Next, they ease the socialization process by simplifying it. Storytelling allows for scenarios, which convey not only previous experience and conduct, but also values, history, and expectations. Finally, they help to convey cultural values, norms, and behaviors. They tell organizational members what is valued within the organization, how to move up, and the reality of everyday organizational life.

Identity and Personality

Much of the literature suggests that organizations have an identity and personality, which make them almost human. “In order to have an identity, organizations establish a historical and anticipated continuity of behavior that is consistent with an identity already existing in the given context” (Levitt & Nass, 1989, p. 241). They also note that organizations can construct an identity; consultants can create legitimacy without interrupting day-to-day activities. This is done through providing new metaphors and stories for the organization, essentially rewriting the organization’s history.

Czarniawska-Joerges’ (1989) proposes a concept of organizational identity based on four elements 1) a definition of individual identity as modern institution (temporal and local), 2) an (institutionalized) metaphor of organization as person, 3) a description of an individual identity as emerging from interactions between actors rather than existing as a form of an essence that is consequently exhibited, and 4) an analogy between organizational narratives and autobiographies as narratives constituting identity (pp 199-200). These are significant departures from previous concepts of organizational identities

in several important ways. First, Czarniawska-Joerges views the function of narrative in creating the identity not as being something removed from the construction, but as part of the construction. She argues that the narrative cannot be taken out of the context if it is to have meaning. Also, she calls it modern identity, distinguishing it from historical identity. Unlike previous studies of organizational identity, in which upper management sets the tone and dictates the culture, she notes that the identity construction is a continuous process of narration between the narrator and the audience. Finally, she uses the analogy of the autobiography because of the individual rather than community-based character of the organization's identity.

Countryman (1995) takes a more developmental perspective. "Reframing" is predicated on the idea that identity is a story. And an organization gets its identity by virtue of the story it tells or the story that is told by outsiders. An organization can reframe its narrative and thereby change its identity. And this is done by reframing, telling the same story without altering the facts, instead altering the disposition of the facts this can provoke dramatic alterations in the identity and conduct of the organization whose story is at stake (p. 22).

Stories and Cultural Intelligence

The literature suggests that organizations have an identity and a personality of their own, and that stories give it shape (Christensen & Cheney, 1989; Czarniawska-Joerges, 1989; Dhunpath, 2000; Kaye & Jacobson, 1999; Kreps, 1989; Lämsä & Sintonen, 2001; Levitt & Nass, 1989; O'Neill, 2000). Czarniawska-Joerges (1989) takes it a step further in noting that human beings are social constructors, organizations are

social constructions, and narratives are identity constructors. In fact, narratives can be manipulated to create the past by reenacting it, and new sets of metaphors and language can be adopted to make past behavior appear to be more consistent. Stories are also storehouses of organizational knowledge and creators of a common culture and intelligence (Brown, 1985; Kreps, 1989).

Discourses do not just represent the social world—they also construct a social world of meanings in different ways, constitute social relations between people, and position individuals in different ways as social subjects. So, there are no identities of individuals in stable form across time, but instead they are dependent on linguistic practices to make sense of their own and others action. (Lämsä & Sintonen, 2001, p. 260)

According to Kreps (1986), the primary ingredients of culture are the collective interpretations members create about organizational activities and outcomes. Stories illustrate these collective interpretations, describing interpretive frameworks that inform members about the meanings cultures prescribe for organizational phenomena (such as how members, products, equipment, property, and rules should be interpreted). Interpretive frameworks have a direct impact on members' actions and interpretations, influence members' attitudes and values, and can dictate members' behavior and any jargon. Stories also reinforce the organization's history, values, philosophy, informal norms, as well as identifying organizational heroes and villains.

Stories provide members with a shared perception of reality and a common sense of social order. They serve as cultural storehouses for organizational intelligence,

providing members with insights about how to react to the difficult situations they encounter. Kreps suggests that organizations have a shared intelligence system and that they share intelligence communicated through stories, which provides insight and information about how situations were handled in the past. Newhauser (1988) compares organizations to families and points out that, like families, organizations have historical memory, and historical memory is part of the organization's culture. This culture is solidified through "tribal lore" as members of each subgroup tell new members stories about life in the workplace. Kaye and Jacobson (1999) added that stories create a collective sense of shared purpose and meaning that can enhance cohesion around an organization's culture.

Constructing and Reconstructing Culture

Stories have been linked to constructing and reconstructing culture in several ways. Stories provide collective structure and predictability to organizational life by providing members with a common cultural reality (Kaye & Jacobson, 1999; Kreps, 1989). Kreps (1989) adds that stories help to create this common culture and the organizational intelligence, which helps to foster the appropriate behavior within organizations. Organizational members have the benefit of past experience in the organization, maintained in an "organizational intelligence" to help them deal with situations. Rather than starting from scratch every time, they can rely on the "organizational storehouse" of information to facilitate their abilities to coordinate, collaborate, and organize (Kreps, 1986).

A leader's vision of the future can be communicated through the use of stories to invoke commitment on the part of the subordinate. Stories play a part in capturing and disseminating learning—mentoring—of future leaders. They inspire alignment in support of change initiative (Kaye & Jacobson, 1999). Hansen and Kahnweiler (1993) noted that stories may help managers to lead and change corporate cultures by facilitating the process of sharing a vision. They may also help employees to gain insight into their own perceptions of the culture.

Martin et al. (1983) selected stories because they generate, as well as reflect, changes in organizational cultures. They identified seven types of organizational stories, which they note are not found in all organizations, but are found with regularity in a wide variety. Each of these types of stories contributes to the construction of culture. The first is the “Is the big boss human?” story and clues employees in to whether rule-breaking is acceptable. The second is the “Can the little person rise to the top?” story and clarifies the promotion process in the organization. Third is the “Will I get fired?” story, which tells employees about the loyalty of the company. Fourth, the “Will the organization help me when I have to move?” story gives the employee an idea of his or her value to the company. Fifth, the “How will the boss react to mistakes?” story tells employees if mistakes are viewed as forgivable, learning opportunities or dangerous and costly. And last, the “How will the organization deal with obstacles?” story speaks to the question of where control is located.

Stories and Socialization

Stories help in the socialization of new organization members in several ways. Stories can help to reduce uncertainty and provide employees or organization members with necessary information. They also provide common explanations and aid in sense making in the literature (Brown, 1985; Kramer & Berman, 2001; Kreps, 1989). Brown (1985) identified four categories in the literature that would be important in discussing the link between socialization and stories: 1) socialization stages, 2) story form, 3) story subject, and 4) story function. Socialization stages were broken down into four categories depending on the tenure of the member. The first stage, entry, included the first six weeks with the organization. The encounter stage followed the entry stage and lasted through five months on the job. Next, the role-management stage followed and lasted until the one-year anniversary. Finally, the member entered the stabilization stage after one year with the organization. Story forms were either aggregate or specific; specific stories were further categorized into those with and those without morals. Subjects of the stories were either relational or task and referred to the information presented about corporate influence. Story functions dealt with the narrator's purpose of telling the story. This could be descriptive or simply sharing information, energy controlling, serving to motivate or de-motivate, or simply maintaining. Brown (1989) noted that organizational stories aid in three specific areas of the socialization process: uncertainty reduction, management of meaning, and bonding and identification.

Stories are used to socialize new members into cultures. Current members tell stories about how they accomplish organizational activities. This can be done through the

use of “war stories” and “success stories” about how organizational activities have failed or succeeded in the past. This kind of communication socializes new members by providing them with a scenario about cultural history, values, and expectations (Kreps, 1989). Also, organizational members continue to self-socialize with the stories they choose to repeat (Thompkins & Cheney, 1983).

Stories and Cultural Values, Norms, and Behaviors

“Storytelling is an effective and memorable way of conveying information (Davis, 1993, p. 500), but more importantly it is a vehicle for sharing an organization’s norms, values, and beliefs (Meyer, 1995; Swap et al. 2001).

Although norms and values are similar concepts, they differ in important ways. Norms (standards for appropriate behavior) guide individual decisions within organizations. For example, norms can dictate how to dress, or what kinds of details are appropriate in product design. Norms can facilitate knowledge acquisition, for example, by providing guidelines for how knowledge should be shared across boundaries. Norms can also inhibit knowledge flow. For instance, an implicit norm of “don't rock the boat” can discourage employees from taking risks by challenging accepted wisdom. Values are deeply held beliefs about what is of greatest importance to the organization. For example, the founders of Johnson & Johnson and Hewlett-Packard left a heritage of ethos that directs the companies' interaction with society even today. (Swap et al., p. 112)

An organization’s values are extremely important because they are essentially the foundation upon which the corporate culture is built. Deal and Kennedy (1982) noted

several important ways in which corporate values impact corporate life. Corporate values provide a sense of common direction for all employees and guidelines for day-to-day behavior. Values are an indispensable guide in making choices. They also play a very important role in determining how far one can rise within an organization. The company will tend to reinforce the primacy of that value by promoting a disproportionate share of the people in these jobs. They further noted that the phrases that capture something people in the organization deeply believe are called “core values” because they become the essence of the organization's philosophy.

Values help to explain, implicitly, what is expected of employees, how to survive or perish, as well as how to succeed and be noticed (Aaltio-Marjosola, 1994). Meyer (1995) found four clear categories indicating values in interviews conducted in a child care organization: 1) consideration-people should show concern for other's needs and feelings, 2) organization/planning-people should plan for work tasks and activities in advance, 3) timely information-people should communicate information as quickly or appropriately as possible, and 4) participation in decision-making-there should be opportunities to influence events and help make decisions (p. 214). Although these were not explicit rules of the organization, they were clearly important to members participating in this study.

