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An Analysis of Female Executives:


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Spring, 2001
This thesis for Honors Recognition has been approved for the Department of Honors Scholars by:

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Differences between males and females have been alleged as "so obvious that all of us, even as small children, condition ourselves to identifying both self and others" (Hall, 1982). Perhaps less considered is the fact that differences between men and women are not simply biological differences, but rather the product of the gender socialization that cannot be overlooked.

To my team:

Murphy Fox;

Beth Wilson;

Sandy Pollard;

Maureen Garrity and Michele Pederson;

And to friends, family, and confidants, without whose support this thesis would never have been possible.

Thank you.
Abstract

Differences between males and females have been sighted as "so obvious that all of us, even as small children, consider them basic to identifying both self and others" (Hall 1). Perhaps less considered is that the differences between men and women are not simply biological differences; there is also the element of gender that cannot be overlooked.

This thesis analyzes current studies on women in management. The first basic assumption is that there has been (and continues to be) significant research dealing with men at an executive level. Thus, mainly female and feminine characteristics of management will be considered.

The first tenet that is explored is that gender is different from sex and draws some conclusions based on this masculine/feminine based—or, as it will be referred to in the future, trait based—approach. Research is then presented regarding historical and current institutional stereotypes of women; a basic outline of the GOLD Research Project and a summation of the current barriers to success that women face is included. Various research from different scholars is used to analyze the five variables of interest in this thesis: communication, decision-making, stress management, conflict management, and goal setting. The unique research tool used in this analysis is then presented by addressing the basic background of the survey, including the group to which it was presented, its methodology, validity and reliability. Conclusions are then drawn based on a comparison of prior research to current results. Finally, some myths of leadership that are still ingrained in the organizational system of today are presented. Some precursory comments on hope for the future are offered, and the thesis is concluded with the author's
reflections and suggestions for ways to incorporate a trait-based approach to management in today's organization.
Methodology

This study of women in management began with an intensive literature review to highlight the five variables to be discussed in this thesis. Then, each variable was analyzed in depth and research conducted to adequately illustrate each. A survey built around the variables followed, with the main goal of garnering results that either supported or refuted studies already analyzed. Section B, the confrontation section, of the survey was taken from the Organizational Communication Conflict Instrument and adapted to fit the specifications of the survey. The rest of the survey was modeled around other questions presented in Communication Research Measures: A Sourcebook, written by Rebecca Rubin, et al. Finally, a comparison of the literature review and survey results was conducted, with final reflection from the author as to the future of women in management.
Chapter One

Introduction and History

Gender and sex is pervasive a topic in today's organizational climate as racial discrimination. Cultural views of gender penetrate organizations and affect not only the make-up of most organizations, but also the conventions and views governing organizational composition and the views of each gender held by those in the organization and the external world. The basis of these perceptions may unfortunately still lie with the perceived stereotypes of each gender. However, new research may indicate that the discussion should no longer be "men" and "women", but instead should be shifted to a more characteristic based approach—masculine and feminine.

The questionable point of this stereotypical and usually generalized view lies in the differences between sex and gender. Sex is determined in the womb, before we are introduced to the idea of gender, and this before we are socialized. Newborn infants come into this world with a label of "male" or "female" depending on their genitalia; however, their traits cannot be societally labeled until they are exposed—psychosexually—to external influences that determine whether they are masculine or feminine. Each of us has some characteristics that may be considered "masculine" or "feminine", but how much of each are we have indicated our gender. Sometimes the two go together so the men are masculine and women are feminine. In other cases, a male is more feminine than most women, or a woman is more masculine than the majority of women" (Wood 19). Wood points out an important distinction between sex and gender. Gender is not only determined by what sex we are, but also by interactions with the gendered world in which we live, including early and later stages of socialization.
Introduction

Gender and sex is as pervasive a topic in today's organizational climate as racial discrimination. Cultural views of gender penetrate organizations and affect not only the make-up of most organizations, but also the conventions and laws governing organizational composition and the views of each gender held by those in the organization and the external world. The basis of these perspectives may unfortunately still lie with the perceived stereotypes of each gender. However, new research may indicate that the distinction should no longer be "men" and "women", but instead should be shifted to a more characteristic based approach—masculine and feminine.

The questionable point of this stereotypical and mainly generalized view lies in the differences between sex and gender. Sex is determined in the womb, before we are introduced to the idea of gender, and thus before we are socialized. Newborn infants come into this world with a label of "male" or "female" depending on their genitalia; however, their traits cannot be societally labeled until they are exposed—psycho/socially—to external influences that determine whether they are masculine or feminine. Each of us has some characteristics that may be considered "masculine" or "feminine", but "how much of each set we have indicates our gender. Sometimes the two go together so that men are masculine and women are feminine. In other cases, a male is more feminine than most men, or a woman is more masculine that the majority of women" (Wood 19). Wood points out an important distinction between sex and gender. Gender is not only determined by what sex we are, but also by interaction with the gendered world in which we live, including early and later stages of socialization.
For the purposes of this study, I will go beyond socialization and stereotypes to highlight the differences in organizational climate between genders at the executive level. Since much research exists on the topic of male leadership at the executive level, I have focused on women at the same executive level. In so doing, five variables will be isolated—communication, stress management, decision-making, conflict management, and goal setting. Research has been conducted and an original survey applied to a group of women executives in an effort to point to some of the characteristics that women executives possess. The ultimate goal is to answer the question of "what makes a successful female executive?", and to illustrate those characteristics.

Before examining these differences, it is important to first make certain distinctions between the genders and understand some assumptions that most gender communication scholars agree upon. Men and women differ not only from each other, but from those within their gender stereotype; there are many variations from woman to woman (or man to man) as well as between the sexes. According to Wood, "thinking and speaking as if all women are alike and all men are alike is referred to as essentializing, the tendency to reduce either sex to certain essential characteristics" (18). Essentializing, as Wood terms it, is troublesome because it distorts and obscures characteristics possessed by either group that may be possessed by both groups. The following pages discuss generalizations made about men and women from a clearly group-oriented perspective. That is, this thesis will assume that generalizations hold true for many, but not all, women that have been interviewed. This holds for the characteristics that will be analyzed and for the differences that will be pointed out.
Institutional Stereotypes of Women

Rosabeth Moss Kanter—a specialist in organizational dynamics and a professor at Harvard Business School—illustrated four basic stereotypes of women in organizations. This research, conducted in 1977, has been tested and proven by many other researchers as cited in Wood—“Garlick, Dixon, & Allen, 1992; Aries, 1998; Jamieson, 1995; Wood & Conrad, 1983” (244). The four stereotypes are sex object, mother, child, and iron maiden.

Sex Object

The definition of women by their sex and, further, sexuality, leads to the delineation of the first stereotype. This tenet is many times manifested in the organizational expectation that women should conform to cultural views of femininity—women should be attractive. Women as sex objects is also illustrated in the communication that takes place between women and their male coworkers. A woman’s performance is many times judged more by her appearance than her competence. According to Wood, “regarding women as sex objects contributes to sexual harassment, which at least 50%, and possibly as much as 90%, of the female work force has experienced in some form” (Wood 245).

This stereotype purports a double bind for women. Women are expected to be thin, well groomed, and attractive. However, the stereotype is that beauty never comes with brains. This shows that women may be discriminated against because they are beautiful and thus assumed to be unintelligent or because they are not competent because they are not attractive—an interesting paradox that many women face in today’s organizational climate.
Mother

The stereotype of women as mothers is often manifested on an indirect level as well as a direct level. Women are not only expected to be the listeners, characterized often by the empathy, support, and help that they offer coworkers, but also the domestic employees that make coffee, transcribe and organize social activities within the organization. Directly, women as mothers may be characterized as a form of discrimination. For example, recent civil rights laws have outlined discrimination against pregnant women or mothers as illegal. This direct manifestation of discrimination suggests that women with children are not considered serious professionals or are not able to fully give to their jobs due to constraints that come from having children. According to Wood, “approximately three-fourths of women working outside the home fall into one of three types of jobs: clerical/administrative support (28%), service (18%), and administrative/managerial (27%, for example, teaching, human resources)” (Wood 246).

Interestingly enough, in 1999, women entrepreneurs owned 9.1 million businesses in the United States, or 40% of the total. However, only three women chief executive officers are employed in the Fortune 500 companies. Sixty-three of these companies reported that at least 30% of supervisory managers were women, and 21 companies reported that at least 30% of executive senior managers were women. This research will be more fully examined in a later chapter.

Child

The discrepancies highlighted in the previous section are sometimes explained using the third stereotype outlined by Kanter: women are “less mature, competent, or
capable of making decisions than men” (Wood 246). This stereotype is self-perpetuating in that those women who are characterized as children are given less opportunity to demonstrate the characteristics that they are accused of not possessing. Through this “protection” of a woman, she is given less opportunity to prove herself worthy of promotion, salary increase, and even personal development that may come from opportunity for challenge.

Iron Maiden

This stereotype defines women as being unfeminine, manly, or bitchy. This idea strikes at the heart of the clash between the definition of sex and the definition of gender. It states that it is unfeminine to be independent, ambitious, directive, competitive, or tough—characteristics that are positive masculine traits.

Other Stereotypes

According to Moir and Jessel, there are other definitions that women may work to fulfill. The first of these is “traditional women” who may not pursue a career so as not to compromise their duties in the household or to their family. Next, they cite “double-achievers” who must “reconcile masculine and feminine characteristics as good wives and competent professional, but often showed a strain in the process” (166). The final group, the “role-innovators” simply denied their female affiliative needs and worked to conform to the male standard of workplace achievement (166).

Much of the research done in the 1970’s and even early 1980’s embraced stereotypes and operated not to alleviate the stereotypes, but to learn other behavior that would enable any female to deal with her natural and innate inability. For example, author Joan Koob Cannie in her book The Woman’s Guide to Management Success: How
to Win Power in the Real Organizational World describes women in the following way: “passive, non-competitive, tongue-tied, thin skinned, emotional and afraid of taking risks” (28). Although she does point out that the discrepancy is that women are either portrayed as emotional wrecks or emotional voids, Cannie still excuses the stereotypes by offering the following advice on how to deal with the disability: “to fog” (38). Cannie describes fogging as “offering no resistance or hard psychological striking surfaces for critical statements to be thrown at you” (38).

Another author during the same time period, Letty Cottin Pogrebin offers a more hopeful explanation. After describing the success equation—mobility + agility = success (52)—Pogrebin goes on to list characteristics that make a successful businesswoman. Unfortunately, a woman’s husband defines one of these characteristics. “Having a charming husband,” she states, “is almost as much as an asset in business as it is to you personally.” Pogrebin also states that “it’s better to be satisfied than frustrated; it’s better to be working than not working; it’s better to be married than single; it’s better to be a mommy as well as a Mrs.; but it’s best to be all four at once!” (263) This tenet may be related to the modern day “trophy wife”, a women who is defined by her attractiveness and domesticity.

