

# Proceedings of Gender and Sexuality at Work:



A Multidisciplinary Research  
and Engagement Conference

18 February 2020



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# Conference Organisers, Committees, and Presenters



## Conference Organisers

**Dr Victor Sojo**, Centre for Workplace Leadership

**Dr Melissa Wheeler**, Department of Management and Marketing

## Executive Academic Committee

**Associate Professor Susan Ainsworth**, Department of Management and Marketing

**Professor Julie Bernhardt AM**, The Florey Institute of Neuroscience and Mental Health and WiSP

**Professor Anna Chapman**, Melbourne Law School

**Associate Professor Michelle Evans**, Program Director MURRA Indigenous Business Master Class

**Professor Valerie Francis**, Melbourne School of Design

**Associate Professor Natalie Hannan**, Mercy Hospital for Women

**Professor Thomas Maak**, Centre for Workplace Leadership

**Associate Professor Leah Ruppner**, School of Social and Political Sciences

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## Universities and Organisations Presenting at the Conference

Australian National University	dandolopartners
Deakin University	Deloitte
La Trobe University	Diversity Council Australia
Macquarie University	Herbert Smith Freehills
Monash University	Metropolitan Fire Brigade
RMIT University	Our Watch
Swinburne University of Technology	QBE
University of Adelaide	Transgender Victoria
University of Canberra	VicHealth
University of Melbourne	Victoria Police
University of Michigan	Victorian Equal Opportunity & Human Rights Commission (VEOHRC)
University of New South Wales	Victorian Government Department of Premier and Cabinet
University of Newcastle	Victorian Government Department of Treasury and Finance
University of Sydney	Women's Health Goulburn North East
University of Tasmania	Women's Health in the North
Western Sydney University	Workplace Gender Equality Agency



# Introducing Gender and Sexuality at Work



# Making Workplaces Better for Everyone

## Conference Wrap-up

Researchers from 14 Australian universities presented their work at the inaugural Gender and Sexuality at Work conference, hosted by the University's Centre for Workplace Leadership (CWL) on 18 February 2020.

The conference, organised by Dr Victor Sojo (CWL) and Dr Melissa Wheeler (Department of Management and Marketing, UniMelb and Swinburne Business School), highlighted how gender identity, sexual orientation, and sexual characteristics intersect with our work lives. Academics were joined by representatives from 16 public and private organisations working in this space.

"We wanted to host this conference to get workplace gender and sexuality researchers and diversity and inclusion specialists from industry together in the same space to share their knowledge about what is working, what's not, and what needs to be further investigated in order to contribute to best practice in diversity management," Dr Wheeler said.

In her keynote Professor Lilia Cortina, Professor of Psychology at the University of Michigan, addressed the hidden problem of gender harassment. Gender harassment, she explained, is a form of sexual harassment. Unlike sexual coercion and unwanted sexual attention, gender harassment focuses on gender-related insults designed to put-down women in workplaces.

This harassment makes up the bulk of sexual harassment experiences, but is poorly recognised in workplace policy. Importantly, Cortina said, frequent gender harassment causes the same amount of harm as the more intense but rarer forms of sexual harassment such as assault.

The Diversity Council of Victoria's Cathy Brown reported on the organisation's survey of LGBTIQ+ people at work. They found that 74% of LGBTIQ+ people thought it was important to be able to be "out" at work, but only 32% felt comfortable to do so. Being out also improves employee wellbeing and increases performance in the workplace.

University of Tasmania researchers Dr Meredith Nash and Dr Hanne Nielsen survey women working Antarctica, and 63 reported sexual harassment. Lack of privacy and the intimate relationships required by remote fieldwork contribute to women's vulnerability on the icy continent.

In another session, Dr Nash and Dr Nielsen looked at the intersection of race and gender for women in STEMM (science, technology, engineering, maths and medicine) fields. Interviewing 30 women of colour, they found all reported “micro-aggressions”, small but frequent remarks that drew attention to the women’s race. “It’s even harder for women of colour to succeed in science,” Dr Nash said.

Dr Leah Rupanner, Associate Professor of Sociology and Co-director of The Policy Lab at the University, highlighted her research from her forthcoming book on US mothers.

“We think of the coastal U.S. states as being the most progressive. In terms of policies and economic opportunities for women, my book shows that this is true. But, their childcare resources are some of the worst in the nation and, as a result, mothers in these states are boxed out of employment.”

The University’s Dr Tania King won the award for best paper from an early career researcher for her work on mental health and work-life balance. Her research showed men who are breadwinners are more likely suffer poor mental health than men in families where men work part time and women work part time.

Members of Victoria Police, the Metropolitan Fire Brigade, and the Victorian public service discussed efforts to reduce bias and discrimination in their workplaces. BCom alum Sally Goldner and Son Vivienne discussed how to make campuses more inclusive for Trans and gender diverse students.

Dr Sojo said that research around gender and sexuality in the workplace is at a point where it can be translated into policy.

“This conference helped showcase the state of the art and the potential for improvement. We already have academics from other universities who want to co-host the conference in the future. We hope this is just the first of many spaces we will create to produce and share knowledge about gender and sexuality at work.”

*By James Whitmore*

*Communications Coordinator, Faculty of Business and Economics at University of Melbourne*

# Day Overview

On the Day Overview below, click on any of the cells for more information. All the workshop sessions are indicated in salmon colour, all other cells represent Academic Paper presentations.

For the Academic Paper presentations, click on the title to navigate to the paper submitted by the author(s), when available. Note that when compiling the short paper contributions, these were arranged alphabetically by title. Also note that variations in referencing style among papers reflect the different systems that are relevant to different disciplines.

For the workshops, click on any of the titles to learn more about that session, including its presenter(s), personal bios, and the session's description. The presenters from *Queer(y)ing Emergency Services* provided a short paper which has been included in the relevant section.

Keynote Address: Professor Lilia Cortina			
Track A	Track B	Track C	Track D
Morning Sessions			
Death by a Thousand Cuts	Women Working Away	The Need for a Father's Quota in PPL Policy	Equality at Work
#MeToo Antarctica	Women and Precarious Employment	Gender, Job Stress, and Sleep in Working Parents	Stigma and Healthcare use in Sexual Minorities
Teaching About Gender-Based Violence	Women, Age Discrimination and Work		Gender-Diverse Individuals at Work
Gender System Justification and Perpetrator Blame	Gender Norms as Predictor Variables	Sharing the Load	Gay Men's Working Lives
Afternoon Sessions			
Achieving Gender Equality at Victoria Police	Gender Representation at the Royal Opera	The Pram in the Hall	Out at Work
	Conflicts of Rights	Work-Family Conflict: Gendered Risks & Opportunity	
*Proud, Visible, Safe	Gender Pay Gap	Workplace Equality and Respect	All Genders, All of Campus
Queer(y)ing Emergency Services	Recruit Smarter	Motherlands	EOA's Positive Duty
Plenary Session			

# Keynote Address

# Keynote

## Gender harassment: A technology of oppression in organizations

### Abstract

The #MeToo campaign has launched sexual harassment to the forefront of public awareness. When people hear this term, however, they typically think only about unwanted sexual pursuit. The term is misleading, because oftentimes “sexual” harassment has little if anything to do with sexuality - instead it’s about gender. This talk will highlight findings on gender harassment: conduct that disparages employees based on gender but implies no sexual advance. I will present evidence on the pervasiveness of gender harassment, work environments associated with it, and its implications for worker wellbeing. This harassment puts pressure on all employees to conform to a narrow standard of gender “appropriate” behaviour. As a result, gender oppression is maintained in society and replicated on the job.

### Keynote’s Biography



Lilia M. Cortina, Ph.D., is Professor of Psychology, Women’s Studies, and Management & Organizations at the University of Michigan. An organizational psychologist, she investigates the many ways in which people are subordinated, violated, and relegated to the margins of organizational life. These interpersonal indignities range from subtle social slights to general incivility to blatant harassment and violence.

Professor Cortina’s scholarship spans the full spectrum, with a particular focus on incivility and harassment based on gender/sex. To date, she has published over 80 scientific articles and chapters on these topics. In recognition of unusual and outstanding contributions to the field, Professor Cortina has been named Fellow of the American Psychological Association and the Society for Industrial/Organizational Psychology.

Professor Cortina’s research on workplace harassment has won awards, but its impact stretches beyond academia and into other professional spheres. She has served as an expert witness in a range of venues, translating findings from social science to inform policy and legal decision-making. For example, she provided expert testimony to the U.S. Department of Defense Judicial Proceedings Panel; commissioned by Congress, this Panel conducted an independent review of American military judicial procedures surrounding sexual assault. She also testified to the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission’s (EEOC) Select Task Force on the Study of Harassment in the Workplace. In addition, Professor Cortina recently joined colleagues in co-authoring a landmark report on sexual harassment for the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine.

Lilia Cortina earned her A.M. and Ph.D. in Psychology (with a minor in Quantitative Methods) from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

# Gender and Sexuality at Work

Keynote Speaker

Professor Lilia Cortina



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# Academic Papers





# Academic Papers

## Peer-Review Process

We received a total of 23 submissions. Twenty papers were accepted and 19 were presented at the GSWC. All academic papers were peer-reviewed.

By submitting a short paper to the conference, authors were agreeing to review one short paper submitted by another author. Additionally, we identified academics with relevant expertise and invited them to review a submission. In total, 56 academics from Australia and overseas reviewed one paper. Each paper had between two and four independent reviewers.

Most papers were refereed using an open review process (i.e., the identity of the authors was known to the reviewers). We considered that the transparency of open peer-review encourages accountability and civility, generally improving the overall quality of the review and articles. Authors and the reviewers of their papers were from different academic institutions.

Reviewers were asked to rate the quality of the papers along seven dimensions. These ratings allowed the organisers to select the best papers to be presented at the GSWC and to decide on the two Best Paper Awards. The average rating from the reviewers was only made available to the conference's Academic Executive Committee. However, the reviewers' feedback was conveyed in full to the authors.

Papers were evaluated on a five-point rating scale, based on the quality of:

- introduction and framing of the research,
- methodology applied to address the topic,
- data analysis conducted and results clarity,
- discussion of theoretical implications,
- discussion of practical implications,
- intersectional considerations, and
- multidisciplinary approach.

Based on these ratings and the final recommendations from the reviewers, 20 papers were accepted for presentation at the GSWC.

Also based on the reviewer ratings, two papers received best paper awards, which included a certificate and a monetary award. One award went to the best paper by a higher degree research student and one award went to the best paper by an early career researcher.

**Below, the reader can find the short papers presented during the conference.**

# Changes over time in gay men's working lives

**Dr Peter Robinson**

School of Arts, Social Sciences and Humanities, Swinburne University of Technology

## Abstract

Based on interviews with 82 gay men, aged 18–87 from eight international cities, this paper examines changes over time in their principal work narratives. Analysis of the data which the interviews provided was undertaken thematically and organized by three age cohorts: an old cohort of men aged 60 and older, a middle cohort of those aged 45–60, and a young cohort of interviewees aged 45 and younger.

Analysis of the data revealed a number of principal narratives which interviewees drew on to account for their working lives what work meant to them. These narratives included the (possibly predictable) 'creative' narrative but also (the less predictable) 'work-as-work', which referred to ordinary, everyday jobs which workers have found in factories, shops, workshops, and department stores in order as to earn a living. Other narratives included work for 'social and political change' and one concerning 'care' work.

Principal narratives varied by age cohort and were historically contingent. For the old cohort, work-as-work was the dominant narrative, while for the middle cohort, care work was the dominant narrative. For the young cohort, creativity returned as a narrative but in a different form and was an important one for these men. Apparent also in the stories young gay men told was evidence of the contribution anti-discrimination legislation was having in their improved working lives.

## Introduction

The purpose of the study (Robinson, 2017) was to examine whether their sexuality affected gay men's working lives as was suggested in some very early work in this area (Bell and Weinberg, 1978; Pollak, 1986) and what changes occurred over time in the working lives of gay men, in the types of jobs they got. Because of significant changes since the 1950s in the social acceptance and standing of gay men and other sexual minorities, including the effect of legislation allowing same-sex marriage in many western jurisdictions, it could be assumed that their working lives would be less affected by prejudice and discrimination and this represented a second rationale for the study.

The single research question, which was used also as the interview question, concerned the story of the interviewees' working lives and what they enjoyed about work. Being as open-ended as it was, it allowed interviewees to provide detailed narrative accounts of their working lives, which often began at the point when they left school or graduated from trade school or higher education to the time of interview or their retirement, depending on their circumstances.

This study is not entirely stand-alone but since the 1980s when the HIV-AIDS crisis overwhelmed a great deal of social research on gay men's lives, very little has been written

on gay working lives. What work preceded it was based on research data collected in the 1970s (see above).

Social research on gay men's work circumstances, where it has occurred more recently, has often concerned workplace discrimination (Griffith and Hebl, 2002; Wicks, 2017) or in the context of poverty and homelessness and how they affect sexual minorities (Cochran et.al., 2002; Uhrig, 2015). It has not been in the context of this study, which is on how they understand the meaning of work more generally and the meaning of their own working lives.

## **Methods**

Drawing on data from interviews with a purposive sample of gay men, aged 18–87, this project was designed to understand if sexuality affected gay men's working lives. All interviewees were asked to answer the same question about their working lives: 'Please tell me the story of your working life and what you enjoyed or enjoy about work'. Their answers were organized by age cohort and analysed thematically. Three age cohorts were used: an old cohort, which comprised those aged 60 and older; a middle cohort of men aged 45–60; and a young cohort comprising those aged 45 and younger.

Analysis sought to identify the principal narratives in the men's answers to the question concerning their working lives and work enjoyment. Once identified and tested, the principal narratives were then used to organize and analyse the data, based on the understanding that the stories people tell about themselves are constitutive (Bruner, 2001; Carr, 2001; Plummer, 1995), that is, that interview data reveal narrative identity and in this case, how interviewees understood the meaning of their working lives.

The purposive sample of 82 gay men was recruited from eight international cities, 2009–2011: Auckland, Hong Kong, London, Los Angeles, Manchester, Melbourne, New York and Sydney. Interview locations were chosen for a number of reasons including the following: language (Hong Kong is a predominantly Chinese city but English is the lingua franca); accessibility for a researcher based in Melbourne (Auckland, Sydney); importance as a metropolitan centre with a history of gay culture and activism (London, New York, Sydney) and an alternative site to the metropolitan centre of the country in question and with its own history of gay culture and activism (Los Angeles, Manchester).

The age range of the sample was 18–87. While interviewees were chiefly white, Anglo and middle class (by education and income), the sample included men from working-class backgrounds and those who had working-class jobs as well as men who identified as African-American, Indigenous Australian, and Maori. The range of occupations were in descending order: education ( $n=24$  which included school and university staff and university students), business ( $n=11$ ), human services, small business, retail, clerical, transport, building and construction. Interviewees' incomes varied and included 11 men who earned very little (less than USD20,000 in 2010 terms) and 13 men who earned relatively high incomes (more USD100,000 or more in 2010 terms). At the time of interview, 14 interviewees were retired.

## Overview

Five principal work narratives were identified in the stories the interviewees told of their working lives and what they enjoyed about work. The narratives suggested work as: (a) simple, practical understanding (over centuries) of work as a means to an end: **work as work**; (b) motivated by care in the sense that feminists such as Hochschild (1983) have understood women's work as care work: **care work**; (c) contributing to social or political change: **social or political change**; (d) having a creative dimension: **creative**; (e) providing or including an opportunity for travel: **travel**.

The importance of principal narratives varied across the three age cohorts. For the old cohort (aged 60+), work as work was the dominant narrative followed by care work; for the middle cohort (aged 45–60), care work was the dominant narrative—during the HIV-AIDS crisis, many gay men contributed time, money, effort to its alleviation—followed by travel which was prominent only in the stories of this cohort; and for the young cohort (aged 45 and younger), creativity appeared for the first time as a narrative and was the principal one for these men, followed by care and social and political change as equally important, second-level narratives.

## Implications

**Theoretical.** A great deal of published research exists on male working lives, changes in employment practices since the 1970s, and the effect these have had on families, careers of men and women and heterosexual relationships and yet very little published research exists on the shape or nature of gay men's working lives. What published material does exist tends to focus on how gay men or lesbians experience and adapt to discrimination in the workplace (Griffith and Hebl, 2002; Wicks, 2017).

Interviews of working people and their work histories are included in the published works of Studs Terkel (1975) and Pierre Bourdieu's collaborative study of the social effects of the new capitalism (1999). As well, scholars such as Humphrey McQueen (2011), Richard Sennett (2006), and Loïc Wacquant (2009) have written about the work-place as it has been transformed to meet the needs of neo-liberal economic agenda and yet no one has studied or written about the work histories of gay men in the same way.

This study draws on interviews with 82 gay men from eight international cities. Analysis of the interview data suggested a number of principal narratives to explain by age cohort gay men's understanding of work and their working lives and then how these changed over time. Mapping the changes in working lives over time suggested that at least three of the principal narratives interviewees drew on to explain their working lives were historically contingent. Firstly, that 'work as work' was the dominant narrative for men from the old cohort could be explained by the fact that these men, who came of age between 1945 and 1970, risked social isolation if their sexuality were publicly known in the work place and so after the event explained their working life as simply something 'that one did' in order to get by. Secondly, the primacy of the 'care' narrative in the stories of the men from the middle cohort (the baby boomers) could be explained by the fact that during the HIV-AIDS crisis, which affected them more than any other age cohort, many gay men contributed time, money, effort to its alleviation. And thirdly, in the young cohort, the importance for them of the 'creative' narrative could suggest the effects of improved social

conditions for gay men and the decreasing significance of HIV-AIDS to the lives of gay men and its associated stigma.

**Practical.** This study provides a unique focus on the work histories and careers of a sub-group of men whose presence is often overlooked in public discourse concerning the male workforce, male occupations, the ‘breadwinner’ and other hetero-normative terms used to distinguish between workers on the basis of gender. It also provides an opportunity for a different set of males to speak about their experiences in the workforce and the workplace, a population which is not often asked to speak or has chosen not to speak (up) or distinguish itself from the generality of men. Finally, the study revealed that gay men are finding the workplace less intimidatory and more accepting which has been brought about in no small measure by anti-discrimination legislation.

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# **‘Death by a thousand cuts’: Visibly and culturally diverse women’s experiences of racial microaggressions in STEMM organisations**

**Dr Robyn Moore**

School of Social Sciences, University of Tasmania

**Associate Professor Meredith Nash**

School of Social Sciences, University of Tasmania

Institute for the Study of Social Change, University of Tasmania

## **Abstract**

In this paper, we use an intersectional framework to explore how gender interacts with other aspects of identity, such as race, ethnicity and/or culture, to structure the microaggressions experienced by visibly and culturally diverse women in academia, industry and government. We focus on these women’s experiences to disrupt the normative erasure of race from the workplace diversity context. We conducted 30 semi-structured interviews with women in science, technology, engineering, maths and medicine (STEMM) organisations who self-identify as women of colour and/or women from culturally diverse backgrounds (henceforth women of colour). While women of colour share many experiences with white women, their challenges cannot simply be subsumed under gender. Rather, race and gender intersect to create overlapping and interdependent systems of discrimination and disadvantage. Racial microaggressions can have a devastating impact yet may be invisible to members of the dominant racial group – those most likely to be women of colour’s peers and managers. White managers and peers can act as allies to women of colour by respecting and amplifying women’s concerns.

## **Keywords**

STEMM, women of colour, cultural diversity, whiteness, microaggression

## **Introduction**

In this paper, we use an intersectional framework (Crenshaw, 1989) to explore the racial microaggressions experienced by women of colour in STEMM organisations. Racial microaggressions are ‘brief and commonplace daily verbal, behavioural, and environmental indignities, whether intentional or unintentional, that communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative racial slights and insults to the target person or group’ (Sue et al., 2007, p. 273). The cumulative effects of these seemingly minor events have a devastating impact – ‘death by a thousand cuts’ in the words of one of our research participants.

Microaggressions may be experienced based on any non-normative aspect of identity such as gender, sexuality and disability. We focus on racial microaggressions to disrupt the tendency of research on women in STEMM to focus exclusively on middle-class, heterosexual, white women (Ong, 2005). This focus constructs a ‘social imaginary of a universal woman’ within the sciences (Torres, 2012, p. 38), which neglects the complexity of women’s lived experiences and erases the experiences of women of colour, among others.

Women of colour face challenges that cannot simply be subsumed under gender. For example, Clancy et al.'s (2017) survey of women in astronomy and planetary science found that women of colour reported the highest rates of negative workplace experiences and are at greater risk of both gendered and racial harassment. US empirical research reveals that identifying as a woman of colour and a scientist often involves creative and painful practices of gender and racial passing (Ong, 2005). Ironically, progress made by women of colour in STEMM is decreasing as an unintended consequence of 'women in STEMM' programs and policy initiatives which disproportionately benefit white women (Armstrong & Jovanovic, 2015). To explore these issues, we asked:

- How do visibly and culturally diverse women negotiate their professional identities in STEMM organisations?

## Methods

This paper examines the experiences of 30 women of colour working in academia, industry and government in STEMM organisations in Australia. Fifty-four women volunteered to participate in our study. We used a sampling matrix based on age, employment status/career point, geographic location and organisational type to purposively select participants. Women who agreed to participate submitted consent forms. We conducted one semi-structured interview of up to one hour with each participant (n = 30 interviews) by Skype in 2019.

All interviews were recorded with consent and transcribed verbatim. Data was analysed thematically. First, each transcript was reviewed for meaningfulness in relation to the research question. Data was then clustered into themes based on shared ideas. Once themes were created, the data was re-read to refocus the analysis on the themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This study was approved by the University of Tasmania Human Research Ethics Committee. Data have been de-identified and pseudonyms are used throughout this paper.

Demographic information was collected in a voluntary questionnaire prior to the interviews. Participants in this study are aged between 22 and 60 years, with a mean age of 38. Women in the study come from 17 different countries, with only three being born in Australia and a further four in other countries in the Anglosphere (NZ, UK, USA). Most women work in full-time, paid employment in skilled roles, positioning them occupationally as middle class.

Both authors are white women. During each phase of this research project, we met to discuss the implications of our racial identity. We are acutely aware of Kincheloe and McLaren's (2002, p. 105) caution that 'research practices are generally, although most often unwittingly, implicated in the reproduction of systems of class, race, and gender oppression'. Indeed, our previous research on women in STEMM demonstrates this (see Nash and Moore, 2019). Due to factors beyond our control, our previous sample consisted of white women, thereby perpetuating the erasure of women of colour's experiences from our findings. We aspire to be allies to women of colour, while recognising that the designation of ally is not ours to make (Brookfield, 2014). Drawing on Patton and Bondi (2015), we regularly reflect on our role in this space as we endeavour to support social justice without perpetuating inequity.



## Findings

Many women in our study felt that gender and race acted in tandem to structure their experiences. For example, Chantal (age 52, born in UK) said that ‘they don’t seem to listen or believe what I say as much as maybe if I looked different, as it were ... it could be the colour thing, or it could be because I’m a woman’. Some participants described experiences of being invisible and having to prove themselves that are likely to resonate with many white women, such as having to work hard to overcome preconceptions:

They just underestimate you ... you have to prove yourself before somebody actually believes what you are saying (Brigitte, age 32, born in Columbia)

Getting to the same table takes so much effort (Shankari, age 53, born in India)

However, women of colour also face microaggressions based on their racial or cultural background:

Like eastern women are supposed to be submissive or stay at home, they don’t expect them to take on leadership positions like your western woman ... there’s already a pre-conceived notion about what I should be doing and no one expect me to go outside it (Danika, age 25, born in India)

I felt that personally I wasn’t taken seriously because A: I was female and B: because I was brown (Meera, age 33, born in India)

There tends to be this perception that, particularly in Asian women, you’re not supposed to speak back or question anything (Meilin, age 35, born in China)

You have to walk a really fine line and, in a way, I feel as a woman you have to better than your male counterparts and as a woman of colour you have to be even better than your white female counterparts (Gabbie, age 44, UK)

Sometimes she confuses our names in talking to them ... we're seen as, oh, that's those Asian women (Adelita, age 60, born in India)

In an environment where their confidence is undermined, women of colour perform the emotional labour of managing their colleagues to affect change in a non-threatening manner:

You know, you can really start to feel like you’re not valued somewhere because ... it’s the tenth time your manager said, “Oh don’t worry about it, you’re stressing out too much” ... And it makes you hone in on yourself as if there’s something wrong with you and you almost start – I don’t know – like gaslighting yourself (Astrid, age 28, born in Australia)

It’s like a constant managing up ... just fitting in and not being difficult, quietly getting your point across, slowly over time (Kelly, age 35, born in South Africa)

If we get angry, sometimes they might get a bit too threatened. So, doing things with a smile, and being pleasant, and being not overly kind of threatening (Chantal, age 52, born in UK)

## Implications

Microaggression are subtle and often unintended, rendering them difficult to recognise and confront. People of colour may describe a vague feeling that 'something is not right' (Sue et al., 2007, p. 277). In contrast, white people often sincerely believe they have acted with good faith, leading them to perceive non-white peoples as over-sensitive. As such, identifying and responding to racial microaggressions is fraught. Despite their devastating impact, women of colour may hesitate to tackle microaggressions due to the likelihood of their claims being doubted and their response being perceived as too emotional, both of which undermine their credibility as scientists. Socialisation in STEMM fields encourages belief in science as objective, which render questions of different lived experiences unintelligible. In a similar way to unexamined heteronormative assumptions silencing conversations about gender and sexuality in STEMM workplaces (Mattheis et al., 2019), unexamined whiteness silences conversations about race.

White men hold the vast bulk of leadership positions in STEMM fields. Yet, this group, who are powerfully positioned to effect change, are the least likely to recognise microaggressions. Understanding this 'clash of racial realities' (Sue et al., 2007, p. 277) can assist white people to learn to recognise racial microaggressions. A key attribute in this regard is an ability to withstand the discomfort of questioning long held (and self-serving) beliefs, such as the myth of meritocracy. Recognising how social and institutional structures have shaped their worldview and experiences is crucial for white people to act as allies to women of colour.

Allies can be instrumental in amplifying the concerns of women of colour. Allies are seen as more credible by other dominant group members because they are not considered to be acting out of self-interest. Moreover, the costs of confronting racial microaggressions are fewer for allies (Rasinski and Czopp, 2010). An important caveat in this regard is to work alongside women of colour rather than taking over (Drury and Kaiser, 2014). Allies occupy positions of social dominance and need to consistently reflect on their/our positionality to avoid unintentionally perpetuating racial inequity.

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# Equality at work: Reflections on the Australian marriage equality debates and the impact of workspaces

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## **Abstract**

This paper explores how the 2017 Australian marriage equality debate impacted how sexual and gender minorities engaged with their place of work. Drawing on findings from a larger project that focused on the Newcastle and Hunter response to the marriage equality postal survey, this paper asks how did workspaces operate as a support system for individuals exposed to incivility and harassment as a result of these debates, and what was the impact when workspaces lacked supportive policies. Results from interviews with participants (N=17) indicated that when workspaces were mindful of the potential impact of the marriage equality debates they could operate as a form of support. However, a significant finding was that when workspaces were not actively supportive it exacerbated the negative impact of the marriage equality debates and complicated the participants' work-life interface. Implications of these results are that workspaces need to adopt proactive strategies to support the wellbeing of sexual and gender minorities, particularly during times of increased incivility as a result of public and heated debates on equality.