“Narratives serve to encapsulate entrenched values which are key to an organization’s culture” (Meyer, 1995, p. 210). In other words, stories are a quick way to share important information about an organization’s culture without having to go into too much explanation. Morgan and Dennehy (1997) illustrate this with a story of Ray Kroc,

McDonald's founder, stopping at a local McDonald's and finding the place in a shambles, according to McDonald's standards, with trash in the parking lot and an overall unkempt look. He called the store manager and made him come in on his day off to clean up the property. Kroc, the manager, and Kroc's driver worked together to bring the property back up to McDonald's standards (p.494).

Stories and Relationships

Stories are inherently social and humans tell stories to explain and describe many things. It stands to reason then that organizational relationships are also explained with the use of stories (Bradbury & Lichtenstein, 2000; Hansen & Kahnweiler, 1993; Wilkof, Brown, Selsky, 1995). Two of the seven story types identified by Martin et al. (1983) are concerned with relationships. "Is the big boss human?" is about the relationship between supervisors and their subordinates. In it, the boss has the option of performing an equalization act. The boss who will allow himself or herself to display human qualities temporarily subjugates status in the interest of the relationship. "How will the boss react to mistakes?" is another kind of story that centers on relationships. It is about whether the boss will be understanding and forgiving or not.

Brown (1985) identified four categories important in discussing the link between socialization and stories, one of which is relational. She found that the reason the narrator tells the story has an energy controlling function: to motivate or de-motivate the listener. In addition, there are also differences in the relationships at different levels of organizations. "Although there was a fairly collaborative spirit among lower levels in the

organization, an adversarial norm of control and domination over the organization and its environment pervaded the top management level " (Wilkof et al., 1995, p. 381).

Bradbury and Lichtenstein (2000) view this relationship component of stories differently. They suggest that organizational research may benefit from a different methodological approach. They call their approach relationality. Rather than focusing on discrete, abstract phenomenon, relationality focuses on relations in organizations. They borrow the term "the space between" from Martin Buber. "Taking a relational orientation suggests that the real work of the human organization occurs within the space of interaction between its members "(p. 551).

Types of Stories

Kinds of stories told in organizations also help to perpetuate gendering of the organization (Aaltio-Marjosola, 1994; Ashcraft & Pacanowsky, 1996; Fish, 1991; Hawk, 1995; Lamsa & Sintonen, 2001; McMillan, 1989; Smith & Rogers, 2000). As previously noted, people tell stories for a variety of reasons. Storytelling begins at an early age and to understand how stories in organizations contribute to the gendering of organizations, it would be advantageous to understand where it begins. Clark (1995) looked at the stories children told about gender and found that even in young children there are differences. Children demonstrated a conception of the unequal distribution of power; boys and girls convey a perception of male in the dominant role. Girls' and boys' narratives revolve around themes of girls telling moral tales about personal relationships and boys' telling action-packed adventure tales. Girls express a world in which non-violence is the norm and direct confrontation is avoided, while "boys narratives express a value system that

stresses strength and power” (p. 11). This difference in language usage continues into adulthood. In fact, Mulac et al. (2001) support this notion that men and women continue to use language differently well into adulthood. Their study found that women continue to be more concerned with relationships and use indirect language, such as uncertainty verbs, hedges, and justifiers, to preserve these, while men have a more direct approach, such as using directives and “I” references (p. 125).

Ashcraft and Pacanowsky (1996) studied an office supply company in which the women were all located in the office and the men were all out in the warehouse. The women in this study had an “us” and “them” mentality. Women’s themes were “the sting of the indirect blow,” which they explained as women not being willing to confront something when it happened, letting stuff build up, and destructive cycles of indirect competition, and the battle between “us” and “them,” which they attributed to cliques, divisions supplanting unity, and differences in language in the divisions.

Pacanowsky and O’ Donnell-Trujillo (1983) identified three different kinds of stories. Corporate accounts that represent management favored customs of organizational life; collegial stories told to peers, but not sanctioned by management; and stories of individual perspectives. Gabriel (1995) identified four types of stories—the subject as hero prevailing over adversity with common sense, the subject as heroic survivor refusing to capitulate to the system, the subject as victim highlighting the absurdity of the system and subverting the authority of those in power, and the subject as love object. Although examples of these could be found in the literature, the majority, if not all, of the stories told and retold both in the organizations themselves and in the literature are about men.

Stories are told about the men of IBM, Ray Kroc, John DeLorean, and the men of NCR (Martin 2001; Martin et al., 1983; Morgan & Dennehy, 1997).

Clearly, organizational stories help to create and recreate gender in the organization. Analysis of stories may “be a means to show how the gender culture is constructed and legitimated in workplaces” (Gherardi & Poggio, 2001, p. 248). An important thing to keep in mind when analyzing stories is that the storyteller is looking at and relaying information from a particular perspective. Different people can view the same experience differently depending on their particular position within an organizational culture. “Experiences can not only be expressed in different ways, but are also affected by the vocabularies and interpretive frames that guide how one makes sense of the world and talks about one’s experiences” (Alvesson & Billing, 1997, p. 35). This is in keeping with feminist standpoint theory, which assumes that women’s position in society gives them a particular vantage point, one which allows them to see the big picture rather than the privileged view (Hartsock, 1983). It is also important to keep in mind that stories perpetuate the existing culture while at the same time they are a product of that culture (Kramer & Berman, 2001, p. 3)

This chapter has reviewed much of the organizational culture literature and has looked at it in relation to gender. It has looked at how gendering within organizations occurs, the impact of subcultures on the gendering of organizations, and how organizational stories contribute to the gendering of the culture. This literature gives us a better understanding of the role of organizational culture in creating and maintaining gender within organizations.

Chapter 3

Methods

The purpose of this study is to examine the effect of stories told in an organization and how that organizational discourse creates and recreates gender in the organization. Qualitative methods of observation and interviews were used to investigate this. This section includes an explanation of the organization and participants of this study, questions and forms used in data collection, the procedures, and data analysis.

The Organization

According to Krippendorf (1980), any textual analysis must be framed in context to be fully understood. *Reststops*(pseudonym) is a national chain of travel centers throughout the United States with corporate headquarters located in a medium sized Midwestern city. *Reststops* has gone through several ownership changes in the last 10 years and is currently owned by a group of private investors. The Chief Executive Officer has headed the organization throughout the ownership changes. The organization has several divisions housed at the corporate level including restaurants, fast food, motels, franchises, and fuel, as well as the traditional departments of sales and marketing, and human relations. Each *Reststop* location has a minimum of four profit centers—restaurant, travel store, fuel, and shop. Some also have fast food locations within the stop and also operate motels. An on-site General Manager oversees the day-to-day operations and supervises the various profit center managers.

Participants

Participants for this study were selected by purposive sample based on geographic location and information from human resources. In most locations the selection process began with the General Managers who had received a copy of the research proposal, including possible questions, in advance. They were asked to provide employees and managers for interviews based on the length of time with *Reststops*, position, and profit center. These criteria were used to ensure a mix from all levels of the organization and a variety of stories. However, in one location the General Manager kept sending me “his girls” to interview and access to management was denied. In another location the General Manager was out due to a family emergency and interviewees were selected by the researcher with the help of a profit center manager on the first day of interviews. Ages of the participants varied from early 20s to mid-60s. The education level also varied, according to information volunteered by participants, from some high school to a Master’s degree. An attempt was made to equally distribute interviews between males and females at each location. However, due to the choices being made by the General Managers this was not always the case. Demographic information is limited to sex and position. Seven women and 12 men participated in this study. Four participants were GMs, 4 Profit Center Managers, 1 Assistant PCM, and 10 hourly employees.

Procedure

Two different kinds of data gathering procedures were used: researcher observation and in-depth personal interviews. Interviews were used to gather personal

stories from participants and observation was used to support the data from the interviews.

Observation

In an effort to maximize understanding of the organization, the researcher observed a Southeast location. Managers and employees had been informed of the research prior to the dates of observation. An attempt was made to get a sense of the culture by observing the entire location, including the profit centers and bookkeeping. Also, because the business operates 24 hours a day, the researcher observed each of the profit centers for some part of all three shifts. The purpose of observing was:

- 1) To gather some general data about the physical setting (i.e., sex segregation or division of labor);
- 2) To determine who attends and/or contributes to meetings;
- 3) To determine location and circumstances of informal meetings and who is involved in those meetings; and
- 4) To get a sense of implicit and explicit rules (See observation form—Appendix A).

Interviews

Stories were collected over a one-month period in four different locations. Between 5 and 10 interviews were conducted at each location, depending on the situation at a particular *Reststop*. In one location the interview process was cut short by a police investigation into an alleged theft and in another location the General Manager was unable to finish the interview due to demands of the business.

Participants were assured prior to beginning the interview that it was completely confidential, that the information obtained would be anonymous, and that any direct quotes used would not be able to be traced back to them because their names and the names of other corporate members would be changed prior to publication. They were then asked if they minded being tape-recorded. In all cases permission to tape was granted. The interview questions ranged from broad information gathering questions (i.e., how long have you been with *Reststops*?) to very specific questions about the rise of men and women in the organization (See Appendix B). Several questions were designed specifically to help put participants at ease and get them talking: 1) Tell me a little of your story. 2) What brought you to *Reststops*? 3) How long have you been here? 4) Have you always done the same job? 5) If not, what other jobs have you had? 6) How does *Reststops* compare with other companies you have worked for? 7) Is it the same, better, worse? 8) What do you like most about *Reststops*? 9) What do you like least? 10) What is the funniest thing you have heard that has happened to someone working at *Reststops*? And 11) How about the saddest?

