



I Love Lucid: The Cold War, Feminism, And The Ideation Of The American Family.

Stream 6: The Cold War and Management

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ABSTRACT

Prior to the mid-1970s feminist theory was virtually absent from theories of organization and management [OMT] (Mills and Tancred 1992). The dominant rationalist accounts presented universalist, totalizing accounts in which the 'employee' was viewed as 'neutral' – beyond the realm of class, race, and gender issues. This viewpoint was exacerbated in the process of textbook production where the aim was to distil through simplification many of the key studies and theories in the field. Analyses of many of the most popular OMT textbooks of the last quarter of the twentieth century reveal and extraordinary absence of discussion of class, race and gender (Mills 1997; Mills and Helms Hatfield 1998).

Acker and Van Houten's (1974) and Kanter's (1977) accounts of gender dynamics at work contributed to a growing scholarship of feminist organizational analysis. Nonetheless, it has taken almost three decades before some of the issues raised by feminist analyses have been taken up within mainstream OMT.

Of those issues where feminist analysis has had some impact perhaps the two most prevalent areas within mainstream OMT have been debate around work/family conflict (Runte and Mills 2002a; Runte and Mills 2002b) and, more recently, diversity management (Mills 2001). That is not hard to explain. As we have argued elsewhere (Mills, 2001; Runte & Mills, 2002a, 2002b), both of these discourses can be read as an incorporation into existing masculinist projects.

In this paper we trace the absence of the feminist project and the rise of work/family conflict through the Cold War era and the construction of the idealized family.

The paper begins with analysis of the era immediately prior to and during World War II and the impact of the growing social movement for change. We trace some of the totalizing aspects of the debate, which was largely inspired by broadly socialist (including Marxist) and liberal concerns. It is a debate, we contend, which raised to new levels issues of sexism and racism while largely appealing to either the primacy of workerism or liberal Enlightenment values. In other words, the social movement for

change challenged existing notions of women and people of colour but in ways that gave primacy to class struggle and/or struggles for 'human rights'.

During the war years the war itself served as both a context for appeals for post-war social improvements and a new primacy by which those appeals were judged. Thus, while some emphasis was put on ending some of the worst practices of racism and sexism it was done from a framework in which primacy was given to war effort. It was a framework that valorized the new subjectivity of the warrior [which served to recast women as being of the 'home-front']. The term 'Rosie the Riveter' neatly captures both the unusual character of women at work, and especially in certain classes of industrial work, while reminding us that women's place is 'normally' in the home.

The paper then moves to analysis of the decline of the post-war social movement under the onslaught of McCarthyism. In particular we examine the junctures of the drive to purge women from the workplace under the guise of 'saving jobs for the returning soldiers', and the ascendancy of the rightist arguments which successfully linked all struggles for change (anti-racism, women's rights, trade unionism) with communism.

Examining shifts in popular culture (itself a central target of McCarthyism) the paper goes on to explore the development of the idealization of the family and its linking to anti-communism and the new Americanism. Here we examine the construction of new totalizing images that are linked to masculinist notions of the role of men and women in the post-war era.

We contend that such was the power of McCarthyism that the revival of the new feminist movement in the United States in the early 1960s began with the deconstruction of the idealized family (cf. Friedan 1963). Within this debate the very notion of 'the family' has become problematic if not anathema to feminist scholars.

The paper concludes that through a number of nodal points that were fused together as McCarthyism feminist concerns were subverted through the development of the idealized family; that the idealized family informed subsequent developments of a work/family conflict which served to obfuscate wider feminist issues of subjectivity; and which, ironically, served to close down some feminist debate on issues of motherhood and family.

I Love Lucid: Cold War, Feminism and Ideation of the American Family

The antecedents of work and family conflict as a form of inter-role conflict are well documented in the literature. As we have previously discussed, however, (Runte and Mills 2002b) the role of discourse as an antecedent to, and a heuristic for making sense of the literature has been overlooked. This paper incorporates a critical analysis of the discourses of work and family throughout World War II and the Cold War within a North American context and reveals how dominant discourses emerge as social constructions that serve to privilege extant power relationships, and inhibit alternative theoretical formulations of gender and organizational life.

Work and family are presented, throughout this historical period (and beyond), as existing in a dichotomous relationship with competing goals and demands. A binary relationship is reinforced that places greater value on the work domain and devalues the family domain. “This delineation mirrors the opposition and disparate valuing of the male and female: the work domain is characterized by the masculine; the family domain is characterized by the feminine (Runte & Mills, 2002).” This demarcation was buttressed by the war effort, which relied upon the mythology of the American warrior supported by the female helpmate awaiting his return. The feminine, while revealed in the wartime and post-war discourse as a figurehead of Americanism, remains less valued than the masculine which is revealed as the core of the capitalist project-- the foundation for American culture without which the entire structure would collapse.