## **Keywords**

Sexual and gender minorities, work, marriage equality, wellbeing

## **Introduction**

This paper is drawing on findings from an ongoing project titled 'Waiting for Equality: Telling LGBTIQ+ Stories About Marriage Equality in Newcastle and the Hunter.' Waiting for Equality is a research project that is exploring regional responses to, and experiences of, the Australian marriage equality debate and postal survey within Newcastle and the Hunter region. This paper is explicitly examining how the marriage equality debate and postal survey intersected with the participants' experiences of incivility and stigma at work, and how the public debates around equality blurred boundaries and impacted the participants' work-life interface. As work often forms an important social and financial resource for individuals (Mental Health Commission, 2009; Oxoby, 2009), it is critical to assess the impact of workspaces on individuals who are impacted by broad, and often personal, social debates around social and civil rights. Previous research has shown that the postal survey and public debates around marriage equality in Australia increased the psychological distress of sexual and gender minorities (Ecker, Riggall, Rostovsky, & Byrnes, 2019). This research adds to this field of literature by assessing how workspaces contribute to how sexual and gender minorities experience public debates around their civil rights and equality.

The underlining question within this exploration is how did workspaces influence the personal experiences of sexual and gender minorities during public debates about marriage equality. More specifically, how did workspaces operate as resources for support for sexual

and gender minorities during this time, or alternatively how did they exacerbate forms of social stigma.

## **Methods**

The Waiting for Equality project involved a variety of different data collection techniques and approaches. The project collected artefacts, ephemera, and cultural evidence of the Newcastle and Hunter response to the marriage equality debate. Supporting this collection were interviews with sexual and gender minorities from Newcastle about their experiences of the postal survey, and a legal analysis of Australian's timeline building towards marriage equality. This paper is focusing specifically on the data that emerged from the collected interviews as a method for capturing individual lived experiences.

Participants were recruited by advertising in Newcastle based social media and newsletters, primarily in outlets that had larger audiences of sexual and gender minorities. Participants who expressed interest were provided with an information sheet and consent form, and upon agreeing to take-part were interviewed at the University of Newcastle by a member of the Waiting for Equality team, Social Work Lecturer Dr David Betts. Seventeen participants took part in this aspect of the project.

The participants all identified as members of the LGBTQIA+ community, with participants identifying as gay men, lesbian women, bisexual, transgender, and queer. The youngest participant was twenty-three, while the oldest was seventy-one. The interviews lasted approximately one hour in length and were directed by a semi-structured interview guide. The collected data was analysed using applied thematic analysis. Applied thematic analysis is a method of distilling textual data into distinct codes representing units of meaning and organising these codes into overarching themes to answer or inform the research hypothesis. This process of applied thematic analysis was heavily guided by the works of Braun and Clarke (2013) and Guest, MacQueen, and Namey (2012), and involved the creation and application of defined codes to the interview transcripts, the organisation of thematic clusters that linked key ideas and findings, and finally the abstraction of relevant themes to answer the projects research question.

## **Findings**

A key finding that emerged from this research was that workspaces could act as an amplifier of incivility and stigma stemming from wider social discourses, yet they could equally provide an avenue for support and resilience if they were proactive in their support for employees. A participant described their initial anxiety on the day the results of the marriage equality postal survey were released and noted that this anxiety was also partly due to being at work during this time. However, they reflected on how the positive response from colleagues created a sense of relief and support once the 'Yes' vote had been announced:

I was at work and so I wanted to go and watch a viewing party, but I had to stay at work. I just went to the bathroom and watched it on my phone. I was feeling, "I just want to be in private for this moment. I don't want to be around heaps of people." I was worried what I would do if the vote came back 'No,' or how people would respond to a 'Yes' outcome. But then

everyone at work was like, “Yay!” And that felt nice, to be around that energy.

This sentiment was equally matched when a participant talked about the impact positive colleagues and workspace environments had on how they were able to discuss, and be open about their support, for marriage equality:

I was at work and they were a very supportive bunch, and I guess I felt free enough to be able to say it. To voice my views, and not feel like I had to hide it or anything. You know, you get supportive comments, which was nice, you feel like you can be you with that support.

Despite the support that workspaces could offer to members of the LGBTQIA+ community during the marriage equality debate, it was the lack of support that was commonly lamented by the participants. On the absence of supportive and inclusive strategies, one participant noted the stark lack of support at their work when compared to other companies:

At my workplace they didn't have a stance on the vote. A lot of companies used it as marketing campaigns and a lot of other people just did because it's part of their values. But our company didn't. And I pushed it and I asked about it and they were like, “We just don't have a stance on it.” I was surprised there was no, “Hey, if you're feeling affected by this Australia-wide survey that's going on, we have employee assistance programs where you can call and get counselling and things like that.” I was surprised that there was no emotional support for that and I thought, “I wonder if this was a debate about something else that was more personal to probably the bigger demographic of people at work that identify as straight then would they have done something like that?”

This lack of support was concerning for the participants who took part in this research, as many discussed negative experiences that occurred within their workspace during the debates and postal survey. One participant mentioned a comment from their manager which exemplified these experiences, and demonstrated the power that people in positions of authority had to voice their views opposing marriage equality:

I work for a religious organization, and the ballot came up a few times, and I remember my boss said once that if her daughter identified as gay, that she would kick her out of the house. She was so against it and let us all know, and we couldn't say anything back.

While another participant was subject to frequent invasive comments, questions, and interrogations from colleagues due to their own sexuality:

I worked there for a long time and it was a very hot topic on everyone's lips. Even the people I was working with would openly say, “Well, my parents are voting no.” I would be like, “You know what this vote means? It means that, in your mind, my right to love someone and have that be legally binding is not as good and not as high as yours,” it was a constant thing.

The marriage equality debate in Australia did not only negatively impact the wellbeing of sexual and gender minorities (Ecker, Riggle, Rostosky, & Byrnes, 2019), it intersected and infiltrated all areas of personal and professional lives, including work. The impact of this intersection was a blurring of the work-life interface, and the boundaries and barriers individuals have with their work and colleagues. A result of this was not only an increase in incivility and harassment, but an increased exposure in professional spaces to the stigma often encapsulated within the public debates. While work and workspaces could operate as a form of support during these debates, without targeted efforts to increase this support, workspaces could unwittingly increase the negative impact of public debates around equality, sex, and gender.

## Implications

The implications of these findings are two-fold. Firstly, discourses on the impact of public debates around the rights of sexually and gender diverse individuals need to incorporate an acknowledgement of the role work-based spaces have on the wellbeing of sexual and gender minorities. The participants in this project articulated that supportive workspaces were defined by not just a passive acceptance of sexual and gender diversity, but an active effort to acknowledge and support this diversity in the workspace. This process of active acceptance was particularly salient during times of increased social incivility, as experienced by many sexual and gender minorities during the Australian marriage equality debates. As Australia moves past the marriage equality debate and begins to reflect on this process of advancing equality – and how the debates themselves highlighted and in cases reinvigorated forms of abuse and hostility – it is important to recognise work as an increasingly politically active and influential social sphere. While legislation exists in Australia to protect employees from discrimination in the workplace, international research indicates that many individuals continue to face stigma and discrimination in the workplace despite these protections. A recent study explored the impact of statutory protections for people living with HIV in New Zealand and found that stigma and discrimination continue to be significant issues for these individuals (Fisher & Henrickson, 2019). The conclusion of this research was that legislative measures alone are not to cease institutional discrimination, and that these efforts require additional training, mentorship, and supportive work structures to provide safe and inclusive environments (Fisher & Henrickson, 2019).

Secondly, it is vital that workspaces take the initiative to develop strategies and plans to support the wellbeing of their employees, with consideration for how individuals with diverse identities may be impacted by broader social debates. As a participant mentioned, when companies lack specific and directed supports it can exacerbate feelings of incivility and discrimination. This was evident during the marriage equality debate in Australia, and while some work environments did adopt supportive strategies that were beneficial to members of the LGBTQIA+ community, it is imperative that more workspaces take similar actions to support sexual and gender minorities at work.

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# Exploring the causes and consequences of work-family conflict in Australian parents: Gendered risks and opportunities

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## Abstract

The demands arising from the combination of work and family roles can generate difficult conflicts (work-family conflicts) for mothers and fathers. This paper outlines a range of research findings which seek to: a) identify the barriers and supports (both in work and family life) that impact on parents' ability to successfully combine work with care, and b) understand the potential consequences of work-family conflict for family relationships and mental wellbeing. The findings reported in this paper are drawn from two large data sources: The Longitudinal Study of Australian Children (LSAC) and the Families at Work (FAW) study. Our findings show that greater work-family conflict significantly contributes to poorer quality family interactions as well as poorer mental health for parents and children – this is the case not only for mothers' work-family conflict, but also for fathers'. We also show that there are gendered patterns in the risks/contributors to work-family conflict (e.g. WFC peaks at lower work hour thresholds for mothers than fathers). The theoretical and practical outcomes of research in this area are rapidly evolving (to reflect ongoing transitions in gender norms and expectations), and the research we report contributes significantly to this ongoing progression.

## Keywords

Parents; work-family conflict; mental health and wellbeing; intergenerational

## Introduction

Parents (and carers) are a significant cohort in the labour market. In 2017, two-thirds of Australian couples with children had both parents working (and about a quarter were both working full-time) (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2017). The increase in dual earner families has led to the emergence of compelling research reporting that a substantial number of employed parents (at least one in three mothers and fathers) are finding it practically and psychologically difficult to successfully combine work and family-care commitments – an experience known as work family-conflict (WFC) (Strazdins, O'Brien, Lucas, 2013). Conversely, work-family enrichment (WFE) captures the benefits (psychological, cognitive, social) parents gain from combining work with parenting. Job characteristics and features are also in scope here, providing more, or less, supportive contexts in which parents can combine work and family roles, with costs to parents, family relationships and children.

The current short paper reports on key research findings from research undertaken by colleagues at La Trobe University (led by Dr Amanda Cooklin; Professor Jan Nicholson) and The Australian National University (led by Dr Liana Leach; Professor Lyndall Strazdins). We also highlight the theoretical and practical / policy implications of this work. The goal of this research program has been two-fold: a) to identify the barriers and supports (both in work and family life) that impact on parents' (mothers and fathers) ability to successfully combine work with care, and b) to identify the potential relational and mental health consequences of WFC for both parents and their children. Drawing on gender role theory, and theories of the Ideal Worker, we have explored gender differences in the antecedents and consequences of parents' WFC. We have sought to move beyond traditional assumptions that WFC is primarily a problem for mothers (where most existing research has been focused), to equally include research questions and analyses that explore the findings for fathers.

## Methods

The current program of research has been developed using data from two main sources: (1) Secondary analyses of data from the national Longitudinal Study of Australian Children (LSAC), supplemented with (2) Original data/ primary data collected in Families at Work: An online survey of employed Australian Parents. The results are supported by quantitative data analysis of the survey data – primarily OLS regression methods.

LSAC is an ongoing, omnibus study of children's health and development, assessing a wide range of child, parent and environmental variables using validated, brief measures. LSAC is a partnership between the Department of Social Services, the Australian Institute of Family Studies (who provide ethical approval for the study) and The Australian Bureau of Statistics. Permission to access these data is granted by the Dept. Social Services. Initially, LSAC used a two-stage cluster sampling design for recruitment, based on Australian postcodes and the Medicare (universal health system) database. Data have been collected biennially (since 2004, ongoing) from two cohorts simultaneously via parent face-to-face interviews and questionnaires. The first cohort, known as the (B) baby cohort, comprised of 5107 children aged 3-18 months at recruitment in baseline/wave 1 (64% initial response rate). The second cohort, known as the (K) kindergarten cohort comprised of 4983 at baseline/wave 1 (59% initial response rate) (see Gray and Sanson, 2005 for further details). We include in our analyses data from either cohort (per the study question), including mothers, fathers and / or couple families with dependent children who are employed. We present both cross-sectional analyses (e.g. from children's infancy, BCohort) and complex longitudinal (child ages 0/1yrs to 12/13yrs, 5/6 waves, 2004 - 2014) analyses to investigate our research questions of interest.

*Families at Work* (2016-17) was an online survey conducted by the authors that aimed to identify the workplace supports accessed by employed Australian parents of children (0 to 18 years) to manage work and family demands, and to identify which strategies were associated with better parent wellbeing. Participants were recruited online (n=4665), using a combination of paid and unpaid advertising. Further details of recruitment procedures are reported elsewhere, including comparisons with a randomly sampled national cohort of employed parents (Bennetts, Hokke, Crawford et al., 2019). In brief, the current sample were broadly similar to all Australian employed parents on key demographic characteristics, yet as they were all employed were more likely to be university educated

and born in Australia compared to all Australian parents, and less likely to live in a disadvantaged neighbourhood, so we interpret our findings with some caution in this context. The study was approved by La Trobe University Human Research Ethics Sub-Committee (S16- 112).

## Key Measures

**Mental health / Psychological Distress** was self-reported by participants using the Kessler-6 (Kessler et al. 2002), 6- item measure of general psychological distress (K6), which measures six non-specific symptoms of distress and anxiety (e.g. sad, nervous, worthless).

**Work-family Conflict (WFC)** was assessed using four items adapted from Marshall and Barnett's (1993) measure of strains between work and family. Two items assess employment-related constraints on family life and parenting (e.g. 'Because of my work responsibilities, my family time is less enjoyable and more pressured') and two assess constraints from family responsibilities that affect work ('Because of my family responsibilities, the time I spend working is less enjoyable and more pressured').

**Work-Family Enrichment** was assessed using a six-item adaptation of Marshall and Barnett's (1993) scale assessing the benefits of combining employment with parenting for children (e.g. 'My working has a positive effect on my children') and for parents themselves (e.g. 'Having both work and family responsibilities makes me a more well-rounded person').

## Findings

A summary of findings from the overall program of research is as follows:

- Work/job characteristics are linked to mental health for new parents (mothers and fathers), a factor under-recognised in the most evidence about perinatal mental health (Cooklin, Westrupp Strazdins et al. 2016; Westrupp, Strazdins, Martin et al. 2016).
- WFC has adverse effects on parenting and the couple relationship (for mothers and fathers); WFE supports parenting and relationships (Cooklin, Dinh, Strazdins et al. 2016).
- WFC, for all parents, is linked to their mental health; moving into WFC is followed by mental health detriments, whereas relieving WFC shows subsequent improvements (Cooklin, Dinh, Strazdins et al. 2016).
- In turn, parents' WFC is linked to poorer social and developmental outcomes for children both concurrently and cumulatively over the longer-term Dinh, Cooklin, Leach et al. 2017; Leach, Dinh, Cooklin, in preparation).
- Gender roles pattern the risks for WFC for mothers and fathers and mothers and fathers are provided with different opportunities at work to avoid or 'escape' WFC; mothers show lower work hour 'thresholds' (~20 hrs / week) before tipping into WFC, as this likely creates a gap in unpaid 'care work' for couple families that is stressful for mothers, but unable to be met by fathers, who are more tied to long hours at work. For fathers the threshold was > 50 hrs / week indicating that 'breadwinning' still dominates contemporary performance and expectations around 'ideal workers' and

‘ideal fathers’. Similarly, mothers and fathers have different, gendered opportunities to relieve WFC (Cooklin, Dinh, Strazdins et al. 2016).

- One in four (27%) fathers report perceived discrimination at work on the basis of parent status, 40% mothers report this too. This barrier is significantly associated with parents’ mental health, and confirms a salient barrier to gender equity in work and care (Cooklin A, Mason S, Widiss, in preparation).

## **Theoretical implications**

WFC occurs when work and care demands are incompatible. It creates dilemmas for parents, which, our research and other current evidence shows, are equally corrosive for mothers' and fathers' mental health (Cooklin, Dinh, Strazdins et al. 2016). Previously, WFC has typically been seen as a problem for mothers, however our findings contribute to the growing evidence that fathers are also vulnerable to WFC and its negative health consequences (Shockley, Shen, DeNunzio, et al. 2017). Importantly, we approach this using gender role theory, unpacking the different risks and opportunities that mothers and fathers have in the workforce, predicated on traditional workplace and social norms around ‘who works and who cares’. Not only do these norms increase the likelihood of entering and becoming entrenched in WFC as parents struggle to combine work and care, they also serve to entrench the gendered division of paid and unpaid work which has proved so hard to shift in Australia. We add to the literature and theory moving towards shared occurrence and consequences of WFC for mothers and fathers, we also contribute a critical understanding that the antecedents, and job characteristics for exit are different, arising from gender roles and expectations (i.e. Cooklin, Dinh, Strazdins et al. 2016). In addition, our research is amongst the first internationally, to use longitudinal data to consider the consequences of WFC for children’s mental health and wellbeing (Dinh, Cooklin, Leach et al. 2017). We conclude that the work-family interface parents experience is a key social determinant of mental health and it has an intergenerational reach.

Finally, in terms of parents’ experiences of discrimination in the workplace, we move the literature beyond encounters during pregnancy / maternity leave. We use Ideal Worker Theory to expand the focus to include all stage of parenting, and for fathers as well as mothers (Cooklin, Mason, Widiss, et al. in preparation). Our findings align with the notion that Ideal Worker norms persist in Australia (i.e. that workers should have a clear commitment to paid work without distractions outside the paid work environment; Davies and Frink, 2013), and that when parents’ violate this norm, they are vulnerable to hostility and discrimination. This is even more so, when workers are perceived to ‘violate’ normal gendered roles about work and care, and we discuss our findings in these theoretical frameworks.

## **Practical implications**

The findings raised and discussed in this brief paper have clear practical implications for workplace processes and procedures, as well as social, employment and health policy. From an organisational / employers’ perspective, recognising and accommodating employees’ family roles and responsibilities is critical to maintaining the productivity and wellbeing of workers. This is not only the case in relation to women/mothers in the workplace, but is also critical for men/fathers. While job flexibility is increasingly being

viewed as common place (and almost assumed) within many Australian workplaces, it is critical to recognise that our own research (and other recent research using the HILDA study) continues to show that WFC is a significant and common problem reported by Australian parents – raising new questions about the sources of WFC and the successes/failures regarding the implementation of flexible work arrangements.

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## Finding the courage to conduct classroom conversations about gender-based violence

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### **Abstract:**

In this paper, we draw on interview data collected from 85 school leaders and 159 teachers to discuss forms of emotional, political and pedagogical labour that teachers encounter when implementing a wellbeing and gender-based violence prevention program. Our findings show tensions between the participants' moral impulse towards opening conversation about the sensitive and often silenced topic of gender-based violence and their apprehensions about the possibility of causing undue distress to colleagues and students. They reported heightened anxiety around managing disclosures and responding to community concerns, whilst grappling with experiences of gender-based violence within their own lives and/or those of their colleagues. At times, their efforts were additionally thwarted by lack of adequate scheduling within the school timetable. Our research shows that school-wide support structures were needed to enable uptake of the program. This included professional learning opportunities, proactive psychosocial support from school leaders and colleagues, involvement of wellbeing professionals, guidance on communicating with parents, and comprehensive training around managing disclosures.

### **Keywords**

Gender-based violence, emotional labour, teacher development

### **Introduction**

In this paper, we draw on the data collected as part of the evaluation of the *Resilience, Rights and Respectful Relationships* program from 85 school leaders and 159 primary and secondary teachers in Victoria to: a) explore the types of emotional, political and pedagogical labour that teachers undertake when providing programs that deal with the sensitive and silenced issue of gender-based violence, and b) highlight the constellation of factors that contribute to teachers' confidence and capacity in their implementation efforts.

Our interests in the notions of 'teaching labour' emanates from our experience in program development, teaching and research around the uptake of educational materials that invite teachers and students to step outside their comfort zone and embark upon what

Boler (2004) describes as 'a pedagogy of discomfort'. A pedagogy of discomfort deals with forms of 'difficult knowledge' (Britzman, 1998) that can instigate a range of emotional responses such as fear, resistance, anger or shame in students and teachers in their encounters with forms of injustice and violence relating to sexism, homophobia, or racism.

The argument that drives our analysis and discussion in this paper is that to be able to undertake forms of labour involved in teaching sensitive materials, teachers need to be provided with a range of individual, school and system level supports that address their personal concerns, meet their professional needs and facilitate their teaching decisions. The provision of such supports helps build the confidence, capacity and courage teachers need to open classroom conversations about gender-based violence.

## Methods

This paper draws on data derived from an Australian Research Council (ARC) linkage study investigating the drivers and barriers to implementation of the *Resilience, Rights and Respectful Relationships* (RRRR) program, a social, relational and gender education program offered to primary and secondary schools in Victoria (Cahill et al., 2019). The broader project tracked schools over a three-year period (2016-2019) using a mixed method research design involving teachers, members of school leadership teams and students from across 20 government primary schools and 20 government secondary schools in Victoria.

In this paper, we draw on semi-structured interview data collected from 85 school leaders and 159 teachers about the factors that affected the implementation of the RRRR Program. The interviews aimed to provide deeper insights into the factors that challenged and/or enabled program implementation, particularly in relation to aspects of the program that were sensitive in nature and required teachers to teach about forms of gender-based violence. A constant-comparative method of data analysis was used to identify emerging patterns in the data. Segments of transcribed data were assigned to tentative categories before being cross-checked and combined into emerging themes and sub-themes.

## Findings

Our findings show that forms of emotional, political and pedagogical labour acted as distinguishable, yet highly interconnected, forces impacting on teachers' decisions and actions in implementing prevention of gender-based violence education. Emotional labour manifested as feelings of discomfort and fear at the prospect of teaching about sensitive and often silenced problems relating to gender-based violence. Exacerbating the emotional labour already inherent in teaching were concerns that open talk about an emotionally charged topic may provoke disclosures or cause distress not only to students but also to teachers or other staff who were affected by trauma or victimisation.

Political labour was needed to navigate resistance to the work both within schools and within wider local communities. Even where little actual resistance occurred, fear of potential backlash exerted significant political demands on teachers and school leaders. Among these were concerns that discussions about gendered patterns of violence might alienate boys and men. Concerns about political backlash were compounded by intersecting forms of pedagogical labour. The program required the use of collaborative learning strategies, as effective education for prevention of gender-based violence require use of dialogic pedagogies that allow for power sharing and promote interaction between students



(Crooks, Jaffe, Dunlop, Kerry, & Exner-Cortens, 2019). This was uncomfortable for many teachers and brought concerns about loss of control as a consequence of departure from more traditional teacher-led, didactic pedagogical practices.

While forms of emotional, political and pedagogical labour worked simultaneously to confine teachers' willingness and capacity, our findings show that a set of structures helped foster conditions of possibility enabling teachers to overcome challenges. These structures were created within schools through measures including policy imperatives on gender education, provision of on-going professional development for teacher, provision of teaching manuals and resources, as well as collegial support and active engagement of school leaders.

## **Implications**

At a conceptual level, the findings of our research have two broad implications for how we understand teachers' work in the context of social justice and inclusive education. On the one hand, our findings point to the complex entanglements of emotional, political and pedagogical factors that can impact upon the intentions and actions of teachers. Teachers are often encouraged to act as change agents, with little attention to the points of dissonance in their work and the less visible forms of labour that they need to undertake when they are positioned as social justice advocates and asked to work at the vanguard to open talk about silenced or controversial topics such as those relating to gender-based violence.

On the other hand, by identifying the support structures that can facilitate teachers' work in implementing gender-based violence prevention education, our research brings to the centre-stage questions about the role of institutional context, curriculum structure, policy mandates, and professional development in enabling effective uptake and program implementation. Thus, successful gender-based violence prevention education requires an assemblage of support that can create spaces of possibility for the types of pedagogies that can interrogate taken-for-grant assumptions and unsettle hegemonic relationships and practices.

At a more practical level, our research findings show that school leadership commitment is crucial for successful program implementation. School leadership support holds symbolic political value through its agenda setting role which helps signal to students, teachers and the wider community the significance of gender education as an area of strategic priority. Psychosocial support from leaders is also significant not only for personal reasons, but also for the practical reasons of resource allocation and provision of structured planning or team-teaching time, which in itself enables collegial peer support.

Other factors that contribute to successful program implementation in gender-based violence prevention education include long term vision and planning, consistent program delivery with high fidelity, the existence of a home in the school timetable, provision of on-going professional development for teachers who are called upon to teach the materials, collegial support that can be drawn upon as a personal-pedagogical resource and that can help foster a sense of shared responsibility, and the existence of a wider policy framework that mandates gender based violence prevention education.

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# Gender norms as predictor variables of earnings

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## **Abstract**

Gender norms within the family home can change outcomes in the workplace. This paper studies how the norms of females, and their male partners, affects the likelihood of female breadwinners. A new instrument or proxy variable is created to address causality concerns. Conformity to traditional norms, by a woman or her partner, lowers female labour market activity. Adherence to norms has a potentially larger impact on female labor supply than common economic variables, such as education and household income. If every person in society had progressive gender norms, this could increase female breadwinners from 20.76% to 37.78%, necessarily helping close the gender pay gap.

## **Keywords**

Labor economics, instrument, social norms

Gender norms, be they traditional or modern, are internalized to some extent by every person, and these norms, or ideas about how the sexes should act, exert a direct influence on economic outcomes. Regardless of economic and social policies implemented by governments and industry to improve gender economic equality, for those in heterosexual relationships, it is the male and female partners who ultimately decide the economic contribution of each. The gender pay gap is often explained in terms of discrimination and bias in hiring and pay decisions (Blau and Kahn, 2017), and employment of males and females in different industries and jobs (Blau and Kahn, 2017). Rather than analyzing limitations to female outcomes in the workplace, as previous researchers have done, this study shifts the focus towards the family home. According to the Household, Income and Labor Dynamics in Australia (HILDA) survey, there is a diversity of responses to the norm, “it is bad for a relationship for the woman to earn more than the man.” The potential implication this norm has for earnings between the sexes warrants further examination. In contrast to previous economic literature on this topic, this paper directly evaluates the economic effect of stated preference for a norm.

The norm of this paper is injunctive, or refers to an individual's perceptions about what ‘ought to be’. That is, should the female partner earn more or the male partner? This paper is concerned with female breadwinners; in a modern economic sense, female breadwinners are women who earn more money than their male partners. If the labor market activity of females and males was roughly the same, this should be reflected in an equivalent proportion of female and male breadwinners. Yet in 2017 in Australia only 21.65% of households had a female breadwinner. If there are more female breadwinners, this would help close the gender pay gap.

This economic research is complementary to existing literature in sociology and psychology that studies how norms affect work/life balance (Blair-Loy and Wharton, 2002;

Dellinger and Williams, 2002; Hammer et al., 2004; Twenge and Campbell, 2005). The research of this paper is quantitative, rather than ethnographic, and as such offers contributions of both method and insight. If different disciplines can corroborate research using different epistemologies, this adds credibility to knowledge already claimed to be true.

The gender norm featured in this paper has been the focus of two prominent studies. Bertrand, Kamenica and Pan (2015), showed that if a woman was predicted to earn more than her husband, based on her demographics, she was also likely to drop out of the labor force or earn less than expected. They showed that in the United States, if proportion of household income earned by women was graphed against proportion of households, there was a sharp drop in the graph where females earned more than half the household income.