Others were asked specifically to try to answer some of the initial questions guiding the research. Question 13 (Can you tell me a story that you have heard about the company, one of your co-workers, someone at another location, or someone at corporate?) was a specific attempt to answer guiding question one (What kinds of stories do women and men tell in the organization—how are they similar or different?). Interview question 12 (Have you had anyone in particular who showed you the ropes or helped you learn your way around here? What can you tell me about that person?) was

designed to illicit information for guiding question two (Do women's and men's stories about the organization indicate an understanding of a unified culture?). Obviously, interview question 9 (What have you heard about how to get promoted? Can you tell me about some of the men who have been promoted? Can you tell me about some of the women?) was asked to answer guiding question 3 (What kinds of stories are told about the rise of men versus the rise of women through the ranks?), and interview question 10 (Has *Reststops* changed at all since you have been here? Can you tell me some of the things that are different now then say when you first started?) to answer guiding question 4 (Do men's and women's stories reveal changes within the organization?).

Analysis

Interviews allowed participants to use their own symbols to describe their experiences. It has been noted that interviews are one way of obtaining narratives (Brown, 1985; Martin, 1983). Rather than beginning with predetermined categories for analyzing the stories, a classification system emerged from the data, consistent with an inductive approach (i.e., grounded theory, Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Interview times ranged from 20 minutes to 90 minutes. Due to the interviewer asking specifically for stories, at least two stories could be found in all interviews. Each interview was transcribed verbatim for analysis. Observation data were used to support data gathered in the interviews regarding the organizational culture.

Transcripts were examined for stories and themes. In addition to the researcher coding the transcripts, two other coders were also trained. One specifically coded for stories and the other specifically for themes. Coders were given a coding form with the

following instructions: "Use a separate coding form for each transcript. Write the transcript number in the upper, right corner of the form. Place a tick-mark in the right column for each item that fits that category." The one coding for stories was given the following definition of a story and asked to code them. "A story is defined as a sequence of events (a plot), with organization-related characters, which takes place in a setting somehow related to the organization." The second coder was given a list of categories generated by the researcher based on analysis of five transcripts. Categories evolved from lists made as each transcript was read. Intercoder agreement levels were acceptable at 91% for stories and 84% for themes across two transcripts. In addition to identifying stories and themes, the transcripts were also compared in several ways.

First, narrative patterns of the accounts by men and women were examined. The reason for this analysis was twofold: 1) to determine if women's and men's accounts of the same event were similar; and 2) to determine if, when asked explicitly for a narrative of a particular kind, men and women would relate the same or different events. Next, organizational rules, as related in the narratives, were examined to determine if men and women perceive the rules similarly or differently. Finally, analysis concentrated on a comparison of the organizations' different subcultures to determine along what lines subcultures evolve and whether gender is a determining factor.

Chapter 4

Results

This study sought to uncover the kinds of stories women and men tell in the organization. A total of 136 stories were examined; 68 per sex. From the themes of participants' stories, clear categories emerged. The analysis revealed nine general categories within which all of the responses in the stories could be placed. The categories relate back to the guiding questions: 1) whether male and female members of the organization tell similar and/or different stories, 2) if these stories indicate a unified culture, and 3) how promotions are perceived by male and female members. Table 1 summarizes the categories.

TABLE 1: Summary of Categories that Emerged in *Reststop* Stories

<u>Corporate Control</u>	Centralization of operations, corporate representatives in control of a situation, company goals driving daily operations, and the impact of corporate spending on individual locations
<u>Promotions</u>	Who, when, how, and why members get promoted
<u>Corporate people</u>	Real people, heroes/saviors, and available to employees at all times
<u>Mentoring</u>	People who showed employees and managers the ropes, helped them find their way, socialized them into the <i>Reststops</i> system, and empowered them.
<u>Employee/management relations</u>	Managers responses to situations, management style, communication between employees and managers.
<u>Work Environment</u>	Descriptions of the working conditions and kind of environment (i.e., family, comfortable, professional).
<u>Communication</u>	Ways in which communication has improved and/or changed
<u>Sexual division of labor/sexual harassment</u>	Jobs and departments that are acceptable for women, language that denotes inferiority, and inappropriate touching and sexual relationships
<u>Customer relations</u>	Employee/manager responses and relationships to customers

Table 2 summarizes how often those categories were found in the stories of females and males. The category is followed by the number of stories told about that category and the percentage of total stories (by sex) that it represents. An overall comparison of the frequency of those categories between females and males revealed some interesting similarities and differences. A comparison of these indicates several obvious differences between the stories told by females and males. Differences arise in several themes: Corporate control, promotions, employee/management relations, work environment, and customer relations.

Two categories were discussed equally in female stories: employee/management relations and work environment each represented 47.1% of the total stories told by females. Although noted frequently in male stories, they were not deemed most important to males; employee/management relations were discussed in 32.4% of the stories and the work environment in 29.4% of the stories. Males were much more concerned with corporate control, as evidenced by 41.2% of the total stories they told. They also had much to say about promotions, which represented 16.2% of their total stories. Both of

TABLE 2: Summary of Categories Revealed in *Reststop* Stories by Sex

Category	Stories by Sex			
	Male (n = 68)	%	Female (n = 68)	%
Corporate Control	28	41.2	12	17.7
Promotions	11	16.2	2	2.9
Corporate people	13	19.1	9	13.2
Mentoring	4	5.9	5	7.4
Employee/management Relations	22	32.4	32	47.1
Work Environment	20	29.4	32	47.1
Communication	1	1.5	1	1.5
Sexual division of labor/sexual harassment	7	10.3	4	5.9
Customer Relations	1	1.5	10	14.7

these categories were noted considerably less by females, with corporate control accounting for 17.7% of the total stories females told and promotions being almost nonexistent at 2.9%. One other noticeable difference in storytelling was with customer relations. Females discussed it in 14.7% of their stories while males did not discuss it at all.

Mentoring was very closely distributed in male and female stories, with females discussing it slightly more. Neither sex was particularly interested in communication, however 1.5% of female stories noted it. One category in which males and females differed, but which was not as obviously unbalanced as those previously mentioned, was sexual division of labor and sexual harassment. Males mentioned it almost twice as much as females with 10.3% and 5.9% respectively.

Although females and males discussed many of the same categories, the themes within those categories were not necessarily similar. Consistent with Richardson (1996), themes emerged within each of the categories. Table 3 summarizes these themes by sex.

Corporate Control

Corporate control encompasses to what degree control within the organization is located at the corporate level, how much of an effect corporate rules and policies have at the location level, and how company goals drive daily operations and impact spending. Male participants identified 12 themes within this category, many with a negative connotation. One participant compared management meetings to brainwashing: "We went to Knoxville, Tennessee; they had an office down there on Laverne Avenue in an office building. That's where we'd go for brainwashing for three or four days to try to

TABLE 3: Themes that Emerged in *Reststop* Stories by Sex

Male Stories	Female Stories
Corporate control	Corporate control
Company policies	Bottom line driven
Employees not paid to think	Cutting employees, costs, management
All ordering done through Corporate	Doing things the " <i>Reststop</i> way"
Brainwashing	
Authorize purchases	
Programs "force-fed down"	
System tracks everything	
Doing things the " <i>Reststop</i> way"	
No Corporate focus	
Conference calls on policies and procedures	
Sacrifice efficiency for conformity	
Controls introduction of new programs	
Beneficial	
Promotions	Promotions
Performance	Willing to relocate
Sacrifice	Performance
Incompetence	Sacrifice
Know the right people	
Good looking women	
Kiss-up to Corporate people	
Relocate frequently	
Hard work	
Corporate people	Corporate people
Real	Real
Supportive	Approachable
Loyal to "special" employees	Authoritative
CEO matter-of-fact	Controlling
Loyal to "screw ups"	Thoughtful
Inconsiderate	
Thoughtful	
Mentoring	Mentoring
Corporate trainer as savior	Trainers
Father-figure	
Showed mentee how to cheat	
Employee/Management Relations	Employee/Management Relations
Angry at management	Lack of loyalty from employees
Replace as necessary	Babysitting
Prefer hard workers	Managers break rules
Managers are snobs	Celebrate together
Managers cannot be trusted	Employees on their own
The boss is never wrong	Fair and consistent treatment
Managers are controlling	Favoritism
Work Environment	Work Environment
Family	Family
Fun	Fun
Dangerous	Dangerous
Pranks	Pranks
Co-culture	Co-culture
	Cold
Communication	Communication
Importance of Email and voicemail	Importance of Email
Sexual division of labor/sexual harassment	Sexual division of labor/sexual harassment
Sex on company property	Sex on company property
Sex between managers and employees	Sex between managers and employees
Females in certain positions	Inappropriate labels (i.e., hon, babe)
	Touching inappropriately/uninvited touching
	Females in certain positions
Customer relations	Customer relations
Internal customers important	Shoplifting
	Difficult customers
	Too short staffed to do well
	Good-hearted
	Taking care of the customer

make us better managers” (Tim). Several noted that corporate controls the introduction of new programs. In fact, one had the distinction of being the roll-out man for a new program and traveling to other locations to introduce it and answer questions about it. However, when the corporate representatives in attendance did not like the answers he was giving, “they kind of didn’t push me to the side, but moved me over and said ‘okay, well, let me finish answering this question for you.’ That’s where we ended our ordeal of me teaching” (Bob). Tim also described the process of adopting new programs as them “being force-fed down.” As with any big corporation, participants noted that things need to be done the *Reststop* way, but they also noted several drawbacks to this. One noted that the company sometimes sacrifices efficiency for conformity. He told a story of the company buying out another chain and coming in and replacing the existing computer program with an antiquated system that was more difficult to operate and less efficient.