As frustrating as these antiquated statements seem, Pogrebin does salvage her initial statement that most women are simply “making time until someone marries her” (1) in the conclusion of her work. She describes what is termed as the feminine ego and then states: “Don’t get tangled up in role definition or femininity tremors. Just go!” (280)
Although this characterization of antiquated research does seem to be rather harsh at times, the conclusions that authors drew during the 1970’s are an unfair representation of today’s businesswoman. The authors of that time period were concerned with adapting male traits—then known as the only successful managerial type. However, recent research points to the fact that solely male traits and only a male approach are not necessarily the key to success.

More recently, Ann M. Morrison takes previous research and offers a summation of the basic barriers keeping nontraditional managers (those of a minority and white women) from advancing in organizations. In her book The New Leaders, she outlines two main barriers. The first, as other scholars have pointed out, is historical exclusion, “the fact that white men have dominated the executive ranks of most organizations for many years” (55). This can be for many reasons, including “their socialization, their reluctance to share their power and privilege with others, and their natural proclivity to associate with people like themselves” (55). The second category involves qualification deficits that make it especially difficult for nontraditional managers to take over an executive position, such as a lack of formal education or a lack of the ability to receive proper and appropriate experience.

No matter what the conflict or how it is termed, Kanter and the others illustrate an integral tenet of the explanation for discrepancies at work: affiliation. No matter what the context, women are, to some extent, “bound up in, qualified by, or in conflict with, the importance of personal relationships, while the conflict does not exist for men, at least not in the same form” (166).
Stereotyping women in any of the aforementioned ways may also contribute in many organizations to inequities in pay. For example, women continue to earn less than men do. According to research published by the Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis, “in 1999, women’s median weekly earnings for full-time workers were 76.5 percent of men’s—a gender wage gap of 23.5 cents for every dollar earned by the median man” (Fortune 10). The Federal Reserve Bank attributes this gap not only to wage discrimination (about one-fourth of the gap) but also differences in “important determinants of earnings such as the number of hours worked, experience, training and occupation... the average woman works fewer hours per week than the average man.” (10). The article concludes with the following observation:

Even in a world free of all types of gender discrimination, as long as people choose to have children there will likely still be a gap between the average earnings of men and women. Perhaps the gender wage gap is most useful as an indicator of changes in the underlying expectations and social norms that drive men’s and women’s career and work force decisions, which themselves may be affected by other types of gender discrimination. (2000)

The self-perpetuating cycle may occur for any of the reasons listed by Kanter or her colleges. However, it is important to note that the gender wage gap may be artificially inflated (at least in part) by determinants of wage, such as hours worked. Additionally, according to Orlando Sentinel columnist Kathleen Parker, “The wage gap is calculated on spurious assumptions. To support their thesis, the equal-pay number crunchers use the median wages of all men and all women in the workforce, regardless of age, educational level, occupation, experience or working hours.” Parker speculates that the “real deal” on the variation in male and female pay level is “that women and men who work comparable jobs generally earn comparable wages, plus or minus a few cents.”
Professor Michael Levin, as cited in *Brain Sex*, also relates that the wage gap may be very misleading. “There is no cosmic cashier dispensing wages for having a virilised (sic) brain. Nobody gets paid without performing. But because men try harder more often, they will, if not forcibly prevented, succeed more often than women in attaining highly-paid positions” (162). This controversial statement illustrates that many times women are not willing to perform when another aspect (such as family) may be in the way. Parker comments on this speculation:

The fact is, women and men of equal qualifications, experience and work hours are usually paid comparably. In instances where women earn less, nondiscrimination explanations can often be found. One that springs to mind: women get pregnant and have babies, which leads them to make different choices. Women who trade higher pay for flexible working hours to rear children aren’t whining to congresspersons about equal pay. They’re hiding behind their Wall Street Journals, hoping no one will notice they’ve placed more value on rearing well-adjusted kids than on shattering the alleged glass ceiling. (4/01).

This biting commentary illustrates two main points: there may be other reasons for the gender gap and one of these may be that women are prioritizing family over job. Instead of quality of work, the difference may be that women are not willing to make interpersonal and time sacrifices.

According to Katz and Liu in their recent book *Success Trap*, women tend to be less interested in work and more interested in issues relating to family, home, and personal lives. “Apart from their greater investment of labor in the home, women tend to be more interested in issues relating to home and family. Numerous studies dating back to 1931 have shown women to be more sensitive to family and other relationships, including social problems and cultural issues. They are more aware of aesthetics . . . and they are more interested in religious and spiritual questions” (166). Katz and Liu proceed
to explain that women's motivation in their work is also very different from that which drives men. Women tend to see a career as a personal development, involving contributing to the well being of others, self-fulfillment, and personal satisfaction. Men, on the other hand, "tend to value personal power, influence and fame more than women do. Men's primary concerns all fit neatly within the parameters of the working world that they have shaped" (166). Once again, a man's perspective and motivation seems to reinforce his position within the organization, whereas a woman's tends to focus on personal fulfillment and growth.

Thus, another reason for the wage gap is postulated. As men focus on power and influence, women may be focusing on family, their social lives, or even "aesthetics". Power and money, a typical means to achieving a higher level in the organizational hierarchy, may be beyond a woman's interest. Women may instead define success (and power) as cooperation within work teams or a collaborative effort to achieve mutually beneficial goals. Thus, although it may appear that women place a lower priority on power, it may just be that women place a lower priority on money and the means to which this end may be achieved may simply not be worth the payoff in the end for a woman.

It is obvious that discrimination exists against female managers. It is even more blatant that prejudice continues to permeate organizations in subtle and accepted ways because stereotypic assumptions have been built into its norms, culture, and everyday practice. The question that remains unanswered is how to isolate the barriers to success that women must tackle, and, thus, how to solve these problems.
Barriers to Success

In the late 1980's, a twelve-member group chose sixteen organizations that they believed developed and fostered diversity in organizations in order to isolate barriers to success. This research group used managers' responses to a set of interview questions to identify both problems and solutions related to diversity. Their intent was to "capture the richness of a case study approach without limiting the applicability of their findings only to certain situations" (Morrison 271). This study was termed the Guidelines on Leadership Diversity (GOLD) Project and one of its most significant findings was that barriers today "are the policies and practices that systematically restrict the opportunities and rewards available to women and people of color" (Morrison 33). The research team discovered twenty-one distinct variables that were categorized into thirteen types (please see Appendix A).

The six most important barriers, across industry, sector, level and function, sex, and ethnic background, as stated by the GOLD Project are as follows:

1. Prejudice: treating differences as weaknesses

2. Poor career planning

3. A lonely, hostile, nonsupportive working environment

4. Lack of organizational savvy on the part of nontraditional managers

5. Greater comfort in dealing with one's own kind

6. Difficulty in balancing career and family

These six barriers, accounting for more than half of all barriers reported, are cited by the GOLD team and repeated in various other forms and combinations in other studies.
focusing on career advancement and diversity. These include Baskerville and Tucker (1991); Catalyst (1990); US Department of Labor (1991).

The effect of the GOLD Project is an illustration and elucidation of the most common variables that women and minorities face when entering business. The importance of the GOLD project is that it took into account not only glaring stereotypes based out of discrimination and prejudice, but also some non-prejudice based factors that inhibit minority success in business. These factors, as illustrated above, not only deal with base prejudice, but also common circumstances—such as poor career planning and lack of organizational savvy. Therefore, the characteristics of non-traditional managers illustrated by the GOLD project have been considered in the following analysis of executive traits.
Chapter Two

Variables of Concentration

The first variable of concentration in this thesis is stress. It is assumed that stress is something that everyone, regardless of his or her place in society, experiences in one way or another. However, when considering gender and the workplace, it takes on special importance. Traditionally, women have had dual roles in their work—as wives and mothers, in household life, and organizational life. There will inevitably be a carryover, especially for women, in the areas of stress as both household life and organizational life each cause and elicit different types and amounts of stress. Coping with stress is yet another variable to be considered in an organizational setting, as illustrated by an executive level study. According to a 1996 study by Bagon et al., coping is viewed as a response to perceived stress and defined as constantly changing cognitive and behavioral efforts to manage specific external and internal demands that are appraised as taxing or exceeding the resources of the person. (2)

These functions of coping with stress are highlighted in the same article, which are useful in this study. These three functions are: emotional management, problem reappraisal, and problem solving. Emotional management is defined as efforts to reduce tension by avoidance. Conversely, efforts to manage the appraisal of stressfulness and active efforts oriented toward confronting the problem define the second and third function. Thus, coping may be seen as a continuum, from avoidance, to the middle ground (reappraising stress), and finally to problem solving.

There are two competing theoretical perspectives that dominate sex role research regarding stress. The first is social learning theory and the second is cognitive-developmental theory.
Stress Management

The first variable of concentration in this thesis is stress. It is assumed that stress is something that everyone, regardless of his or her place in society, experiences in one way or another. However, when considering gender and the workplace, it takes on special importance. Traditionally, women have had dual roles in their work—as wives and mothers, in household life and organizational life. There will inevitably be a carryover, especially for women, in the area of stress as both household life and organizational life each cause and elicit different types and amounts of stress. Coping with stress is yet another variable to be considered in an organizational setting, as illustrated by an executive level study. According to a 1986 study by Lazurus et al, coping is “viewed as a response to perceived stress and defined as constantly changing cognitive and behavioral efforts to manage specific external and/or internal demands that are appraised as taxing or exceeding the resources of the person” (2).

Three functions of coping with stress are highlighted in the same article, which are useful in this study. These three functions are: emotional management, problem reappraisal, and problem solving. Emotional management is defined as efforts to reduce tension by avoidance. Conversely, efforts to manage the appraisal of stressfulness and active efforts oriented toward confronting the problem define the second and third function. Thus, coping may be seen as a continuum, from avoidance, to the middle ground (appraising stress), and finally to problem solving.

There are two competing theoretical perspectives that dominate sex role research regarding stress. The first is social learning that “asserts a general independence of sex role personality traits and behaviors,” (2) and the second is cognitive development theory.
that "suggests that sex role phenomenon are generally interrelated, particularly for sex-typed persons whose gender schemas cause them to adhere closely to traditional sex role norms in their self-concepts and behavior" (2). After elucidating these two different strategies, the article works to answer two questions: first, to what extent do sex typed traits predict actual coping behaviors and second, to what extent is the relation between sex typed traits and coping behaviors modified by contextual characteristics?

The results of this study indicate that coping responses are significantly related to "sex-typed personality traits (instrumentality and expressiveness), to specific characteristics of the work environment in which the stressful episode occurs (demands and resources), and to situational characteristics such as the importance of the stressor" (8). The study found some additional fundamental differences between men and women in the work environment and their methods of coping with stress. Women were suggested to be more likely to use avoidance coping. This may be predicated by a lack of interpersonal support on the job. Additionally, varying importance of the episode may make a significant contribution. In fact, the importance of the episode was more indicative of avoidance coping than was a lack of support.