Bertrand, Kamenica and Pan (2015) claimed that their analysis demonstrates social fulfillment of the norm that females should earn less than their male partner. Their conclusions were questioned in a follow-up paper by Binder and Lam (2018), who suggested their findings could be consistent with many different norms. For example, Bertrand, Kamenica and Pan's findings could be due to the expectation that the female partner should earn as much as her male counterpart, or that females and males in relationships should earn the same amount. Further, Binder and Lam empirically simulated the data set used by Bertrand, Kamenica and Pan. Given that males tend to earn more than females, they matched couples on the single assumption of a high likelihood of positive assortative matching with respect to wages<sup>1</sup>, as is commonly observed, and found a distribution very similar to that of Bertrand, Kamenica and Pan. This paper seeks to resolve the question of whether a norm can change economic outcomes by directly evaluating stated preference.

In response to the statement that it is not acceptable for women to earn more than men, HILDA participants could respond on a seven-point Likert scale. In each year the question has been asked (2005, 2008, 2011 and 2015), 40-50% of Australians strongly disagree that it is bad for females to earn more than their partners. In this paper responses to the Likert scale are transformed into a continuous, standardized index, with positive values indicating traditional values, or someone believing female partners should earn less.

There are three hypothesized problems with seeking a quantitative, causal relationship of how conformity to gender norms affects economic outcomes. Firstly, there is response bias, a form of measurement error. Cognitive biases can cause an individual to provide a non-random deviation of answers from their true value. This can create a systematic error, or bias. Secondly, there is reverse causality, or a person's economic situation causing them to respond to the norm statement differently, which can also bias quantitative results. Thirdly, if there is a variable omitted from the equation that influences both being a breadwinner and gender norms, this will also bias results.

Hence, to ensure that causality is identified, an instrument or proxy variable is needed. The instrumental variable (IV) of this paper is loosely influenced by the Bartik (1991) instrument. The IV below is focused on the demographic composition of thirteen

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<sup>1</sup> "Positive assortative matching with respect to wages" means that a female or male is likely to partner with someone of similar earnings to themselves. In equilibrium, this means the male partner often earns more than the female partner.

regions of Australia in a base year (2005). The demographic groups are defined according to four age groups, three education levels and three nativity/immigrant groups. These 36 groups display a wide range of economic characteristics and attitudes towards gender. The Bartik-style instrument isolates variation in local norms that is driven solely by nationwide changes in norms, which is presumably uncorrelated with the specific demographics of residents in a given region. The instrument has the following form:

$$\bar{n}_{it}^g = \sum_s \gamma_{les,2005}^g \times n_{leat,-s}^g$$

In the above equation  $\bar{n}_{it}^g$  refers to a particular person's standardised gender norm measure for a particular year,  $g$  indexes gender,  $l$  refers to nativity/immigrant status,  $e$  refers to education,  $a$  refers to age,  $t$  refers to time,  $s$  refers to region and  $-s$  refers to all regions except state or region  $s$ . Variable  $n_{leat,-s}^g$  is the average gender norm value in year  $t$  for a particular demographic group, excluding region  $s$ . Variable  $\gamma_{les,2005}^g$  is the fraction of individuals from a particular demographic group living in region  $s$  in the base year, 2005.

The assumption of this IV is that gender norms are specific to particular regions and demographic groups, whereas *changes* to gender norms are not. The fixed effects were chosen in an effort to force this assumption. The research will control for  $l\#e$ ,  $e\#t$  and  $t$ . After doing so, gender norms are specific to the demographics of regions, satisfying the first part of the assumption:

$$\text{corr}(\sum_s \gamma_{les,2005}^g \circ \text{shift}_{st}, n_{leat,-s}^g | l\#e, t) \neq 0 \text{ for all } s \text{ and for } g = \text{female, male}$$

Second, the assumption says that changes to gender norms are driven by societal changes and not driven by region-specific changes. There are following results:

$$\begin{aligned} \text{corr}(\gamma_{les,2005}^g, n_{leat}^g | l\#e, t) &= 0 \text{ for all } s \text{ and for } g = \text{female, male} \\ \text{corr}(\text{shift}_{st}, n_{leat}^g | t) &= 0 \text{ for all } s \text{ and for } g = \text{female, male} \end{aligned}$$

Combining the above two equations we have:

$$\begin{aligned} \text{corr}(\sum_s \gamma_{les,2005}^g \circ \text{shift}_{st}, n_{leat}^g | l\#e, t) &= 0 \text{ for all } s \text{ and for } g \\ &= \text{female, male} \end{aligned}$$

The model of this paper is pooled cross-sections. A fixed-effects or time lag model is not appropriate as, in general, adults' gender norms do not change greatly over time. Given a couple,  $i$ , and time period,  $t$ , let  $\text{FemaleBreadwinner}_{it}$  be a binary variable equal to 1 if the woman earns more than the husband and 0 otherwise. A linear probability model is estimated:

$$\begin{aligned}
FemaleBreadwinner_{it} &= \beta_0 + \delta_t + \beta_1 WifeNorm_i + \beta_2 HusbandNorm_i \\
&+ \beta_3 \ln HusbandIncome_{it} + \beta_4 \ln HusbandIncome_{it}^2 \\
&+ \beta_5 \ln HusbandIncome_{it}^3 + \beta_6 Children0 - 5_{it} + \beta_7 Children6 \\
&- 18_{it} + \beta_8 X_{it} + \beta_9 IC_{it} + \epsilon_{it}
\end{aligned}$$

where  $\delta_t$  is year fixed effects,  $Children0 - 5_{it}$  is the presence of children aged 0-5,  $Children6 - 18_{it}$  is the presence of children aged 6-18,  $\ln HusbandIncome_{it}$  is the log of the husband's income<sup>2</sup> and  $X_{it}$  represents labour market controls of education level, age and nativity/immigrant status. The term  $IC_{it}$  refers to the controls of  $e\#t$  and  $l\#e$ .

For the OLS results, a one standard deviation increase in traditional values for women decreases the likelihood of a female breadwinner by -0.023 ( $p < .01$ ). The gender values of a woman's partner have almost the same effect. Female's and their male partner's gender norms are orthogonal; this means, in general, a heterosexual person finds a marriage partner independently of the partner's norms. If both partners have traditional attitudes, their effect is additive, or women's labor supply is depressed twice as much.

The TSLS estimates reveal that traditional values have a much larger negative effect than the OLS estimates show. The equations also have strong F-statistics, with 21.77 reported for women and 16.39 for men. These F-statistics are sufficiently high for the Bartik-style instrument to be regarded as a reliable proxy for an individual's gender norm measure.

Attending university is generally beneficial for a woman if she is to become a breadwinner, with a positive coefficient of 0.202 ( $p < .001$ ) for the male specification. However, the practical significance of conformity to gender norms on this outcome is large. If a female partners with a male with traditional attitudes rather than modern (that is, a male who strongly agrees that a female should earn less in a heterosexual relationship rather than a male who strongly disagrees), this completely removes the positive effect of university education on labor supply.<sup>3</sup> Researchers of economics find that gender and sexuality intersect in the workplace.

If a man has a large income, this may be expected to significantly affect the likelihood of his partner becoming a female breadwinner. However, compared to adherence to gender norms, the effect of a male partner's individual income on relative household income is small. If a woman's partner falls to the 10th percentile of earnings from the 90th percentile of earnings, this would increase her likelihood of being a breadwinner by 0.067.<sup>4</sup> If a woman's own gender values move from very traditional to very modern (or more from the 90th percentile of the gender norms measure to the 10th percentile) this increases her

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<sup>2</sup> The log of wife's income was not used as this does not add explanatory power to the model

<sup>3</sup> The interpretation of the beta coefficient is that a one standard deviation increase in the gender norms measure decreases the likelihood of a female breadwinner by -.113. To reach the 90th or 10th percentile, we can use z-values. The z-value for the 90th percentile is 1.282 and for the 10th percentile -1.282. The calculation is  $|1.282 \times -.113| \times 2 = .293$  for men. This is larger than the coefficient for education at 0.202.

<sup>4</sup> A change in log of partner's income from the 90th to the 10th percentile is equal to  $\$11.8501 - 9.663325 = 2.186775$ . Raising this to the exponential is  $e^{2.186775} = 8.907$ . Using the formula for the change in a linear-log model, the cubic specification of income gives  $\delta y = \frac{-.134}{100} \% \times -8.907 + \frac{.043}{100} \% \times -8.907 \times -8.907 + \frac{-.003}{100} \times -8.907 \times -8.907 \times -8.907 = .067$ .

likelihood of being a breadwinner by 0.351. Again, the practical impact of gender norms seems to dominate the effect of traditional economic variables.

Changes in how beliefs in gender norms cause economic impact at the aggregate level can be predicted through counterfactual analysis. To do so, all regression coefficients of the model are held constant with the gender norm measure singly changed. If all women and men strongly agreed that it is fine for women to earn more than their husbands the presence of female breadwinners in the economy would increase from 20.76% to 37.78%. Such a large increase in female breadwinners is almost certain to further close the gender pay gap.

The contribution of this paper is both insight and method: it quantitatively demonstrated how adherence to a norm regarding breadwinners can decrease female labor market activity and contribute to the gender pay gap, it also provided a new method to ensure the identification of causality between norms and labor market activity using large data sets. Through the use of an instrument for stated preference, this paper has ameliorated the concerns of Binder and Lam (2018). The revealed preference results of Bertrand, Kamenica and Pan (2015) were re-enforced using stated preference. Bertrand, Kamenica and Pan did not directly study norms. Gender norms regarding dislike of female breadwinners causes some women to not participate in the labor force, or to earn less money if they do. The home can affect the workplace.

This paper encourages labor economists to undertake further empirical research on identity. Gender norm analysis could decrease the large residual in labor economics equations, or cause us to acquire new knowledge about what changes economic outcomes. Assessing whether someone agrees "a pre-school child is likely to suffer if his/her mother works full time," could change our predictions of childcare policy. How the sexes bargain paid and unpaid work within marriage could be understood better through studying the norm "if both partners in a couple work full time they should share housework and the care of children equally". Socioeconomic data sets have been recording stated preference for a sufficiently long time. The data is there for researchers to use.

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# Gender system justification predicts decreased blame towards perpetrators of sexual harassment

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## Abstract

Sexual harassment is a pervasive social problem with serious physical and psychological repercussions. Whilst the #MeToo movement has shone a spotlight on the issue, public reactions to perpetrators remain divided. Building on system justification theory, we argue that this division can be explained by individual differences in the desire to safeguard the gender hierarchy. To investigate this claim, we conducted a correlational study ( $n = 185$ ) to examine whether gender system justification predicts perceptions of sexual harassment as unintentional and benign, and whether this leads to decreased blame judgements towards perpetrators. Results largely supported our hypotheses: we found that individuals who are high (vs. low) on gender system justification are more likely to view sexual harassment as unintentional and harmless and are less likely to blame perpetrators. Additionally, our analyses revealed that the effect of gender system justification on blame was mediated by differing perceptions of harm, but not intent. These results suggest that the exoneration of perpetrators may be motivated by a desire to maintain the status quo of gender relations, and that this motivation may result in the interpretation of evidence in a manner that favours exculpating perpetrators.

## Introduction

In late 2017, radio host Leeann Tweeden accused a U.S senator of forcibly groping and kissing her during an official overseas tour. Importantly, her claim was not unsubstantiated. Tweeden released a photo of the senator grinning with his hands over her breasts, and in the days after her statement, seven more women accused the senator of similar misconduct. Still, the media response was divisive: whilst some called the senator's behaviour appalling and inexcusable, others argued that the behaviour of this "warm tactile person" must have been misunderstood, or that his misconduct was negligible compared to other #MeToo allegations (Mayer, 2019).

This polarised response, commonplace in public debate around the issue, raises a question with important implications for those dealing with workplace sexual harassment: what explains disparate reactions to sexual harassment, and in particular a tendency to exonerate perpetrators? Kate Manne's (2017) philosophical analysis of misogyny offers an answer. According to Manne, misogyny is not merely the hatred of women. Instead, misogyny is a social function: the "enforcement branch" of a patriarchal society that involves the policing of norms with the aim of maintaining the status quo. In environments where this social function is operative, men are asymmetrically entitled to social positions of influence, status and prestige, as well as women's affection and service. Given the

“collective overinvestment in upholding male dominance” (Manne, 2017, pp. 182), misogyny results in a sympathetic response in cases where men are censured for behaving badly, including instances of sexual harassment. Manne dubs this phenomenon *himpathy* and proposes that himpathetic responses to a man’s wrongdoing tilts judgement of him towards exoneration.

This proposal dovetails with psychological research on system justification, which suggests that individuals are motivated to view existing social systems as just, fair, and good, and will engage in various strategies to rationalise and maintain the status quo (Jost, Banaji, & Nosek, 2004). Applied to gender, system justification theory suggests that individuals are motivated to defend the current treatment of women as fair. Supporting this hypothesis, prior research has found that gender system justification (GSJ) is correlated with rape myth acceptance, which serves to naturalise and exonerate gendered violence (Chapleau & Oswald, 2014).

Moreover, Manne’s analysis accords with current research in moral psychology, which highlights the role of motivational forces on moral judgements. Specifically, Alicke’s (2000) theory of blame suggests that an individual’s motivation to reach a particular blame judgement can lead them to interpret the available evidence in a way that justifies blaming the actor if they feel unsympathetic towards them, or exonerating the actor if they feel sympathetic.

Applying the theory and arguments outlined above to the realm of sexual harassment, the current study makes the following predictions:

*Hypothesis 1:* Individuals with high (vs. low) GSJ will be motivated to interpret the evidence surrounding an incident of sexual harassment in a way that justifies exonerating the perpetrator. Specifically, individuals with high (vs. low) GSJ will be more likely to perceive sexually harassing behaviour as unintentional and harmless.

*Hypothesis 2:* As a consequence of hypothesis 1, individuals with high (vs. low) GSJ will be less likely to perceive male perpetrators of sexual harassment as blameworthy.

As no prior research has examined links between gender system justification and third-party interpretations of sexual harassment, the current study chose a correlational research design to examine the plausibility of Manne’s (2017) hypotheses.

## Methods

A gender-balanced Australian sample ( $n = 185$ ,  $M_{\text{age}} = 38.83$ ,  $SD_{\text{age}} = 15.08$ ) was recruited using the online recruiting service, Qualtrics. All participants had current or past work experience. Participants read two vignettes that described an incident of workplace sexual harassment (mild or moderate, counterbalanced). After reading each vignette, participants completed a one item measure of perpetrator blame: ‘How much blame does [perpetrator] deserve for his behaviour?’ on a sliding scale from 0 to 100 ( $M_{\text{mild}} = 69.86$ ,  $SD = 28.21$ ;  $M_{\text{mod}} = 87.11$ ,  $SD = 21.37$ ), a one item measure of perceived harm: ‘How harmful do you think [perpetrator’s] behaviour was for [target]’ on a 9-point scale ( $M_{\text{mild}} = 5.99$ ,  $SD = 2.14$ ;  $M_{\text{mod}} = 7.33$ ,  $SD = 1.80$ ), and a four item measure of perpetrator intentionality (e.g. ‘Please rate the extent to which [perpetrator’s] behaviour was driven by negative or positive

intentions') on a 9-point scale ( $M_{\text{mild}} = 4.73$ ,  $SD = 2.00$ ;  $M_{\text{mod}} = 6.21$ ,  $SD = 2.09$ ;  $\alpha_{\text{mod}} = .88$ ,  $\alpha_{\text{mild}} = .89$ ). Subsequently, participants completed a measure of gender system justification that assessed participants' agreement with 12 statements about the status quo of gender relations in Australia (e.g. 'Australia is an open society in which both men and women can achieve higher status') ( $M = 5.73$ ,  $SD = 1.29$ ,  $\alpha = .86$ ). Finally, participants completed a one-item measure of political orientation, and reported their age, gender, and racial heritage.

## Findings

To test our hypothesis that individuals with high (vs. low) GSJ would interpret an incident of sexual harassment in a way that justifies exonerating the perpetrator, we performed two regression analyses. In these analyses, GSJ was used as a predictor of perceived intentionality and perceived harm. All analyses averaged across harassment type<sup>5</sup>: ratings of perceived intentionality, perceived harm, and blame consisted of the means across the two vignettes. Additionally, all analyses controlled for age, political orientation and gender, and were conducted using a bootstrap approach (based on 5,000 bootstrap replicates) due to violations of normality assumptions.

The analyses revealed that GSJ was a significant predictor of perceived intentionality ( $b = -0.40$ ,  $SE = 0.10$ , BCa 95% CI  $[-0.59, -0.23]$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ) and perceived harm ( $b = -0.33$ ,  $SE = 0.12$ , BCa 95% CI  $[-0.56, -0.13]$ ,  $p = 0.005$ ), suggesting that participants high in GSJ were less likely to perceive the harassment as intentional and harmful. A third regression model examined the relationship between GSJ and blame judgements. In line with our hypothesis, the analysis revealed that GSJ was a significant predictor of perpetrator blame judgements ( $b = -3.00$ ,  $SE = 1.45$ , BCa 95% CI  $[-5.89, -0.13]$ ,  $p = 0.040$ ).

Lastly, Hayes' PROCESS macro (2013) was used to examine whether the effect of GSJ on blame judgements was mediated by perceived intentionality and perceived harm. As shown in Figure 1, GSJ was negatively related to perceived harm and perceived intentionality, which were both positively associated with blame judgements. However, our hypothesis was only partially supported; whilst perceived harm was a significant mediator of the relationship between GSJ and blame judgements ( $b = -2.58$ ,  $SE = 1.06$ , 95% CI  $= -4.93, -0.86$ ) perceived intent was not ( $b = -0.60$ ,  $SE = 0.54$ , 95% CI  $= -1.84, 0.31$ ).

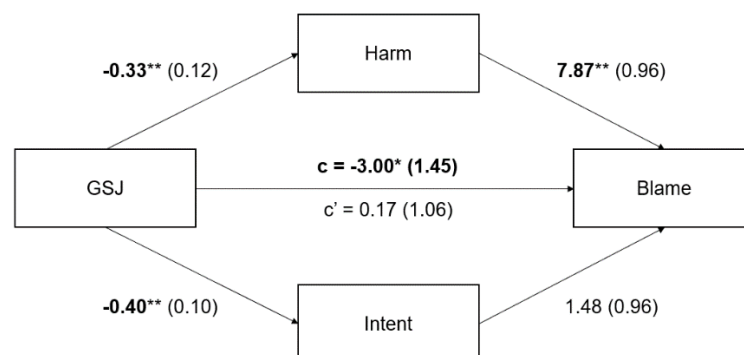


Figure 1. Relationships between gender system justification, perceptions of harm and intent, and blame judgements of perpetrators. \* $p < 0.05$ , \*\* $p < 0.005$ .

<sup>5</sup> Reporting the interacting effect of harassment severity and gender system justification is beyond the scope of this brief paper.

## Implications

In line with Manne's (2017) analysis of himpathy, we hypothesised that divergent judgements surrounding sexual harassment would be explained by individual differences in the desire to maintain the gender hierarchy. Results largely support our hypotheses. We found evidence that individuals high in gender system justification were more likely to view sexual harassment as unintentional and harmless, and that the effect of gender system justification on perceptions of harm (though not intent) was associated with a reduction in blame towards perpetrators.

These findings are consistent with prior research, which has demonstrated that individuals with traditional gender attitudes are more likely to exculpate perpetrators of sexual harassment (Smirles, 2004; Valentine-French & Radtke, 1989). However, the current study provides a potential explanation as to *why* particular individuals are prone to judge perpetrators with leniency. Specifically, the results are compatible with Manne's proposal that lenient blame judgements of perpetrators are a method of 'hierarchy preservation' aimed at maintaining the status quo. After all, if blame is prevented from attaching to men's misogynistic behaviour, there is no need to acknowledge and modify the unjust nature of existing power structures.

The results also speak to an ongoing debate in moral psychology regarding blame assignment. In contrast to motivated blame models (Alicke, 2000), rationalist models propose that when assigning blame, individuals weigh up the intent, reasons for action, and causal involvement of an agent (Malle, Guglielmo, & Monroe, 2014). The present study's results are, in contrast, consistent with theories that emphasise the role of motivational forces on blame assignment. Measures of gender system justification are intended to capture how *motivated* individuals are to justify and maintain the gender hierarchy, and our results suggest that this may influence how individuals assign blame and interpret evidence surrounding sexual harassment.

However, given the correlational nature of the study, future experimental research is necessary to rule out alternative explanations for this result. For example, individuals high in gender system justification may be less likely to perceive that sexual harassment is injurious, intentional, and blameworthy due to differing beliefs or experiences relating to sexual harassment, which would be consistent with rationalist models of blame.

Understanding what leads to divergent interpretations of sexual harassment is important, as it informs how human-resources departments and policymakers should tackle exonerating narratives that potentially result in the minimisation of sexual harassment, employees and bystanders' reluctance to report harassment, and lenient (or non-existent) punitive measures in response to harassment. If these outcomes are influenced by a drive to maintain the status quo, workplace interventions that aim to hold perpetrators accountable may benefit from an approach that assuages the system justificatory motive.

Finally, the study points to an important avenue for further research: the influence of a perpetrators' racial, economic, and social privilege on a company's response to sexual harassment. If the exoneration of perpetrators is driven by a desire to maintain existing social hierarchies, it will be most prevalent when examining those at the top of the social ladder; the downfall of a less privileged man due to a sexual harassment complaint does not threaten the current social system, and consequently, does not require an exonerating

narrative. Future research should examine this hypothesis, as it may uncover systemic biases in the handling of sexual harassment complaints.

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# Gendered power relations and sexual harassment in Antarctic science and remote fieldwork in the age of #MeToo

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## Abstract

Antarctica is a remote, historically masculine place. It is also a workplace, and the human interactions there are connected to power structures and gendered expectations. Today, nearly 60% of early career polar researchers are women (Strugnell et al. 2016). However, women in Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics, and Medicine (STEMM) are 3.5 times more likely than men to experience sexual harassment during fieldwork (Clancy et al. 2014) making questions of safety, power, and harassment pertinent. Gender equity initiatives coupled with #MeToo have provided new platforms for reporting sexual harassment and challenging problematic research cultures which position science as meritocratic and gender-neutral. Yet, the impact of #MeToo in Antarctic science is uneven. The termination of Prof. David Marchant is widely cited as evidence that #MeToo is positively affecting Antarctic science. We argue it is problematic to focus on individual cases at the expense of the wider culture. We examine the complex historical (e.g. gendered interactions with the Antarctic landscape), cultural (e.g. identity politics), and relational (e.g. gendered power dynamics) tensions underpinning recent #MeToo revelations in Antarctic science with a view to providing more nuanced approaches to structural change.

## Keywords

Antarctica, gender, feminism, fieldwork, sexual harassment

## Introduction

On 6 October 2017, one day after the publication of the New York Times exposé of Hollywood sexual harassment, the Antarctic science community had its own 'Weinstein moment'. Science published a piece reporting that geoscientist Dr. Jane Willenbring and several other women had accused their former Boston University PhD supervisor, Professor David Marchant, of sexual harassment during Antarctic research fieldtrips in the late 1990s and early 2000s (Wadman 2017). Following an 18-month investigation, in April 2019, Boston University finally terminated Marchant's employment (Wadman 2019). The Marchant case is not unique in that the harassment of women and other marginalised groups in Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics, and Medicine (STEMM) is an enduring problem (NASEM 2018).

Here, we use Antarctic science as a case study to argue that it is a mistake to judge the effectiveness of #MeToo in STEMM via individual cases and at the expense of examining

wider organisational cultures and identity politics (Rottenberg 2014). Although #MeToo is forcing institutions globally to reckon with the meaning of sexual harassment in different organisational environments, women who do remote Antarctic fieldwork often do not report harassment (Nash et al. 2019). There is a need to address the wider culture of gendered power relations and harassment to make fieldwork safer for all, and to remove the onus on those who have been harassed to come forward with #MeToo stories that prompt reactive change.

Building on earlier examinations of gendered inequality and harassment in STEM, we take an interdisciplinary feminist approach to assess the impact of #MeToo in Antarctic science. We examine the complex historical, cultural, and relational tensions that sit beneath #MeToo in Antarctic science, providing a more nuanced approach to structural change.

## **Out in the field**

Whether researchers are based on vessels, national stations, or remote Antarctic field camps, fieldwork plays an important role in knowledge creation. Yet, women in STEM are 3.5 times more likely to experience sexual harassment during fieldwork compared to men (Clancy et al. 2014). Harassment in the field can take many forms; ethnic harassment, gender harassment, sexual harassment, and generalized workplace harassment can make workplaces unsafe (Raver and Nishii 2010). Remote environments can magnify the effects.

Gender harassment is ‘a form of hostile environment harassment that appears to be motivated by hostility toward individuals who violate gender ideals rather than by desire for those who meet them’ (Berdahl, 2007, 425). Gender harassment shares similarities with ‘sexual(ized) harassment’ which ‘is largely an expression, exertion, and recreation of (male) power to control the recipient’s behaviour’ (Kloß 2017, 399) – both recognise the importance of patriarchal systems in underpinning behaviours. With a few exceptions (e.g. Strugnell et al. 2016), research in the Antarctic context has rarely focused on gender or sexual harassment. Here, we primarily discuss sexual harassment and its primacy in the #MeToo movement.

Although sexual harassment is underreported, 63% of the women responding to our 2017 survey about their experiences in Antarctica with the Australian national program (Nash et al. 2019) experienced inappropriate or sexual remarks when in the field. Of those, half took no action. The context of small research teams in remote field sites compounds challenges around gender and sexual harassment, making it difficult to report incidences, or to leave the situation. A female scientist interviewed by Hague (2015) recalled, ‘I heard the sentence “what happens in the Antarctic stays in the Antarctic” so many times’. This suggests Antarctica is viewed as a place that is removed from home geographically and in terms of ethical standards. Historical, cultural factors, and relational factors all come into play when analysing power relations and harassment in the Antarctic fieldwork context.

## **Historical factors: Gendered interactions with landscape in Antarctica**

Antarctica has a young human history, throughout which tales of masculine endeavor have predominated. This continues to influence the ways the continent is viewed today, as iconic Antarctic images of heroic explorers like Shackleton and Mawson continue to circulate. Yet, Antarctica itself is often ascribed female pronouns and characteristics.

Casting Antarctica as ‘a kind of female body which must be mastered and penetrated by bold, resourceful males’ (Manhire 2004, 23) is central to Heroic Era narratives.

Given the historical framing of Antarctica as a remote, feminised landscape, and canvas for masculine feats of endurance, it is unsurprising that women were denied access to the continent because of ‘ideological legacies of empire and Victorian notions of manhood’ (Seag 2017, 320). Although women travelled to Antarctica as the wives of whalers and expedition leaders during the early twentieth century, the prospect of single women heading south as researchers was viewed with much anxiety. Women’s access to Antarctica has been uneven, and dependent upon national policies (e.g. British Antarctic Survey only allowed women to overwinter in the 1990s) (Seag 2017, 331). Figurative renderings of Antarctica as a feminised landscape and the historic absence of women on the ice provide important context for contemporary organisational experiences in Antarctic research and fieldwork (Nash et al. 2019), and for polar science more broadly.

### **Cultural factors: Identity politics in polar science**

Despite a patriarchal gender order, the lack of diversity in STEMM fields is now widely acknowledged. For instance, although women now make up 45.8% of postgraduates, only 20.6% of senior STEMM leaders are women (SAGE, 2019).