When I was working for Stopover and *Reststops* took over—an example would be the shop system with Travel Port was a Windows based colored monitor. You go into one screen you can look up history, you could do everything from one spot. They took that system out and they put in a Lotus-based system that was about 15 years old. You had to go from one screen to another screen, if you wanted to pay it out you had to get out of that screen and go to another screen, you know you bounce around. (Stuart)

One participant told a story of a manager and a snowstorm to illustrate corporate control over purchases. “One example, we had a snowstorm here. The GM was gone, so the shop manager decides to spend \$16,000 removing snow. Completely out of his authority. Even if the GM was here, it doesn’t take too many of those things happening in

the field for control to be very closely guarded” (Tim). He also noted that corporate controls purchasing. “I’m told what to order, or limited as to what I can order, I’m not saying it’s good or bad because they have to answer to higher powers and it’s their money that’s tied up.”

Another negative perception of corporate control is with company policies. One employee ignored policy in what he considered a crisis and “they yelled at me because I didn’t follow proper procedures” (Caleb). A manager told of a “big safety meeting yesterday, we had a conference call of like 100 people” to illustrate how the company controls from a distance (Elmer).

Elmer also noted that the organization lacks focus. “They’ve tried all these different programs. I mean, some of the specialists and the powers that be, they come up, it’s like uh, it’s like uh the old women cooking spaghetti. Throw it against the wall, if it sticks it’s good, if it doesn’t throw some more against the wall.”

Several participants also noted the benefits of Corporate control: less wasteful, more expeditious, more time for taking care of the business. The following is one example of this.

A lot of the excessive paper shuffling, duplicate copies has gone away. Everybody has computers so a lot of the files that were backed up on computer were also backed up in a file cabinet, they’re not anymore. With some of the people that came to *Reststops* from *Stopover*—I know there’s one who is a regional vice president—has had a big effect on that. Getting rid of the waste. Paper waste, human resource waste. Shuffling all the stuff that is not necessary. That’s been a good thing, but it was huge. It was huge because of the culture. People just

thought we gotta have this and what are we going to do without it, what if the computer falls, crashes, those kind of things. (Stuart)

Female stories are very different from male stories because they are more personal. The female participants seemed to be more interested in how Corporate control affected them personally. Several told stories of cutting costs. One participant was disappointed on the most recent Christmas “not to get even a Christmas card . . . it’s (*Reststops*) just gotten cheap” (Joan). Another told of losing something important to her:

When the Flipper Group took us over, I had four weeks vacation. They took a week away from us. I don’t think that’s fair because I worked for that four weeks. Nobody had the right to take it away from us. People who had been here a really long time got a week’s vacation taken away. I was really pissed about that. That’s not fair. (Audrey)

Others told of “doing things the Corporate way” and the impact it had on the way they did their job.

Abraham was our specialist at one time, and there were so many things he was just a stickler about. I mean, just, place settings had to be just so-so. The caddies had to be just so-so. The cup on the place mat just so-so, the silverware set on the place mat just so-so. Well, I knew that John and Paul and all of them was coming for an inspection. I was really beating heads to try to make sure everybody was doing all these things just so-so. For him to not even care . . . and here I had spent two weeks, two and a half weeks, killing myself to try to make sure that I wouldn’t hear nothing out of him. I sat there thinking “you rat.” (Lorraine)

A third kind of story told by a female participant about the effect of Corporate control on individuals was about the bottom line. She told stories about employees who were out of work longer than the acceptable 90 days, one due to illness and the other to injury, who were terminated at the end of the 90 days according to company policy,

They had to let her go, because it was after 90 days. Well, her insurance, they dropped her. They said, “well, you know, you’re costing too much money,” whatever, “and if you want to keep your insurance then it’s going to cost you this much.” It’ll cost so much, and she can’t afford to pay. She couldn’t afford to go to physical therapy. She couldn’t afford anything. So now this woman, she’s been with the company for 18 years, and that’s loyalty, and to just get thrown out into the streets. Her medical insurance, that she’s paid all her life, they just take it away from her. It just kills me. You know, ‘cause you give everything you’ve got, and then they just throw you aside and put someone else in there who can do the job. That bothers me. You know, it just shows how vulnerable you are. You’re nothing. You’re only, you’re only worth something if you’re producing. (Amy)

One male manager summed it up this way:

Reststops is going through a centralized phase and I can’t stand centralized. I would much rather be an entrepreneur running this business than have big brother telling me what I can and cannot do every day. I enjoyed working for Mom and Pop places because that reason. You could do things and make changes like that (snap of fingers). With any kind of corporation it takes longer to effect change and then if Joe Schmoe in another state is doing something wrong then

everybody's gotta go by the new rules, the new guidelines. I don't like that.

(Stuart)

Promotions

Stories about who gets promoted, how they get promoted, and when they get promoted were numerous among the stories told by male participants: 11 of the 12 male participants told at least one story about promotions. Many were stories about hard work, experience, dedication, and sacrifice resulting in promotion. One story, in particular, captures this: "I think with our company, the promotions are pretty much, especially if you're in house, they're done by experience and by your proven performance, period. You don't just go up and say 'I'm ready to be promoted' and get promoted" (Larry).

Another manager noted the connection between relocation and promotion:

Uh, I started out as a shift manager, which was in between a lead and an assistant, and probably because of my previous experience with management, I was offered a general manager position after 7 months and went from _____ to _____. I was in _____ 3 years, a little over 3 years, and then I started asking to move up to another location and within 6 months I was in _____. So that was pretty rapid ascent for me. (Elmer)

Another factor important to promotions as illustrated in the following story is personal sacrifice.

I don't know, she travels a lot and I don't, I gotta believe she's single because she's out all the time. She works late hours. Uh, there's a general manager in Albuquerque, I don't know if she's, it seemed like maybe she had a boyfriend, but very independent kind of will. Because of the hours that we work, you never

know when you're going to get out to go home, or something might happen and you have to stay later, or you get called in because something's going on. It's certainly not a nine-to-five kind of job. And, I know Joan Jett a little bit, but I don't know anything about her home life. We've been to meetings together and I've never seen her with a spouse or boyfriend or anything like that. So I'm wondering if that makes it easier. Obviously it does. (Elmer)

Other stories about promotion were not so flattering to *Reststops*. Several men who have been with the company for years tell very different tales. According to them, promotions depend more on other factors. One manager noted the importance of treating corporate people right in response to another manager getting angry at a corporate person: "It doesn't work that way and pretty much that's what any corporate people want. They want their ass kissed. And as long as you kiss their ass they love you. If you butt heads with them, they're going to bring them down" (Elmer). Another talked of "a kind of buddy system. I've never figured it out. I still don't know. I think I got hired because they like me . . . I came out of the Army. They thought my record was unbelievable, so they hired me because of that" (Tim). It is also important to know the right people: "The top dog is a Stopover guy. So, he generally picks the Stopover people for promotions" (Caleb). And in the case of women, one man said, "women are promoted because of their looks sometimes or physical attribute. They joke about it" (Tim).

Another tale about promotions is that incompetence results in promotions. This is reflected in the following two stories. "It does seem like if you can't handle the job you're doing, they move you up to a job that you can handle" (Ed)

_____ has always been a problem site and that's why, one of the reasons, they sent me here was to straighten it out. Well, they had labor issues up the ying yang, the way they did things is just stupid. Not the way *Reststops* wanted them done. Um, they had a guy here that was here for seven years that's now a specialist. And he really has whack ways of doing things. Him and I don't get along at all and now he's my specialist. He doesn't agree with the way that I run things. The company does. (Elmer)

Female stories about promotion included the themes of hard work, experience, sacrifice, and dedication also, but they also included stories about sex being a determining factor. One female pointed out that women and men get promoted up through the ranks equally. In fact, to prove her point she listed all the women who had moved up and all the men who had moved up and the positions they had moved from and to. However, she could not think of a single woman who had been promoted to Corporate; "I can't think of any women that's come here that's gone to corporate that I'm aware of, but I don't think it really matters, if you've got the ability" (Cecilia). Another woman told of coming back to work at *Reststops* after a change in management with the understanding that she was interested in management. But, in the one and a half years she had been back, she heard nothing more about management. In fact, she claimed that current management favored promoting men: "the management deal, I don't know, because I had, like I said, I had asked him when I first came back, and two more has been promoted since me, so . . . Men" (Deborah). Similar to men, other women relocated to gain promotions. "Gosh, I can see her face but I can't say her name. But she came in here as assistant restaurant manager, and she's now a restaurant manager in Texas" (Lorraine).

Corporate People

Stories told about corporate people were about how corporate people related to organizational members at the location level: were they real people? Heroes and/or saviors? Were they available to employees at all times? Male stories about corporate people encompassed a large variety of characteristics, both positive and negative. The positives included such things as real, supportive, thoughtful, and up front. One male described the Chief Executive Officer as very “matter-of-fact” which made the CEO easy to relate to and likeable, “When I went up there for the orientation I was impressed because he knew all about me” (Willie). Another told a story of a first meeting with a Regional Specialist:

I had to give the cashier a break. Some guy comes up, never seen him before. He’s just talking to me. I thought he was a customer. I sold him some cigarettes, and we’re BSing back and forth. The cashier comes back from break and I go about my business. The next morning at shift change, my manager comes to work and he comes up, the guy I’d been talking to the night before. He just said ‘I’m John. How ya doing? My manager says ‘this is John Smith.’ John says, ‘We’ve already met. I didn’t have a clue that he was a regional manager. I thought he was really nice, just an every day guy. (Doug)

One manager noted that promotions from within help corporate people to be supportive because they understand. “Most of senior management has been at site level at one time or another so um, they don’t come in and start dictating, they know the day-to-day things we deal with. Sometimes they forget we have to remind them though” (Caleb).