Women were also more likely to use problem-reappraisal coping, whereas there were no gender differences with regard to active problem solving coping. However, there were several predictors of the coping style after sex was removed (sex-typed traits, the work environment, and episode importance) and that patterns of effects were different in each type of coping (Long 8).

This paradox brings up another engaging question: are women simply dismissing problems as inconsequential that men find important? Long found the contrary. Her
results proved that after the effects of sex were removed, episode importance was also a significant factor to the coping method used. Additionally, Long demonstrated the effect of variable personalities on coping methods. She showed the following:

Personality differences have more marked effects at more severe levels of stress; that is, persons high in neuroticism or low in extraversion show poorer adaptation to severe life stress. This suggests that personality traits such as instrumentality and expressiveness may interact with the severity of the stressor. (3)

Long attributes this variation in style not to differences in gender, but to differences in personality type, extraversion, or neuroticism.
Conflict Management

Conflict management was the second area of concentration for this study. It is known that conflict management is as fundamentally a part of an executive’s schedule as is working with subordinates. Conflict management not only belies subordinate/leader relations, but also is indicative of peer/colleague relationships as well. Thus, today’s executive must deal with not only inner conflict in decision making, but also in conflict radiating down the chain of command, up the chain of command, and at a level equal with him/herself.

Conflict can be defined in a number of ways. Sometimes confused with confrontation, conflict can embody confrontation but at its heart expresses a different meaning. For the purposes of this analysis, conflict will be defined as not only large-scale arguments but also as simple differences of opinion within an organizational setting.

Conflict management is a key aspect of management for an executive who is employed in today’s organization. In fact, it has been extrapolated that those who successfully deal with conflict are more equipped and even perceived as better managers. Conflict is a normal occurrence in organizations and it shouldn’t necessarily be avoided. Conflict “signals the presence of diverse points of view, which in struggle or reconciliation can spark creativity, nourish growth, jump-start productivity, and strengthen relationships” (Schilling 1).

In response to this everyday occurrence, a manager can have a plethora of different reactions. When someone says that change is necessary or starts making changes without the consent (or even the knowledge) of his/her employees, their
responses can range from passive aggression to open resistance. Shilling cites ten different ways of dealing with conflict. They are as follows:

1. Abandoning
2. Avoiding
3. Dominating
4. Obliging
5. Getting help
6. Humor
7. Postponing
8. Compromise
9. Integrating
10. Collaboration/Problem Solving

No matter the style, the reason behind it comes from an interesting perspective. In fact, according to Shilling, the style that we choose may be more of a conditioned response than a choice. Shilling maintains that “for the most part, styles are conditioned responses, not conscious choices. They’re learned early in life and reinforced every time they pay off by getting us off the hook, evoking sympathy, according a sense of control. . . we just react” (2). Further, there is still much debate as to whether gender differences in resolving conflict is congenital or learned behavior. “Regardless of the explanation,” cites Thompson, “there is evidence that these differences begin early in a person’s life” (11). Childhood studies defined by Peirce and Edwards (1988) to determine problem solutions in written fantasy stories found that violent styles were employed by boys and analysis and reasoning based solutions were used by girls (Thompson 11).
There are many different variables that lead to the type of style that is employed, including socialization. However, there is an obvious difference between male and female conflict management in an organizational setting. Miller (1991) "estimates that woman are more likely to prefer integrative, compromising, and tactful strategies of conflict management, while men have greater preferences for competitive, unyielding, and aggressive strategies" (Thompson 11). Additionally, Shockley-Zalabak and Morley (1984) studied conflict resolution styles of college students. They found the following:

Men were more likely than women to employ the competitive style and women were more likely than men to use the cooperative style. Interestingly enough, their description of women's conflict resolution strategies closely parallel the behaviors that small group researchers classified as being constructive applications of conflict (Thompson 11).

Thus, the research suggests that typical male responses to interpersonal conflict are competitive and typical female responses are cooperative. A group or individual decision, whether made cooperatively or competitively, will result in better performance over the long run when it accommodates those that it effects. Therefore, the decision-maker should consider the implications of his/her decision before deciding which approach will be the most effective.
Decision Making

The third variable of concentration in this thesis is decision making. Decision making at the executive level may be characterized by strategic and future-oriented decisions. Business theory states that "the CEO is the individual ultimately responsible for the organization's strategy management. But, except in the smallest companies, the CEO relies on a host of other individuals . . . strategic decisions require commitment" (Strategic Management 13). Regardless of the types of decision being made, it is important to first examine the way in which decisions are made and second examine the implications that stem from this method of making decisions.

In upper management positions, most strategic decisions are made in groups. Groups have been shown to reach better decisions than individuals when "more information is needed than any individual possesses and when the problem is unique, ambiguous, or complex. . . interaction of the group members not only provides an error-correcting function but facilitates individual thinking and involvement" (Thompson 1). Andrews (1987) argued that "balancing short-term and long-term profitability is the central challenge of professional management" (Thompson 5). Further, Ansoff (1988) notes that "strategic decisions are not self-regenerative" and that long run success depends on "recognizing conditions under which concern with the operating problem must give way to a concern with the strategic" (Thompson 5).

Female decision-making is a complex business. According to Brain Sex, "she is taking in more information and taking account of more factors than a male. A woman's strength, and her weakness is her capacity to perceive, for example the human dimension of a business decision" (168). Her mind is more sensitive to personal and moral
implications than that of a man. Thus, her decisions become more complex than a man's, "who relies more on calculated, formulaic, deductive processes" (168).

Tymson reinforces this theory and further describes a female decision. She states that, in a decision oriented climate, a woman will "tend to discuss it with others, seek their input and feedback before making a recommendation to senior management. She thinks it is more important that everyone feels they have contributed to the decision and therefore are more likely to support it" (www.tymson.com). Her first priority is the relationship and it shows in her decision making style.

According to a study by Kohlberg cited in Brain Sex, this difference is illustrated in most every decision-making process conducted by either sex. The study analyzed a group of people who were confronted with the following dilemma: a man's wife is dying and he cannot afford to purchase the drug that would save her life—should he steal it or not? The philosophical answer: yes; life is more valued than property. However, men and women tackled the process to make this decision in two different ways.

Men saw it as a matter of justice. They questioned what was the just and right thing to do, what exercised the correct use of principle. Women, on the other hand, relied on the answer as a question of responsibility. They asked themselves what the responsible thing to do was and in this quest posed a multitude of other questions—couldn't he ask the pharmacist for help? Could he ask his friends for money? These questions, according to Moir and Jessel, "showed that they perceived different dimensions to a problem, including the moral aspect, theft; they may come up with a less snappy answer, but it is most certainly a more comprehensive one" (169).
ethos, as Moir and Jessel term it, of decision making insists on blunt and quick decisions, whereas the feminine ethos is a more comprehensive and thorough approach.

Also supporting the masculine ethos, Tymson states, “the man usually makes the decision, with discreet consultation, and makes the recommendation. He believes that actively seeking input takes away from his position. He’s in charge so he needs to make the decision” (www.tymson.com). According to Tymson, men make decisions based on their power and feel that in order to continue illustrating their power role, they should make decisions based mainly on their own opinions.

The gap that results from the varying decision-making processes of men and women can lead to increased conflict between men and women at work. Men oftentimes misinterpret women as indecisive in decision making or emotionally irrational in making the decision (169). For men, decision making is actually a quite simple matter as they are “divorced from many of the human and personal dimensions of the choice and it is easier to arrange a smaller number of things in order than a larger number” (169).

It is obvious that there is a difference in the way men and women make decisions—but why? Much can be explained by overall differences in the thought process of the sexes. “Men tend to be more analytic, extracting essential from the circumstantial detail. Women take in the larger picture. Men concentrate more intently on a narrower range of items; they are capable of ignoring distractions because they are deaf or blind to them. Women, because of the way that their brains are wired, bring an extra element of emotional sensitivity into the equation” (170).
So, in all practical aspects, when making decisions men are not playing the same game as women. The two groups operate by distinctly differing sets of rules in the way that their decisions are made.

Is one set of rules more effective than the other? The answer to this question would entail an audit of how effective each decision making process is in various circumstances. Generally speaking, an affiliative and emotionally sensitive decision may be more effective when dealing with an employee who had experienced a family tragedy. On the other hand, a masculine approach involving a quick decision may be better in another circumstance, such as negotiation during a crisis situation. Whatever the circumstance, executives should work to employ the best decision making style for each decision in order to remain efficient and effective in their decision making process.

There are many different systems currently being published and prescribed for organizations to establish quality goals. The most common in an organizational setting is a SWOT analysis. Determining the company's strengths and weaknesses is followed by an analysis of the external opportunities and threats that may be mitigated or enhanced by the company's internal assessment. Many companies are presently working to identify SMART goals. John Icon, author of The SMARTest Goal Setting Techniques, urges
Goal Setting

The fourth element of concentration, goal setting, is an integral part of any businessperson's agenda, but may be especially considered so for an executive whose position within the organization calls for strategic decision making that will impact the long term success of the business. A goal is a statement of desire to do or achieve something. It becomes the focus of one’s attention and the end to which much effort is directed. Often times intermixed with goal setting, strategy is a means to the achievement of the goal.

Goals—and further strategy—at an executive level are future oriented, whether through the short term or long term success of the business. In order to be successful, goals must have many different characteristics. Performance can be accelerated by time invested in strategy, so continually reevaluating previously set goals is imperative. Goals should be written down and constantly reviewed. It follows that an organization's strategy for meeting goals must always direct the organization toward the goal in the best manner possible. Although consideration of the future is the driving force behind goal setting, the current position of the company should be analyzed as well in order to determine where the organization should be.

There are many different systems currently being published and prescribed for organizations to establish quality goals. The most common in an organizational setting is a SWOT analysis. Determining the company's strengths and weakness is followed by an analysis of the external opportunities and threats that may be mitigated or enhanced by the company's internal assessment. Many companies are presently working to identify SMART goals. John Koze, author of *The SMARTEST Goal Setting Techniques*, argues
that "the SMART technique proves to be very effective... they work and have proven themselves over time so that they are published and reiterated a thousand times over. They truly are 'smart'—specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and tangible/timely"

(1) According to Susanne Beier, author of Setting Goals for Success, good goals should be specific, measurable, challenging, realistic, time-limited, action-oriented, and useful.

(2) Susanna Palomares, another goal setting expert, offers "The Six P's of Goal Setting": positive, present tense, personal, precise, possible, and powerful. (2) All of these prescriptions share the same bottom line: achievable goal setting is an integral part of success in business.

No matter the system that our organization has adopted, most business have many of the same goals. Depending on the size and motivation of the business, organizations may be considered to each work for one of the following goals:

1. To survive
2. To consolidate and continue to be successful
3. To expand and grow.

However, when more closely inspected, these three main strategies really boil down to a single goal. Shailendra Vyakarnman and John Leppard, authors of Keep Your Solo Business Going with Goal Setting, predict that each company's goals can be reduced to a single, underlying objective: growth.