In Antarctic research, women and men of colour and those with other marginalized identities remain underrepresented relative to white heterosexual men (O’Reilly and Salazar 2017) though gender remains the primary lens through which Antarctic science organisations are addressing their institutional cultures. An intersectional approach to gender and sexual harassment in Antarctic science is essential because harassment is seen primarily institutionally through a heterosexual lens and as a practice that occurs between men and women only. Further, existing studies of gender and sexual harassment also tend to focus on the experiences of white women even though women of colour experience the most hostile STEMM workplace environment of any group (Clancy et al. 2017). This highlights the need to understand the ways in which diverse groups experience oppression, and to incorporate a range of under-represented voices to create an inclusive research and fieldwork environment.

### **Relational factors: Gendered power dynamics**

Considering #MeToo, making sexual harassment visible and bringing it into a space where it can be institutionally addressed is difficult due to the hierarchical nature of relationships inside scientific research, higher education institutions, and in the field. For instance, PhD students are reliant on a PhD supervisor to provide feedback, funding, fieldwork opportunities, mentorship, and guidance throughout the candidature. The fear of losing this support is often a motivating factor for students to stay silent in relation to sexual harassment. Dr. Jane Willenbring waited nearly 17 years after her last Antarctic expedition with Prof. Marchant – to report her harassment claim because she was no longer worried he could ruin her career (Scoles 2018).

The power imbalance between supervisors and PhD students is acute for those people working in small scientific sub-fields – which is common in Antarctic science – because scientists cannot easily escape one another. As Ahmed (2017) observes in relation to her own experiences of exposing institutional sexual harassment, making a complaint is



to ‘become the location of the problem’ which can lead to further harassment. In Antarctic fieldwork, the onus is on the victim to make a complaint and we argue that there is unacknowledged emotional labour associated with having to determine if a complaint is justified (e.g. is being grabbed on the bottom worthy of an investigation?). Gendered power dynamics in Antarctic science and fieldwork manifest in many ways and harassment is only one of many structural obstacles (see Nash et al. 2019), but relational factors must be taken into account.

## Implications

We have argued that there is a need to rethink equity and inclusion in the context of polar research, and to address the structural inequalities underpinning STEMM. Our intention has been to spark a conversation about identity and systematic change within Antarctic research, and to reveal the broader context behind what #MeToo has brought forth. We argue for broader recognition that identity and science are intertwined, and not mutually exclusive.

Looking forward, there is a need to recognise intersectionality (Seag et al, 2019), and for greater inclusivity in Antarctic science and research cultures. Rather than asking individuals to say #MeToo, an awareness of the nuances of Antarctic history and relational power dynamics is essential background knowledge for those planning remote field research. Encouraging scientific communities to reflect on their histories is an important step towards making Antarctic field work safer and inclusive. Whereas harassment is often presented neutrally in human resource documents and policies, there is something radical about asking scientists to account for the gendered/sexualised imagination of the Antarctic to frame their experiences. ‘Breaking the silence’ about fieldwork through specific kinds of conversations is critical in framing the issues. Fieldworkers might be encouraged to be self-reflexive about their position (e.g. race, gender, sexuality) and how social identity contributes to (dis)comfort in certain settings. For instance, the experience of living in close quarters where white heterosexual men predominate and without the possibility of exit is one that comes up regularly in the stories of fieldwork from women and other marginalised groups (Nash et al. 2019). A dialogue about identity and unequal power relations makes it less likely that scientists will individualise and potentially conceal challenges encountered in the field. This approach will enrich the diversity in STEMM and affect the quality of outputs. Intersectionality can transform how we think about harassment in STEMM, but this will also require global institutional commitment to fostering cultural change in Antarctic research communities. At the end of the earth, #MeToo is needed more than ever.

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## Identifying trends, assessing response: Gender representation at the Royal Opera

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### Abstract

In June 2019, The Royal Opera in London joined the Keychange initiative and pledged to achieve 50/50 gender parity across its creative teams by 2022. On the surface, this presents as a productive strategy to address a lack of representation in The Royal Opera's creative hiring outcomes. However, the commitment to achieving 50/50 gender parity across "all creatives" can be seen as problematic when framed within a specifically operatic context. This article analyses the creative teams hired by The Royal Opera over fourteen performance seasons, from 2005/06 to 2019/20, and examines trends in gender representation in five key creative roles: stage director, set designer, lighting designer, costume designer, and projection/video designer. Drawing on this data, the article establishes an initial benchmark of industry trends around gender representation in these roles and highlights the limitations of The Royal Opera's 50/50 strategy.

### Keywords

Gender representation, cultural labour, employment, opera, creative and cultural industries

In June 2019, The Royal Opera in London, UK, joined Keychange, an international initiative led by PRS Foundation that encourages arts organisations to commit to achieving gender parity by 2022. The initiative was originally conceived in 2017 as a talent development program that aimed to address gender imbalance in performer line-ups at partnering music festivals. The initiative subsequently expanded, and, in 2019, arts organisations across the wider music sector were invited to join the pledge (Snow, 2019). As part of their Keychange commitment, The Royal Opera specifically pledged to "ensuring that women make up 50% of all creatives working on new opera productions at Covent Garden by 2022," including composers, directors, designers, librettists, and movement directors (Snow, 2019). On the surface, this presents as a productive strategy to address a lack of representation in The Royal Opera's creative hiring outcomes. However, the commitment to achieving 50/50 gender parity across "all creatives" can be seen as problematic when framed within a specifically operatic context.

The past decade has seen increased attention and scholarship around issues of gender representation and diversity within the cultural and creative industries (Coles et al., 2018). Despite extensive literature in other performance-based sectors such as theatre and film (MacArthur, 2015; Smith et al., 2017), the opera industry has remained largely

overlooked. Agid and Tarondeau's *The Management of Opera: An International Comparative Study* (2010), for example, makes no mention of gender in its discussion of opera leadership. Australia's *National Opera Review* (2016) similarly omits any reference to gender or even the term "woman" in its overview of repertoire and creative practitioners.

Critical discussions of gender representation in the opera industry have been limited, in part, by the underlying characteristics of the genre. Opera remains defined by its canonical repertoire, and works composed by white European men in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries continue to dominate opera stages world-wide. Opera also has strict limitations in terms of its performers, with the voice types of operatic roles explicitly fixed within the musical score and roles for men far outnumbering those for women in canonical works. While other performance-based genres can consider and potentially address low rates of female representation on stage or in repertoire (see Howard, 2019), neither approach is tenable in opera. Instead, the primary opportunities for gender-based review are limited to the orchestra pit, including instrumentalists and musical conductors, and in creative roles, such as stage directors and designers. Neither of these has received significant scholarly attention to date.

As other cultural sectors actively interrogate questions of gender and leadership, the opera industry's slow response has the potential for real consequences in terms of its future viability. For a start, arts funding bodies in the UK are now explicitly considering gender balance and diversity as a qualifier for financial support (Gardner, 2017). At the same time, the opera sector has been roiled with accusations of sexual harassment and abuse by men in leadership positions at major opera companies and criticised for its continued reliance on historical works that contained gendered violence and racial stereotypes (Giovetti, 2019).

As a starting point for this much-needed discussion, this article examines gender representation in prominent creative roles in opera production. Drawing on a case study analysis of the creative teams hired at The Royal Opera in Covent Garden over a fourteen-year period, from 2005/06 to 2019/20, the article maps the individuals hired in five creative positions: stage director, set designer, lighting designer, costume designer, and projection/video designer. The analysis considers the company's 2019 decision to join the Keychange pledge and contextualises this strategy using the quantitative data findings from the company's hiring outcomes. Drawing on this data, the article establishes a much-needed initial benchmark of industry trends around gender representation in these roles.

## **Case Study: The Royal Opera**

The Royal Opera operates under a *stagione* system, in which a combination of new productions and revivals of old productions are staged for brief runs of performances over the course of a single season (Agid and Tarondeau, 2010). Repertoire includes standard canonical works that are revived every few years, less popular operas that are staged more occasionally, and modern or contemporary operas, including world premieres (Donaldson, 1988). While the opera company maintains a small in-house staff of revival directors and designers, the majority of creative practitioners are hired on contract for each production.

The Royal Opera maintains detailed online production archives, which provided the necessary data to map hires in creative roles over multiple seasons. In order to compile a list of productions presented during the fourteen-year period, the authors cross-referenced The Royal Opera's website listings with The Royal Opera House Collection's online archives.

Excluding concerts and recitals, this left a data sample of 325 staged productions presented between the 2005/06 and 2019/20 seasons. We then mapped individuals hired in the five primary creative roles in opera production—stage director, set designer, lighting designer, costume designer, and video/projection designer—as well as the subsidiary roles of associate director, revival director, and associate designers. Roles related to choreography, sound design, and dramaturgy were excluded for the purpose of this paper. This provided a data sample of 1,497 individual creative roles over the fourteen-year span.

The gender of creative practitioners was determined according to the self-identified pronouns employed within their professional biographies in The Royal Opera's online production listings (e.g., he, she). None of the practitioners employed non-gendered pronouns. The gender of practitioners without listed biographies were sourced from their professional websites or categorised as unknown ( $n = 7$ ). The analysis considered the gender and creative role of each practitioner hired in each season, as well as overall rates of representation within creative teams. The analysis also considered whether productions were new (e.g., commissioned or co-commissioned for a Royal Opera premiere) or revivals (e.g., restagings of old productions using the original designs and new singers).

## Findings

The data shows that female practitioners have significantly lower rates of representation in creative positions than their male peers over the fourteen-year period. Female practitioners were hired for only 26.5% of the 1,497 creative roles in all productions staged by The Royal Opera during this time period. For only new productions mounted during the fourteen-year span, 30.7% of the 534 creative roles went to women.

Each of the five primary creative roles under consideration collectively shapes the way a theatrical work is realised on stage but varies widely in terms of prestige and artistic ownership. The stage director serves as the definitive creative authority for a production, driving its artistic vision and drawing the highest salary. The stage director is also often directly responsible for selecting the other practitioners that will be hired as part of the creative team (Cohen, 2011).

Studies from both film and theatre have identified traditionally poor rates of representation for women directors (Coles et al., 2018), with MacArthur (2015) suggesting a consistent ratio of 70% men to 30% women in theatre since the 1970s. The data from The Royal Opera suggests even lower rates of representation for women stage directors within the opera industry. Over the fourteen seasons, women comprise only 9.5% of primary stage directors (e.g., not including revival and associate directors) for both new and revival productions (see Figure 1). Representation improves slightly when only new productions are tracked, with women making up 13.2% of primary stage directors.

When considered in terms of individual roles, the data from The Royal Opera also shows clear evidence of a gendered division of labour. This aligns to the findings of existing studies in theatre and film, in which women are overrepresented in traditionally “feminised” fields, such as costume design, and underrepresented in more technical fields, such as lighting design (Coles et al., 2018). At The Royal Opera, women comprise 52.5% of costume designers in all productions presented over the fourteen-year period but reach rates as high as 84.6% in individual seasons. In

contrast, women represent just 21.7% of lighting designers and 5.4% of video/projection designers hired for all productions over the fourteen seasons.

Data collected from only new productions demonstrates a more marked divide in certain roles. For the 122 new productions presented over the fourteen-year period, women comprise 61.9% of costume designers and 21.3% of lighting designers. Rates of representation in video and projection design saw some improvement, with women comprising 10.8% of practitioners hired for new productions.

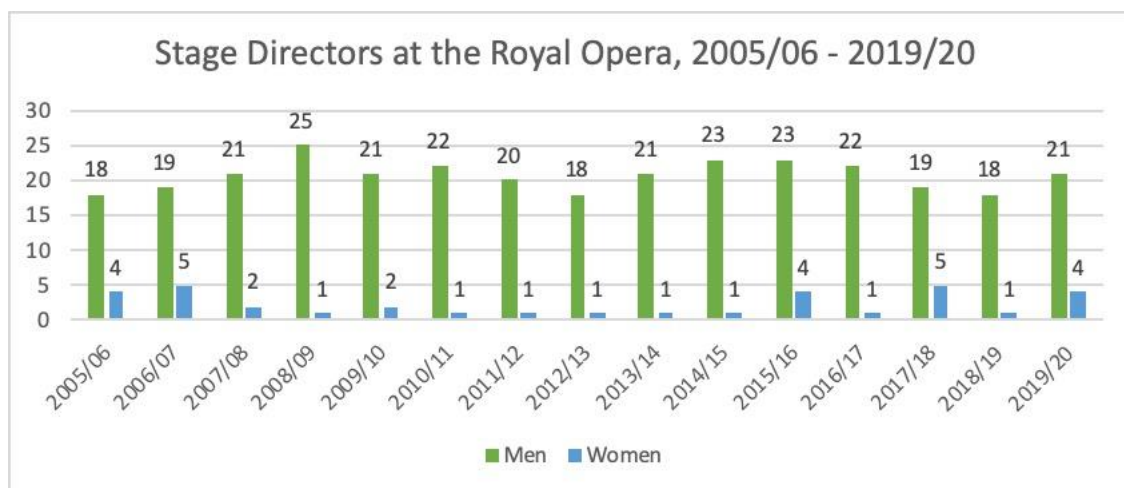


Figure 1. Primary stage directors (not including revival and associate directors) for new and revival productions

## Evaluating The Royal Opera's pledge to join the Keychange initiative

Given these findings, The Royal Opera's decision to join the Keychange initiative is both timely and strategic. The company announced the pledge a little more than a month after being widely criticised for its 2020 season announcement, which featured only one woman conductor alongside eighteen men (Brown, 2019). The company is also facing mounting pressure from the arts funding body, Arts Council England, which is prioritising organisations that champion diversity (Gardner, 2017). By joining the 50/50 pledge, The Royal Opera has not only aligned itself with 250 music organisations across the wider music sector but positioned itself as a progressive leader in opera.

Indeed, on the surface, The Royal Opera's commitment to achieving 50/50 gender balance across its creative teams appears to be a productive strategy, particularly as women constitute less than a third of creative practitioners hired over the fourteen seasons. However, as the closer analysis of the company's hiring outcomes shows, the greatest imbalance of gender representation is not across creative teams as a whole. Instead, the most pervasive imbalance is located within individual roles on creative teams, specifically the role of stage director, which serves in a capacity of artistic leadership, and the roles of lighting, video/projection, and costume designer, each of which aligns to gendered stereotypes of work.

In light of this, a more effective organisational strategy would focus on achieving gender balance in occupational categories, rather than overall teams. In addition, the strategy would be weighted toward increased representation in the most significant creative positions. As each creative team is comprised of multiple roles of varying power and authority, this disparity must be acknowledged as part of any attempt to address gender imbalance. The position of stage director enjoys the greatest visibility, prestige, and artistic authority as part of a production and also plays a critical role in determining which other practitioners will be hired. So long as there is a gender imbalance in this role in particular, the artistic voices of women will not be fairly represented on operatic stages. As such, achieving increased representation in the position of stage director should be prioritised above any efforts to achieve 50/50 gender balance across roles with significantly less creative power.

## Conclusion

The analysis of The Royal Opera's hiring outcomes establishes an important benchmark that can be used to promote a better understanding of gender representation in creative roles in the opera industry. More critically, the data also provides a means to evaluate the company's strategy to address gender imbalance over time. Despite The Royal Opera's pledge to achieve 50/50 balance across its creative teams by 2022, the company has not publicly acknowledged any particular strategies being employed to achieve this aim. Regardless, our analysis suggests that the aim is, in itself, problematic. The company's efforts would be far more effective by targeting those positions with the most creative power, as well as those that align with gendered stereotypes of work, rather than endeavouring to achieve gender parity across wider creative teams. More generally, the discussion reveals the need for frameworks for addressing gender imbalance within individual cultural sectors that rely on sector-specific knowledge and quantitative data from the field.

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## Sharing the load: Does household employment configuration impact on the mental health of mothers, fathers and children?

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*\* We honour the memory of beloved co-author Associate Professor Allison Milner whose intellect, quirk, drive and vitality will never be forgotten.*

### Abstract

In Australia, as in many industrialized countries, the past 50 years have been marked by increasing female labor-force participation. It is popularly speculated that this may impose a mental health burden on women and their children. This analysis aimed to examine the associations between household-labor-force participation (household employment-configuration) and the mental health of parents and children. Seven waves of data from the Longitudinal Study of Australian Children were used, (2004-2016, children aged 4/5–16/17 years, respectively). Mental health outcome measures were Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire scores (children/adolescents), and Kessler-6 (parents). A five-category measure of household employment-configuration was derived from parental reports: both full-time, male-breadwinner, female-breadwinner, shared part-time employment (both part-time) and father full-time/mother part-time (1.5-earner). Fixed-effects regression models were used to compare within-person effects after controlling for time-varying confounders. For men, the male-breadwinner configuration was associated with poorer mental health compared to the 1.5-earner configuration ( $\beta=0.19$ , 95%CI 0.03-0.35). No evidence for associations were observed for either women or children. This counters prevailing social attitudes, suggesting that neither children nor women are adversely affected by household employment-configuration, nor are they disadvantaged by the extent of this labor-force participation. The mental health of men appears to benefit from female labor-force participation.

### Keywords

Mental health, gender equality, labor-force participation, parents, children

## Introduction

In Australia and many high-income countries, the increased participation of women in the labor-force has been one of the most significant social changes of the modern era. This change has vastly shifted the way that women carry out their daily lives. For example, in the 1950s, normative cultural expectations placed women firmly in the role of housewife with a clearly defined responsibility to raise the children and keep the house while their husband, the ‘breadwinner’, worked <sup>1,2</sup>. Today, most women work, and among couple households with dependent children, 70% of mothers were employed in Australia in 2017 <sup>3</sup>.

While the majority of women with dependents in Australia are employed, they commonly work part-time, while the majority of men are employed on a full-time basis <sup>4</sup>. This employment-configuration is at least partly due to social and political influences, including high childcare costs and tax disincentives for mothers working longer hours <sup>5</sup>, which has fostered a social milieu endorsing traditional arrangements that privilege maternal care of children.

Some scholars argue that the dominance of this household employment arrangement with females working part-time does not progress gender equality <sup>4,6</sup>, primarily because it cements traditional gendered labor divisions in which women take primary responsibility for childcare and household-labor, and may weaken ties to the labor-force <sup>6</sup>.

Employment is considered an important social determinant of health <sup>7</sup>, however the case for more equal division of paid and unpaid labor between couples is also mired in expectations, attitudes and values about what is best for household members. The “*turbulent social conflict*” <sup>8, pg 729</sup> experienced by women as they grapple with, and try to navigate, the normative cultural landscape with its divergent expectations about work and family responsibilities has been extensively described <sup>8,9</sup>. Despite this, there is little empirical evidence of how the way parents configure their working arrangements might impact on the mental health of themselves, and their children.

In this study, we examined whether household employment configuration (the way couples configure their working arrangements) is associated with the mental health of parents and children. We used seven waves of data from a representative sample of Australian children and their parents to examine the within-person associations between household employment- configuration and both paternal and maternal mental health (Aim 1) and the mental health of their children (Aim 2).

## Methods

**Participants and study design.** Data was drawn from Cohort-K (Waves 1-7, years 2004-2016, aged 4/5 to 16/17 years) of the Longitudinal Study of Australian Children (LSAC), a nationally representative longitudinal study of Australian children and families <sup>10</sup>.

**Outcomes.** We assessed three outcomes: paternal, maternal and child mental health. Maternal and paternal mental health were self-reported, and measured using the six-item Kessler Psychological Distress Scale (K6). Child mental health was assessed using the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) Total Difficulties score (0-40).

**Exposure variable.** A five-category measure of household employment-configuration was derived from parental reports of labor-force participation. As there were minimal (n=22) same-sex couples, analysis was restricted to heterosexual couples with at least one partner in the labor-force.

Unemployed persons were excluded from analyses. The categories included in this measure of household employment-configuration drew on the most common arrangements in the dataset, and were dual full-time (DFT: both parents working full-time), male-breadwinner (father full-time, mother not in paid labor-force), female-breadwinner (mother full-time, father not in paid labor-force), shared part-time employment (both parents work part-time), 1.5-earner (father employed full-time, mother employed part-time).

**Confounding variables.** Confounders included in analytic models were: area-level socio-economic position, household income, number of children in household, presence of children aged under 5 years in household. Parent models also adjusted for child mental health, education (completed Year 12 vs not), and occupational skill level (low, medium, high). Child/adolescent models also adjusted for maternal occupational skill level and maternal mental health.

**Statistical analysis.** We obtained an analytic sample that was consistent across all respondents, and consisted of 3576 individuals in each analysis (3576 fathers, 3576 mothers, 3576 children).

All analyses were conducted in Stata SE version 14.0<sup>11</sup>. To assess the relationship of within- person changes in an individual's mental health in relation to within-person changes in their household employment-configuration, we used fixed-effects linear regression models, specifying respondent id as the panel variable, and year as the time variable. We used the most common Australian household employment configuration (1.5 earner) as the reference, and compared the mental health of individuals when in the 1.5-earner configuration, with mental health when in other household employment configurations.

## Results

Table 1 presents the adjusted coefficients from the fixed-effects models. For maternal mental health, there was no evidence of within-person associations between household employment- configuration and mental health. Results indicate that when a father was in a male- breadwinner model, their mental health was poorer than when they were in a 1.5-earner configuration ( $\beta=0.19$ , 95%CI 0.03-0.35). No evidence of an association between household employment-configuration and child mental health was observed.

**Table 1: Fixed effects regression: within person associations between household-employment configuration and mental health**

	Coefficient	Lower CI	Upper CI
<i>Within persons (3,576 persons, 12,190 observations)</i>			
<b>Mothers</b>			
1.5 earner	(ref)		
Dual Full Time	0.02	-0.13	0.18
Male-Breadwinner	0.05	-0.12	0.22
Female-Breadwinner	0.34	-0.50	1.18
Shared Part Time	0.16	-0.12	0.43
<b>Fathers</b>			
1.5 earner	(ref)		
Dual Full Time	0.04	-0.11	0.19
Male Breadwinner	0.21	0.04	0.37
Female Breadwinner	0.39	-0.45	1.23
Shared Part Time	0.17	-0.10	0.43
<b>Children</b>			
1.5-earner	(ref)		
Dual Full Time	0.04	-0.19	0.27
Male Breadwinner	0.09	-0.15	0.33
Female Breadwinner	-0.44	-1.23	0.35
Shared Part Time	0.19	-0.23	0.61

## Discussion

Drawing on seven waves of data from a representative sample of Australian children and parents, we found no evidence that the mental health of women varies by household employment-configuration, however the mental health of men appears to be worse in male- breadwinner households, compared to when in a 1.5-earner household. No evidence of an association was observed between household employment-configurations and child mental health outcomes.

The results indicating that men in male-breadwinner households have poorer mental health than when in 1.5-earner households, are small and are unlikely to be clinically meaningful at an individual level, however they may be important at the population level. Minor shifts in mental health scores may be relatively negligible at an individual level, but at a population level, they represent important shifts in the proportion of the population at risk <sup>12</sup>. The results for men are also noteworthy, because women's workforce participation is typically regarded as an issue of gender equity, centered on the benefits for women <sup>13</sup>. While on the whole, there has been little previous work examining men's mental health variations in the context of household employment arrangements, our results align with broader evidence of the benefits of gender equality extending to men, as well as women <sup>14</sup>. It is possible that women's labor-force participation catalyzes men's greater participation in

caring and domestic roles – even if they continue to work full-time – with consequential mental health benefits. Supporting this, there is some evidence that men engaging in multiple life roles, particularly involving the care of children report better mental health <sup>15</sup>. It has been postulated that men in traditional (breadwinner) roles are less constrained by caring and domestic roles and have greater opportunity to engage in more risky health behaviors <sup>16</sup>, whereas those engaging in more caring and domestic roles are theorized to adopt healthier behaviors and attitudes <sup>17</sup>.

The results for women and children are important because they provide no evidence that mental health penalties arise for either women or children due to women's labor-force participation.

Our position is not that the default should be that mothers work full-time, nor is our position that raising and caring for children is a secondary priority. Rather, we hold that "when the state encourages a heteropatriarchal model with fathers as breadwinners and mothers as caregivers, gender divisions of work within families are enhanced, influencing inequalities among women who are mothers." <sup>18</sup> pg 2. We argue that women and men should both have the choice and support to combine work and family responsibilities. This does not solely mean policy support for women's labor-force participation; policy and institutional support for men to share household and family responsibilities is equally needed.

While our results suggest that the mental health of women and children are not affected by household employment-configuration, initiatives that support women's labor-force participation have the potential to drive economic benefits for women and society more broadly. Importantly too, such initiatives, accompanied by strategies to support men's participation in caring responsibilities, will potentially also deliver mental health benefits to men given that their mental health appears to benefit from women's labor-force participation.

## Conclusion

In summary, we found no evidence that the mental health of children and women is adversely affected by household employment-configuration. Associations observed for men suggest that the traditional, male-breadwinner household employment arrangement may be disadvantageous to their mental health. These results go some way to quell some of the traditional normative expectations and beliefs about the roles and responsibilities of men and women with children by showing that the mental health of children and women appears to be unaffected by household employment-configurations.

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# Silenced and invisible work experience of trans\* and gender diverse individuals in intersectional identity relation

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## **Abstract**

The integrative literature review demonstrates a gap about work experience and career development of trans\* and gender diverse (TGD) individuals in Australia. This is noted in the literature of organisation and management studies as well as gender, queer and trans studies. The investigations of career development and work reality of TGD individuals have been either completely overlooked or included in research about LGBT identities without distinguishing between the different experiences of sexual and gender minorities. Future research agendas, therefore, should include TGD perspectives for a better understanding of intersectionality, performativity, and the interrelation of gender and work identity. By recognising the intersection of work and gender identity for TGD individuals as well as their work experience such as enablers and barriers could encourage the development of gender equity for all gender identities. Voices of TGD individuals have been silenced through the cycle of exclusion containing harassment, stigmatisation, and discrimination at work. By including TGD perspectives and inviting TGD people to the table of organisational and managerial decision-making, diversity at the workplace gets a chance to thrive.

## **Keywords**

Trans\* and gender diverse (TGD) individuals, intersectionality, career enablers, work barriers

## **Introduction**

Diversity at the workplace is mostly limited to gender equity for employees within the binary understanding of gender. This literature overlooks the experiences and ideas around TGD individuals and their potential to participate in the workplace (Rumens, 2017). An integrative literature review was selected based on the new critical and synthesised knowledge generation about the reviewed topic (Torraco, 2005). The integrative literature review of organisation and management studies as well as gender and queer studies revealed that the investigation in career development and work experiences of TGD individuals has been either completely ignored or included in research about LGBT identities without distinguishing between the different experiences of sexual and gender minorities (Matsuno & Budge, 2017; Parkinson, Flowers, & Semlyen, 2019).

Experiences with work and career development include the analysis of enablers and barriers to labour force participation and satisfaction within the workplace for TGD individuals. Analysis of organisation and management studies literature reveals a gap about the understanding of enablers for TGD individuals regarding positive work experience and career development. The description of barriers to labour force participation, workplace experience, and career development of TGD individuals is undifferentiated included in

research about LGBT or binary trans experience while transitioning at work (Matsuno & Budge, 2017; Parkinson et al., 2019). Within diversity programs and gender equity approaches for organisation, TGD individuals are more often forgotten and left behind than included or even considered (Moradi et al., 2016).