On the negative side, corporate people have been described as sneaky, inconsiderate, and loyal to “special” employees and screw ups. One story about an inconsiderate corporate person had to do with the use of time.

The specialists come in, the specialists don't get up in the morning. I get here like I said at 5:30 in the morning because that's uh, for me that's the best time to get started. You come in before things start getting wild, you can get a lot of work done in the first hour and a half before your servers hit the floor. Uh, the specialists they might roll in around noon and then wanna hang out all day and use your phone to do other business. They're really not doing anything for you and they wanna stay until 9 o'clock at night and they expect you to stay with 'em.
(Elmer)

One story in particular illustrates loyalty to, what members call, “screw-ups:”
When I first got here they had an assistant manager that was working here who was hired as a GM for the company, and but in GM training while he was working through all the departments well he got up in the restaurant, they realized what kind of guy he was and they left him here. So he was pretty much worthless.
(Elmer)

Females also perceived corporate people as real, as well as approachable, authoritative, controlling and thoughtful. One female described the CEO.

Well, he's I don't know if laid back is the right word, but he's more down to earth than, you know, he's approachable, and he'll talk to you, and he's just easy to talk to, or a nice person to, you know. He's laid, I guess he's laid back. For his

position, he's kind of laid back. When he comes down here, you know, he, you don't have to get all freaked out like some people do. (Amy)

Another had this to say about the CEO, "He walks right up to me and calls me by name, extends his hand and gives me a big, hearty handshake" (Lorraine). One corporate specialist was portrayed as controlling and authoritative:

They had a meeting down here, and something had happened, and she went to the emergency room while the meeting took place, and it was all of us in the meeting. And one of them spoke up and said, "Well, if Karen was here she'd have us faxing notes, copying that, doing this..." I said, "Okay." [laughs] (Lorraine)

Another corporate member was perceived as thoughtful because he attended an employee's son's funeral.

Scott always seems to me like he is concerned about all the employees. We have a cook here, Marian James, and her son was shot and killed, and Scott came to the funeral. We were, all of us had gathered and gone. I guess it's probably ten, twelve of us managed to be off to go to the funeral, or been able to take off, an hour or two out to go to the funeral. And we were all lined up, sitting on the pew, and here come Scott walking in. He come back and sat down with us just like he was part of us, like that's where he belonged. (Lisa)

Mentoring

Mentoring included people who showed employees and managers the ropes, helped them find their way, socialized them into the *Reststops* system, and empowered them. Males also had both positive and negative things to say about mentoring. On the

positive side they have been described as “father-figures” and “saviors.” One long-term organizational member credits a corporate trainer with saving him from himself.

In the 1990s I hit a dry spot. I sort of dried up and my attitude went down in the dumps. I was really struggling with whether or not to get out. People get burned out. Jim is the one who saved me. Maybe he shouldn't have saved me. But, he sent me to a seminar...on the power theory. You have the power to control what's happening to you...Jim spent about three hours coaching me and just talking me through this problem. To me, that was the turning point. (Tim)

On the negative side one male's mentor taught him how to look good on paper. “Oh, he was a good guy. He was younger than me, um, he uh, he showed me how to cheat on the labor model. You need to take shortcuts, it would make my job easier and that way I could get more done. The things that are important to know” (Elmer). Female participants did not tell stories about mentors; instead they told of trainers, of people who trained them to do their job, but did not function as a mentor.

Employee/Management Relations

Employee/management relations' stories told how managers responded to different situations and what kind of management style they employed. It also told about communication between employees and managers. What kind of relationship do employees and managers have? Are managers viewed as unapproachable and standoffish or are they easy-going and just like everybody else? Many of the stories told by males reflect a negative attitude toward management. One employee told a story about an on-the-job injury and a manager's insistence about looking at the injury that illustrated the perception of managers as being controlling.

I had an assistant manager one time who sticks in my mind. I was working at the dishwasher one time and cut my finger really bad. Being a guy, I didn't want to go to the hospital. I just washed my finger and capped it off so it wasn't bleeding. My assistant manager comes up and she says 'Let me see.' I said no, just leave it alone and I'll put a bandage on it when it quits bleeding. She said 'Let me see, let me see, I've go to see.' I moved my finger, it opens up real bad. She passed out. It bled really bad. Even though I was hurting, I thought that was..., not to take joy in someone else's misery. But, yeah, I laughed just like that when she passed out. She was only out for a second, just the sight of blood made her faint. I said, 'you want to see it again?' She never asked me nothing like that again.

When I was hurt, she just took my word for it.(Doug)

Another man described managers as snobs: "They're not too friendly here. You know, that's probably about the only biggest thing. You know, they'll come in, say 'hi' to you and just keep walking by you like you don't exist, you know" (Tony).

Two different stories illustrated the perception employees had of managers being sneaky. One story told of management cutting an employee's pay:

The manager likes to mess with people's pay, you know, short change them, you know, cut you on a job, stuff like that. Everybody's like 'You got to watch him. You got to watch him.' You know? I learned real quick. Yeah, you really do. I hate to say that, but that's one of the things that they told me, and it's true. I found out the hard way and everything so... Yeah, that was, like, one of the first things I was told when I came here. Watch him, you know, check yourself and make sure you're getting what you're supposed to be getting. (Tony)

The other told of an employee being taken off the schedule without knowing it.

Well, what happened was I came into work one day, I came in that morning. A couple people, you know, ran up to me and was like, "hey man, you're not on the schedule," you know, "You're fired," and I'm like "What?" Nobody's called and told me or anything, and they were like, "Yeah man, you ain't on the schedule this week." I'm like, "Are you sure?" So, I go back and check, and I'm like, "Okay, where's Alfred?" He's like, "Well, he's at the Auto Diesel College, you know, for career day." I'm like, "Alright, well I'm going to go talk to him." I left, I go down there. I had to talk to him and find out what was going on. You know, he said that, he's like, "You know, you're not producing like you should be." I explained to him that "You didn't explain anything of this to me, 'cause I was hired to do certain things, and that's what I was doing." You know? He was like, "You know, it's costing me more to keep you than to get rid of you." I was like, "Okay, but I thought I was on an hourly based pay." After this little confrontation he finally said, "Okay, you know what? I'm going to give you a set quota you have to meet, you know, week by week." So I was like, "Alright." I came back to work and finished that shift. (Peter)

Peter also shared a story about his first meeting with a new manager and the anger that resulted from it. "Actually, the day he got here, I was five minutes late for work. He wrote me up. So, I didn't like him from the door. I was like, who does this guy think he is? I've been here longer than him, and he wants to write me up?" Another employee noted that "You kind of have to stay awake, where you have a lot of people come here with a negative attitude. You might come here, I mean, working with somebody that

might tell you, "Where I come from, here, we do this way." And I do it the *Reststops* way, and I, number one, you know, with my boss, rule number one, "The boss is never wrong" (Philip)

One manager told a story about the necessity of replacing a long-term employee because of his attitude. He noted that the problem had gone on too long and previous management had ignored it. He brought the employee into the office and counseled him about his attitude and "We continued to have problems with the customers arguing with him and so forth, so, ultimately, I ended up terminating him. Well, it was unfortunate because he'd worked here for so long and nobody had ever addressed the fact that he had a problem" (Bob).

Another manager told a positive story about helping the handicapped child of one of his subordinates get a computer.

Well, I gave him a, he was, he goes to school, and I heard her mention one day that he would just love to have a computer. Last Christmas I called one of my guys, my buddies down at _____, 'cause I knew we had a bunch of old computers down in the basement. So I called him and told him the situation, "I want to buy one of those old computers." So he told me to come and get it, and when I come to get it he didn't charge me. Just gave it to me. We had it, we had it upgraded, and I gave it to Jill to give him for Christmas. That was probably the most rewarding thing I've done in a long time. (Larry)

Females also had negative stories about employee/management relations. They perceive managers as rule breakers, doing things and allowing things that employees would not be allowed to do. One woman told a story about her manager and his kids: "He

brought his kids in, and his kids were 15 and 16 years old. They were coming back on my grill line when I was cooking and I finally told him, 'Look, keep your kids off my line.' And he sent me home" (Deborah). Managers have been accused of showing favoritism "he'll tell you he'd prefer a man" and leaving employees to handle any situation that arises on their own. One such story is about employees being deserted on Christmas and working 24 hours straight.

When I was doing supervisor, it was me and this other waitress. Everybody called out. I cooked and dishwashed; she waited on tables. We came in Christmas Eve at 6:00 in the morning and left Christmas Day at 6:00 in the morning. The only thing we were living on was the caffeine pills and cigarettes. I mean, we were 24 hours here and we couldn't get anybody in here to help us. The restaurant manager at the time was not the same one. He wasn't answering his phone. We couldn't get ahold of him." (Deborah)

Women describe their relationships much differently than men do. A female manager described the relationship as "babysitting . . . and they're all grown women, and they call me in the middle of the night because 'so and so didn't say good evening,' and 'so and so is trying to tell so and so how to clean the cappuccino machine" (Amy). On the positive side, many of the females described times when everyone celebrated together or supported each other in times of crisis. The mother of the handicapped child told a story of a manager putting together a fund-raiser in the parking lot:

And some of the employees got together, and they did a parking lot benefit and had leather jackets, and I don't know what all that they raffled off, and first one

thing and another, and raised right at a thousand dollars to benefit some of the needs that I needed with my child. And, it was a very touching. (Lorraine)

Work Environment

Males and females tell similar stories about the work environment. The work environment is how members describe working conditions and how they perceive the environment (i.e., family, comfortable, professional). Many noted that the employees are a big “family.” One woman noted the importance of taking care of each other:

But I . . . for several years there, in lieu of having the company Christmas party, everybody opted to making sure everybody had Christmas. If we didn't have anybody within the confines of this location, then we would find someone somewhere and make sure that they had Christmas. And there's nothing any more fulfilling than knowing that you made some child's eyes sparkle.” (Lorraine)

A man illustrated the familial relationship with the following story:

I remember once the management team went out in Roanoke and we had our pictures taken. The photographer took certain pictures and made a little picture board out of it. In one of the pictures, there are three ducks, then the mother duck. Of course, he correlated it to our chain, and said this is the GM and all the little ducklings following behind. (Tim)

Others intimate that the environment is cold and unfriendly.