Any company is like a bucket that must be kept filled to a certain level with incoming business in order to achieve ongoing success. If the company surpasses this level, it faces a rosy future; if it doesn't just around the corner. The only way for them to survive is to go on finding new customers to keep the level of business up. Companies actively struggling to survive are faced with a bucket that's emptying faster than they can fill it... On the other end of the spectrum are the
dynamic, go-ahead companies for whom "growing" is the very name of 
the game . . . growth and expansion are part of their basic blueprint, and 
everyone who comes on board must be prepared to set—and meet—ever 
more challenging targets . . . growth is tantamount to survival. (3-4)

It is obvious that goal setting at an executive level is very important. It is also 
evident that growth is paramount to arguably every organization. The question remains, 
however, in the style of goal setting embraced by women. Beier postulates that "even as 
professional women, we often spend the bulk of our energy focused on our roles as 
caretaker or 'cheerleader' for our children and husband's dreams. Half the time women 
don't even realize when they lose sight of their own career goals. Instead of dreams and 
ambitions, there is a feeling of emptiness" (1). This illustrates the varied foci of female 
good setting. Goal setting appears to be a team effort in which women consider not only 
their own opinions, but also the impact that may be had on their children and husbands.

Beier advocates an interesting approach to female goal setting. Through this 
approach, she embraces the fact that women need to take the time to define their needs 
and ambitions, both emotionally and physically, for their families and their organization. 
This process is begun, according to Beier, by "not only accepting the fact that you do 
have dreams, but by actually developing goals to attain them. Whether you are just 
starting a career, changing jobs, re-entering the workforce, or going back to school, you 
need to set some goals for yourself" (1).

The birth of this philosophy lies in socialization. Stanford University promotes a 
website that embraces topics such as goal setting for women. As published on 
www.stanford.edu, "women are socialized differently from men in goal-setting. Girls are 
more likely to receive sympathy and commiseration when they are unable to accomplish a
task. They learn to give excuses, provide extenuating circumstances and blame outside events or maladies for failure to achieve a goal” (1). Antithetically, boys are coached to work at a goal until it is accomplished. This difference in socialization may make it difficult for obstacles to be overcome or goals to be achieved.

Stanford does offer some hopeful words for the future of female goal setting. The site advocates setting goals, using adequate and helpful strategy and tactics to achieve these goals, and to continually work to overcome whatever obstacle that may be presented. Although it is difficult to set adequate goals in the current complex and fluid organizational climate, Stanford prescribes an easily achievable approach: “if we expect to get past the ‘glass ceiling’ and go to the top of our fields, we must learn to set and keep to our goals. Since it may be difficult for others in our lives to be hard on us, we need to be hard on ourselves” (1).
Communication

The final variable of concentration is one that stems through all aspects of business in every business day: communication. Communication within the workplace can be defined in a number of different ways. Typically, however, and for the purposes of this study, communication results from a direct relationship in which a subordinate and an executive converse.

It is then important to introduce a theory that is pervasive and may very well explain many of the gendered expectations of communication in an organizational setting. Standpoint theory "offers insights into how a person’s location within a culture shapes his or her life" (57). The focus of standpoint theory is how gender, race and class affect circumstances in individual’s lives. Focusing solely on gender, according to gendered standpoint theory, “different social groups like women and men develop particular skills, attitudes, ways of thinking, and understanding of life as a result of their standpoint within society” (58). In her analysis of this theory, Wood emphasizes that it would be incorrect to assume that each individual is shaped by only one standpoint (for example, their gender). “Instead, it entails social expectations that define the meaning of sex and that are systematically taught to individuals” (60).

According to Wood, there is a certain “male-as-standard” norm that defines communication in professional settings. “Leadership, a primary quality associated with professionals, is typically linked with masculine modes of communication—assertion, independence, competitiveness, and confidence” (254). Other characteristics, according to Wood, are more important to those that apply them and thus have greater utilization by women: deference, inclusivity, collaboration and cooperation (254).
This interesting paradox (which enforces the stereotypes laid out in the previous section) may be explained in many different ways. According to Brain Sex, there is a consistent difference in what men and women bring to a relationship.

A woman brings to the relationship emotional sensitivity, a capacity for interdependence, a yearning for companionship . . . a man, if not totally blind to the importance of emotions, has a less-demanding emotional nature. He has the capacity for independence, and sees his duties in the marital contract largely in terms of providing financial security (127).

This relational view may be further extended to differences in managerial style. Similar differences between the styles of men and women have been found. It appears that “both men and women enjoy being leaders and being in positions of influence, although there are general differences in how the two sexes enact leadership” (Wood 255). These differences are in large part due to communication techniques. According to Wood, women are more likely to use collaborative, participative communication that enables others. Men, in general, engage in more unilateral and directive communication styles that are consistent with their ideals of success and achievement (255). These differences may, in large part, be due to socialization. However, whatever they result from, they point to two communication techniques employed by women.

Extending standpoint theory, Sara Ruddick (1989) hypothesizes that demands of their role lead mothers to develop “maternal thinking, which consists of values, priorities, and understanding of relationships that are specifically promoted by the process of taking care of young children” (59). Ruddick further argues that women who are socialized into this maternal thinking role extend their perspective to more than just their maternal lives. Barbara Risman (1989) furthered Ruddick’s data through her study of single fathers. Risman found that “men who are primary parents are more nurturing, attentive to others’
needs, patient and emotionally expressive than men in general and as much so as most women” (59).

Candy Tymson, author of Business Communication: Bridging the Gender Gap, reports another interesting view on communication. She purports that “men use language to preserve their independence and maintain their position in the group; women use language to create connection and intimacy” (www.tymson.com). She goes on to cite two main styles of communication stemming from the differences in gendered communication: the Information Style and the Relationship Style. Topping the list of Information Style characteristics is an association with talk that is primarily used to negotiate, to maintain status, or to preserve independence. This style is mainly utilized by men and seems to purport classically male communication that has been explored in this section. The style Tymson pins on women is the Relationship Style. “Conversation is primarily a language of rapport: a way of establishing connections and negotiating relationships.” This, too, seems to reinforce the previously analyzed female communication technique.

Men and women also tend to engender different body language. Tymson states that men tend to be totally focused on the task at hand. Nodding during a conversation tends to shows that he agrees with the idea. Women, on the other hand, tend to nod to build rapport and show that they understand. This may lead to a decreased focus on the topic at hand and an increased motivation to ensure that the female listener supports the speaker.
After analyzing the differences between the sexes in communication style and technique, Tymson offers 10 strategies for dealing effectively with the other sex. For women, Tymson states the following:

1. **Speak up!** Don't allow men to interrupt you. Stand up for yourself!

2. **Avoid using tag endings** that make you sound unsure of yourself such as “don’t you think?”, “isn’t it?” and “is this OK?”

3. Don’t take male comments so personally. They don’t, and can’t understand why you do! Remember that most men are direct in their communication and like to get straight to the point.

4. Focus on being logical in the way that you present your information and avoid giving unnecessary details (storytelling).

5. Avoid discussing anything too personal. Instead talk about job-related issues and current affairs.

6. **Tell it how it is.** Don’t dilute your comments or criticism. Men get confused if you try to ‘soften’ your feedback by focusing first on what they did right or what you liked. Be direct.

7. Don’t try to be one of the boys - they don’t like it.

8. Stop saying "I'm sorry" just to be polite. Only apologize if you are wrong.

9. **Monitor your body language and facial expressions.** Be aware of giggling or smiling when it's not appropriate.

10. **Lighten-up.** Don’t take things too seriously or hold grudges. Learn to separate business matters from your personal feelings.
Notice that Tymson consistently focuses on feelings and politeness. She looks to encourage candor and bluntness in communication (two classically male techniques) while also supporting women in their natural proclivities in communication. For example, Tymson advises to “monitor your language and facial expressions. Be aware of giggling or smiling when it’s not appropriate.” It seems that this takes into account the differences that men and women exhibit in communication through body language and give them legitimacy, while at the same time interestingly advising against them.

Tymson also gives ten strategies for men when dealing with women in business. These include:

1. Invest time in building rapport.
2. Focus on being ‘more polite’ by using words such as "please" and "thank you" when making a request or giving an order.
3. Avoid monopolising (sic) conversations, speaking for the woman or interrupting her.
4. Be aware that because relationships are important to women they tend to take things more personally. What you consider as just direct communication can seem harsh to them.
5. Avoid barking out commands or orders to women. They prefer, and respond better, to polite requests.
6. Don’t call a woman names like "sweetheart", "honey", "dear" or "darling". Unless they know you very well they will probably think you are chauvinistic and condescending.
7. Control any outbursts of anger or frustration. Women are uncomfortable when men yell and curse.

8. Pay attention when women are speaking. Use good eye contact, nod and use ‘I’m listening’ type of sounds like "uhuh".

9. Encourage women to speak more succinctly by asking questions or bringing them back to the point.

10. Be aware of the subconscious influence of your mother! If you have a negative reaction to a woman at work notice if you are responding to things about her that remind you of your mother.

Tymson once again calls for a more middle ground between male and female communication techniques through the relaxing of both types into a style that can be easily understood by both genders. Although many of her techniques may be classified as flammable, Tymson’s perspective points out some stereotypical views as well as many often overlooked communication traits.

Whatever the insight on communication techniques by the sexes, there still exists the idea that women may be harshly judged by communication techniques that their male counterparts exhibit on a daily basis. This leads to the philosophy that in order to be effective communicators, men and women may have to employ the most effective techniques in their communication styles. If gender stereotypes in communication are as pervasive as they seem to be, men and women both need to be concerned with the image that they are portraying through communication. For example, cultural views hold that women should be empathetic and understanding, as well as caring and nurturing. The danger in a gender based approach to communication styles is that women who do not
exhibit these characteristics may be placed back into the iron maiden stereotype, in turn jeopardizing their effectiveness as leaders and their acceptance as women in an organization.