The following is a literature review of the established or absent enablers and barriers for TGD individuals and their work and career experiences as researched within organisation and management literature. This paper demonstrates the need for future research to focus on the exploration of enablers and the evaluation of barrier adaptation for work and career experience of TGD individuals. Hereinafter, it should be argued that further research is necessary to understand the intersection of gender and work identity for TGD individuals, their experienced enablers and barriers at work and applied coping strategies, as well as the possibility to invite TGD people to the table to voice their experience and ideas in the workplace. This could furthermore contribute to ensure gender equity for all genders at the workplace and increase the well-being of the individual at work by being able to be their authentic self, if they choose so.

## **Intersection of TGD and work identity**

Gender identity is only one prism of the kaleidoscope self (Spade & Valentine, 2008). Diverse forms of identities, social roles as well as intrapersonal, interpersonal, and structural aspects forming a unique composition of an individuals' self (Spade & Valentine, 2008). At work, different identity classes such as the professional, personal, and situational identity come into play and intervene in different intensity (Day & Kington, 2008). While the professional identity represents the policy and social expectation according to a profession; the personal identity includes aspects like the individual gender identity, social class or other characteristics of the individual (Day & Kington, 2008). The situational identity involves the dimension of the local institution or business a person works at (Day & Kington, 2008). Furthermore, all three identity classes interact with the organisational identity including values, interests, and aims of the organisation (Livengood & Reger, 2010). The process of intersecting identities describes 'the ways in which individuals possess multiple social identities' (Grzanka & Miles, 2016, p. 377).

Trans\* or transgender is referring to the disconnect of gender identity with the biological gender or sex assignment, which describes traditional the binary categories of female and male (Moradi et al., 2016). The phrase trans\* and gender diverse (TGD) is the attempt to cover diverse non-cisgender identities under an umbrella term (Beauregard, Arevshatian, Booth, & Whittle, 2018). The description of TGD individuals should here include people who are identifying within, along, beyond, and outside the binary with diverse material and physical gender expression as part of their performative gender identity. TGD individuals may label themselves as genderqueer, non-binary, genderfluid, bigender, agender, and other terminology (see Table 1).

The intersectionality of identity forms at the workplace - such as work identity and gender identity - has impact on the individuals identity construction as well as symbolic representation, and is enforced on a person by (un)equal social structures and gender hierarchies (Grzanka & Miles, 2016). Within the literature, evidence can be found that gender has an influence on career development and career decision-making based on gender-stereotypical practice and hegemonic gender order (Matsuno & Budge, 2017).



Although, it has not been explored what role does gender identity play for TGD individuals in relation to their professional, situational, and work identity as well as vice versa.

**Table 1. List of trans\* and gender diverse identities**

Agender	A person with no (or very little) connection to the traditional system of gender, no personal alignment with the concepts of either man or woman, and/or someone who sees themselves as existing without gender. Sometimes called gender neutrois, gender neutral, or genderless. *
Androgynous	A gender expression that has elements of both masculinity and femininity. *
Bigender	A person who fluctuates between traditionally “woman” and “man” gender-based behavior and identities, identifying with two genders (or sometimes identifying with either man or woman, as well as a third, different gender). *
Gender fluid	A gender identity label often used by people whose sense of self in relation to gender changes from time-to-time. The time frame might be over the course of many months, days, shorter, or longer, but the consistent experience is one of change. *
Gender non-conforming	A gender identity label that indicates a person who identifies outside of the gender binary. Often abbreviated as “GNC.” *
Genderqueer	A gender identity label often used by people who do not identify with the binary of man/woman. *
Neutrois	See agender *
Non-binary	An umbrella term for genders that fall somewhere in the middle of the gender spectrum and are neither strictly male nor female. This can be used as a gender identification without further explanation. Sometimes the term, genderqueer, is used. **
Polygender	When you identify with multiple genders at once. Sometimes referred to as multigender. **
Queer	An umbrella term to describe individuals who don’t identify as straight and/or cisgender. *
Questioning	An individual who or time when someone is unsure about or exploring their own sexual orientation or gender identity. *
Third gender	For a person who does not identify with either man or woman but identifies with another gender. This gender category is used by societies that recognise three or more genders, both contemporary and historic, and is also a conceptual term meaning different things to different people who use it, as a way to move beyond the gender binary. *
Transgender	A gender description for someone who has transitioned (or is transitioning) from living as one gender to another. *
Transsexual	A person who identifies psychologically as a gender/sex other than the one to which they were assigned at birth. Transsexuals often wish to transform their bodies hormonally and surgically to match their inner sense of gender/sex. *

\* Killermann, Sam. (2020). A Guide to Gender: The Social Justice Advocate’s Handbook. Retrieved from <https://www.itspronouncedmetrosexual.com/2013/01/a-comprehensive-list-of-lgbtq-term-definitions/>

\*\* The PBHS Closet. (n.d.). List of Genders and Sexualities. Retrieved from <http://thepbhsclset.weebly.com/a-list-of-genders--sexualities-and-their-definitions.html>

## Methods

An integrative literature review was chosen to generate a new perspective and applicable framework on the understanding about work and career experiences of TGD individuals of literature in organisation and management studies (Torraco, 2005). The integrative literature review for a new emerging topic includes reviewing, criticising, and synthesising of representative literature (Torraco, 2005). Literature has been accessed via Web of Science, Scopus, and Google Scholar which was predominantly chosen from the literature corpus of organisation and management studies as well as gender, trans and queer studies. Concurring to the narrow research about TGD individuals (including alternative terminology such as genderqueer or non-binary) the scope was extended to trans, LGBT, as well as sexual and gender minorities in the context of work experience, labour market and career development as well as decision-making. The literature led to following emerging themes: enablers (including coping mechanism) and barriers (including silencing), which are elaborated in following.

### Enablers of work participation and satisfaction for TGD individuals

Enablers are external conditions and events as well as internal dispositions and individual behaviour that are influencing the personal career development and workplace experience positive for TGD individuals (Chinchilla, León, Torres, & Canela, 2006). External enablers could be named as organisational structure, work policy, and workplace values as well as environment, who have supportive effect or positive influence on the work and career experience. In the literature, hardly any reference to the investigation of enablers for TGD individuals can be found.

Internal enablers are coping mechanism that imply the action of personal resources to react and act to a situation or event (Hamill, 2003). Marques (2019) introduces four identity management strategies to cope with discrimination: blending (gender display of desired gender), masking (display of assigned gender, suppression of authentic self), naturalising (express true self with diverse range of femininity and masculinity) and subverting (politicised gender expression by creation of ambiguous gender display). While silencing TGD voices is described as barrier, quiescent and pro-social silence chosen by TGD individuals could be seen as internal enabler which could be beneficial for the individual work and career experience (Bell, Özbilgin, Beauregard, & Sürgevil, 2011).

### Barriers at work

Academic literature suggests that one of the major barrier for TGD individuals is the silencing and marginalisation of TGD peoples' voices in the workplace (Beauregard et al., 2018). A lack of voice results in a lack of power which leads to missing opportunities to change external regulations and to influence internal management choices (McNulty, McPhail, Inversi, Dundon, & Nechanska, 2018). TGD individuals can represent a non-compliance with the gender binary categorisation which can be difficult to understand for cisgender people and, furthermore, might be confronting and making them feel uncomfortable (Beauregard et al., 2018). The cycle of exclusion and discrimination against TGD people in the workforce is continuing if TGD voices should not receive any space within the work discourse (Beauregard et al., 2018).

Further barriers could be identified for the LGBT community to access or stay in the workforce or even pursue their desired career by undertaking their career development decision-making according to the literature (McNulty et al., 2018). The literature and research around sexual and gender minorities in relation to their experience of work pathways and career development is extensive (Moradi et al., 2016). On closer inspection it becomes clear that these are primarily the experiences of lesbian and gay individuals and less is known about the experience of TGD people (Matsuno & Budge, 2017). The examination of trans\* identities in the field of work is mostly binary rather than non-binary or gender-nonnormative beyond the binary of female and male (Matsuno & Budge, 2017).

TGD people are the most targeted social minority group of physical and psychological violence based on heterosexual and cisgender social power (Collins, McFadden, Rocco, & Mathis, 2015). Collins et al. (2015) define internal or attitudinal barriers (self-concept, motivation, self-esteem, interest and attitudes towards work,) and external, social or interactional barriers (discrimination, transphobia, harassment, violence, stigmatisation, and exclusion) as challenges to conceive a career for TGD people.

Most of these barriers have been researched within the broader context of sexual and gender minorities but averted the specific examination of experience for TGD individuals (Matsuno & Budge, 2017). This results in the research question of whether barriers of sexual and gender minorities as well as known coping strategies, are applicable of the lived reality of TGD individuals? Have all barriers and forms of discrimination the same significance for TGD people? Are even specific forms of barriers and disadvantage as well as management strategies missing from the perspective of TGD individuals?

Creating a trans\*-positive and gender-diverse environment at work is beneficial for individuals of all gender identities, which needs to call TGD individuals to the table of organisational decision-making (McNulty et al., 2018). In order to do this, an appropriate space must be created, and the rundown of tokenism should be avoided (Lasala, Jenkins, Wheeler, & Fredriksen-Goldsen, 2008). Subsequent, the theoretical and practical effects and influences are described in more detail.

## **Theoretical and practical implications**

The research corpus about work experience and career development of TGD individuals is narrow within the organisation and management studies literature (Moradi et al., 2016). Future research could contribute to the intersectional knowledge of interrelation between gender and work identity under the specific lens of TGD individuals. Potential research projects should investigate if theoretical approaches and conceptualisations about enablers and barriers at work are applicable to TGD people. Furthermore, the models and theories could be expended by the subjective narrative of TGD people and their experience with workplaces as well as career development and decision-making.

Practical contributions are besides a better understanding of lived reality for TGD individuals, the application of their recommendations to workplace policies and organisational structures. The development and initiation of space for TGD voices could lead to practical implication in organisations. Integrating TGD perspectives in organisational structures and work policies could encourage the realisation of gender equity for all gender identities as well as the enactment of human rights to the workforce.

## Let's make some space and listen!

Gender identity is to various extent interrelated with the personal work identity and other connected identity forms. Gender has influence on the hierarchical order and hegemonic power that are incorporated and represented by individuals at work. The intersectionality of identity categories, the work experience, such as opportunities and barriers along the work path, as well as the option of voicing the positioning of TGD individuals at work has been underrepresented, or not even analysed at all. The achievement of gender equity for all gender identities needs to evaluate and include enablers and barriers for TGD individuals. Such enablers and barriers are embedded in the individual themselves as well as in organisational structures and workplace culture. Developing a holistic picture of enablers and barriers based on work and gender interrelation could inspire an intersectional progression to include and value gender diversity in organisational process and structure. Based on the insights of TGD individuals, changes and opportunities for the development of a gender-respectful and diverse working space could be developed and may lead to gender equity for all genders at work.

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# Structural stigma and sexual orientation disparities in healthcare use: Evidence from Australian Census-linked-administrative data

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## Abstract

Structural stigma (legislative and sociocultural constraining factors) contributes to health inequalities in sexual minorities; however, it is unclear whether this stigma also influences healthcare service and medication use. Addressing this gap, we map the regional-level responses to the Australian 2017 postal survey on same-sex marriage legislation to Census-linked-administrative data covering 75% of all Australians, including 83,167 individuals in same-sex relationships. Controlling for sociodemographic characteristics and regional fixed effects, we then estimate the extent to which structural stigma is associated with the use of medical services and prescription medicines for individuals in same-sex vs. heterosexual relationships. Compared to their heterosexual counterparts, an increase in the percentage of votes against same-sex marriage was associated with less GP use and additional nervous system related prescriptions for females ( $n=40,929$ ) and males ( $n=41,859$ ) in same-sex relationships. Increasing stigma was also associated with reduced pathology services and anti-infective prescriptions for men in same-sex relationships. Our results suggest that sexual minorities in stigmatised regions have poorer mental health but are less likely to use primary healthcare services. This highlights the need for interventions to improve health and healthcare access for sexual minorities, particularly in regions with high structural stigma.

## Background

The lesbian, gay and bisexual (LGB) community have worse health outcomes than their heterosexual counterparts [1-4]. Sociocultural and legislative factors that disadvantage minority groups (structural stigma) are theorised to contribute to these health inequalities by inducing pathophysiological stress responses, risky health behaviours and reduced healthcare seeking [5]. Therefore, although structural stigma can lead to poorer health and potentially greater healthcare need, it may also reduce healthcare access and healthcare seeking. Despite numerous studies describing the negative health effects of structural stigma in sexual minorities, the effects on healthcare use are less certain.

## Aims

This study aims to contribute to a greater understanding on the extent to which structural stigma is associated with sexual orientation disparities in healthcare use.

## Methods

As a proxy for structural stigma, we map the responses from the Australian 2017 Survey on legalising same-sex marriage to Census-linked-administrative data covering 75% of the Australian Census population, 83,519 individuals in same-sex relationships – the largest administrative dataset to date where individuals in same-sex relationships are identified. Controlling for a rich set of individual-level controls and region fixed effects, we estimate whether regional variation in support for legalising same-sex marriage is associated with sexual orientation disparities in utilisation for key healthcare services and prescription medicines of interest. We focus on three main outcome groups. First, as we are interested in primary healthcare use, we look at the likelihood of visiting a GP and differences in annual GP visits. Second, we explore the use of nervous system scripts because, as they primarily comprise anti-depressants and anti-anxiety medication [6], their use provides a relatively objective indicator for treatment of mental health disorders. And third, we look at pathology-related items and consider changes in pathology services, which includes services pertaining to sexual health checks, as well as anti-infective scripts, which include antibiotics and HIV-related medication.

## Results

Compared to their heterosexual counterparts, we find that individuals in same-sex relationships living in regions with more structural stigma visit the GP less often and use more medication for treating mental health disorders (nervous system scripts). These results are largely consistent with previous research showing that sexual minorities in stigmatised regions have poorer health [7] but use less primary healthcare [8]. We also find that low regional-level support for same-sex marriage is associated with reduced use of pathology-related items (pathology services and anti-infectives) among men in same-sex relationships compared to men in heterosexual relationships. These results are consistent with other studies, which suggested that gay men in stigmatised regions may be less comfortable with discussing their specific sexual health needs and may be less aware of, or adherent to, HIV-related medication [9].

## Conclusions

Altogether, this suggests that although sexual minorities in stigmatised regions are in poorer health and arguably have greater healthcare needs, they are less likely to use primary healthcare services. This points to the significance of structural stigma as a moderator in sexual minority health and healthcare access disparities.

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# The need for a father's quota in Australia's paid parental leave policy

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## Abstract

In Australia only 1 in 20 men currently take any Paid Parental Leave (PPL). More fathers take Dad and Partner Pay, however this provides little remuneration and government sanctioned time off from paid work. With more families now requiring dual incomes than in previous years, the organisation of work and home life in Australia would benefit from policy which facilitates a shared-care approach. Research suggests that providing a well remunerated parental leave policy specifically aimed at fathers can facilitate shared care immediately following birth and throughout a child's life. The idea of a father's quota in Australia's PPL policy is not new, however is important to revisit given a quota has not yet been implemented. This paper will argue that Australia remains heavily reliant on the breadwinner model of caregiving and paid work, and this has impacted upon the implementation of a targeted leave period for fathers. Further, Australian research points to the desire of fathers to take longer periods of time off after the birth of a child, but lack of structural support and cultural norms around men's involvement in paid work present barriers to fathers taking PPL. Implementation of a father's quota would assist in providing practical assistance for families after the birth of a child, and provide cultural and structural support for father involvement in the short and longer term.

## Keywords

Paid Parental Leave, father's quota, breadwinner, structural support.

## Introduction

Paid Parental Leave (PPL) is a legislated period of remuneration which primary carers may access after the birth of a child (Brennan, 2011), and is usually paid through their employer. When the PPL scheme was introduced in Australia in 2011, 18 weeks of remuneration following the birth of a child was offered to the primary caregiver, paid at minimum wage. The primary caregiver could be a man or a woman, but continues to almost always be the mother, due in part to the need for the woman to recover after childbirth and if she chooses to breastfeed, and due in part to the likelihood of male partners earning more (Huerta et al., 2013). Mothers are thus very likely to take all 18 weeks. Accordingly, Australian father's use of government sanctioned PPL is one of the lowest in the Western world, at 2-3% (OECD, 2016).

Other countries have introduced a specified period of PPL targeted at fathers, or a 'father's quota', and it is not a new idea for Australia to do the same. However, given that Australia has not yet introduced this specified leave period, it is necessary to continue to discuss the barriers and benefits of a father's quota so that the idea remains current in the minds of the public and of policy makers. This paper will thus highlight some barriers and

benefits to the implementation of a father's quota in Australia through a short review of Australian and international literature.

## **Background**

In Nordic countries such as Norway, Sweden and Denmark, their focus on gender equality initiatives has meant that family-friendly measures are targeted at both men and women (Brandth & Kvande, 2018). Father's use of PPL in these countries is facilitated by a specified period of leave for fathers; if this period of leave is not used by them it cannot be used by the mother and is lost (Brandth & Kvande, 2011).

As mentioned, very few Australian fathers use any PPL. A scheme offering fathers (and same-sex partners) leave after the birth of a child, the Dad and Partner Pay (DPP) scheme, was introduced in 2013. Roughly one third of fathers use DPP (Martin et al., 2014). However, it offers only two weeks of remuneration at minimum wage, which is untenable for many families. Employers can offer their own PPL if they choose, and a growing number do. However, access to employer-paid parental leave differs between industries and women are more likely to have access to and take employer-paid parental leave than men (WGEA, 2018).

Others note that a significant barrier to the implementation of a father's quota in Australia is a cultural reliance on the male breadwinner model (Baxter & Smart, 2011; Werth, 2011), which has existed for many decades and continues to have an influence on Australian policy in relation to work and parenting (Brennan, 2011; Dreyfus, 2013). Further, in addition to women being more likely than men to take PPL in Australia, research suggests that during PPL women tend to assume responsibility for household (unpaid) labour, whilst men assume responsibility for paid work. This trend continues after PPL as reflected in research and ABS data (ABS, 2019; Baxter, 2019; Huerta et al., 2013). Arguably, the nature of Australia's PPL policy thus works to reproduce and entrench gendered norms of women as responsible for caregiving and the apparent normality of the gendered division of household labour.

Brennan (2011) has argued that the scant attention paid by Australian legislators to father's use of PPL (and ongoing flexible working arrangements as children grow) reinforces the idea that men do not require access to this sort of leave. Fathers' exclusion from policy and discourses around parenting can further reinforce gendered norms of fathering and mothering, and lead to the reproduction of gendered roles within families. The introduction of policy which enables more equal care of children has the potential to facilitate change in these cultural norms.

## **Findings in the Literature**

Research conducted in Australia has found both cultural and structural barriers to father's use of PPL following the birth of a child. Coles and colleagues (2018), for example, found that fathers were aware of and concerned about cultural expectations that they would continue to be breadwinners for their family (see also Baxter & Smart, 2011), although they also expressed a strong desire to spend time with their young children. These concerns echo the cultural barriers highlighted above. Borgkvist and colleagues (2018) found that fathers still faced institutional and structural constraints within their workplaces, due to unsupportive managers and colleagues, and unclear policies and avenues for

applying for leave (see also Coles et al., 2018) This research points to continuing gendered influences on fathers decision-making in relation to PPL, and the need to address structural barriers such as lack of clear, targeted, legislated leave.

Other studies have found links between leave and father's mental health. Cooklin and colleagues (2015) identified that long and inflexible work hours, and a lack of autonomy over work were associated with increased work-family conflict, and subsequently increased distress. They concluded that 'employment characteristics, via work-family conflict and work-family enrichment, are key determinants of fathers' postnatal mental health' (p. 214). Specified periods of PPL would assist in alleviating work-family conflict for new fathers and potentially reduce the impact on their mental health and well-being (see also Pocock, Skinner, & Williams, 2012).

Suwada (2017) argued that while there are new obligations for fathers, they often are not provided with the adequate structural support required to meet them. This can be achieved through and needs to begin with more inclusive and supportive PPL policy. Research from around the globe demonstrates how the introduction of a father's quota could facilitate fathers' increased use of PPL, and assist in breaking down the kinds of cultural and structural barriers identified in the above Australian research.

First, taking time off when their baby is born has been found to give fathers the chance to learn that caring for an infant is not innate, and to form a bond with their children (see Brandth & Kvande, 2018; Huerta et al., 2013; Wall, 2014). Spending prolonged time with children when they are first born and when they are very young has been linked to fathers being more dedicated to caring for and spending time with them as they grow (Miller, 2017), which has in turn been linked to positive health and development outcomes for children (Huerta et al., 2013).

Further, a specified period of leave not only increases father's use of PPL, it assists in establishing a norm of fathers taking PPL to be with their young and/or infant children (Cools, Fiva, & Kirkeboen, 2015). For example, some countries have found that the introduction of a father's quota has encouraged challenge and re-definition of ideas about what father's roles are, as well as underscoring the importance of father's involvement in the first year of a child's life (Brandth & Kvande, 2011). These policies have been successful in increasing men's use of PPL by providing a specified period of government sanctioned leave that employers cannot refuse. Consequently Norway, Sweden, Finland, and Denmark have some of the highest rates in the world of men utilising parental leave and flexible working arrangements on a longer-term basis (Brandth & Kvande, 2018; Huerta et al., 2013). Of importance to the Australian context, O'Brien (2013) has suggested that a targeted policy initiative for fathers can be successful even in countries with a strong breadwinner ideology.

Finally, from a gender equality perspective, a father's quota provides opportunities for men to engage in other activities in the home. During this period of leave fathers have been found to perform more household duties which reduces unpaid labour performed by women, potentially leading to less time pressure and stress (Ruppanner, Perales, & Baxter, 2019), and often results in men remaining more involved in these activities in the long-term (Brandth & Kvande, 2018; although see Cools et al., 2015 for counter arguments to these findings).

## Implications

Many Australian fathers remain reluctant or unable to use PPL, and barriers are both cultural and structural in nature. Nordic countries have demonstrated that changes in cultural norms and expectations can be facilitated by government policy. Thus, tangible and practical policy change in Australia will arguably facilitate fathers use of PPL and pose challenges to gendered norms of parenting (see O'Brien, 2013).

Having a government supported and legislated period of PPL which fathers are entitled to use also has the potential to eliminate the practical gap between theory and implementation in terms of father's rights to and use of family policies within workplaces. It would provide structural and cultural support for fathers, and send a message that fathers involvement in their young children's lives is valuable and impactful (Brandth & Kvande, 2011; Brennan, 2011).

Notably, Australia's current government-funded PPL policy offers 18 weeks remuneration to facilitate mothers' recovery and breastfeeding (should they choose); as such, the total number of weeks offered would need to be extended in order to provide specified weeks of remuneration specifically for fathers. The economic aspect of this likely presents a barrier to the implementation of a father's quota at present (see Martin et al., 2014). Further, as highlighted by Kalb (2018), a policy initiative such as this would require longer-term commitment to allow time for it to show effect, and the practicality of prolonged commitment may depend on political, financial, and social factors.

However, from a societal perspective the reviewed research suggests that increased use of PPL by fathers has the potential to benefit Australian families as a whole. The reduction of work-life conflict, and unequal amounts of unpaid labour, is likely to have a flow on effect to health and wellbeing as well as economic productivity (Huerta et al., 2013). Increased father involvement would also have a positive impact on child development in the short and longer term. These outcomes could thus reduce the overall financial impact of the introduction of this kind of policy.

## Conclusion

This paper has argued that there is a need for a father's quota in Australia's governmental PPL policy. Many Australian fathers do not take PPL when their children are born, and this is heavily influenced by cultural and social attitudes in Australia, and also structural barriers such as adequately remunerated leave and workplace support. Research from countries around the world provides a strong case for why and how a father's quota can be effective in facilitating and supporting more fathers to use PPL, and why implementation of this kind of policy initiative in Australia would be beneficial. A governmental policy incorporating a father's quota would provide the cultural, as well as practical and financial support, required for more Australian fathers to utilise PPL.

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# The pram in the hall: Motherhood and creative practice in academia

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## Abstract

This theoretical paper brings together existing research from diverse sources to examine the challenges faced by female academics in creative industries who are also mothers. Such academics, as well as being excellent creative practitioners, are those who use creative practice as rigorous enquiry to interrogate research questions. The academic and cultural ecosystems in which these women need to operate are explored through three key barriers that prevent equal career opportunities for female creative practitioners who have children and choose to work in academia.

## Introduction

In 1950 the writer Cyril Connolly wrote in his final editorial of the journal *Horizon*; “There is no more sombre enemy of good art, than the pram in the hall” (Lewis 1997). This well-known and oft regarded as misogynistic quote, highlights a number of issues that face female creative practitioners in contemporary, western society. Female academics in the creative industries who choose also to become mothers are often in precarious positions when one steps back and looks at the ecosystems in which the artist-mother-academic must survive. These women are challenged on three main fronts:

- i. Balancing the competing demands of being an academic with those of being a caregiver
- ii. Women’s fertility “choices” and career progression in academia
- iii. Creative practice as “valid” research in the larger context of established university research cultures.

These three challenges are interdependent on one another when considering the opportunities available to, and the career progression of, artist-mother-academics. Although improvements have occurred since Cyril Connolly’s editorial, there is still a long way to go before these challenges cease to exist.

## Balancing the competing demands of being an academic with those of being a caregiver

Previous research indicates that working mothers spend significantly more time on childcare than their male partners, with one study of Canadian university psychology departments finding that women spend 10 hours more per week on childcare than the fathers of their children did (McCutcheon and Morrison, 2016). Female academics with children under the age of 13 have also been found to have greater feelings of overload and conflict, due the higher needs of younger children who are yet to develop self-sufficiency (Grasetti, 2014). Here the distribution of workload between parents of both genders could

ease such issues. However, in Australia, there is still an expectation that women will be primary caregivers due the gender pay gap and social expectations of gender ideals (Walsh 2018). This is further compounded by fathers feeling stigmatised and less confident in their careers if they request flexible working arrangements in order try to assume more responsibilities in the home (Crabb 2019).

In 2004, Stack undertook an extensive study that considered a wide range of variables, including the time that both genders spent at work, and where time was taken from by women in order to engage in more childcare responsibilities. Stack's study found that rather than taking time away from work hours to do the lion's share of childcare, female academics gave up time that would be spent on entertainment and leisure, reorganizing their lives to fit in with the needs of their children. This was not true of men who had children, echoing the above point that "women are culturally expected to be the primary care givers for children" (Stack, 2004) putting mother-academics at a distinct disadvantage in their capacity for a high volume of research outputs. Stack also makes the point that the studies that he and other academics have done, do not take into consideration women who have found the juggling act between academia and childrearing too difficult and who have sought employment in other fields. Twelve years later, citing Kelly Baker, editor of *Women in Higher Education*, Summers and Clarke highlight this defection to other careers, a point that is still being glossed over in research studies:

...those of us who become mothers in academia often find ourselves negotiating the high cultural expectations of 'serious' scholar and 'good' mother, roles that don't coincide neatly. Supposedly, serious scholars put career and research first, while good mothers prioritize family above all else. Mother-scholars then, are caught in a bind of conflicting expectations. Is it any wonder so many of us leave? (Summers & Clarke, 2015).