My aunt used to work for *Reststops* in South Carolina. She was a waitress. She didn't get along with the other waitresses. I asked her, why, and she said that they belittled her, that they pushed he out of the way. I said, Sarah, you're in an entirely different world. You're either going to have to get in there with them and

do what they do or quit. So, she quit. She said she couldn't be that mean."

(Sylvia)

They tell stories about practical jokes and pranks they play on one another. One man told of the "new guy" being initiated with a practical joke:

This young kid that worked here, first job, a high school guy, didn't have a clue. John, my buddy who's been in the business for years and years too told the kid to do something and he could get the ringer on the mop. He was asking John, 'what am I doing wrong? How do I do this?' Real straight faced, John says, 'Well, it's my first day too, I really don't know. Let's ask Doug.' So, they're hollering for me. I came around the corner like something's wrong. I'm busy and a little flustered at being busy. This guy asked me the question, 'how do I get this on the bucket?' It was a really stupid question, and I just busted out laughing. That was the funniest thing, for somebody to be that naïve. John was real straight faced, like, well, it's my first day. I liked that. (Doug)

A female told about the fun they had: "We had good times when I worked at the fuel desk. We had those tubes that they send throughout the banks, you know we would send things in and fuel tickets and then we send them out. We were always sending stuff out to them and they were sending stuff back to us. One time the guys sent us a dead mouse" (Jill). Another told of fun in the restaurant with a silly initiation of putting "whipped cream and honey on the new servers money" (Deborah).

They also tell stories about the danger of working at *Reststops*, but for different reasons. Males tell about dangers directly related to doing their jobs:

One of the mechanics from the earlier shift was working on a truck. It was his last job of the day. He was going to go out with a couple of the other guys after work. So, they're all rushing him to hurry up. He was checking the tension on the belt. The machine kicked on and pulled his hand through the pulley and tore the tip of his finger off and smashed up the rest of his fingers. I don't even know what happened. He came in, and blood was just pouring everywhere. He's screaming he has to go to the hospital, he needs an ambulance. I'm like, no you don't. You're just playing, aren't you? And I looked down, and it was like hamburger.

(Willie)

Females tell very different stories about the danger. One told of an experience on the midnight shift: "I was nine months pregnant and got kicked in the stomach by a driver. I flipped the table upside down on him and missed him barely with a knife" (Deborah). Female stories have more to do with the people they come into contact with than with their actual jobs.

Both males and females make references to co-cultures and subcultures. Co-cultures are the profit centers and the stops themselves. Several members mentioned the fact that the stop changes with new management. In fact, one female shared her theory about the changes.

And then, I call it the rock effect, that the rocks are all out here, and depending on who's at the head, helm, this should be laying this way, no this should be laying this way, no this should be sitting here, and then the next manager comes in and says, "No it needs to go this way, no it needs to go this way, no it needs to go this way." It depends on who's at the helm, what you're doing. And, depending on

who's at the helm as to how the rocks are turned. And eventually they get back to the same way they were in the beginning. They may go this way, this way, this way, this way, this way, and then back around this way, but eventually they go right back to the exact same way they were in the beginning. And then somebody will change it again, and they start changing it all over again. (Lorraine)

The different profit centers are referred to as “down there,” “downstairs,” “up there,” and “them.” Sub-cultures are seen in the hierarchy within the organization. When members are talking about management and corporate people they are generally referred to as “he” or “him.”

Communication

Communication stories told of ways in which communication has improved and/or changed. Both females and males noted the change in the way organizational members communicate. One female talked about how voicemail improved communication and email improved it further. “And what I don't like is a calling and getting voicemail and you have to wait. But now it's really good because we've got an e-mail system and they're usually pretty good about responding” (Jill). The male perspective is more complex:

Uh, the way we communicate. We used to call each other on the phone, now it's very difficult to even get ahold of anybody as you know. I can't stand voice mail, but it's almost a necessity because we've trimmed back, we've trimmed back to the point where I have to wear so many hats that I can't be sitting in my office waiting for the phone to ring and so we get voice mail. And then we play tag

back and forth, and everybody's got cell phones and voice this and voice that, so like when I come work now I check my cellphone voicemail, I check my corporate voicemail, I check my voicemail on my phone in my office, and I check my email. That's routine every morning, every lunchtime, every evening before I go home. So, that's the, the communication is different. (Caleb)

Sexual Division of Labor/Sexual Harassment

Sexual division of labor includes jobs and departments that are acceptable for women and language that denotes inferiority. Stories of sexual harassment include stories of inappropriate touching, sexual innuendo, and sexual relationships. Stories told by males and females share several themes: sex on company property, sex between managers and employees, and a sexual division of labor. Several "sex on company property" stories were told. One female told this story: "One night they couldn't find the security guy. They paged and paged him on his radio because they really did need him. I think it was Kyle who came in. They looked and looked. He was over in a motel room with a hooker" (Alice). A male had this story to share about conduct of restaurant employees: "just young guys we used to have working for us. Who was getting laid in the bathroom, who was getting laid in this room or that room" (Ed). A story told by both men and women was about organizational members getting caught on tape having "sex in the safe room with the camera rolling."

Another common theme is sex between managers and employees. Both females and males tell stories of male managers having sex with female employees. One manager told of his relationship: "She was an assistant manager here in the shop. Gave me the old 'company black eye'" (Elmer). An employee told of a fuel manager and "this little hottie

that worked at the fuel desk. They were both married people. They snuck around with each other, and her husband comes to the hotel, and there's both of them in the car. The next thing you know, they're both divorced. Now he's married to the fuel cashier"

(Doug).

Females also tell stories of inappropriate labels "he used to call me 'hon' and 'babe,' but he didn't mean anything by it, it was just him" (Jane), and inappropriate, uninvited touching by male managers. Two stories females told reflect this problem. "At times we've had management in here, and not recently, *Reststops* is really big on sexual harassment. I mean, we have had managers in here in the past who you would be afraid to be in the same room with. You gotta have somebody in the room with you, but like I said they've gotten much better so . . ." (Jill).

John was an alcoholic, everybody knew that, okay? We pretty much dealt with it at the time. But, at the, excuse me. At the Christmas party he put his hands on my child in a way he should never have put his hands on my child. Well, this was a Friday night Christmas party. I was here working, but it was told to me not only by my child, but by six, seven, eight other employees that was there that saw it.

(Lorraine)

Both female and male participants told stories illustrating a sexual division of labor. A male noted that he "went to the store manager's meeting a couple months ago for this district and there were, in the room we had probably 12 people and 3 of them were women, 4 of 'em were women. The restaurant manager's meeting, one. The general manager's meeting all men" (Caleb). A female shared her opinion on the division:

I think that's our mindset also, we had shop managers who never let women in the shop. If they have as much training as the guys do there should be no reason, I mean, but then again too, we never let any women fuel trucks, on the fuel island either. And you know, they just figured that wasn't normal, that wasn't commonplace, there was always a male fueling trucks. (Jill)

Customer Relations

These stories center of employee/manager responses and relationships to customers. As previously noted, customer relations is a category discussed more by females than by males. In fact, only one male told a story about customer relations and, unlike those told by females, it was about internal customers.

This company is, when you call the corporate office, anybody, Human Resources, Marketing, Maintenance or construction site people, whoever you call, they know. It's like, they drop everything they're doing to help you. They understand that that's what Mr. Jones wants. He wants the field management people to get all the help they need and all of the assistance they need. It's that way. The, I guess you'd call it the administrative side of it is, I don't see any problem. (Larry)

Stories told by females about customer relations were very different. One reflected the good-hearted nature of employees toward customers.

We had a lady in here who had three kids. I had looked at those kids for a week. She was using bags for the baby diapers. They were not eating. The husband came and dropped them off, and he went off somewhere, I don't know where. He said he was trying to find a job. But, her and those three babies stayed here morning,

noon, and night over there in the TV lounge. They slept over there. They didn't have hardly anything to eat. The babies were crying. She had paper bags for the diapers. I couldn't handle it. I told Cindy, "I'm taking my lunch break." It was so sad. I went out and bought them a whole bunch of diapers. I bought food. I got food here and gave it to them down there in the chapel. I bought the little kids something to play with, color with. It was just so sad. Those little kids were just so pitiful. Walking around here with paper on their butts for diapers. It was sad. That's the saddest case I've seen in a long time. So, I went out and spent a small fortune on them. I didn't have much money at the time, but I just couldn't handle it. It was pitiful. (Delia)

Others told of the difficulty of being on the "front lines." "I hear her yelling, she said, 'Get out of my store right now.' So, I get up, you know, and see what's going on, and this guy, he's got his jacket full of videotapes he's trying to steal. And he has his, you know, he had it zipped down halfway, and it was all just bulging out" (Amy). One manager told of being "in the floor" as she watched a waitress handle a difficult customer.