There exists an entirely different school of research in the communication studies world. Many researchers are currently contending that communication is not based on male/female traits in an organizational hierarchy. In fact, they maintain that communication styles change as an individual gets higher in the hierarchy. Communication, therefore, is supposed to be a reflection of power as opposed to gender. This is an obvious extrapolation of standpoint theory. The theory’s main tenet is that standpoints can be changed. In other words, men and women may be able to hone and even develop new skills necessary for their jobs, even if these skills weren’t present in the first place. If a move in the hierarchy requires different technique in order to illustrate increased power, standpoint theory states that the individual will adapt to this need for new communication techniques and employ the necessary method. This suggests that as women and men enter into new roles within an organization their identities and communication habits are also changing and both sexes are employing the best of the other’s communication as well.
Coupled together, these theories offer a hopeful perspective on the communication techniques of managers in an organizational setting. Not only does this research suggest that gender is trait based, it also shows that one gender can effectively take on characteristics of the other gender; men can exhibit female characteristics and vice versa. For greater organizational effectiveness, each gender must understand, appreciate, and adapt the strengths of both communication styles.
Chapter Three

Survey Introduction

The Montana Association of Female Executives (MAFE) is an organization built to promote women in business at the executive level. MAFE was founded in the late 1980's as an extension of the Billings Chapter of MAFE. Elise Frewer, the first president of the Helena chapter of MAFE, was an integral part of the birth of Helena MAFE as she saw a need for Helena area women to be able to network with other executive women that may have faced the same obstacles and/or triumphs. MAFE was founded under the consideration that women's lives have changed. "Years ago, executive women were older and their family situation was different. Now the members consist of younger women with families still at home or they work out of their home." (Frewer 2001)

MAFE's does not participate in any community projects or by only specific to its members.

The current membership of MAFE is between 75 and 100 members from around Montana, but mostly residing in or near Lewis and Clark County. Members of MAFE must be voted in by the current members, the only other prerequisite not amplified by the organization's name is members must be female and at the executive level in their Business.

On February 27, 2001, there were twenty-four women present. In attendance were consultants, financial planners, small business owners, retired law firm. Vice presidents, non-profit organization directors, computer consultants, business branch partners, real estate agents, engineers, deed planners, career coaches, and government employees. This meeting was the official membership drive, therefore, at least four (and possibly five) of the women in attendance were not yet members, but did qualify to be.
Audience Description

The Montana Association of Female Executives (MAFE) is an organization built to promote women in business at the executive level. MAFE was founded in the late 1980’s as an extension of the Billings Chapter of MAFE. Ellen Feaver, the first president of the Helena chapter of MAFE, was an integral part of the birth of Helena MAFE as she saw a need for Helena area women to be able to network with other executive women that may have had the same obstacles and/or triumphs. MAFE was founded under the consideration that women’s lives have changed. “Years ago, executive women were older and their family situation was different. Now the members consist of younger women with families still at home or they work out of their home” (Feaver 2001). MAFE’s does not participate in any community projects, as its only cause is its members.

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On February 27, 2001, there were twenty-four women present. In attendance were consultants, financial planners, small business owners, retired executives, bank vice presidents, non-profit organization directors, computer consultants, business branch partners, real estate agents, engineers, event planners, career coaches, and government employees. This meeting was the annual membership drive; therefore, at least four (and possibly five) of the women in attendance were not yet members, but did qualify to be so.
Prior to filling out the research instrument distributed to them at the meeting, several women spoke about their interests in MAFE and the rewards that it furnished them. Each of the speakers shared two reasons for coming to MAFE:

1) Networking and exposure leading to community wide contacts
2) Feedback and encouragement.

Among these reasons for membership in MAFE, possibly the most prevalent was the networking potential that MAFE offered each woman. Some described MAFE as a sisterhood or a “women’s delegation so that we can share ourselves with other women.” Not only did members demonstrate the need for a networking device for women in Montana, but also many others stated that they found themselves in “interesting situations” in Montana as female executives and they “really needed a support system.” As one woman stated in reference to her life as a mother, a wife, an executive, and a woman, “MAFE helped me knit it all together.” Additionally, many woman spoke of their other obligations, and showed large support for the argument that women are multitasking beings. One woman stated it best, after promoting three other organizations that she was involved in, when she stated, “It’s true—as a female executive, I wear many hats.”

Twenty women participated in the survey that was distributed (Please see Appendices B and C for the complete survey). Of these women, 60% were between the ages of 30 and fifty. The additional 40% were over 50; there were no women in attendance under 30 years of age. The majority of the women (70 percent) had been in executive positions for over five years. Only five percent were relatively new to the executive world (less than one year of experience) and the last 25% had been involved
between one and five years. Each of the women had completed at least some college. Thirty percent had completed their undergraduate degree and only 20% had not completed college. In fact, 50% had gone beyond their undergraduate degree. All of the women polled made at least $25,000 per year; the majority (55%) made less than $50,000. Thirty five percent made between $50,000 and $75,000 annually and the remaining ten percent earned over $75,000. As one would expect in the small business oriented climate of Montana, 75% of the women polled supervised fewer than ten employees. Only 15% managed between ten and 20, and the final ten percent claimed to manage over 20 (with one woman stating that she supervised over 120 employees.)

A few notes about the demographic information that was provided are integral to understanding the rest of the survey. Each participant was asked the same set of demographic questions. Additionally, each participant answered the standard questions; no women wrote in answers or presented their own away from those provided on the survey. However, after the completion of the survey, a flaw in the research instrument emerged. The question regarding salary contained an overlapping variable. It was stated so that two categories held the $50,000 marker. Unfortunately, this is irreparable; luckily, salary was not the thrust of the survey. It is important to note, however, that this may have caused some amount of error in the results.
Validity and Reliability

The MAFE Survey was designed to analyze the five main characteristics of females in management presented in this thesis. As the audience was limited and the survey had never been tested before, it is understood that the results would be used solely for qualitative research. That is, the statistics and percentages garnered from a data analysis of the results would only be considered indicative of characteristics of the 20 women from MAFE who were surveyed. No further conclusions will be drawn from the research since it applies only to those women who participated. It is the purpose of this thesis not to prove the validity and reliability of the statistics provided by the survey; nor is it the goal to be able to duplicate the use of this research tool. The goal of this unique research instrument was merely to test some of the research presented earlier in this thesis and to determine what characteristics (if any) in the survey that women in MAFE epitomized.
Methodology

The survey was based on previously validated surveys. The style of questions was taken from Rubin et al and adapted to fit the audience to which the survey was to be given. A seven-point, Likert-type scale was deemed the most appropriate, partially because the models used in designing the survey used a Likert-type scale, but also because it seemed the easiest to understand in a short amount of time.

Time also played an interesting role in the presentation of the MAFE survey. I was allowed two minutes prior to the actual polling to introduce the survey and give a background on the project. Then, as the survey was administered, other women began speaking to the group about non-survey related topics. At this time, it was observed that many women directed their full attention to the survey until they had completed it; however, many others would give it only partial attention between speakers or as they grew disinterested in the topic at hand. Overall, each woman had approximately 20 minutes total time with the survey in their possession, during which no time was directed solely to polling.

Not only did time play a part in the designing of the scale used to measure responses, but it also led to a focus on the most straightforward and easy to understand questions possible. The survey was limited to 51 questions (ten for each section except Section A, which inadvertently received two number three questions).

An additional note must be made regarding Sections D and E. Of the 20 completed surveys, three women left blank the back section of the survey. This included the sections regarding Goal Setting and Communication. The percentages representing the responses to these sections have been changed to a total of 17 responses (as opposed
to the previous 20). These surveys were not discarded due to the few respondents in the survey; the percentages were simply recalculated.

As stated previously, parts of the survey were taken directly from another source. Part B, the section measuring conflict management, was taken from the Organizational Communication Conflict Instrument (OCCI) developed by Putnam and Wilson in 1982. The approach of Putnam and Wilson was based on perceived inherent weaknesses in other similar instruments. For example, they felt that many approaches were value laden, their styles of resolution were characterized by low reliability, the nature of the conflict in the other surveys was undefined, or investigations of the conflict were often plagued by conceptual and methodological problems (Rubin 244). Therefore, Putnam and Wilson focused on two assumptions:

1) Conflict strategies are those communication behaviors, both verbal and nonverbal, that provide means for handling conflict.

2) Use of particular conflict strategy is largely governed by situational, rather than personality, constraints.

With these assumptions in mind, the authors of the OCCI focused on three different conflict management strategies. The first, non-confrontation, was characterized by an avoidance of disagreements, downplaying controversies, approaching conflict indirectly, or smoothing (245). Solution Oriented, the second device, included strategies termed confrontational and collaborative that leaned more toward opposition. The final strategy was termed the control strategy and called for the management of conflict by arguing persistently and using nonverbals to emphasize the arguer's point.
Each of these three categories of conflict management were represented in the MAFE survey. Questions two and seven represented nonconfrontation; one, three, and six related to collaboration; compromise was measured by questions four and ten; control strategies were shown through questions five, eight, and nine.

The only other section that was largely influenced by the OCCI was Section C. In this section (Decision Making) the first two questions were taken directly from the OCCI. The rest of the questions in Section C and all other sections were modeled after previously written questions; however, none of the questions remained exactly the same.

After designing and administering the survey, the data was analyzed. The following process was partially taken from Schutt (2001), in his description of data analysis for surveys. The first step in this analysis was data cleaning and inputting. The data was inputted into a simple spreadsheet and percentages were then calculated for each variable and recorded on a separate spreadsheet. (Please see Appendices F through I). At this point, the basic results that will be laid out in the following pages were determined. These include an analysis of the characteristics represented by the responses to the MAFE Survey and a reiteration of their support or refutation of previously presented research.
Chapter Four

Survey Results

Results

Section A represented results from questions relating to stress. This section was designed to illustrate the differences between job-related stress and home-related stress (including spouse/partner, children, or personal troubles), effects of stress, coping with stress. Most of the questions were job related (numbers six, seven, eight, and nine) and home stress was measured in question five and nine was based on differences of the first three from the second, as two were number three in stress.

In response to the questions relating to job stress, most of the women polled were relatively split. Fifty-five percent of the respondents agreed that most of the stress in their lives was related to their job; 35% stated that most of their stress was related to their position within their job. Ten percent of the respondents were undecided about their position within their job, and 55% disagreed that their position added the most stress in their lives. Forty-five percent of those polled disagreed that their jobs were the leading cause of stress in their lives. Sixty percent of the respondents agreed that their jobs created a normal amount of stress in their lives, five percent were undecided, and 35% disagreed.

As far as one's position within the organization goes, 75% of the respondents felt that their position created a normal amount of stress. Only percent were undecided about their position within their job, and another 20% disagreed. The final job-related question elicited a mainly agreeable response. Seventy percent of the respondents agreed that
Section A

Results

Section A represented results from questions relating to stress. This section was designed to illustrate the differences between job-related stress and home-related stress (including spouse/partner, children, or personal finances); effects of stress; coping with stress. Most of the questions were job related (numbers one, two, four, five, and ten), coping strategies were represented by questions six, seven, eight, and nine, and home stress was measured in questions three and three-a (used to differentiate the first three from the second, as two were number three in error).

In response to the questions relating to job stress, most of the women polled were relatively split. Fifty five percent of the respondents agreed that most of the stress in their lives was related to their job; 35% stated that most of their stress was related to their position within their job. Ten percent of the respondents were undecided about their position within their job, and 55% disagreed that their position added the most stress in their lives. Forty five percent of those polled disagreed that their jobs were the leading causes of stress in their lives. Sixty percent of the respondents agreed that their job created a normal amount of stress in their lives, five percent were undecided, and 35% disagreed.