Baker now has two children and is no longer an academic, a role she chose not to pursue due to the inequities of academia and the lack of access to paid maternity leave when she became pregnant with her second child, thus losing half of her salary as a lecturer, making it financially unviable for her to remain in academia (Baker, 2014). This "forgetting" to count those who have left academia is a knowledge gap that needs further investigation to understand how better to identify and address the inherent failings of academia when it comes to gender equity in women's careers.

## **Women's fertility "choices" and career progression in academia**

Often it takes up to 10 years for women to achieve a PhD (Bonawitz & Andel, 2009). The duration of PhD candidature, combined with career opportunities available after candidature, leaves very small fertility window in which women are physically capable of having children should they wish to do so post-candidature. With fertility starting to decline at 30 years and rapidly decreasing by 35 (Better Health Victoria, 2019), this also does not leave much time for academic women to establish their careers first, and then have children.

In the US, almost half (45%) of Higher Degree Research candidates are women (Bonawitz & Andel, 2009), yet their capacity to actually secure permanent academic positions is far less than this, at 31% (Sieverding, Eib, Neubauer & Stahl, 2018.). Of those who do secure academic positions post PhD, only a third will become mothers in their first



12 years of academia (Mason & Goulden, 2004). Those who have children as Early Career academics (5 years post PhD), find that they are less likely to gain permanent posts or tenure track positions than early career men (Holm, Prosek & Weisberger, 2015 and Williams, 2005). These patterns are not limited to one region of the world and are considered a global issue (Sieverding, Eib, Neubauer & Stahl, 2018).

This is reflective of the “leaky pipe-line” phenomena, where at entry levels there are more female academics, but in more senior roles there are less. Although more commonly used in relation to STEM careers, the leaky pipeline has been observed generally across academia regardless of discipline (Gasser, 2014). The term “leaky pipeline” however, has been challenged by Professor Aileen Fyffe, following a study of Scottish female mid-career academics stating that “Conceptualising women’s careers in terms of linear “ladders” or “pipelines” might have the effect of marginalising or demotivating those whose careers do not fit the perceived stereotypical ideal pattern. (Fyffe, 2018).

Academics in the creative industries in particular, very much embody Fyffe’s point, not having followed a linear upwards career trajectory through academia. They have been experts in their areas of creative practice *before* entering academia, so come with a wealth of knowledge that is often ignored by the academe. Creative practitioners come to academia for a number of diverse reasons: some may wish to push the boundaries of what they are creating by engaging in research while others may “fall” into teaching to support their creative practice, finding that they enjoy the discourse with, and mentoring of students. The women who are artists and mothers and academics juggle three roles in their daily lives and this has a marked impact on their roles in academia, re-enforcing the leaky pipeline, while the value of mother-academics research contributions remains low (Summers and Clarke, 2015). As a consequence, many of these female academics remain on fixed term or casual contracts (Bryson, 2004; Academics Anonymous, 2017), which provide only marginally more financial predictability than that of a freelance creative practitioner.

### **Creative Practice as a “valid” research activity**

This barrier is not one that arises from gender, however it is one that adds to the complexity of the landscape in which the artist-mother-academic exists. In Australia, in particular, where funding is scarce, creative practice as research is still nascent in comparison to other countries. The research focus of many institutions is STEM based and many academics in creative practice find themselves having to argue the case for research excellence against criteria and metrics, such as H-Indexes which bear no relevance to creative practice. Yet, it is often creative practice that is more successful in areas such as *Impact and Engagement*, providing more relatable, relevant and richer translations of new knowledge that have far reaching benefits to a broad range of audiences. (A New Approach, 2018).

In creative practice, the most common means of dissemination of high quality research outputs are non-text-based, such as public exhibitions, performances or recordings. The very nature of public dissemination has a much further reach than peer reviewed journals, being much more accessible by the general public and has a great value to society at large. In the creative industries, international or solo outputs are highly valued, as are competitive collaborations that are part of international peer reviewed conferences,

however none of this value is captured by the traditional metrics that measure research excellence.

The *Strand Report* (Strand, 1998) sought to define exactly what creative arts research in Australia is and to examine the quality and impact of non-traditional outputs of research, such as exhibitions, performances, recordings or creative artefacts within larger government and academic contexts. This had mixed results with a narrowing of the parameters which helped with clarification, but also limited the perceived value of some non-traditional approaches to research (Woodrow, 2018). Creative practice-based academics still face many challenges because while the Excellence in Research in Australia (ERA) exercise acknowledges the “non-text outputs of artist-academics in its evaluation of ‘research outcomes’, much of the process remains resolutely framed by measures that work against creative arts researchers” (Wilson, 2011), with the observation that “*outside scientific research there are no standard methodologies or publications outcomes and the processes and outcomes of creative arts research are just one set of many that sit amongst other accepted and funded, forms of activity*” (Strand, 1998).

The value placed on creative practice in Australia is reflected in the funding it is provided in comparison to other disciplines. The likelihood of securing funding for arts-based research in a competitive process that is open to all disciplines is highly unlikely. For example, in 2010 out of 1680 ARC grants only 25 were awarded for Studies in Creative Arts and Writing FoR Code19 (Wilson, 2011). During 2012–2018, out of the 1474 DECRA awards, only 2 were awarded to Fine Art practitioners (Woodrow, 2018). Funding successes are more likely from dedicated arts funding bodies, such as the Australia Council for the Arts, however, these are not recognised by the National Competitive Grants Index and in 1998 “The ARC immediately erased all creative outputs from consideration for research grants: an exclusion that stayed in place until 2011 after the introduction of the 2010 ERA scheme brought creative arts research back into the academic fold” (Woodrow, 2018). Even with this acceptance, many arts funding bodies are reluctant to fund creative practice-based university research due to the on-costs that universities charge.

## Conclusion

Academic opportunities for women are slowly changing with job applications and promotions processes now starting to acknowledge career breaks due to maternity leave and (for both genders) primary care-giving responsibilities. However, there is still have a long way to go both in terms of policy and societal norms to support working women in all careers. In particular, the active roles that fathers play in the family, supporting their partners and equalising caring and domestic responsibilities in the home need to be normalised in Australian society because “the inability of a father to work flexibly, or leave when he needs to, creates a parallel obligation for someone else – usually a woman – to pick up the slack” (Crabb, 2019, p13). A step towards this would be the provision of more flexible working hours and parental leave options that provide genuinely family friendly policies where *both* parents are acknowledged to be equally responsible for childcare, elder care, household administration and organisation of the family activities.

Such changes to these practices will aid the artist-mother-academic in terms of the addressing issues in the workplace. However, in terms of creative practice-based research, alternatives to the metrics-based systems need to be developed in a way that equally

recognises and values the research achievements of all disciplines and their particular intrinsic merits that can be provided through interdisciplinary practices to wider research communities. In this way, we can provide opportunities and role models for girls and young women wishing to pursue creative academic careers and be mothers, as well as normalising “hands on” active fatherhood as a role model for boys and young men. This is particularly pertinent in a changing landscape where there is growing evidence that supports the refreshing rhetoric that maternal employment actually benefits children psychologically and socially, especially girls, in the success of their future careers (McGinn, Ruiz Castro and Lingo, 2019).

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# The role of gender in the relationship between psychosocial job stressors, work-family imbalance, and sleep quality in Australian working parents

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## Abstract

The current study uses data from the Household Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia (HILDA) survey to examine whether gender is an effect modifier in the relationship between psychosocial job stressors (job demands, job control, job strain, and job security), work-family imbalance (work-family conflict and family-work conflict), and sleep quality in a sample of employed parents. Data from 2791 men and women between the ages of 18-64 years in paid employment were included in the analyses. We conducted linear regressions with gender as an interaction term, controlling for relevant confounders. Our findings demonstrated that in employed parents, psychosocial job stressors and work-family imbalance were associated with poorer sleep quality. Adjusting for work family imbalance attenuated the associations between psychosocial job stressors and sleep quality. Furthermore, we revealed that gender is an effect modifier in the relationship between job security and sleep quality, whereby there is an association between low job security and poorer sleep quality in men, but not women. Previous evidence has indicated that improving working conditions and reducing psychosocial job stressors enhances employee wellbeing. Our findings suggest that targeting work-family imbalance and job stress may have the potential to aid employee sleep quality.

# Women, age discrimination and work: Where have all the cases gone?

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## Abstract

Women report experiencing high levels of age discrimination in work. At present, addressing age discrimination in employment primarily relies on individuals bringing a legal claim. Do women pursue their rights through public court processes to challenge discriminatory conduct? Drawing on qualitative and quantitative analysis of all reported Australian cases relating to age discrimination in employment, this paper argues that women appear substantially underrepresented in age discrimination decisions. This implies that women are less likely to pursue an age discrimination claim to the point of a publicly accessible case decision. It is unclear, however, whether this means women are less likely to use the legal system to challenge age discrimination, or whether they are pursuing other forms of recourse (such as a claim of sex discrimination). This paper offers three key implications. First, relying on individuals to identify and address systemic discrimination is likely to be ineffective. Second, the limited data published by Australian equality agencies makes it difficult to conclude whether women are pursuing other legal avenues, or failing to utilise legal mechanisms at all. Third, there is a need for more creative legal mechanisms to address discrimination, such as positive duties on employers.

## Keywords

Workers' rights and discrimination; age discrimination; Australia; law; equality; content analysis

## Introduction

Do women pursue their legal rights to be protected from age discrimination in employment in public court processes? Women and men both report experiencing high levels of age discrimination in employment. In a 2014 telephone survey of 2,109 Australians aged 50 years and over, the Australian Human Rights Commission ('AHRC') found similar proportions of women (26 per cent) and men (28 per cent) reported age discrimination in employment in the previous two years (AHRC, 2015, pp. 18–19). Women were more likely than men to report that their experience of discrimination affected their self-esteem, mental health or stress levels (AHRC, 2015, p. 53). Age discrimination can act as a major barrier to older workers participating in the workforce (AHRC, 2016, p. 38), increasing the risks of demographic ageing and poverty in old age (Heath, 2017). There is a social, economic and individual imperative to effectively address age discrimination in employment.

Addressing age discrimination primarily depends on individuals bringing a legal claim against those who discriminate. Legal claims can be made under federal discrimination law, federal industrial law or equivalent statutes at state and territory level. The system relies

heavily on alternative dispute resolution ('ADR'), with most claims being resolved through confidential conciliation or abandoned before proceeding to the public court or tribunal system (Blackham & Allen, 2019). The enforcement of discrimination law via ADR is intended to create an informal, accessible, non-adversarial system that can be navigated without legal assistance. Few age discrimination complaints proceed to the federal courts, in part due to ADR (MacDermott, 2013). Previous scholarship has not considered claims at the state and territory level, or the use of age discrimination law by different demographic groups.

In this context, the research questions addressed by this paper are:

1. Are public (court) legal systems actually accessible to all those who experience age discrimination in work, and to women in particular?
2. If not, who is actually using these legal avenues?
3. How can the systems be improved, to increase their accessibility and effectiveness at addressing discrimination?

It is difficult to consider whether women pursue claims at ADR or complaint stage, as equality agencies who receive complaints are bound by statutory secrecy obligations, and release very limited information about the complaints they receive (Allen & Blackham, 2019). However, age discrimination case law *is* available in the public domain, and offers revealing information about who is pursuing their claim to the public (court) stage.

It was hypothesised that women would be under-represented in the case law for four interrelated reasons. *First*, men may have greater resources than women (both financial and otherwise), increasing their capacity to pursue a claim to court. *Second*, older women in particular may be less likely to challenge discrimination, having experienced discriminatory treatment throughout their working lives and potentially internalising discriminatory sentiment (Grant, 2011, pp. 43, 62), thereby having a weaker attachment to work. *Third*, there are more employed men than women, meaning men are also more likely to experience discrimination in employment. For example, in the 50-54 age group, males have a labour force participation rate of 86.6%, compared to 77.6% for females (ABS, 2017). *Fourth*, women may have alternative grounds on which to pursue a discrimination claim, such as gender or caring responsibilities.

## Methods

As part of a broader study examining the enforcement of age discrimination law in Australia and the UK, qualitative and quantitative content analysis was employed to analyse age discrimination cases handed down in Australian jurisdictions. Content analysis involves identifying, coding and categorising documents (Patton, 1990, p. 381). In this study, research was undertaken in three parts. First, the universe of documents to be analysed was identified. This included judgements relating to age discrimination, including those under discrimination legislation and industrial relations legislation (including unfair dismissal law where age was alleged to be a factor in the dismissal) handed down in all Australian jurisdictions, from the commencement of age discrimination legislation in Australia until 31 December 2017. Second, the sample of texts for analysis was determined. Documents were

identified via keyword searches of case databases and annotated Acts.<sup>6</sup> This search identified 139 cases. To refine the sample, cases were excluded where age discrimination was not significant to the decision (as where age discrimination was only mentioned incidentally in the judgment), where the case did not relate to work or employment, or where the case did not include an individual claim (as where the claim related to discriminatory terms in enterprise bargaining). Cases that were reported multiple times (e.g., in preliminary hearing and/or on appeal) were only considered once, aggregating the issues for consideration across the various hearings and judgments. This refined the cases to a sample of 108 decisions, made up of 64 substantive and 44 procedural judgments. Third, the texts were coded using themes derived from the literature and the documents themselves and analysed using qualitative and quantitative methods.<sup>7</sup>

## Findings

Of the 108 cases in the sample, 81 cases featured a male claimant, and 28 featured a female claimant.<sup>8</sup> Over 90 per cent of claims (99 cases) related to claimants who alleged they were too old; only six related to claimants who were too young. Ethnicity was raised in 21 cases, and disability in 19 cases. The majority of claimants were older men (68 per cent, or 73 claimants).

Thirty-three cases related to recruitment and 63 to dismissal (including 12 relating to retirement and 10 relating to redundancy). This differs dramatically from the results of the AHRC National Prevalence Survey, which found that the most common episodes of discrimination experienced by older workers were: limiting employment, promotion or training because of age (27%); jokes or derogatory comments based on age (21%); and perceptions that individuals had outdated skills, were too slow to learn new things or delivered an unsatisfactory job because of their age (21%) (AHRC, 2015, p. 38). Conversely, being threatened with redundancy or dismissal, or being asked to retire, was reported by only 3% of respondents; and poor treatment resulting in leaving the job, being made redundant or dismissed because of age was reported by only 3% of respondents (AHRC, 2015, p. 39).

Thus, the cases in the sample are likely to be outliers, and the most extreme instances of age discrimination experienced. This makes sense, given the likely emotional, financial and reputational costs of pursuing an age discrimination claim: only the most serious cases are likely to be pursued.

## Implications

This study shows that women are substantially under-represented in Australian age discrimination case law. Even differences in gender workforce participation rates are insufficient to account for the substantial disparity in court cases. In this sample, 81 cases

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<sup>6</sup> Including on Barnet JADE, individual Tribunal websites, LexisNexis AU cases, Westlaw AU cases, CCH Online – Discrimination Cases and Industrial Relations Cases, and the Fair Work Commission website.

<sup>7</sup> The legal doctrinal analysis of this case law is forthcoming as Alysia Blackham, 'Why Do Employment Age Discrimination Cases Fail? An Analysis of Australian Case Law' (2020) 42(1) *Sydney Law Review* (in press).

<sup>8</sup> One case included both a male and female claimant, meaning these numbers add to 109, not 108.



(or 75 per cent) featured a male claimant, and only 28 (26 per cent) featured a female claimant. Thus, cases featuring male claimants were three times more likely than those featuring female claimants. The AHRC National Prevalence Survey found that those aged between 60 and 64 were most likely to report experiencing age discrimination in employment in the last two years (at 32 per cent of respondents) (AHRC, 2015, p. 39). In this age group, men aged 60 to 64 are only 1.27 times more likely to be in the labour force than women (ABS, 2017). The gender disparity in the case law therefore cannot be explained by workforce participation rates alone.

The question, then, is why aren't women pursuing court claims? It may be that women are more likely to resolve their claim at conciliation, meaning fewer claims progress into the public sphere. Thus, it is possible that women are not necessarily less likely to use legal mechanisms, just less likely to proceed to court. This is impossible to test with the existing data released by equality agencies about conciliation, which does not break down the resolution of claims by gender or demographics of the complainant. Thus, the *first implication* of this paper is that we need more detailed data to be released by equality agencies, to see whether the demographic trends in the case law also extend to ADR claims, or whether ADR is filtering out some claims and claimants more often than others.

It may be that women are just unwilling to make use of legal avenues. Early results from other parts of this DECRA project, which draw on qualitative expert interviews with representatives from equality bodies, legal practitioners, age lobby groups, and legal academics, indicate that this may well be the case. According to community legal practitioners in particular, even women who are aware of their legal rights may be deterred from pursuing legal claims due to a fear of retribution or victimization, a sense that legal complaints will not achieve the outcomes they desire, and deciding that it is better and easier to just move on, rather than pursuing a claim. The *second implication* of this paper, then, is that some of these barriers are nearly impossible to overcome with an individual enforcement model. It is not that women lack an understanding of their rights: rather, some are making an informed decision that legal processes are not worth their time or emotional energy. This study therefore echoes other research which has questioned the viability of the individual enforcement model in discrimination law (see, eg, MacDermott, 2013).

The AHRC's *Willing to Work* report recommended a number of areas for legal review and reform of federal age discrimination laws, including reviewing approaches to standing (and potentially allowing actions by representative organisations) and considering the use of positive duties (AHRC, 2016, pp. 332–333). Allowing representative actions, as in some states and territories, is unlikely to address the substantial limitations of the individual enforcement model: it assumes that representative bodies have the capacity and willingness to bring such claims, and that individuals will raise their concerns with a representative body. A representative model still leaves other legal barriers intact.

The other option put forward by the AHRC's report – positive duties – has substantial merit. Rather than relying on individuals to address these organizational failings, a more proactive and preventative approach is required. Thus, as its *third implication*, this study lends weight to calls for positive duties on employers in the Australian context. This reflects the law in the UK, where public bodies are subject to a Public Sector Equality Duty; and the duty in s 15 of the *Equal Opportunity Act 2010* (Vic), which requires organisations to take reasonable and proportionate measures to eliminate discrimination, sexual harassment and

victimisation 'as far as possible'. The challenge, of course, is how such duties are formulated and enforced, and how we make sure they are embedded and mainstreamed in organisational practices. This is a challenging emerging area of scholarship, which needs to be pursued in future research.

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# Women and precarious employment during young adulthood

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## Abstract

Women's disadvantage in the labour market has been a persistent feature in many countries around the world. The rise of precarious forms of employment in the last two decades has created new forms of work disadvantage for women. Using longitudinal data from 494 participants in the Life Patterns project and multivariate linear regression modelling, this study finds that women engage significantly more than men in precarious work between the ages of 24 and 31. Despite attaining higher levels of education than men, women are still more likely than men to be employed under precarious conditions. Engaging in precarious employment is also explained by participant's social background, degree of engagement in studies and, to a certain extent, by their occupational status and marital status. However, none of the social background, occupational status, educational level and family condition variables considered in this study seem to explain why women engage more in precarious employment. The findings suggest that it is unlikely that women chose to be in precarious jobs due to their social, educational or family conditions, and that the reasons for their disadvantage may relate to persistent unequal labour market conditions for women.

## Keywords

Gender, precarious work, labour market, education, social inequality

## Introduction

Research has persistently shown women's disadvantage in the labour market (see Weichselbaumer & Winter-Ebmer, 2005, for a meta-analysis on gender wage gap). In the last decades, women's disadvantage in the labour market occurs despite higher levels of participation in post-secondary education (see for example Craig, Mullan, Blaxland, & Society, 2010; Cuervo, Wyn, & Crofts, 2012; Kupfer, 2014). From the human capital theory, individuals who invest more in their skills, training and experience improve their productivity and employability, and can obtain higher quality jobs, rewards and benefits (Becker, 1993). It is paradoxical, then, that although women have increased their levels of participation in education, they still face labour market disadvantages (Kupfer, 2014; Wyn, Cuervo, Crofts, & Woodman, 2017; Young, 2010).

In the last few decades, research has focused on the increasing precarization of the labour market. The deterioration of employment conditions and the shift towards insecure forms of employment such as part-time, zero-hours and casual and/or short-term contracts in contemporary labour markets (see for example MacDonald & Giazitzoglu, 2019; Presser, 2005; Stewart & Stanford, 2017; Vosko, 2006) can translate into social precarity (Wilson & Ebert, 2013). While precarious labour conditions may bring flexibility and opportunities for

self-development, it may also lead to precarious lives (Arnold & Bongiovi, 2013; Kalleberg, 2011; Standing, 2011).

While precarious conditions of work affect all people, some groups are more exposed than others. Research has shown that women are more likely than men to be employed in precarious work conditions (see for example Cranford, Vosko, & Zukewich, 2003; Vosko, 2006; Young, 2010). Some explanations point out that women may jeopardize their careers by the time they invest in forming a family, caring for children and taking care of home duties (see for example Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). Others, based on stratification and social reproduction theories, put inequalities in the labour market and other social conditions at the centre of women's disadvantage (see for example Bullen & Kenway, 2004).

Using longitudinal data, this study seeks to explore if young women in cohort 2 of the Life Patterns project engage more frequently than men in precarious work between the ages of 24 and 31. Considering the complexities involved in the transitions from study to work for young people (Furlong et al., 2017; Wyn et al., 2017), the study also seeks to understand if contextual variables such as family socioeconomic background (SES), educational attainment, marital status and having children may explain the possible overrepresentation of women in precarious employment.

## **Methods**

The study uses longitudinal quantitative data from the Life Patterns project. Life Patterns is a research program developed by the Youth Research Centre at the Melbourne Graduate School of Education designed to gain understanding of the ways in which young Australians are responding to the rapidly changing world. Cohort 2 participants, the focus of this paper, answered the first survey in 2006, when they were 17-18 years old and in the last year of secondary education. Since then, participants were surveyed yearly, and this study uses longitudinal data from 494 participants who answered the surveys between 2012 and 2019, covering their transitions from education to work from the ages of 24 to 31.

The outcome variable used in this study is a continuous variable with the proportion of years participants engaged in precarious work (in renewable, limited, sessional or casual contracts) between 2012 and 2019. The main explanatory variable in the analysis is gender, coded 1 for female and 0 for men. A series of six control variables are included: a continuous variable for occupational status in 2019, based on the International Socio-Economic Index of Occupational Status (ISEI) elaborated by Ganzeboom (2010); a continuous variable for family SES of participants; a continuous variable for study proportion (the proportion of years in which participants indicated that they were studying between 2012 and 2019); a six categorical variable for highest level of education attained by 2019; a set of two dummy variables for relationship status (in a relationship, de facto/married, and using single as the reference category); a continuous variable called children proportion, with the proportion of time participants have had at least one child between 2012 and 2019; and an interaction variable for females and children proportion.

Following an initial descriptive analysis by gender, the study uses a set of eight linear regression models to examine the association between gender and proportion of years engaged in precarious work, progressively including control variables to examine persistence and/or moderating effects of existing relationships between gender and precarious work.

## Findings

The descriptive analysis reveals that although the proportion of women and men engaged in precarious work decreased over time, women were always more likely than men to engage in precarious work between 2012 and 2019 (see Table 1). This is despite the fact that a higher proportion of women attained a university or a post-graduate degree compared to men (82% compared to 71%, respectively), and that similar proportions were in a relationship, in a de facto relationship or married (65% of women compared to 67% of men). A larger proportion of women (28.7%) than men (21%) had at least one child between 2012 and 2019.

**Table 1. Participants engaged in precarious work between 2012 and 2019 by gender (%)**

Year	Male	Female
2012	33.1	48.9
2013	27.9	37.8
2014	26.6	37.3
2015	21.2	34.0
2016	18.9	29.3
2017	19.8	27.1
2018	19.0	25.7
2019	17.7	24.7

The modelling strategy in Table 2 reveals that women engaged significantly more in precarious work than men between 2012 and 2019, and that this effect remains significant after controlling for all variables in Model 8. Other variables significantly associated with prevalence of precarious work are family SES, study proportion and, to a certain extent, occupational status and being in a de facto relationship or married. Achieving higher educational levels does not significantly translate into accessing more secure jobs (Model 5). Although a larger share of women attained a university or a postgraduate degree than men in the sample, it did not allow them to access more secure jobs. Models 7 and 8 suggest that there is no evidence to claim that having children affect levels of engagement in precarious work.

Participants in higher status occupations in 2019 engaged more frequently in precarious work (Models 2 and 3). Perhaps some of them were willing to accept precarious labour conditions in prospects of getting a higher status occupation. However, this relationship loses significance in Model 4, mainly because participants studying for longer periods end up having higher status occupations in 2019. In any case, occupational status and study proportion do not significantly modify the coefficient estimated for females, and as such, do not seem to explain why women engage more frequently in precarious employment.

Participants from a higher family SES were also more likely to engage in precarious work, even after controlling for all other variables in Model 8. This may be because high SES

families can support individuals in times of financial difficulties, reducing the probabilities of falling into precarity (Antounucci, 2018). Similarly, participants from low SES families may avoid precarious work precisely due to the risks it entails in absence of family support. However, family SES affects women and men similarly, and is not relevant to explain why women are significantly more likely than men to engage in precarious work.

Participants who reported being studying more frequently during this period (study proportion) were more likely to engage in precarious work (Models 4 to 8). This is not surprising as research has found that being a full-time or part-time student reduces the possibilities of having a secure job (MacDonald & Giazitzoglu, 2019). Although on average women reported fewer years being studying than men (25.5% compared to 27.2%, respectively), study proportion does not significantly explain why women engage more frequently in precarious forms of employment.

Model 6 reveals that participants who were married or in a de facto relationship engaged less than single participants in precarious employment. However, this does not affect women differently, and therefore does not explain the overrepresentation of women in precarious employment.

**Table 2. OLS estimates of the proportion of precarious employment between 2012-2019**

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6	Model 7	Model 8
Parameter	Est.	Est.	Est.	Est.	Est.	Est.	Est.	Est.
Constant	23.96**	1.06	6.63	2.23	-5.04	5.87	6.69	6.14
Gender (ref. Male)								
Female	11.20**	12.03**	11.68**	11.87**	11.24**	12.42**	12.58**	13.19**
Occupational status		0.34**	0.25*	0.19	0.15	0.20	0.19	0.19
Family SES			5.23**	4.51**	4.13**	4.16**	4.13**	4.09**
Study proportion				0.29**	0.28**	0.26**	0.26**	0.26**
Highest level of education					2.14	-	-	-
Relationship status (ref. Single)								
In a relationship						-2.66	-2.59	-2.54
De facto/married						-7.08*	-5.25	-5.28
Children proportion							-0.10	-0.04
Female*Children proportion								-0.08

\*p<0.05; \*\*p<0.01

## Implications

The study finds that women engage significantly more in precarious jobs than men during the eight-year period analysed, controlling for a series of contextual variables such as family SES, educational attainment, marital status and having children. None of these contextual variables appear to be relevant to explain why women engage more frequently than men in precarious employment during the eight-years studied.

Of special concern is the finding that despite attaining higher levels of education than men, women were still more likely than men to be employed under precarious conditions. The evidence suggests that this is not because they were more likely than men to invest more time forming a family or caring for their children. In other words, this study suggests that it is unlikely that women chose to be in precarious jobs due to their social or family conditions, and that the reasons of their disadvantage may relate to persistent unequal labour market conditions for women.

Further research in this area is needed to understand why greater investment in education has not translated into better employment conditions for women, and to identify the labour market and social inequalities that may explain women's disadvantage at work.