One of the funniest, and this goes back a few years, and I was just going into management, and I was doing the midnight shift, and I had an older lady. She was probably, like, 65, 66, 67, something like that, her age. And they had pulled tables together, and they had a bunch of drunks. And this one guy, he'd reach up and take hold of her sleeve or her apron, whatever he could get ahold of, and he'd yank on it, pull on it. "I want some biscuits and gravy." And, very patiently, very

calmly, very, just, "Okay, sir, I'll get it for you in just a minute," and she was continuing on to try to get everybody's order. She side-stepped him, she moved her position, he'd get up and go to her, and she tried to change where she was at, and she just, she was almost through. There was, like, ten or twelve of them. She was taking all their orders when they were all together, and she'd just about got everybody's order, and he come back and started yanking on her, telling her he wanted some biscuits and gravy. She just, very, [sighs], and she put her guest checkbook here, ink pen here, and she said, "Sir, I do not have them damn biscuits and gravy underneath this good little wig," and she pulled her wig off. "I do not have them biscuits and gravy underneath these dime store falsies, but if you'll give me a minute, I'll go in the kitchen and get them biscuits and gravy for you, but you're gonna have to hush." And he says, "Oh, okay," sat back, and didn't say one word. [laughs] I was in the floor. I was in the floor. I absolutely laughed so hard tears were rolling. It was hilarious. (Lorraine)

One manager noted that the problem of shoplifting affected customer service in a more indirect way. She explained that she had to lock expensive merchandise up, and there is "one cashier working, so she has to take care of the customers that are standing in line, get this guy a leather jacket out of the back stockroom. You know, it's just impossible. People are not going to hang around and wait" (Amy).

The final theme found in stories of customer relations has to do with taking care of the customer. A female manager was walking by a server "she had a glass of milk like that, a bowl of sugar, and a spoon. I come by, and I said, 'Sweetie, what are you trying to

do?’ And she says, ‘That man ordered sweet milk, and I’m trying to figure out how much sugar to put in it’” (Lorraine).

As shown by the results, this study supports the idea that this organizational culture creates and maintains gender. In addition to the gendering revealed in the stories, observation of a Southeast location supports this finding. Masculine individuals, both male and female, are found in the task-oriented profit centers of Shop and Fuel, while feminine individuals are in the more relationship-oriented profit centers of travel store and restaurant. There is evidence that males and females in the organization tell different stories and that they do not perceive a unified culture. There is also evidence that males and females do not move up through the ranks in the same way or to the same level. Again, the observation of one location supports this finding. All of the managers at the location were male and supervisors female. Additionally, these results also provide new and useful information to further investigation in this area. The results of this study provide a great deal of information from which many conclusions may be drawn.

In sum, the nine categories that emerged in the stories illustrate what is important to organizational members of *Reststops*. Many view Corporate control as noteworthy. Others shared stories about promotions. Still others talked about different kinds of relationships such as mentoring, employee/management relations, and customer relations. To some, the work environment was important; to some it was communication. Many talked about a sexual division of labor and/or sexual harassment. Some described and evaluated corporate people. These categories clearly convey what is important to the members of this organization.

Chapter 5

Discussion and Conclusion

Stories told by members effectively illustrate key similarities and differences between female and male perceptions of the organizational culture of this organization. The results of this study revealed both similarities and differences to previous research, as well as expected and unexpected results. This chapter discusses the present study, limitations of this study, and possibilities for future research.

The categories that emerged in this study emerged because the questions asked were about these particular topics. However, the amount of time devoted to each category by women and men and the themes that emerged reveal much about the organization. This study found that categories in women's and men's stories are the same, but many of the themes and stories are different, which is consistent with Kramer & Berman's (1998) findings. Women are more interested in relationships and work environment than are men. They are interested in employee/management relationships and also in customer relationships. There are a couple explanations for this. One, the women who participated in the study are at lower levels within the organization and are therefore not privy to knowledge about corporate or promotions, so they did not really have much to say about these categories. A second explanation is that women in this organization are located in positions that are inherently more relationship oriented. The women interviewed certainly have much more customer contact than do the men who participated in this study. Many of the women who participated in this study have direct customer contact; they are cashiers and servers, and customer contact is a necessary part of their jobs.

Men who participated in this study do not have as much direct contact with the customers; many of them are managers, who can choose when to have customer contact, or they work in the kitchen or in the shop where they have very little customer contact. Men tell more stories about corporate control, corporate people, and promotions because they have more direct experience with these things. More of the men who participated in this study are Profit Center Managers or General Managers. They are more informed about the inner workings of the organization. They also have more working relationships with corporate people and more of them have experienced first hand how promotions work. This division of labor within this organization supports previous findings of sex segregation within organizations (Bajdo & Dickson, 2001; Gale & Cartwright, 1995; Itzin, 1995; Snyder, Verderber, Langmeyer & Myers, 1992).

The categories and themes discussed by women and men of this organization say much about the organization. First, they say that the organization is perceived differently by women and by men. Women perceive promotions as within an individual's control; self-sacrifice and performance are critical to promotions, and as long as one is willing to relocate for the company almost anyone is eligible for promotion. Men, on the other hand, are more pragmatic. They also perceive self-sacrifice, performance, and being willing to relocate as important criteria for promotion, but they also admit that promotions are based on external factors such as who-you-know, how you look, and how good you are at "kissing up."

Second, both women and men perceive Corporate as "them", however, women and men view decisions and corporate control differently. Women are more interested in the direct affect corporate decisions have on them personally. They are more concerned

with how it affects the way they do business or how it affects a “family” member and they take it personally when bottom-line decisions affect people that they know and care about. It disturbs them when customer service suffers due to cost-cutting efforts. Men do not take it so personally. In fact, many saw it as amusing that corporate would go to such lengths to centralize and codify everything.

Third, women and men had very different tales to tell about mentoring. Several men told of mentors who took them under their wing, showed them how Reststops wanted things done, introduced them to people they needed to know, and, in general, opened doors for them. Women did not have these kinds of experiences. In the women’s stories, mentors functioned as trainers; they told the women how to do their jobs, some even showed them. But, many of the women described being left to figure it out for themselves. This illustrates two things about this organization: that there is a “buddy system” in place and that more value is placed on particular jobs within the organization.

Obviously, similarities and differences occurred between women and men within this organization, the question is why? Similarities could be the result of the arrangement of the organization. Asplund (1988), Klenke (1996), and Marshall (1993) all identified power structures dominated by men in which the organizational culture has been and continues to be shaped by men and which tends to reinforce the value systems of those men. This organization has a similar power structure. It is unquestionably a hierarchy with the Chief Executive Officer at the top. The CEO is at the top of the pyramid, followed by Vice Presidents, and so forth, down to location levels at which the General Managers would be highest, Profit Center Managers next, then Assistant Profit Center Managers, followed by supervisors, and finally, hourly employees.

Based on this power structure, those within the organization have a perception of locations as subcultures. Perception at the location level is affected by the particular view, or standpoint, members have of the organization. This shared perception allows members at the location level to perceive things similarly. Stories told in this study indicate that members within each location perceive themselves as somehow different and separate from the rest of the organization. This is particularly obvious in the stories about changes that occur with each management change. Although there is an overarching organizational culture that dictates how things are to be done, rules are interpreted differently by different managers. Regardless of how locations run the day-to-day operations, they fit the definition of a subculture and they recognize that power is at the top of the hierarchy—Corporate—rather than at the lower levels (Wilkof, et al., 1995), as evidenced by stories of getting ready for a corporate visit.

Another indication of subcultures is in the use of language; as noted in previous research (Mulac, et al., 2001) the use of language can contribute to distinct subcultures. In this organization, both males and females told stories of sex between male managers and female employees. However, stories told by men made it seem as if it was an everyday occurrence, even acceptable. One participant said he got the “old company black eye,” implying that it is a frequent occurrence and no big deal. Others told of a manager and employee getting caught by her husband, how everyone knew about it, and still he got promoted. Apparently, based on this story, the “old company black eye” really is no big deal in this organization. Another use of language in this organization that implies a subculture was the constant reference of one GM to “his girls,” which seemed to mean any female employee. When pressed about interviewing managers, the

researcher was told he would send another one of “his girls.” He never referred to the men working in his location as “his boys.”

There is also evidence to support the existence of co-cultures within the locations themselves (Orbe, 1998). There is not an elitist mentality that any one profit center is better than another, but there is an “us” and “them” mentality (Ashcraft and Pacanowsky, 1996) clearly separating the employees within each of the profit centers. The shop is a masculine co-culture with autocratic, unfriendly managers and employees who are there to “do a job.” The store and the restaurant are a different world. The employees and managers talk about each other as if they know each other well, in fact, some refer to co-workers as family.

This study also supports the notion that women have difficulty achieving positions of power because they are not part of the male community (Asplund, 1988; Itzin, 1995; Mann, 1995; Simpson, 2000). This could also be explained in part by the differences in location within the organization. As has been previously noted, men (at least those who participated in this study) are at higher levels within the organization. Men share stories about corporate meetings in which they swap ideas, share inside jokes, and tell “remember when” stories. Meetings at which they get to socialize with their superiors from corporate, often including the CEO. Conversely, women in this study are at lower levels within the organization and have a different perception of the organization. In fact, the only female who told a story of socializing with the CEO was a bookkeeping trainer who is invited to go out with the guys because the GM “isn’t much of a talker, so they take me along” (Jill). Men described the promotion system as a “buddy system” in which who you know is more important than what you know. Others

tell stories of the loyalty shown to male members of the organization regardless of their actions or behaviors (i.e., throwing knives and plates in anger, coming to work drunk, sexually harassing female employees). Clearly, in this organization the top of the hierarchy is a male community.