As far as one’s position within the organization goes, 75% of the respondents felt that their position created a normal amount of stress. Five percent were undecided about their position within their job, and another 20% disagreed. The final job related question elicited a mainly agreeable response. Seventy percent of the respondents agreed that
stress changed the way they did their jobs, five percent were unsure, and the other 25% disagreed.

Coping strategies were also represented in the instrument. Eighty percent of the women polled concluded that they actively confronted job-related stress. Only ten percent were undecided about this characteristic, and the other ten percent disagreed. On the other hand, 45% agreed that they either ignored the stress or approached it in a non-confrontational manner. Forty five percent disagreed with this statement, and the other ten percent were undecided. The response to the question regarding effective multitasking showed that 95% agreed that they could handle more than one task at a time. The other five percent disagreed. To further support this factor, 55% stated that dealing with multiple tasks created stress in their lives. The other 45% disagreed with this statement.

Two questions inspected the aspect of household stress for the female executives. The first stated that most stress was related to household life (spouse/partner, children, or personal finances). Fifty percent of those polled agreed that household life was the main cause of stress in their lives whereas the other 50% disagreed. The majority (60%) of those polled agreed that personal stress largely affected their job, five percent were undecided, and 35% disagreed.

Relation to Previous Evidence

Previous to administering the survey, I hypothesized that the results would be very conclusive. Because the survey was taken partially from previously validated questions used in various surveys, I expected to see a large difference in those that agreed with the questions and those that disagreed. However, the research was not very conclusive, as
many of the categories were split evenly and had relatively small gaps between agreement and disagreement.

The first tenet that my research supported was that women face dual roles. These roles were defined as job life and household life, with the inclusion of personal finances, children, and spouse/partner relationships. The majority of women stated that their job and their position within their job caused a normal amount of stress in their lives. Interestingly, women overall opposed the tenet that most of their stress came from their position within their job. I hypothesized that being an executive would lead to an increased amount of stress than another position; however the results did not support my hypothesis.

The respondents were exactly split as to stress caused by home or job. Fifty percent stated that most of the stress in their lives related to their job and the other 50% stated that most of their stress related to household life. Sixty percent of the women polled states that personal stress largely effects the way that they did their job. Once again, the MAFE survey supports the dual role that women were projected to experience.

Additionally, the survey was built to measure the coping measures of women in both organizational life and home life. The research pointed to three functions of coping: emotional management, characterized by efforts to reduce tension by avoiding dealing with the problem; problem reappraisal, including efforts to manage the appraisal of stressfulness; and problem solving, involving active efforts oriented toward confronting the problem. The conclusion of the Lazarus et al study found that coping responses were significantly related to set typed personality traits, to characteristics of the work environment, and to the importance of the stressor.
With these characteristics in mind, women were suggested to use avoidance coping, be more likely to use problem-reappraisal coping, and show no difference from men in their use of problem solving coping. Forty five percent of MAFE respondents either ignored or responded in a non-confrontational way to stress. The 80% of respondents that indicated an active confrontation of stress refuted the previous research cited by Lazarus et al. Women did cite that they used multitasking and that multitasking added stress to their lives. Overall, the coping strategies found by the MAFE survey refute the research and characterize female executives that were polled as actively confronting stress as opposed to avoiding it.
Section B

Results

Section B illustrated a variation of the DCCL. As already described, each question was used to measure not only conflict but also the strategy used to deal with it. These strategies are non-confrontation, collaboration, compromising, and control. As represented by questions one, three, and six, most women employed a collaborative style of conflict. The answers to questions regarding their blending of ideas, their suggestion of solutions, and their offering of creative solutions alludes to this collaborative style. According to the survey, 95% of the respondents blended their ideas to some extent with others to come up with a solution. 65% of those either agreed or strongly agreed with this idea. Only five percent were undecided.

The second collaboration question was answered in a similar fashion. 90% of the respondents used a collaborative style. In this case, however, ten percent of the women disagreed with the statement, and ten percent were undecided. The third question once again showed very similar results. Ninety percent of the women polled agreed to some extent that they offered creative solutions in discussions of disagreements; only five percent moderately disagreed.

The second most supported strategy tended to be compromise. In this survey, questions four and ten were used to measure compromise. Both questions entailed the idea of “giving in” or offering “trades-offs.” The first question was met with overwhelming support. 90% of the respondents agreed in some extent (with 30% agreeing, and 60% strongly agreeing). Only ten percent of the respondents moderately disagreed. Questions on held similar responses; however, in this case some of the women
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The second most supported strategy seemed to be compromise. In this survey, questions four and ten were used to measure compromise. Both questions entailed the idea of “giving in” or offering “trade-off’s”. The first question was met with overwhelming support: 90% of the respondents agreed to some extent (with 50% agreeing, and 20% strongly agreeing). Only ten percent of the respondents moderately disagreed. Question ten held similar responses; however, in this case none of the women
strongly agreed, but the majority (80%) agreed to some extent. Five percent were undecided, and the rest either moderately disagreed or disagreed.

The third style, non-confrontation, represented the next most used style. Questions two and seven indicated that most women wouldn’t shy away from disputes, nor would most reduce their disagreements by making them seem insignificant. Only one quarter of the women polled shied away from disputes (one woman noted that this was a factor of management that she was trying to improve). Additionally, 55% of women disagreed that they reduced disagreements. This factor was a little bit less pronounced as 30% of the women were undecided and another 15% felt that they did reduce their disagreements.

The final confrontation strategy, control, seemed to be of little use to the women polled. This strategy employed words like “insistently”, “assert forcefully”, and “raise my voice”. Most women disagreed that they used a controlling strategy. For the three questions used to indicate control, only 20% raised their voices and only 15% agreed to some extent to arguing insistently for their stance. Question eight, asking to what extent women asserted their opinion forcefully, had interesting results. Fifty five percent of those polled disagreed that they asserted their opinion and the other 45% agreed. This question represent the most closely equated answers in the Conflict Section.

Relation to Previous Evidence

The results that were garnered from the confrontation section were interesting. I hypothesized that because I had adapted the conflict instrument from a validated research instrument, my results would conclusively support the previously existing research. I found that the results that I received were, in fact, in support of previous research.
MAFE respondents used collaboration and compromise strategies almost unanimously. There were a few exceptions that tended to shy away from disputes, raise their voices, assert their opinions, or argue insistently for their cause; however, the majority of the respondents supported a collaborative or compromising style. Ninety-five percent responded that they blended their ideas with others to create a positive solution. Eighty percent suggested solutions that combined a variety of viewpoints and 90% offered creative solutions in discussions of disagreements. This shows overwhelming support for a collaborative style. Also receiving considerable support was the compromising style. Ninety percent of respondents gave in a little when they were trying to get others to accept their positions. Additionally, 80% tended to offer trade-offs to reach solutions in a disagreement. The MAFE survey consistently supported research proposed by other surveys.
Section C

Results

Section C was used to measure the decision making of MAFE female executives. It measured the perceived importance of the woman’s opinion, different techniques for decision making, each woman’s decision making ability, and the importance of self-motivated decisions versus those made by others.

With the exception of one question, women respondents at MAFE overwhelmingly agreed with all of the questions in the decision making section. The only question that they disagreed with was question four stating that women take into account mostly their own personal opinions. Fifty five percent of the women postulated that they took into account others decisions as well when they worked. The other 45% agreed that it was mainly their call and they didn’t take into account others’ decisions.

Question four aside, the majority of women (no less than 75%) agreed with all of the questions posed to them. This means that women at MAFE responded that they:

1. Have a large say in decisions made at work. (90%)
2. Make reasons for changes clear. (100%)
3. Make decisions that are important to the organization. (85%)
4. Give their employees a say in the decisions that are made. (95%)
5. Tend to use collaborative, participative communication techniques when trying to make a decision. (90%)
6. Assert their opinions when making a decision. (75%)
7. Feel comfortable making many decisions in the same time period. (80%)
8. Are given the power to make important decisions in the organizations. (90%)
9. Make decisions based on what they feel with precipitate the best solutions. (95%)

Relation to Previous Evidence

Women are characteristically seen to follow a very human relations related approach to business, focusing on an attention to personal and moral implications and contribution of each person. According to Tymson, her first priority is the relationship that will develop from the decision and the way it will make others feel.

The MAFE research supported this assumption. Ninety percent of the women polled tended to use collaborative, participative communication techniques when trying to make a decision. Ninety five percent of the responses received indicated that they gave their employees a say in the decisions that were made, with a 100% response rate agreeing that the reasons for these decisions were made clear.

These responses show a relationship based approach that is characterized as classically female; however, the MAFE survey also showed that women were not afraid to be aggressive or insistent when making decisions. An overwhelming majority of those polled said that the decisions they made were important to the organization, they were given power to make important decisions, and they had a large say in the decisions made at work. This is reflective of the extra decision making capacity that an executive possesses. As previously mentioned, executives by definition have a large decision making role within an organization and the decisions that they consider are indicative of the companies health and continuity. In order to establish perpetuity within an organization, any executive (whether male or female) must have good decision making
power and an effective style to make the most important decisions that the organization faces.

Section D

Results

Section D measured different facets of goal setting at an executive level. This section took into account types of goals (long-term versus short-term, etc) as well as the flexibility of those goals and expectations resulting from goals.

Goal setting proved to be an interesting facet of female executive decision making at MAFE. Once again, the majority of all respondents agreed with the survey questions as they were posed. The largest response in question was question eight, in which thirty five percent of respondents were undecided. Overall, however, MAFE members agreed at a level of no less than fifty eight percent to the questions posed. The following statements represent those to which members responded in agreement:

1. I set achievable goals everyday. (64%)
2. I rely on long term goals to direct my short-term activity. (82%)
3. I become upset when goals that have been set are not realized. (58%)
4. I am flexible in changing my goals. (94%)
5. I expect my employees to work to achieve my goals. (88%)
6. My organization motivates people to be efficient and productive. (88%)
7. I am mostly motivated by the goals that I set. (88%)
8. I focus on setting achievable goals and then meeting them. (88%)
9. My goals operate concurrently with the goals of my organization as a whole. (94%)

Relation to Previous Evidence

Research states that through goal setting, women once again face a dual role: as caretaker and businesswoman. Unfortunately, the MAFE survey did not consider this role in the goal setting section. The only types of goals that were considered were those that were important to the organization.

However, there were some interesting conclusions to which the MAFE research pointed. Women were largely driven by both short term and long term goal setting. As elicited by the large percentages, MAFE members rely consistently on goal setting to direct their future activity. It seems that these women realize the importance of goal setting as stated by Beier and thus employ both current and future goals.