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## Women ‘working away’ from home in Australia

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### Abstract

This is an introductory exploration of the experiences of women ‘working away’ from home in Australia. Data are from an ARC project investigating how working away is transforming Australian household life, including 70 interviews with industry stakeholders, workers and at-home partners. Working away entails overnight travel away from home for days or weeks at a time. There is cross-sector growth in these labour patterns, but impacts on personal and family wellbeing are not well understood. Notably, there is little research on the experiences of women working away. This paper focuses on this cohort in our sample (n=19). Our discussion concentrates on two sets of spatial experiences: at work and at home. Working away from home enables women to pursue desired careers and create distinct professional identities, but also brings challenges to emotional and physical health. Women also face challenges at home and in intimate relationships. Motherhood is a notable issue. For some, working away and mothering are incompatible, but others contest this claim and work away after motherhood. The findings contribute to scholarship on gender, work-related mobility and work/home relations. We encourage practical steps from companies, professional bodies and partners to help redress detrimental impacts on wellbeing and relationships.

### Keywords

Working away; long-distance commuting; women; workplace; home

### Introduction

This is an introductory exploration of the experiences of Australian women ‘working away’ from home. ‘Working away’ is understood as work that entails extensive overnight travel away from home for days or weeks at a time. There is cross-sector growth in these labour patterns in Australia, but impacts on personal and family wellbeing are not well understood. Notably, there is little research on women’s experiences, arguably because work-related mobility – such as long-distance commuting, business travel and FIFO (Fly-In/Fly-Out, which entails diverse rosters, e.g. 8 days on/6 days off, 2 weeks on/1 week off, 3 weeks on/1 week off) – is a typically male-dominated activity (Bergstrom Casinowsky 2013; Makela et al 2015; Pirodda 2007). Nevertheless, women are a growing part of this labour force, comprising the majority of some sectors (e.g. remote area nursing).

### A brief overview of women’s experience of work-related travel

Post-WW2 brought greater numbers of women into the workforce in the Global North. The growth of women working also saw an increase in women commuting, and since

the 1970s geographers and sociologists have researched gendered patterns of daily commuting. Citing research from the 1970s and 1980s, Hanson and Johnston (1985: 193) stressed that: “women have selected job locations that require significantly shorter work trips than those made by men. Study after study, conducted in different places at different times, has confirmed this finding”. This is the ‘spatial entrapment thesis’. In recent scholarship, Wheatley (2013, 2014) confirms its ongoing salience, notably in dual-career households, citing literature from a range of national contexts in the Global North.

A range of factors contributes to women’s spatial entrapment. As Wheatley (2014) contends, household gender norms are fundamental. The continued gendered distribution of household tasks, including women’s greater contribution to domestic labour in dual-career households on average, reduces available time for travel-to-work (Dobbs 2007). Several studies have identified this as especially so for mothers, who perform the bulk of childcare activities (Carter and Butler 2008; Philp and Wheatley 2011). When school-aged children are present, chauffeuring children can become part of women’s travel-to-work, further limiting their commuter zones (Dowling 2000; Dobbs 2007). These constraints remain salient despite the continued workforce growth of women, including better-remunerated professional jobs.

Recent research identifies similar constraints in long-distance commuting, business travel and FIFO. In a study of Swedish partnered male and female business travellers, Bergstrom Casinowsky (2013: 311) found a correlation between “increased overnight work travel and ... reduced share of domestic responsibility” for male travellers but not female travellers, suggesting this makes “women more reluctant to embrace jobs requiring frequent travel”. In work on Finnish international business travellers, Makela et al (2015) found that an increased number of travel days exacerbates work-to-family conflict for mothers but not fathers. In a study of German mobile workers, Reuschke (2010) identified married men as the largest cohort, and mothers least represented; female mobile workers were typically childless, or older and in high occupational positions. In a pan-European study of mobile workers’ parenthood decisions, Meil (2010: 171) found that the timing of parenthood is delayed “both for men and women, but stronger for the latter”, and that “greater involvement of men in unpaid work does not seem to facilitate fertility decisions of mobile women”.

The above work compares men and women, but does not focus on women’s experiences. However, a few studies have interviewed women FIFO workers in the Australian mining sector and offshore oil industries of the UK, Canada and Brazil. Both Wybrow (1988) for the North Sea oil industry, and Anger et al (1998) for the Newfoundland oil industry, found institutional and interpersonal barriers to female labour participation. More recently, Pirotta (2007) and Bailey-Kruger (2012) identified specific gender-related issues for women FIFO workers in the Australia mining sector. These include workplace discrimination, and working harder than men to ‘prove themselves’ while playing down their femininity to fit the ‘macho work culture’. Most of these women were single and believed FIFO was incompatible with raising children. This was contested by the small number of mothers, who said they balanced family and FIFO with help from partners and extended family. Similarly, interviewing women FIFO workers at Brazil’s Campos Basin offshore field, Barbosa and Alvarez (2016) found most were single and many consciously postponed marriage and motherhood, while the small number of married mothers needed support at home to sustain working away. This work aside, women’s experiences of working

away are under-examined. We address this lack, finding that while traditional gender roles create limitations, many contest such constraints.

## Methods

The data are from an ARC project investigating how working away is transforming household life, with attention to personal and family wellbeing. Using qualitative approaches, we aim to understand the positive and negative impacts, and identify supports to reduce detrimental effects. Seventy interviews were conducted with industry stakeholders (10), workers (42) and at-home partners (18). Interviewees were selected from a social media screening survey that drew 192 respondents. Here, we focus on 19 women who work away. Interviews were coded thematically; initial coding was guided by findings from existing research, and additional codes were added as novel themes emerged. In the analysis, we focus on two sets of spatial experiences: those at work and those at home. These spaces are not bounded but interpenetrate, and women's experiences reveal how work-related and domestic practices often stretch across sites of work and home.

These women work across diverse sectors: mining, conservation science, nursing, health science, technology, business management and media. All are professionals; most have permanent, well-salaried positions, though some are contractors with irregular work and lower salaries. All have their homes in capital or major regional cities; some primarily travel to remote locations and others between capital cities. Their age range is late-20s to early-60; over half are in their 40s. Fourteen are partnered, five are single; ten are mothers. Eleven have British or European ancestry, seven have Asian ancestry and one is Indigenous.

## Findings

**1. Experiences at work.** Some respondents work away as careers are well remunerated and regarded: "This job allows me to work in a high paid, very highly regarded job" (LF, health consultant, partnered, 30-34yo). There is a critical opportunity to create a distinct professional identity: "It's your own space. You're your own person again. Particularly as a woman, whilst at home, if you've got kids, you're a mum and a wife, and that's pretty much it. So you do get that time away. You're seen in a professional light" (HK, mining engineer, partnered, mother, 35-39yo). Working away provides a career they are passionate about: "One thing that makes the travel easier is that I really enjoy my work, so it's something I personally am quite passionate about and I'm happy I found that kind of work because I never thought I'd find a job that I actually liked this much" (ZT, health consultant, single, 24-29yo). Working *away* from *home* is particularly salient for women: work-related mobility creates distance from domestic gender roles and a space for developing a professional identity.

Nevertheless, there are impacts from irregular schedules and high workloads. Many experience mental and physical exhaustion from long hours and intense projects: "I'm a workaholic and [long hours] can be very self-destructive. When you're in an environment when you're not really empowered to change the way a project's been structured or you're delivering work, it's very easy to run yourself into the ground, which I did several times. ... You were exhausted and had enough and just wanted to go home" (PJ, environmental scientist, single, 30-34yo). Travel is lonely, particularly for those with partners: "Staying in a hotel by myself, it's quite lonely at times" (CJ, quantity surveyor, partnered, 25-29yo).

Difficulties maintaining self-care while working away are also evident in notable impacts on diet and exercise, which women reported more often than men: “The issue with staying in motels is that you’re eating out all the time. So trying to ensure that I’m still eating a balanced diet is important. Obviously, exercise is vital as well. I really struggle with that, with the kind of hours that I work and with the time zone difference. ... I’m too tired to do exercise by the evening and if I do it in the morning then I’ll get no sleep” (LF, health consultant, partnered, 30-34yo). And: “I never have an opportunity to get healthy snacks or fruit, so I gain weight and start eating really unhealthily” (RP, management consultant, partnered, 25-29yo).

Curiously, no respondent reported experiencing gender-based workplace discrimination – despite the limited research on Australian women working in FIFO mining that has identified onsite discrimination. Perhaps this was muted due to the study’s reach beyond the mining sector. Moreover, the lack of experiences reported in the sample does not mean discrimination is absent. One respondent, who has worked in FIFO mining for 20 years, notes “it’s a hell of a lot better than it used to be” (GS, site administrator, partnered, mother, 45-49yo).

**2. Experiences at home.** There are various impacts on home life. Single women have little time or energy to maintain home environments: “I had friends over on Saturday and I’m trying to keep it clean but I can see that I need to put stuff away, but it is hard ... I think she walked in and her eyes widened because I don’t think she’d ever seen it like this ... Cleaning was the last thing on my list. I just wanted to sleep” (YV, health scientist, single, 40-44yo). It is also hard to establish relationships: “My life is not set up for the establishment phase of a relationship. ... ‘Yes, I’m home from travel but I just need two days alone to decompress, so lovely as you are I won’t be coming round tonight.’ ... I also have to be respectful of their needs and recognise that maybe one day a month is not enough for them to feel that they’re in a committed relationship with me” (MK, archaeologist, single, mother, 40-44yo).

Partnered respondents report diverse experiences. Some have supportive partners: “He’s been an amazing presence. ... He has a very high-pressure job but he does a really great job at home. Between us, we have such a strong relationship. We talk every day, maybe multiple times. We’ll ring each other, or text each other, every couple of hours about things. When I’m home, we just talk more. ... It is a very close relationship” (MC, IT manager, partnered, mother, 40-44yo). But some have broken relationships: “It’s not easy and, I’ll be honest with you, I’m on my third marriage” (BM, managing director, partnered, mother, 45-49yo).

Motherhood can be difficult to juggle with working away. Some women feel parenting and working away are incompatible: “The biggest issue will be kids because I just think it’s profoundly unfair to be away for four nights of the week and leave the stay-at-home partner to do the lion’s share of childrearing. Obviously, that answer for me is informed by my gender” (LF, health consultant, partnered, 30-34yo). Some felt they should stop working away when they had children: “When we decide to have kids I might need to just stay home for a few years” (FS, accountant, partnered, 30-34yo).

Conversely, over half the respondents (10) are mothers, and balance working away and parenting. Supportive partners are vital: “So he’s the dad at school doing the parent-

teacher interviews. He's the one who cooks dinner and cleans the house. He's stepped up, in terms of the home life" (MC, IT manager, partnered, mother, 40-44yo). Some prepare for children before travel: "I would make sure I'd cook up a heap of stuff the week I was home to make sure that all they had to do was throw things in the oven or in the microwave" (GS, site administrator, partnered, mother, 45-49yo). Mothers also maintain contact and perform emotional labour while working away, stretching mothering across space: "Usually through FaceTime. ... 'You're sure you've got your key with you, have you fed the dog, has he been out?'" (MJ, journalist, single, mother, 45-49yo).

## Implications

Most research on work-related mobility focuses on men, with women cast as the stay-at-home wives of 'absent' male workers. Instead, this paper highlights the lived experiences of women working away, *both* at work *and* at home, which interpenetrate. We can consider these experiences in relation to the 'spatial entrapment thesis', which contends that women's commute times and distances are more constrained than men's, even in dual-career households (Wheatley 2013, 2014). A key reason is the persistent gendered distribution of household tasks, reducing women's available travel-to-work time. While the mobile workers here counter this thesis, they retain sharp awareness of the impact of work-related mobility on domestic life, including housework and parenting, and are not fully freed from these responsibilities. Mothers, notably, perform emotional and domestic labour at a distance. Simultaneously, mothers' absence from the home challenges prevailing parenting practices and enables them to nurture a professional self (Bueskens 2018). More broadly, this pushes us to rethink work/home relations, where home is not a base for daily commutes, but an anchor for wide-ranging work-related mobility.

While women's labour force participation is certainly encouraged, the lived experiences here show difficulties that need redress. Mobile work often comes with career and financial benefits, but also affects wellbeing and relationships. Women had difficulties with loneliness, diet and exercise working away, with limited access to food and fitness options, especially with remote fieldwork, but even with inter-urban travel. Companies and professional bodies could make efforts to provide healthy food options and access to fitness facilities, and ensure network connectivity and free time for communication with loved ones. At home, partners should be encouraged to take on primary domestic responsibilities, not 'help out'. Even where male at-home partners pick up domestic responsibilities, women remain keenly aware of what tasks must be done, and often retain the role of 'domestic manager'. Single women face specific challenges with managing home and establishing relationships. While these are harder to address head-on, cross-sector career and social support for all women working away, in the form of mentoring and peer groups, may provide assistance.

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# Gender and Sexuality at Work

Best Paper Award -  
PhD Candidate  
Morgan Weaving



Best Paper Award -  
Early Career  
Researcher  
Dr Tania King



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# Individual Community and Industry-Led Workshops in the Proceedings



## A new approach to achieving gender equality at Victoria Police

### **Kristen Hilton**

Commissioner, Victorian Equal Opportunity & Human Rights Commission

### **Brett Curran**

Assistant Commissioner, Gender Equality and Inclusion Command, Victoria Police

### **Rena De Francesco**

Assistant Director, Gender Equality and Inclusion Command, Victoria Police

### **Session Description**

The Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Review into Sex Discrimination and Sexual Harassment, including Predatory Behaviour in Victoria Police marked an important turning point in Victoria Police's understanding of the experiences of women in the organisation. VEOHRC Commissioner Kristen Hilton will provide an overview of the review and how VEOHRC worked in partnership with Victoria Police to understand and address the drivers of sexual discrimination, sexual harassment, and predatory behaviour in the organisation.

Whilst this work has already delivered improvements, Victoria Police is preparing to make some fundamental shifts in how it works towards gender equality across the organisation. Assistant Commissioner Brett Curran and Assistant Director Rena De Francesco, who are leading the development of this new approach, will describe the future of gender equality work at Victoria Police.

## Advancing leading practice in workplace equality through the EOA's positive duty

### **Justine Vaisutis**

Head of Education and Engagement, Victorian Equal Opportunity & Human Rights Commission

### **Gregory Frank**

Education Consultant, Victorian Equal Opportunity & Human Rights Commission

### **Session Description**

Under the Equal Opportunity Act 2010, organisations have a positive duty to eliminate gender discrimination, sexual harassment, and victimisation as far as possible. This obligation is in recognition that equal opportunity is about more than just fixing issues as they arise. True equal opportunity means creating an environment where unfair treatment and problem behaviour is unlikely to happen in the first place.

This workshop and Q & A session will explore:

- How the positive duty obligation contributes to leading practice and an evidence base about effective strategies to advance gender equality in workplaces
- The positive duty obligation for employers and the business benefits of meeting it
- Strategies to address issues around gender and sexuality at work
- How the positive duty could be strengthened

This session will be valuable for members of the public and private sectors who would like to learn more about practical application of the positive duty, and academics with an interest in how the law can advance workplace equality and address sexual harassment.

## All genders, all of campus

**Sally Goldner AM** has been involved in Victoria's queer communities for over twenty years. This includes Transgender Victoria, co-facilitator of Transfamily, presenter of 3 CR's "Out of the Pan" and Treasurer of Bisexual Alliance Victoria.

She is the focus of an autobiographical documentary "Sally's Story" and a life member of 4 queer organisations.

She was awarded an Order of Australia in 2019, inducted into the Victorian Women's Honour Roll in 2016, awarded LGBTI Victorian of the Year in 2015 and was noted in The Age's Top 100 most creative and influential people in Melbourne in 2011.

She is an educator, speaker, MC, and occasional performer (all in contrast to her original accountancy training) ...with more to come!

**Margot Fink** has become a role model for young lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) people. The driving force behind the Gender Is Not Uniform campaign, Margot encouraged schools to create safer environments for gender diverse students. She was instrumental in developing All of Us, the first nationally-approved teaching resource on LGBTI topics for Australian high schools and has spearheaded the International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia campaigns. Each year, she helps to organise the Same Sex Gender Diverse Formal, bringing together hundreds of LGBTI young people from across Australia.

**Son Vivienne** has over 30 years' experience in media production and research in digital self-representation, storytelling, online activism for and by queer identities. Their current research explores the many creative ways that we 'code-switch identities' as diversely abled, classed, raced, and gendered bodies, online and off. They are a Board Director at LGBTQI+ youth advocacy NGO, Minus18, and Secretary of Transgender Victoria with particular interest in Access & Inclusion and Peer Support. Their work on digital storytelling is published as Digital Identity and Everyday Activism: Sharing Private Stories with Networked Publics (Palgrave, 2016). Son's less-verbose, more-embodied projects include cultivating abundance in their garden, and generosity in their children. More info at Son's website: [www.incitestories.com.au](http://www.incitestories.com.au) or Twitter @sonasteris

## Session Description

Binary notions of gender limit virtually everyone whether staff, student...or anyone involved in campus life. How people identify and express their gender has been way more than binary since humanity began. This session looks at possible bias, both conscious and unconscious, when considering gender in various settings, and how to

overcome the biases and move to a place of being positive and respectful in relation to gender.

The diverse panellists will use practical examples from their lived expertise to move through these issues and allow for an interactive session.

## How to close your organisation's gender pay gap

**Dr Janin Bredehoeft**

Research and Analytics Executive Manager, WGEA

### **Session Description**

How can we use data to help tackle the gender pay gap? How can data paint a picture of gender inequality in Australian workplaces? How can we objectively and fairly assess jobs across a diverse and ever-changing labour market?

This session will provide an overview of the WGEA's gender pay gap data, and employer action on pay equity data across industries. It will also outline how the WGEA has sharpened its messaging on pay equity and the gender pay gap through research and consultation with industry and academics and provide tips on how to measure and address gender pay equity in organisations.

## Conflicts of rights: The Religious Discrimination Bill and anti-discrimination law

### **Professor Beth Gaze**

Centre for Employment and Labour Relations Law at Melbourne Law School, The University of Melbourne

### **Session Description**

What are the limits to the freedoms of speech and religion when they conflict with the rights and freedoms of other people? The Religious Discrimination Bill exposure draft raises the problem of the extent to which law does or should provide protection for religious speech or conduct, particularly where it appears it could conflict with the non-discrimination rights of other people. The right to non-discrimination protects people with a range of attributes including sex, pregnancy, and sexual orientation as well as religion. Discrimination law can impose limits on conduct and speech where it is discriminatory, harassing, or vilifies a person because of their protected attribute. This paper will use the Israel Folau dispute as an example to consider to what extent does (or should) discrimination law protect people who were named in his tweet, and secondly, what would be the effect of adopting the proposed Religious Discrimination Bill on Folau and on employees of religious bodies more generally.

## Motherlands: How U.S. states push mothers out of employment

**Associate Professor Leah Ruppanner**

Melbourne School of Social and Political Sciences, The University of Melbourne

### Session Description

Associate Professor Leah Ruppanner's new book is the first to create a detailed measure of family policies across U.S. states. The results of this book show that states generally divide into two types: (1) those with expansive childcare resources, inexpensive childcare, long school days, and high rates of maternal employment and (2) those with strong gender empowerment, that have progressive family and gender policies and broad economic and political opportunities for women. Interestingly, states that we usually expect to be the most progressive – California, for example – rank poorly on childcare resources but high on gender empowerment. By contrast, a state like Nebraska, which is traditionally a red conservative state, has some of the best childcare resources in the nation. The book argues states should look to each other to fill their policy voids and provides clear policy solutions for policy makers interested in supporting working families.

The results of this book point to clear policy solutions that state legislators should enact to support working families including: (1) reducing childcare costs and increasing childcare spaces especially in high cost of living states; (2) more effectively maximizing enrollment in the federal Head Start program; (3) lengthening school days; (4) legislating well-paid parental leave to both parents; (5) investing in female-dominated professions; (6) restricting work to enable more flexibility and schedule control for women and men to handle caregiving roles; (7) opening male-dominated higher paying professions, including blue-collar work, to women; and (8) reducing the structural barriers to men taking on more paid and unpaid caregiving.



## Out at Work: Making Australian workplaces safe and welcoming for LGBTIQ+ workers

### Presenter

#### **Cathy Brown, Diversity Council Australia (DCA)**

Cathy is the Research & Policy Manager at Diversity Council Australia, the leading independent diversity and inclusion advisor to business in Australia.

She works with a range of diverse stakeholders to deliver high quality research and strategic projects, including leading the project *Out at Work*.

Cathy has an undergraduate degree in Communications and a Master's in Social Inquiry from the University of Technology, Sydney. Her thesis explored issues for gay and lesbian seniors as they aged.

Cathy has been involved in human rights activism for over ten years through a range of community groups. Her interests include advocacy for LGBTQ+ people, and gender equality through an intersectional lens.

### Panel

#### **Dr Raymond Trau, Lead Research Investigator**

Dr Trau was the co-author on the research project and is a Senior Lecturer in the Department of Management at Macquarie University. He holds a PhD from Monash University and was a research fellow at the University of Sydney, University of Queensland and University of Western Australia.

His research focuses on workplace diversity, stigma and stigmatisation in the workplace, job and career experiences of LGBTIQ+ employees, mentoring, social network and corporate social responsibility; and he is currently collaborating with researchers from Australia, Singapore, the United States and Canada.

#### **Robbie Robertson, Deloitte Digital**

Robbie is a Partner in Deloitte Digital, part of the firm's broader the Consulting practice based in Sydney. Robbie's passion and key interests lie in physical spatial design and experience design - and he brings more than 20 years' experience delivering global design projects within key industry sectors including Financial Services, Telco, Automotive and Retail.

In addition, Robbie is the Partner Sponsor and Network leader for Deloitte's LGBTI Network "GLOBE" in Australia and sits on the firm's Inclusion, Diversity and Well-being council alongside other senior partners and Deloitte's CEO, Richard Deutsch. He also serves on the board for ACON and Pride in Diversity.

Robbie believes that individuals can only achieve their best when they are

comfortable and able to bring their whole selves to work, advocating for a more inclusive workplace for all our people, regardless of gender, sexuality, cultural background, or disability.

### **Ben Brown, QBE**

Ben is a Learning Partner at QBE insurance and the Co-Chair of QBE Pride. Apart from his day job which sees him delivering development opportunities which are accessible for all, he is deeply passionate about inclusion in the workplace and beyond. Having been a part of QBE Pride for the last 3 years, he has loved seeing how LGBTQ+ employee networks have become a great visible force in the journey for identifying employees to be their true authentic selves at work.

### **Session Description**

While Australian organisations are increasingly developing policies to support and include their LGBTIQ+ workforce, there remains a sizeable proportion of LGBTIQ+ employees who are still not comfortable being out at work. And yet hiding who they are can be costly, not only to their own well-being, but also to the organisations they work for and the broader Australian economy. In partnership with RMIT, the Star Observer, Deloitte and QBE, DCA conducted a study to better understand why LGBTIQ+ workers share or conceal their sexual orientation, gender identity or intersex variation at work, and how employers can create safe and inclusive workplace environments where LGBTIQ+ people can be themselves at work. This session will present the evidence about what it means to be out at work and how organisations can provide LGBTIQ+ employees with a real choice about being out at work. Followed by a panel discussion exploring the findings and what practical actions organisations can take to create inclusive cultures that enable real choices about being out at work.

## Proud, visible, safe – responding to workplace harm experienced by LGBTI employees in Victoria Police

### Mark Keen

Inspector, Capability Department, Victoria Police

Mark Keen has been a member of Victoria Police for 34 years with experience in frontline policing, prosecutions, sexual offence & child abuse investigations, and diversity & inclusion. Mark was responsible for developing the *Victoria Police LGBTI Inclusion Strategy & Action Plan 2018 – 2021* and is currently the Deputy Chair of the Victoria Police LGBTIQ Employee Network (VP PRIDE).

### Session Description

In 2015, the Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission (VEOHRC) conducted one of the world's largest ever independent studies of sex discrimination, sexual harassment and predatory behaviour in Victoria Police. Despite its particular focus on gender equality and the experiences of women, this study made a collateral and disturbing finding that gay men in Victoria Police were six times more likely to have been sexually harassed by a colleague than male respondents overall. Similarly, the reported rates of harassment for lesbian women were a third higher. Following requests from key LGBTI staff and propelled by the tragic suicide of a former gay police officer who had resigned due to workplace bullying, Victoria Police commissioned VEOHRC to conduct a further qualitative study to better understand the nature, impact and drivers of workplace harm for LGBTI employees. Released in May 2019, the Proud, visible, safe report draws on the current and historical experiences of LGBTI employees, detailing both positive and negative findings. It also makes recommendations for improving and strengthening Victoria Police's response to workplace harm for this employee cohort. This session will outline the background to Proud, visible, safe as well as its methodology and key findings. It will also explore some of the challenges associated with implementing the report's recommendations and driving cultural change within Victoria Police.

## Recruit Smarter: Better hiring practices for gender equality

### **Dr Michelle Stratemeyer**

Senior Consultant, dandolopartners

### **Mr Daniel Feher**

Senior Policy Officer, Inclusion and Reform Branch, Multicultural Affairs, Department of Premier and Cabinet

### **Ms Rachel Tulia**

Executive Director, Corporate Delivery Services, Department of Treasury and Finance

### **Session Description**

The session will provide a brief overview of the Recruit Smarter pilot program, which tested interventions in participating workplaces to improve diversity and inclusion in hiring processes. A partnership between the Department of Premier and Cabinet (Victoria), the Centre for Ethical Leadership, and VicHealth, this program attracted over 40 participating organisations and delivered a robust evaluation of the effectiveness of process-based interventions for addressing recruitment bias.

In particular, this session will focus on the efficacy of de-identifying applicant CVs during the initial reviewing stage of the hiring process in order to improve the representation of women in the shortlist for interview. Data will be presented for two organisations that initiated this hiring process, one of which demonstrated improvements in the proportion of women shortlisted for interview and one of which did not. Discrepancies will be discussed, as well as challenges and barriers that occurred during the research and implementation phases.

Following this will be a 30-40 min panel discussion with a Q&A with the audience.

## What's that got to do with it? Queer(y)ing the need for diverse, inclusive emergency services

**Helen Riseborough** is the Chief Executive Officer of Women's Health In the North (WHIN), the northern metropolitan regional women's health service in Melbourne. As CEO, Helen leads the strategic work of the organisation in gender equality, prevention of violence against women, the family violence services integration, gender and disaster, sexual and reproductive health, and women's economic equality. She holds a Master of Social Policy and a Social Work Degree.

**Liam Leonard** has over 25 years' experience as a social policy expert and LGBTI advocate. A past Director of GLHV, he has been the lead investigator on a diverse range of state and national LGBTI research projects and led the development of the world's first LGBTI inclusive accreditation program, the Rainbow Tick. Liam partnered with the GAD Pod in research on LGBTI communities' experience of the emergency management sector, commissioned by the Victorian Department of Premier and Cabinet.

**Debra Parkinson** is the researcher for both WHIN and Women's Health Goulburn North East (WHGNE). Her research – in partnership with Claire Zara and other partners – has captured disaster and emergency management experiences of women, men and people of diverse gender and sexual identities, including emergency service personnel. Debra is an Adjunct Research Fellow with Monash University Disaster Resilience Initiative (MUDRI) and manager of the GAD Pod, an initiative of these three organisations.