Conclusions

This study looked at stories told by women and men within a stereotypically masculine organization. Stories were examined for similarities and differences and three notable conclusions emerged from the results. First, the perception of organizational members is that the company places more value on task-oriented rather than relationship-oriented individuals. Second, that there is not a unified culture within the organization. And finally, that men are at the top of the hierarchy.

It is obvious from the results that more value is placed on individuals capable of adhering to policies rather than in getting personally involved. This effectively results in gendering of this organization, which can be seen in a sexual division of labor, sex segregation, and stereotyping. Individuals with more of a relationship-oriented approach continue to find themselves at the lower levels of the organization while those who are more task-oriented and bottom line driven rise through the ranks.

This is interesting in light of one GM's observation that Reststops is a visionary organization that realized a decade ago that income could no longer depend on fuel sales. According to Stan, the company was the industry leader in changing its focus to non-fuel sales. However, a shift in value of personnel did not follow this change in focus. *Reststops* continues to promote individuals from the traditionally task-oriented profit centers rather than those from the relationship-oriented profit centers.

Previous literature suggests that subcultures exist within organizations and clearly those subcultures can be identified as masculine or feminine (Cartwright and Gale,1995). This study supports the findings that masculine subcultures have a more direct approach and feminine subcultures have a more affective style. Masculine subcultures adopt the tendency of a masculine culture to be driven by power relationships and results oriented. Conversely, feminine subcultures tend to be more concerned with interpersonal relationships and more process oriented.

Previous research suggests that organizational cultures do create and maintain gender and that men are the gatekeepers hierarchically in positions of power and influence (Asplund, 1988). This study confirms this finding, at least for this particular organization. Men in this organization maintain the structure of the “good ol’ boys network” by interacting within a male community and excluding women from top levels of the hierarchy.

As anticipated at the beginning of this research, similarities and differences were found in women’s and men’s stories. Stories are inherently constructing. By their very nature they construct and reconstruct. They illustrate the collective perception of reality within an organization. Because they represent a collective reality, it is natural that some of the stories that women and men tell will be similar. It is expected that women and men will tell similar stories about an organization’s history because these are facts that are not left open to interpretation. However, stories that can be interpreted, will be interpreted based on the standpoint of the storyteller. If the storyteller is limited to the lowest levels of the organization due to gendering within the organization, this is the framework with which the story will be told. This will lead to a belief that to rise to the top of the

organization, one needs to share the value system of those already there, which primarily means to be direct and bottom line driven rather than indirect and relationship driven.

Stories are a powerful means of creating and maintaining an organization's culture. They tell organizational members everything they need to know about the organization. They go beyond the explicit rules shared with members as they are socialized into an organization. The stories tell members what behaviors are expected, accepted, and valued.

Obviously, there is no question about the gendering of this organization; clearly the organizational culture creates and maintains gender. This can be seen in the kinds of stories women and men tell in the organization. Although women and men tell stories about the same kinds of things, they obviously do not share the same view of the organization. Their stories are similar and yet different. And still they paint a very clear picture of this organization.

Reststops is an organization that lives in the past. As noted previously, it was a trendsetter in focusing attention on areas other than fuel sales to generate income. However, while the importance of the store and restaurant becomes clearer, the organization clings to old ideas about who is most eligible for promotion. The stories told by organizational members indicate that the organization continues to value more masculine, task-oriented, bottom-line driven individuals. Stories also indicate a double standard: men have relationships and families, but women sacrifice their personal lives for the company. Still, many of the participants of this study found the organization a good place to work judging from the number of members who have been with it for many years.

Limitations

A few limitations were found in the present study, and this section will explain these. The first limitation was the inability to get a diverse sample at different locations. There was a lack of access, both to an equal distribution of female and male participants and to female members in higher levels within the organization. The design of the study allowed for GMs at each of the participating locations to choose interviewees for the researcher. Most of the GMs were cooperative and understood the researchers interest in interviewing equal numbers of males and females from each of the profit centers. Only one GM kept sending “his girls” to be interviewed and denied access to managers.

A second limitation of the study was time. Due to deadlines and poor planning, data collection was hurried and/or cut short. Unanticipated problems arose at three locations which interfered with data collection. At one location data collection was cut short by an in-house emergency. At another the GM was on vacation and the researcher was not permitted to collect data. A third location’s GM had to leave for a family emergency, but the fuel manager gave the necessary approval to start data collection. Planning was not done far enough in advance to get to all the locations originally planned or to work more closely with the Human Resource Manager in an effort to maximize interviews.

A third limitation was focusing specifically on stories. It is possible that more information may have resulted from phrasing the questions differently (e. g., “Tell me about a time when...” instead of “Can you tell me a story about...”). Additional data may have resulted from questions asking less specifically for stories.

Finally, there was no comparison group in this study. Would a female dominated organization have resulted in similar findings? Did it make a difference? There is no way to tell if the results indicating gendering are particular to this organization or societal.

Future Research

Based on the results of this study, future research should continue to study ways in which organizational cultures create and maintain gender. Future studies may replicate the current study in a variety of kinds of organizations, such as stereotypically female organizations (i.e., nursing, elementary school teaching), stereotypically male organizations headed by females (i.e., plumbers, contractors, dentists), and stereotypical female organizations headed by males (i.e., nursery schools, day care). Is gender created within other kinds of organizations, and, if so, how?

We have evidence that the glass ceiling remains intact, as does the good ol' boys network (Asplund, 1988; Hacker, 1992; Itzin, 1995). This research assumes the glass ceiling is a structure, Buzzanelle (1995) argues that the glass ceiling is both a process and a consequence of gendered interactions in organizational settings. Future studies should look at ways in which the gendering of and interactions within organizational cultures contribute to the glass ceiling and foster the male community.

It is also important for future research to study the contribution of language of organizations to the culture of those organizations. Language gets its power through shared meaning and if a symbol only becomes significant through negotiation (Mead, 1934) it is important to recognize how language contributes to the gendering of an organization.

In sum, the purpose of this study was to examine the role of organizational culture in creating and maintaining gender. Qualitative research methods of in-depth interviews and observation were used to gather data. The present study has found evidence that this organizational culture does create and maintain gender. Women and men of the organization tell stories about the same categories, but the central themes are different. This organization continues to be sex segregated and have a sexual division of labor. Gendering is done through language, through a power structure dominated by males, and by an organizational culture that values personal sacrifice. Additionally, evidence was also found in support of subcultures and co-cultures. Hollywood's tale of life in the organization was tongue-in-cheek and not to be taken seriously. The organizational members were exaggerated caricatures. And the Hollywood version had the requisite happy ending. In this organization, it is reality.

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Appendices

Appendix A—Observation Form

Location:		Date:	
Department:		Time:	
Department Head:		Sex:	
Number of Employees:	Male=	Female=	
Location of Employees (jobs):			
Manager on Duty?		Location:	
Manager's activity?			
Employee interaction with Manager?			
Describe:			
General Manager:		Sex:	

Appendix B—Interview Questions

1. Tell me a little of your story. What brought you to Reststops? How long have you been here? Have you always done the same job? If not, what other jobs have you had?
2. How does Reststops compare with other companies you have worked for? Is it the same, better, worse?
3. What do you like most about Reststops?
4. What do you like least?
5. What is the funniest thing you have heard that has happened to someone working at Reststops?
6. How about the saddest?
7. Can you think of anything that you remember in particular that happened or that you heard happened?
8. Have you had a chance to meet any of the corporate people? Can you tell me about that experience?
9. What have you heard about how to get promoted? Can you tell me about some of the men who have been promoted? Can you tell me about some of the women?
10. Has Reststops changed at all since you have been here? Can you tell me some of the things that are different now then say when you first started?
11. Can you tell me about an experience you had personally with a manager or corporate person?
12. Have you had anyone in particular who showed you the ropes or helped you learn your way around here? What can you tell me about that person?

13. Can you tell me a story that you have heard about the company, one of your co-workers, someone at another location, or someone at corporate?

Appendix C—Coding Form

Instructions for Coders: Use a separate coding form for each transcript. Write the transcript number in the upper, right corner of the form. Place a tick-mark in the right column for each item that fits that category.

A story is defined as a sequence of events (a plot), with organization-related characters, which takes place in a setting somehow related to the organization.	
Corporate people in control -As long as things are going according to plan, someone else can be in charge, but when things are not going as expected corporate people take over -corporate centralizing operations	
Promotions result from experience -Knowing what you are doing -knowing how to take care of business	
Promotions result from performance	
Sacrifice is a key to success -Being willing to move as quickly and as often as necessary -working whenever needed -coming in when called -covering other departments	
Sexual Harassment -Affairs between managers -affairs between managers and employees -managers suggesting inappropriately	
Promotions result from hard work -work many hours -do whatever is needed -give up personal life	
Promotions result from being in the right place at the right time	
Women are detail oriented	
Men don't care about details	
Company goals -taking care of the customer	
Corporate people as real people -Humorous -hard-working -considerate -thoughtful	
Mentoring People who showed employees the ropes, helped them find their way, empowered them	
Employee/management relations -able to talk to managers -managers overlooking problem employees -management style	
corporate spending -cutting costs -cutting hours -cutting management	
environment -comfortable/uncomfortable -professional -friendly -family	
paperwork -takes time away from important stuff -busywork	
doing things the Corporate way	

Vita

linda pysher jurczak was born in Easton, Pennsylvania on July 5, 1959. She graduated from Easton Area High School in 1977 and immediately went to work. In 1996, after various low-level management positions, she returned to college. She received a B. S. in Speech Communication from the University of Tennessee in 2001. An interest in feminism and organizational communication convinced her to pursue an advanced degree in Speech Communication.