The interesting question that had potential to support previous research dealt with an executives reaction to her goals not being met. As stated by Stanford University research, women were more likely to give excuses, provide extenuating circumstances, or blame outside events for their failure. Additionally, this difference that springs from socialization may make it difficult for obstacles to be overcome or goals to be met. The MAFE research showed that 59% of those polled got upset when their goals were not reached. Although this is not a direct manifestation of previous research, one might extrapolate that this reaction to goal setting could possible be different from that of a man. Unfortunately, the goal setting section of the MAFE survey did not make this next step; therefore, the research indicated in this section is mainly inconclusive.
Section E

Results

Section E of the survey regarded communication. This section analyzed various executive characteristics that could infringe upon or help communication, as well as various communication techniques that were previously found to be characterized as feminine.

Without exception, the majority of the women polled at MAFE agreed with the questions posed to them regarding communication. Interestingly enough, only two questions had one person who disagreed, six questions each had one person who was undecided, and all of the questions had at least an 88% agreement rate. Women at MAFE agreed with the following statements:

1. I am approachable. (100%).
2. I delegate responsibility. (88%)
3. The opinions of my employees are valued in this organization. (94%)
4. I have adapted communication techniques that are necessary for my position within the organization. (100%)
5. I give criticism in a positive manner. (88%)
6. I tell my employees how they are doing. (88%)
7. I tend to focus on helping my employees. (88%)
8. When communicating with employees, I try to employ a personal, caring style. (94%)
9. I communicate assertively and am self-confident. (94%)
10. I feel that through communication, I can create and sustain interpersonal connections with my employees. (94%)

Relation to Previous Evidence

Communication at MAFE was an extremely good representation of previous research done by a plethora of communication scholars. The first tenet that was overwhelmingly supported was the collaborative, participative communication style that tends to support others. Ninety four percent of those polled stated that they valued the opinions of their employees within the organization. Eighty eight percent responded that they not only told their employees consistently how they were doing, but also tended to focus on helping them. Possibly the biggest indicator of this communication technique was an 88% response rate to positive delegation of authority. MAFE respondents communicate using a collaborative, participative style.

The second facet of communication that MAFE respondents followed was the use of language to create connection and intimacy. One hundred percent stated that they were approachable. Ninety four percent of those polled stated that they could create and sustain interpersonal connections with their employees. Ninety four percent indicated that they tried to employ a personal, caring style when communicating with employees. This support is the most conclusive in following previously validated research and shows that women truly do look to nurture rapport and a positive relationship.

MAFE members also supported characteristics of communication that may be extrapolated to develop at an executive level. They responded that they asserted themselves, gave criticism, and were self confident. The previous research did not refute this possibility; however, it did support that fact that the relationship was considered
primary in effective female communication. Overall, the results were very much in
support of previous research.
Chapter Five  Reflection and Conclusion

No matter the characteristics of managers, recent research proposes that a leadership position should not be bound to male characteristics. In fact, more and more studies surface with each coming year arguing that women are more influential as executives than are men. Why do they claim that women are more effective? As described above, women’s communication techniques and leadership styles are more affiliative and based more on feedback and recognition. Women have always been criticized for this emotional, sympathetic approach. However, research points to the fact that an emotional or “female” approach may be more effective than a classically “male” approach.

According to Encouraging the Heart, written by Imozi Kusse and Parry Pooser, there are several interesting myths of leadership. These myths tend to portray a “male” approach, in fact, Kusse and Pooser state that we’ve been misleading ourselves for years, operating according to myths about leadership and management that have kept us from seeing the truth (8).

The first of these myths is that “rugged individualism” and solidarity are the only ways to succeed. America projects the trust “if you want something done right, you’ve got to do it yourself.” However, according to Kusse and Pooser we don’t operate the most effectively in isolation. With no support, no encouragement, no expressions of confidence, and no help from others, we are six to fail (8). Therefore, we must operate in a highly supportive environment in order to succeed.

Secondly, Kusse and Pooser affirms that “encouragement is the most important leadership practice because it is the most personal” (8). Contrary to the popular belief
Myths of Leadership

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Secondly, Kouzes and Posner affirm that “encouragement is the most important leadership practice because it is the most personal” (8). Contrary to the popular belief
that leaders ought to be cool, aloof, and analytical, that they must separate emotion from work, Kouzes and Posner found that the number one success factor in large organizations is the relationship of a leader to his/her subordinates. The authors further explain this relationship as a relationship built on love. Irwin Federman expresses the most common sentiment when love and business are coupled—impossible! Federman states: “It may seem inappropriate to use words such as love and affection in relation to business. Conventional wisdom has it that management is not a popularity contest... I contend, however, that all things being equal, we will work harder and more effectively for people we like. And we like them in direct proportion to how they make us feel” (11).

The Center for Creative Leadership (CCL) in Colorado affirms Federman’s statements. In a recent study performed by the CCL, it was found that only one facet of leadership differed from the bottom percentage to the top percentage of leaders. The highest performing managers showed more warmth and fondness toward others that the bottom 25% (9). This may seem obvious and very separate from the “love” that Federman mentioned. However, in reality, the highest performer’s subordinates two levels down in an organization were significantly more satisfied overall with co-workers, supervision, top leaders, organizational planning, ethics, and quality (10).

The CCL also affirms a related concept called EQ. Emotional Quotient measures “a master aptitude, a capacity that profoundly affects all other abilities, each facilitating or interfering with them” (10). Daniel Goleman, the originator of EQ furthers that empathy, a part of EQ, is “the fundamental skill of management” (11).

What does it mean to be an empathetic leader, one who operates with love? According to Lawrence Lindahl as cited in Encouraging the Heart, employees were asked
to rank the intangible rewards of their jobs. Highest on the list was feeling appreciated and feeling informed; employees wanted to be listened to and wanted to feel worthy of receiving information. Interestingly, in the same survey, Lindahl found that managers held the same characteristics as important. This important non-financial reward has many times been found to be a simple expression of gratitude, a thank you, a simple gesture of appreciation.

No matter what the feedback, it is certain that at the heart of effective leadership is genuinely caring for people. According to Kouzes and Posner, “before we encourage the heart, we have to believe in others, and in ourselves. Our belief in others has positive benefits for individual leaders, for their constituents, and for the organizations they serve. High expectations matter—a lot” (71).

So, what of expectations? Are women simply expressing differences in communication, stress management, decision making, goal setting, and conflict management because they have different expectations than their male counterparts? According to Morrison, “women are often expected to perform at a higher level than white men who hold or have held the same jobs” (62). This tenet repeats itself over and over in the leading research. Women are held to higher standards than are men who would hold the same job. It seems that women are not only having to rightfully compete, but are expected to outperform a qualified male as well to be considered effective.

Moir and Jessel suggest that there is a definite difference in the value that both men and women assign to achievement. “The motivation of men and women is different both in degree and direction . . . the bias of the adult male brain expresses itself in high motivation, competition, single-mindedness, risk taking, aggression, preoccupation with
dominance, hierarchy, and the politics of power. To the woman, this all matters rather less” (159). In fact, according to *Brain Sex*, women find work less “consumingly important” than men:

To reach the top, apart from reaching an interesting and responsible post at middle level, would, as the women see it, call for a maximum commitment of time and energy, and so a sacrifice of other interests which they are not prepared to make. (160)

No matter what the motivation of men and women, the question still remains: are women simply not as effective or able to lead as men? We could draw this conclusion only if the research indicated that one style was more effective than another. Research, however, including that presented in this thesis, does not support the belief that masculine qualities are better than feminine qualities in management. “Although instrumentality and assertiveness are valued in leaders, so are supportiveness and collaboration, which are communication skills at which women tend to excel” (255).

“Further, studies indicate that the most effective leadership style incorporates both relationship-building and instrumental qualities” (Wood 255). Although Wood is referring to a study done by Cann and Siegfried in 1990, current research points to the same conclusion. According to a November 2000 article published by *Business Week, As Leaders, Women Rule*. The article delves into the worlds of 425 high level executives who were assessed by approximately 25 surveyors each. The thesis of the article is that women won higher ratings on 42 out of 52 skills measured by each surveyor. They also found that women handle 45% of all managerial posts, even though there are only two women CEO’s in the Fortune 500 companies.
Additionally, in another study performed by Business Week, the top 25 managers of the year were assessed. They were ranked by out performance, strategy, increase in sales, determination, exit plans and power: "the signs of a true leader." Of these 25, there were two women: Martha Stewart, CEO Martha Stewart Living Omnimedia and Margaret Whitman, CEO Ebay. Although two women seems like a dismal number, considering the number of female executives, this is actually more of a victory for women than a loss.
Conclusion

‘It’s a man’s world’ is a common phrase coined to represent the scope of male domination in executive positions. In fact, there are many such phrases to identify this gender gap. However, the question that still remains, despite the research that has been presented, is: can women be effective CEO’s? The ‘good old boy’ network is difficult to breakthrough, but some women have shown that it can be done.

Katz and Liu propose that no matter the sex of an executive, a myriad of traits are necessary to reach this level in the hierarchy. Professional advancement within corporate culture requires “firmness, decisiveness, competence, assertiveness, confidence, and ability to calculate risk” (Success Trap 176). These traits are considered value-neutral and not wholly gender specific. It's by asserting these values that one can gain a true advantage as an executive. Many of the same qualities that make women effective CEO’s are those that make them effective mothers, responsible parents, or good people. “A good manager must be sensitive to human relationships and responsive to emotional conflicts. An effective executive inspires cooperation and trust and encourages the free exchange of ideas. In many instances, your feminine warmth, empathy, tolerance, and sensitivity can be definite assets” (Success Trap 177).

The research is indicative of a characteristic based manager. However, it is also important to continually distinguish what was determined to be the premise of this thesis and reaffirmed above: gender is solely a characteristic based view of a person. Carol Gilligan, a philosopher and scholar, points out the distinct difference between decision-making and further, morality and ethical decisions in males and females. She suggests that males make decisions based on principle and the respect of others’ rights and females
make decisions on the basis of care and nurturing. According to Gilligan, "the moral imperative that emerges repeatedly in interviews with women is an injunction to care, a responsibility to discern and alleviate the 'real and recognizable trouble' of this world. For men, the moral imperative appears rather as an injunction to respect the rights of others and thus protect from interference the rights to life and self-fulfillment." (Gilligan)

Some criticize Gilligan because they feel that through her research, she has made a stereotypical decision that avoids contemporary and feminist gendered views. However, others see Gilligan as simply softening the male/female version of humanity into a masculine/feminine version. Gilligan, then, is not trying to polarize the genders but is simply pointing out fact: certain characteristics are considered masculine and others feminine. Gilligan's discovery is beyond gender; she points out the perpetual struggle between heart (feminine) and mind (masculine) in all of us. We may be a blend of a rational, logical, principled person and a caring compassionate person.

Gilligan has graduated out of gender to a focus on the importance of the conflict between heart and mind. She entreats us to look at both in various situations to determine the best use of each for either situation. In sum, Gilligan uses a characteristic based view to take us out of gender philosophy into characteristic philosophy that combines both masculine and feminine characteristics to form the ideal blend of both.