**Steve O'Malley** is a Leading Firefighter and the Fairness and Inclusion Officer with the Metropolitan Fire Brigade. He has been an operational Firefighter for more than 30 years and is a graduate in the study of Human Rights. Steve is an Honorary Life Member of WAFA, a foundation member of the Emergency Management Victoria 'Gender and Disaster' taskforce. Steve is a long-standing presenter and advocate for prevention of violence against women and gender equity and Advisory Group member for the GAD Pod.

## **Session Description**

The session looks at incentives and barriers to the development of LGBTIQ-inclusive emergency service provision and workplaces. It presents research findings on the:

- Experiences of LGBTIQ people as clients and employees of emergency services; and
- Attitudes and practices of emergency personnel and organisations toward LGBTIQ people under emergency situations.

This session presents data and case studies highlighting the interactions between sexism and deeply engrained prejudice against sexual and gender diverse minorities in the emergency sector. These interactions underpin workplace cultures and organisational procedures that rely on as they reward macho behaviours and ways of associating. This session includes a discussion of the backlash from within the emergency sector and elements of the mainstream press against research on the experience and needs of LGBTI people in emergency situations.

At the same time, the session looks at how the Victorian Government's commitment to promoting diverse, inclusive practice as the baseline for the delivery of publicly funded services provides opportunities for challenging the masculinist culture of the emergency sector. It provides a context for drawing on the growing support from within the emergency sector for cultural change and the development of LGBTI-inclusive practices and service delivery.

The session encourages participants to consider the impact of heterosexist discrimination on LGBTI people's experiences as consumers and staff of emergency services and ways of promoting gendered cultural change and the development of LGBTI-inclusive workplaces.

## **Short Paper**

### **OUT and about in the Emergency Management Sector: Promoting LGBTI-inclusive employment practices and workplaces**

#### **Keywords**

LGB issues, emergency services, discrimination, diversity management, employment, LGBTI-inclusive emergency management.

#### **Introduction**

This study sought to explore both Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex (LGBTI) people's experiences of accessing emergency services, and emergency management (EM) personnel's attitudes and knowledge of LGBTI people's emergency needs. The study aims to

assist the emergency management sector develop diverse inclusive models of service delivery and professional practice that include LGBTI staff, volunteers and clients (Parkinson, Leonard, Duncan & Jeffrey, 2018). The growing body of disaster and emergency research and policy focuses almost exclusively on the experiences of LGBTI people under disaster situations (Dominey-Howes, Gorman-Murray & McKinnon, 2018).

To date, no studies have explored the attitudes of emergency sector staff and management towards members of sexual and gender diverse minorities (LGBTI individuals and communities) or looked at the degree to which emergency sector policies and procedures acknowledge and address LGBTI people's needs.

The emergency sector and in particular services such as the Country Fire Authority (CFA) and Metropolitan Fire Brigade (MFB) are male-dominated, macho cultures. Workplace practices rely on and reward masculinist behaviours and ways of associating that rely on the marginalisation and devaluation of women and sexual and gender diverse minorities (Parkinson & Duncan, 2018; Parkinson, Duncan & Archer, 2019). This study relies on qualitative and quantitative data from LGBTI people and emergency management employees. It asks them to reflect on their experiences of accessing services; the particular needs of LGBTI people under emergency conditions; LGBTI people's willingness to access services or work in the sector; and practical ways in which the emergency sector and individual services can promote and develop LGBTI-inclusive employment practices. The research found evidence of systemic heterosexist discrimination that impacted on emergency service provision, and has implications for those employed within the sector. It engages with Australian and international research on LGBTI people's lived disaster experiences and the growing body of policy on diverse, LGBTI-inclusive practice (Dominey-Howes, et al., 2018).

This research identifies the need for cultural transformation within the EM sector to deal with deeply entrenched forms of masculinist privilege, in order to achieve diverse, inclusive practice.

## **Methods**

This research targeted two audiences - LGBTI Victorians, and EM sector personnel. A survey specific to each audience was developed and hosted on the Gender and Disaster (GAD) Pod website. The surveys gained ethics approval and were accompanied by an Explanatory Statement. Respondents were recruited through traditional methods (newspapers, journal articles, radio, word of mouth) and electronic distribution (emails, Facebook, Twitter, websites, e-newsletters). The survey link was circulated by the Advisory Group through government departments and emergency services' newsletters and networks; the Victorian Government LGBTI Taskforce; the Victorian Public Sector Pride Network Website and newsletter; the Asia-Pacific Natural Hazards Facebook page; and the Women's Health Association of Victoria.

The EM survey had 157 respondents: 86 men (55%), 63 women (40%), six preferred not to say (4%) and 1% gave inappropriate responses. Age range was normally distributed from under 26 to 65+. Years employed ranged from a year to 45+, and 53% had a front-line emergency role. Sixty percent were from metropolitan locations, 26% regional and 14% rural. Questions were not compulsory, so response rates vary.

There were 33 respondents to the LGBTI survey, however, only 12 questionnaires were complete enough for data analysis. Aged 26-65, ten identified their sex as a woman and two as a man. Seven identified their sexual orientation as lesbian, two as bisexual, and three as gay. The small numbers of LGBTI respondents are consistent with low response rates in similar surveys in Australia and overseas (Bhopal, 2007, p. 265; Institute of Medicine, 2011; Meyer & Wilson 2009, pp. 23-24).

Data collection was 2/12/2016 to 31/1/2017 for the EM survey, and 2/12/2016 to 13/2/2017 for the LGBTI survey. Survey Monkey was used, with responses online and anonymous. In addition, in-depth interviews were conducted with four lesbian/bisexual women. All promotion for the survey invited participants to be interviewed. Three were involved in firefighting on Black Saturday. Confidentiality prevents further details. Findings are accessible through the GAD Pod website, journal articles and conference presentations.

## **Findings**

The survey found that LGBTI people in emergencies may experience loss of private (safe) space; fear of (or experience of) violence, harassment or verbal abuse; discrimination and marginalisation and lack of recognition of family or couple status.

Many LGBTI people are reluctant to approach emergency-related services as clients or employees or to be open about their sexual orientation or gender identity because of current and historical discrimination against sexual and gender diverse minorities. This is particularly true for emergency services provided by faith-based agencies. These fears and anxieties may be exacerbated at a time of crisis when people may feel more vulnerable and exposed.

One in four (23%) EM survey respondents agreed that homophobic/transphobic attitudes are expressed by individual staff members in their workplace. One in three (31%) have observed colleagues making unwelcome remarks, emails, suggestions or jokes of a homophobic/transphobic nature, and 43% reported homophobic/transphobic attitudes are not countered by individual staff members in their workplace. Only 16% agreed that there is recognition of trans people and their needs.

Half (51%) of EM respondents had no agreement or limited agreement that their working environment encourages quality emergency service provision to LGBTI people, specifically and 74% were not aware of any policies, procedures or training sessions on providing emergency services to LGBTI people.

Comments indicate that some EM respondents believe there is no difference and therefore no reason for the EM sector to differentiate LGBTI people from other community members. This ambiguity of 'same needs' and 'equal treatment' is significant. It demonstrates a lack of awareness, and for some, seems to be at the heart of resistance to learn and change. It is crucial to address this misunderstanding through education in order to begin cultural change. EM respondents' comments reflected a wide spectrum of opinion, from those who think such education is essential, through to those who infer they would resent it as an imposition. Yet, a welcome finding and a foundation for change was that almost a third (29%) were positive towards LGBTI issues.

The lesbian and bi women described the ways in which they did not have the same rights as heterosexual couples, and of reluctance to access services through fear of



discrimination. or involved in EM. Some spoke of withdrawing from volunteer roles because of the culture of homophobia and/or sexism within the emergency sector. There were also examples of explicit discrimination.

## **Implications**

This research engages with queer and feminist theory and the ways in which dominant constructions of masculinity limit women's and sexual and gender minorities employment opportunities and access to mainstream services. This research and its findings are particularly important in the emergency sector where organisational cultures and practices embody, value and reproduce macho, hetero-patriarchal constructions of masculinity that are at best dismissive of women and LGBTI people and at worst openly hostile.

The research highlights not only overt and often violent forms of discrimination against LGBTI people, it also foregrounds less obvious but nonetheless damaging ways in which heteronormative assumptions and heterosexist discrimination operate within the emergency sector to marginalise and exclude LGBTI staff and clients. The assumption that everyone is heterosexual and cis-gender renders LGBTI people and their needs invisible. It necessarily privileges heterosexual and gender normative behaviours, relationships and families at the expense of non-heteronormative and trans and gender diverse identities, relationships, families and communities.

This research gives voice to LGBTI people's experiences and needs. It highlights ways of including LGBTI people and communities in disaster and emergency research; emergency management policy and procedures; and the work cultures and practices of emergency organisations. The research findings focus on practical ways in which emergency management and organisations can develop and implement diverse, inclusive practice and models of service delivery that include LGBTI people and communities. These include gender equity and LGBTI-inclusive training packages and the Rainbow Tick, the world's first LGBTI-inclusive service accreditation program delivered by the national accreditation agency QIP.

The research highlights the interactions between and mutual constitution of sexism and homophobia and transphobia. It suggests possible affiliations and joint projects between feminist and LGBTI researchers and activists aimed at challenging dominant heteropatriarchal work cultures and practices. It also suggests ways in which LGBTI-inclusive emergency and policy development can contribute to the development of diverse, inclusive models of service delivery that include the needs of other minority and marginal populations including people with disabilities and people from CALD backgrounds.

The study acknowledges that cultural transformation within the emergency sector has to deal with deeply entrenched forms of masculinist privilege. At the same time, efforts to make service delivery and work places more LGBTI inclusive have met with increasing hostility from outside the emergency sector. This includes objections from conservative and faith-based groups that see such inclusion as promoting identities, practices and communities at odds with their particular view of how the world should be organised. Addressing resistance and objections from within and outside the emergency sector relies less on theoretical sophistication and more on forming strategic alliances with government, faith-based lead agencies and peak bodies that share a commitment to social justice, equity

and inclusion. It also rests on being able to demonstrate the harms caused to LGBTI people by work cultures and practices that exclude them or that force them to hide their sexual orientation or gender identity in order to fit in.

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## Workplace equality and respect: Lessons from the development and implementation of a prevention guidance for workplaces

### Jo Brislane

Jo is a prevention of violence against women specialist who has worked in Australia and the Pacific over the past 10 years. Jo has led work on implementing respectful relationships education and led the development of the Workplace Equality and Respect standards and tools. Jo currently manages a team of staff at Our Watch responsible for prevention initiatives in schools and workplaces and developing evidence-based prevention approaches for universities and TAFEs.

### Session Description

Workplace Equality and Respect is a freely available suite of tools and resources that guides workplaces to take evidence-based action to prevent violence against women. This session will outline key lessons from the development and implementation of a prevention guidance for workplaces and will include:

1. A presentation on the research and core principles that informed the development of Workplace Equality and Respect;
2. A participatory activity that will outline the step-by-step process that enables workplaces to assess their organisation and identify key actions to make lasting change; and
3. Summarising key lessons learned about workplace-based activity to prevent violence against women and answering audience questions about implementation of Workplace Equality and Respect.

# Gender and Sexuality at Work

Some of our  
Community and  
Industry-Led  
Workshop Presenters



# Plenary Session



# Plenary Session

The plenary session discussed the future of research and engagement in gender and sexuality at work discipline.

We first presented the results of the conference registration survey to frame the discussion around the gaps in knowledge and practice in gender and sexuality at work.

Then, the panel of academics, community, and industry experts discussed the survey findings and provided their insights on gaps and opportunities for better research in this area.

## Engaging with the Community

To identify gaps in knowledge and understanding within research on gender identity, sexual orientation, and sexual characteristics at work, we gathered feedback from all registered conference delegates.

During the registration process, all participants had the opportunity to describe what they perceived as the largest gaps in research and knowledge translation in this area.

We conducted a thematic analysis of these responses; the method and results are summarised below.

We used the main themes that emerged from this work to spark discussion during the plenary session of the conference.

### Method

**Participants.** Two-hundred participants registered for the Gender and Sexuality at Work Conference via the registration portal (although ultimately there were around 220 conference delegates/presenters in total).

These participants were from 93 unique organisations and universities and included industry members (60%; n = 119) and academics (40%; n = 81). When attendees registered for the conference, we asked them to respond to the following prompt:

*“A key goal of this conference is to identify gaps in knowledge and understanding within the body of research on gender and sexuality at work. Please tell us where you think the biggest gaps are and what can or should be done to add the missing pieces.”*

After eliminating non-responses and answers that were unrelated to the prompt, we were left with **155 responses** to analyse.

**Procedure.** We conducted a thematic analysis of the 155 registration responses using an iterative process. First, we read through all responses to understand the content and overall themes. We made some preliminary groupings and put each response into a category, creating new ones as necessary.

After this first round of categorisations, two researchers met and discussed the groupings and made subsequent revisions to the themes and sub-themes. Responses were moved between or within categories as needed. Once the changes were actioned, the researchers met again to discuss the updated groupings and made a few final changes.

## **Results**

Five main themes emerged in the analysis, which functioned in a cyclical fashion. As depicted in Figure 1, researchers produce new knowledge on topics of gender and sexuality at work, and this research is then translated to practice. Once the research is in practice, it can be evaluated and further refined, and this informs the directions for further knowledge production.

Across the five main themes, each had multiple sub-themes. Common sub-themes across all larger themes included: Intersectionality; Unconscious bias; Safety; and Leadership. Table 1 presents a more detailed list and description of these sub-themes as a function of the main theme.



**Figure 1.** Knowledge creation-translation cycle

Below we discuss the five main themes underlying the knowledge creation cycle depicted in Figure 1.

### **1. Gaps in research themes.**

*Below are identified research topics in gender and sexuality at work that are currently underexplored and suggestions for future research directions.*

Participants felt there should be more research on issues related to different identities and how they function in organisations, including the place of identity at work, sexuality, non-binary gender identities, stereotypes and perceptions, unconscious bias, and intersections of multiple identities. Participants were also interested in the job outcomes related to different gender and sexual identities.



Other research gaps related to abuse at work such as experiences and drivers of psychological abuse and workplace violence, as well as bystander intervention in such situations. Another area for future research dealt with policies and procedures that are facilitators or barriers to the success of women and sexual minorities. These issues included wage and opportunities gaps and work-life balance.

Some participants identified corporate social responsibility and philanthropy as a gap in research themes. Leadership was also mentioned as a research area with more specific topics relating to engaging leaders to build an inclusive culture and considering the role of gender in leadership. Additional topics were the implications of industry segregation and the lack of research on gender and sexuality education.

## **2. Gaps in practitioner knowledge.**

*These included topics that practitioners would like to know more about.*

Practitioners were interested in learning more about the workplace experiences of individuals with multiple marginalised identities (i.e., age, gender, sexuality, and race). They were also interested in learning about unconscious bias, including how to measure and manage it at work. Workplace safety was another topic highlighted, including violence against women and workplace discrimination in general. Another gap was in understanding the role of sexuality in leadership.

## **3. Research in work settings.**

*This section outlines the challenges researchers face when conducting applied research in an occupational setting and considerations to conduct more inclusive research.*

One gap was in selecting research topics and settings. Participants noted the need to take an intersectional approach in future research and to expand their research to different industries and communities. Additionally, participants thought researchers should consider how they frame their projects, as most research is conducted from a dominant (i.e., white and middle class) perspective. Researchers should also consider the social determinants of health when planning their research. Apart from research topics, settings, and framing, participants described barriers researchers face to conducting quality research including getting participants from organisations and getting these participants to self-identify.

## **4. Convergence of research and practice.**

*Challenges and blind spots when integrating academic research and practice are summarised below.*

The main challenges that researchers and practitioners reported when translating research to practice were to do with information sharing. Information is ineffectively

exchanged among multiple stakeholders, compromising fidelity. Additionally, academic evidence is not always available to practitioners, and, even when it is, language can make it inaccessible.

In terms of workplace inclusion policies and practices, there is no clear consensus on their impact on employees, organisational outcomes, and conditions that modify the impact. Work-life balance policies in particular were mentioned. Related to this question of “what works?”, participants also pointed to implementation barriers and facilitators to such policies and practices. More broadly, participants suggested investigating mechanisms of cultural change in the workplace.

Multiple participants reported that identity in the workplace was not considered enough when translating research. In general, participants were interested in the role of identity at work and how organisations can support it. More specifically, participants discussed the inclusion of gender in system designs and how women can combat gender stereotypes.

## **5. Gaps in practice.**

*Practical implications of gender and sexuality in a workplace setting were suggested, including what organisations are not doing/should be doing to most effectively support all employees.*

As a foundation for considering gender and sexuality at work, participants pointed to the importance of offering people a basic education on gender and sexuality. Participants suggested this education should be happening in schools and in the workplace.

Considering organisational inclusion practices, participants saw a gap in organisational responses to employees with multiple underrepresented identities and organisational approaches to acknowledging identity in the workplace. Participants were also interested in how organisations and individuals can identify and respond to workplace abuse and, more specifically, interventions to reduce bias from subtle discrimination. Additionally, participants mentioned further investigating the role of leaders in workplace change and LGBTQI+ visibility in leadership.

Within an organisation, participants suggested workplace design should consider gender and carer duties, perhaps using benchmarking for gender and sexuality to address issues. Beyond internal processes, participants saw a need to reduce bias in external service delivery by increasing practitioners’ knowledge of gender and sexuality.

Participants also noted issues related to masculinity, including inclusion in hyper-masculine industries, androcentrism (i.e., male-centred thinking) regarding

workplace norms, healthy working male identities, and men's involvement in gender equality efforts.

**Table 1. Themes and Sub-themes that Emerged from the Thematic Analysis**

Gaps in research themes	
<i>Intersectionality</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Workplace experiences of individuals with multiple minority identities</li> <li>• Older age as an identity that interacts with gender identity</li> </ul>
<i>Unconscious bias</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unconscious biases regarding gender and sexuality</li> </ul>
<i>Sexuality</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of research/data that looks at the experiences of LGBTQI+ groups at work</li> </ul>
<i>Leadership</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engaging leaders in building inclusive culture</li> <li>• Considering the role of gender in leadership</li> </ul>
<i>Safety</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Safety from abuse in a university setting</li> <li>• Psychological safety at work (i.e., harassment, abuse, and their consequences)</li> <li>• Norms and stereotypes as drivers of workplace violence</li> </ul>
<i>Non-binary gender identity</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of research that looks at experiences of trans, gender diverse, and gender fluid groups at work</li> </ul>
<i>Stereotypes/perceptions</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Perceptions of women who conform to gender stereotypical norms</li> <li>• Perceptions of minority groups in managerial roles</li> </ul>
<i>Wage and opportunities gap</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Using data to identify and tackle non equitable pay and opportunities based on gender</li> <li>• Wage growth for sexual minorities</li> </ul>
<i>Work-life balance</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gender issues in carer responsibilities</li> <li>• Flexible work options for parents and carers</li> <li>• Reproductive coercion</li> </ul>
<i>Place of identity in the workplace</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How one's personal identity impacts workplace experiences and vice versa (culture, language, gender, etc.)</li> <li>• Celebrating different identities (especially sexualities) rather than culture of "degendering" or "disembodying"</li> </ul>
<i>Job outcomes</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How job outcomes such as job satisfaction, intention to leave, productivity, creativity, etc. and how they relate to gender and sexuality at work</li> </ul>
<i>Bystander intervention</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Impact of advocacy on champions of inclusion</li> <li>• Research and framework for bystander intervention in workplace harassment/abuse</li> </ul>
<i>Corporate social responsibility and philanthropy</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Considering gender in the distribution of corporate giving</li> </ul>
<i>Industry segregation</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The implications of education as a feminised profession</li> </ul>
<i>Education</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of research on gender and sexuality education</li> </ul>

Gaps in practitioner knowledge	
<i>Intersectionality</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The experiences of individuals at work with multiple marginalised identities like age, gender, sexuality, and race</li> </ul>
<i>Unconscious bias</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How to understand, measure, and manage unconscious bias at work</li> </ul>
<i>Leadership</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The role of sexuality in leadership</li> </ul>
<i>Safety</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Violence against women</li> <li>Workplace discrimination in general</li> </ul>
Research in work settings	
<i>Intersectionality</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Need for greater consideration of intersectionality in research approaches</li> </ul>
<i>Barriers to conducting quality research</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Difficult to get participants from organisations</li> <li>Difficult to get participants to self-identify</li> </ul>
<i>Framing the research</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Research is typically designed and conducted from a dominant perspective</li> <li>Considering social determinants of health</li> </ul>
<i>Setting</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Research needed in different industries (i.e., non-middle-class, white-collar workplaces) and communities (i.e., non-urban)</li> <li>Considering the Australian setting in terms of national gender equity</li> </ul>
Convergence of research and practice	
<i>Translating research to practice</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Accessibility of academic research evidence for organisations/practitioners</li> <li>Availability of academic research evidence for organisations/practitioners</li> <li>Issues in information sharing from academia to practitioners</li> <li>Issues in information sharing from practitioners to other practitioners and academia</li> <li>Engaging multiple disciplines in efforts to address gender and sexuality at work</li> </ul>
<i>What works?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Effective workplace policies and practices related to gender and sexuality</li> <li>Effective workplace training programs related to gender and sexuality</li> <li>Impact of workplace policies/practices on employees</li> </ul>
<i>Place of identity and values in the workplace</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The role of identity (gender, sexual, etc.) in the workplace and how organisations can support it</li> <li>Personal vs corporate values</li> </ul>
<i>Implementation barrier/facilitators</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Why isn't change occurring?</li> <li>Backlash to efforts around inclusion in the workplace</li> </ul>
<i>Work-life balance</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How to encourage workplaces to support and implement flexible working arrangements</li> </ul>
<i>Gender</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lack of consideration of all gender identities in designing systems</li> <li>Stereotypes women experience and how they can combat them</li> </ul>

<i>Mechanisms of change</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Considering why change is/is not occurring and methods for encouraging it</li> <li>• Making specific groups responsible for cultural change in the workplace (i.e., new employees or minorities)</li> </ul>
Gaps in practice	
<i>Intersectionality</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organisational responses to employees with multiple underrepresented identities</li> </ul>
<i>Unconscious bias</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understanding the role that subtle discrimination plays in practice</li> <li>• Interventions to reduce conscious &amp; unconscious bias</li> </ul>
<i>Leadership</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engaging leaders in workplace change</li> <li>• LGBTQI+ visibility and consideration in leadership</li> </ul>
<i>Safety</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identifying and responding to workplace abuse/harassment</li> </ul>
<i>Men</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Getting men engaged in gender equality efforts</li> <li>• Engaging men more in carer responsibilities</li> <li>• Creating a healthier male identity at work</li> </ul>
<i>Basic education</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School setting- Educating young people at school about sexuality and sexual identity, difference between sex and gender, etc.</li> <li>• Workplace setting- Educating new and current employees about sexuality and sexual identity, the difference between sex and gender, etc.</li> </ul>
<i>Benchmarking for gender and diversity</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Using data to address gender inequality and in decision-making</li> <li>• Defining a benchmark for gender and sexuality and managing it</li> </ul>
<i>Industry segregation</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inclusion in hyper-masculine industries</li> </ul>
<i>Service delivery</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increasing knowledge and awareness of gender identity among practitioners</li> <li>• Increasing knowledge and awareness of sexuality among practitioners</li> </ul>
<i>Workplace design</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policies/practices for work-life balance</li> <li>• Role/consideration of gender in designing systems, policies, and processes</li> </ul>
<i>Role of identity in the workplace</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Considering how workplaces approach acknowledging or not acknowledging gender and sexual identity at work</li> </ul>
<i>Stereotypes/perceptions</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Androcentrism- male-centred thinking about workplace norms</li> </ul>

## Conclusions

The results from the thematic analysis indicate that the gaps in knowledge and understanding of gender and sexuality at work lie in research, practice, *and* the convergence of the two. In particular, participants specified themes of intersectionality, unconscious bias, safety, and leadership.

Moving forward, these results can inform future research topics and approaches for academics and workplace practices for industry members. Importantly, they also reveal gaps in how we work across research and practice and ways we can improve these collaborations to most effectively translate academic research into workplace practices and to ensure that academics are engaging in research that is meaningful to industry.

Ms Rebecca Schatchman

Dr Victor Sojo

Dr Melissa Wheeler

## The Plenary Expert Panel



### **Professor Anna Chapman, Melbourne University Law Faculty**

Anna Chapman is a Professor in the Melbourne Law School. She has held a number of roles in the School, including as the Associate Dean of the Juris Doctor program, and as a Co-Director of the Centre for Employment and Labour Relations Law. Her research lies in workers' rights, and especially the rights of women and LGBT workers.



### **Professor Isabel Metz, Melbourne Business School**

Isabel received a PhD from Monash University. She is a professor of Organizational Behaviour in the Melbourne Business School at the University of Melbourne. Her research examines how change and human resource management influence people and organisation outcomes. Current research projects include investigating internal and external influences of diversity and inclusion practices in organisations.



### **Nithya Solomon, Executive Lead, Innovation Office, VicHealth**

Nithya is renowned for her international leadership experience and expertise in bringing innovative ventures in philanthropy and social investment to life. She has held roles in Australia, USA and Latin America at Nike, Ernst & Young, Accenture and ANZ Investment Bank. As the Nike Foundation Strategy, Finance and Operations Director Nithya managed a multi-million-dollar venture philanthropy engine that gives adolescent girls a clear path out of poverty. In her current role at VicHealth she stewards the hallmark 'Leading Thinkers Initiative', currently focused on Behavioural Insights and Gender Equality. Nithya holds a Masters of Administration degree from the Kellogg Graduate School of Management and Bachelor degrees in Chemical Engineering and Performing Arts from Monash University.



### **Anthony Wood, Partner, Herbert Smith Freehills**

Tony is a partner in the Employment, Industrial Relations and Safety group of Herbert Smith Freehills, and has been recognised as one of Australia's premier employment lawyers for each year since 2008 by Best Lawyers.

Tony has more than 25 years' experience advising clients in employment related matters including industrial strategies and disputes, equal

employment opportunity, termination of employment issues, enterprise bargaining, transmission of business, bullying and whistleblower issues.

Tony is a convener of the Herbert Smith Freehills LGBTI network, “IRIS”. The network operates in each of Herbert Smith Freehills’ Australian offices and through HSF’s global network. In 2013, Tony was awarded the Australian Workplace Equality Index Executive Leadership Award for his work in LGBTI workplace inclusion. In 2017, Tony was included in the Australian Financial Review’s list of the top 50 LGBTI business leaders in Australia. Tony holds law and commerce degrees from the University of Melbourne. Tony is a member of the Industrial Relations Society of Victoria and the Australian Human Resources Institute.



#### **Panel Moderator**

#### **Dr Raymond Trau, Senior Lecturer, Macquarie University**

Raymond Trau is senior lecturer at Macquarie Business School in Macquarie University. Raymond’s research focuses on diversity and inclusion. The most notable contribution of his research is to theory and practice of LGBTIQ inclusion. Raymond's research has been published in a number of international journals (e.g. Journal of Applied Psychology) and has received research mentions and interviews by major international and domestic media outlets. Raymond’s work has a strong link with industry via research collaboration, consultation and co-authorship with profit, non-profit and government organisations including Diversity Council of Australia and Pride in Diversity.



# Gender and Sexuality at Work

## Plenary Panellists



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