This philosophy may be further extended to serve the purposes or answer the question: what makes an effective CEO? We have already determined—the research presented from the 1970's to the this study—that there are many reasons for fewer female CEO's in business than men. These reasons range from stereotypical views of women (as pointed out by Kanter and Moir/Jessel) to differences in working habits, from women's
injunction to care to men's injunction to principle. Regardless of the gender differences, it is the characteristic of the manager that makes him/her successful. However, Gilligan allows us to realize that neither men nor women make a successful manager. On the contrary, it is various characteristics, both masculine and feminine, that allows a graduation out of a gender-based approach to a trait-based approach.

As the article from Business Week suggests, women may rank higher on most of the studied traits. However, I suggest that this is from conditioning. Women have been conditioned for years to follow the stereotypical male ethic for management; that is, to be powerful, to be assertive, and to be confident. However, As Leaders, Women Rule allows us to see that this combination training that makes women consider that the very basis of the inner conflict between heart and mind is what causes such effective people. New theory suggests that women and men can both be "effective" managers; however, the successful combination of characteristics from care to principle may be the determinant, not sex.

Throughout the duration of this research, I hypothesized that my research (conducted in 2000-2001) would be much different from that research that inaugurated my study of women in management. This 1970's research seemed to me to be fatalistic, solely embracing the flaws of women and pointing to a way in which women managers could fix themselves to live up to their male counterparts. This philosophy and approach angered me and made me think that our new attitude today represented a victory for all of those multitudes of women in management.

However, after an in-depth analysis, a research based survey, and many hours of consideration of new techniques and styles versus old ones, I found that my research
tends to mirror the research done in the 1970's. There are very few women in upper management (executive positions). Women still struggle to even breach the barrier of upper management. This can be evidenced by any research presented in this study, legislation that is being mandated with each coming year, or even an analysis of one’s own company or a comparison of companies in one’s own home town.

My hypothesis could have been wrong for many reasons, but perhaps the most preeminent is that I made certain assumptions about change. I believed that a basic understanding of the forces that were acting against women in management would highlight them and perhaps they would be able to fix themselves. I was gravely mistaken.

Although this thesis mirrors the 1970’s and simply points out new scholars editorializing about the same old issues, all hope is not lost. Understanding—the point to which I have come through this research—is the first step to change. After this understanding, it is imperative to shed light upon those obstacles to change and what it is that stands in the way of change. Is our organizational culture so pervasive and repulsed by change that it maintains the basic stereotypes of women in management? Is our society so egocentric that we cannot see someone unlike ourselves on a level equal to us?

I propose that there is further examination necessary to determine this aversion to change that has been illustrated in the last 30 plus years. From this study, it seems that affinity—the basic premise that we are comfortable and confident in only those who are like us—is at the heart of the segregation problem that exists at the executive level. Being afraid of someone unlike us could easily explain the perversion of upper management, however ridiculous it seems.
Fortunately, I believe that all hope is not lost for corporate America. Alice G. Sargent said it best in her work, The Androgynous Manager. She states that “women should adopt the best of men and vice-versa” (ix). This philosophy, developed by Sargent in 1980 is being proven in the contemporary business world to be quite true. The research supports many differences between masculine and feminine styles of leadership; however, the future of women in executive positions in organizations is bright. As long as men dominate the organizational world of today, women continue work to become strong contenders for the leadership positions of tomorrow. If they follow Sargent’s advice, and adopt a bit of the famed American ‘Adventurist Spirit’, we may be able to stop being so frightened of diversity and, instead, embrace those unlike us. Who knows, we may even learn a thing or two.
Appendix A

The GOLD Research Project
Barriers to Advancement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Barriers</th>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. White men already in place, keep others out</td>
<td>a. Greater comfort with one's own kind</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>6.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b. Prejudice</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>12.4</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>c. Threatened by non-traditional</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>d. Insensitive or arrogant</td>
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<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Other</td>
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<td>9.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Cannot find qualified nontraditional candidates</td>
<td>a. Less education</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b. Lack of organizational savvy</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>8.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>c. Lack of or resistance to mobility</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>3.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>d. Difficulty balancing career and family</td>
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<td>5.9</td>
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<td></td>
<td>e. Poor recruitment</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>3.7</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Other</td>
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Appendix B
Letter to MAFE Members

February 27, 2001
Dear MAFE Member:

First of all, thank you for participating in this survey. As a vital component of my senior thesis, I appreciate your effort in making this unique research tool a success. Your input will be kept confidential and will be discarded after I complete my research.

As Michele mentioned, my name is Genevieve Priebe. I am a senior Business Administration Management and Communication Studies student, from Whitefish, Montana. I have lived in Helena for four years and have spent my time being actively involved in Carroll Student Government, campus activities, and the Carroll Honors Scholar Program. I have also consistently worked around half-time for various organizations in Helena, including a year with the Undaunted Endowments Program that helps non-profit organizations grow their endowment funds and organize fundraising campaigns. In my spare time, I enjoy outdoor activities as well as expectantly preparing for graduation.

The idea for this thesis came from many different experiences that I have had as a student at Carroll. I am one of few women (there are two of us, to my knowledge) graduating from Carroll in Business Administration Management this year. As the only female in many of my classes, I began to realize the discrepancy between men and women in business. According to the January 2001 issue of Fortune Magazine, there only three women CEO’s in the Fortune 500 companies. Additionally, according to a 1999 statistic, women’s median weekly earnings for full-time workers were 76.5% of men’s. I began to question the implications of this through research and informal interviews with female acquaintances of mine in business.

The idea that began as a simple question—why are there not more women CEO’s?—has stemmed into a project through which I am measuring five different characteristics of managers. As a work in progress, I can’t tell you exactly where your responses will fit. The only finality I can offer is to make available a copy of my finished thesis to MAFE so that those of you who are interested can see where your responses come into play.

If you have additional information that may be relevant to this topic and you are willing to share it with me, I encourage you to contact me. I am available by e-mail (gmprrieb@yahoo.com) as well as by home phone (495.0144). Any additional information or experiences that you would like to relate would be very helpful; I would appreciate any extra input you may have. Once again, thank you for participating in this survey.

Sincerely,
Genevieve Priebe
Appendix C
Demographic Information

I. Please place a mark by the correct response to each of the following questions.

How old are you?
_____ Under 30
_____ 30 - 50
_____ Over 50

How long have you been an executive?
_____ Under a year
_____ Between one and five years
_____ Over five years

What is your current yearly salary?
_____ Under $25,000
_____ $25,000 - $50,000
_____ $50,000 - $75,000
_____ Over $75,000

What is the highest educational level that you have completed?
_____ High School or less
_____ Some College
_____ Undergraduate Degree
_____ More than an Undergraduate Degree

How many full time employees do you supervise in your organization?
_____ Fewer than 10
_____ 10 - 20
_____ More than 20

B.

1. I blend my ideas with others to create new alternatives for resolving conflict.
2. I stay away from topics that are sources of disputes.
3. I suggest solutions which combine a variety of viewpoints.
4. I give in to a little on my ideas when the other person also gives in.
5. I raise my voice when I am trying to get others to accept my position.
6. I offer creative voice in discussions of disagreement.
7. I reduce disagreements by making them seem insignificant.
8. I state my opinion forcefully.
9. I argue insistently for my stance.
10. I offer trade-offs to reach solutions in a disagreement.
Appendix D
Survey Questions

II. Please mark the following statements to reflect how agreeable you are with each. Indicate the degree to which the following statements reflect how you feel in an organizational situation by marking whether you:

(1) strongly disagree  (2) disagree  (3) moderately disagree
(4) are undecided  (5) moderately agree  (6) agree  (7) strongly agree

Record the number of your response in the space provided. Work quickly and just record your first impressions.

A.

1. Most of the stress in my life is related to my job.
2. Most of the stress in my life is related to my position within my job.
3. Most of the stress in my life is related to my household life, including my spouse/partner, children, or personal finances.
4. Stress related to my personal life largely affects my job.
5. My job creates a normal amount of stress in my life.
6. My position within the organization creates a normal amount of stress for someone of that position.
7. When dealing with job-related stress, I tend to actively confront the cause of my stress.
8. When dealing with job related stress, I tend to either ignore the stress or approach it in a non-confrontational way.
9. I can effectively handle more than one task at the same time.
10. Stress changes the way I do my job.

B.

1. I blend my ideas with others to create new alternatives for resolving conflict.
2. I shy away from topics that are sources of disputes.
3. I suggest solutions which combine a variety of viewpoints.
4. I give in a little on my ideas when the other person also gives in.
5. I raise my voice when I am trying to get others to accept my position.
6. I offer creative solutions in discussions of disagreements.
7. I reduce disagreements by making them seem insignificant.
8. I assert my opinion forcefully.
9. I argue insistently for my stance.
10. I offer trade-offs to reach solutions in a disagreement.

C.

1. I have a large say in the decisions that are made at work.
2. When I make changes, the reasons are made clear.
3. The decisions that I make are important to the organization.
4. When I make decisions, I take into account mostly my own personal opinion.
5. My employees have a say in the decisions that are made at work.
6. I tend to use collaborative, participative communication techniques when trying to make a decision.
7. I assert my opinion when making decisions.
8. I feel comfortable making many decisions in the same time period.
9. I am given the power to make important decisions within my organization.
10. I make decisions based on what I feel will precipitate the best solution.

D.

1. I set achievable goals every day.
2. I rely on long term goals to direct my short-term activity.
3. I become upset when goals that have been set are not realized.
4. I am flexible in changing my goals.
5. I expect my employees to work to achieve my goals.
6. My organization motivates people to be efficient and productive.
7. I am mostly motivated by the goals that I set.
8. I respond not to my own goals for the organization, but to others’.
9. I focus on setting achievable goals and then meeting them.
10. My goals are operate concurrently with the goals of my organization as a whole.

E.

1. I am approachable.
2. I delegate responsibility.
3. The opinions of my employees are valued in this organization.
4. I have adapted communication techniques that are necessary for my position within the organization.
5. I give criticism in a positive manner.
6. I tell my employees how they are doing.
7. I tend to focus on helping my employees.
8. When communicating with employees, I try to employ a personal, caring style.
9. I communicate assertively and am self confident.
10. I feel that through communication, I can create and sustain interpersonal connections with my employees.
## Appendix E
### Survey Results—Section A

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Appendix J
Survey Demographics Results as Percentages

### Age
- **Under 30:** none
- **30-50:** 60%
- **Over 50:** 40%

### Length
- **Under a year:** 5%
- **Between one and five:** 25%
- **Over five:** 70%

### Salary
- **Under 25,000:** None
- **25,000-50,000:** 55%
- **50,000-75,000:** 35%
- **Over 75,000:** 10%

### Education
- **High School or Less:** None
- **Some College:** 20%
- **Undergraduate Degree:** 30%
- **More than an Undergraduate Degree:** 50%

### Employees
- **Fewer than 10:** 75%
- **10-20:** 15%
- **20 or more:** 10%

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