Recognizing that alternate and competing discourses often arise from disparate experiences of the same phenomenon, we argue that for many women, the opportunity to participate in war industry labour had an empowering effect, despite the enduring power of the dominant discourse that maintained clear boundaries between work and home. This sense of personal empowerment had the potential to erode the rigid lines between work and family discourses for some women. This potentiality remained unrealized, however, as it encountered the discourses of the Cold War era, which emerged from World War II. The development of the “feminine mystique” (Friedan, 1963), more clearly defined concepts of both femininity and masculinity, and the threat of sanctions under McCarthyism for deviation from the status quo, created a context in which efforts to transform gendered notions of work and family were suppressed (Horowitz 1998).

The context of the Cold War for the development of gendered notions of work and family remain unexamined in the literature: “literature on the cold war has focused on the domestic roots and processes of this transformation, yet failed to explore the nature of gender relations as both a catalyst to, and consequent of, the engagement of the Americas against perceived communist threat (Grant 1994: 123).” This paper begins to fill this gap.

Women in World War II Labour

*“Our entire manpower problem is most acutely a problem of womanpower
(Business Week, September, 1943).”*

During the war years, four million additional workers were needed in American industry to meet rising production demands (Halberstam 1994: 589). Facing the sudden and massive labour shortage for at-home production in support of the war effort, recruitment strategies were developed to encourage participation by men who were excluded from war duty, and then when this labour pool proved insufficient, by women. “Production was essential to victory, and women were essential to production (Weatherford 1990: 116).” Although women of all ages, races and social class participated in wartime production, the woman worker was predominantly portrayed as white, middle class, young and engaged out of a spirit of patriotism (cf. Anderson 1982).

Undoubtedly, some of the women who took war jobs did so for patriotic reasons; however, given that the majority of women assuming manufacturing jobs during the war period had extensive prewar work histories in lesser paid/female dominated trades, it appears that war workers came primarily from the ranks of women who needed to earn a wage in peacetime as well (Anderson, 1982). “What was new in World War II was the upgrading of available jobs and the entrance of middle-class women into the labour force (Weatherford, 1990:191).” Nonetheless, the belief endured postwar that a woman only worked if a male partner was not available to her and that women who worked during the war were exclusively driven by patriotic ambitions. Women were expected to leave paid employment upon marriage; a suitable marriage partner would provide financially for the family unit. Although some women with families and husbands had always worked, their employ was seen as stopgap “assistance” to the primary breadwinner—even if the wife’s employ endured for years. A Canadian woman’s magazine article from the Depression era, for example characterizes working women as “girls living at home; married women glad of a half-time to *help out* [italics added] while their husbands are laid off or hunting for work; young widows with tiny children to support (Chatelaine Magazine, 1932, see Sangster 1932).” The discourse of work prior to WWII was mostly silent on the full and voluntary participation of women. Women, even prior to the war, were perceived as being temporary workers.

That the deployment of women into the war industry was seen as temporary is reinforced by the maintenance of a priority hiring system for employable male workers: training programs for women workers were not to be established in industrial or geographical areas where male employment figures indicated an available (and male) labour force (McKelvey 1942). A sequential hiring protocol for female workers also reflected the discourse of the family domain as female dominated and reinforced the notion of female workers as temporary adjuncts to the labour market. Initial hiring programs were aimed at young, unmarried workers (who, upon return of a pool of eligible bachelors, would subsequently become happy homemakers); married, but childless women (who upon return of their husbands would become mothers); and married women with older children (who wouldn't have to work, upon the return of the primary wage earner or who were just "helping out" for patriotic reasons). It was official policy to employ mothers of young children only as a last resort; childcare facilities were kept to a minimum throughout the war (Anderson, 1982, Weatherford, 1990). The public rather than private sector responsibility for childcare provisions also evidences the perception that the employ of women was as a temporary and patriotic endeavor. "The burden [for childcare] was shifted from business to local government and volunteer community projects [not to] the industry that had created the need and was earning the profits (Weatherford, 1990:171)." The linking of these programs with the war effort, made inevitable the revocation of such programs once the public/societal need for women's wartime labour dissipated.

The message that the work women were doing during the war was temporary became a major theme of the Reconversion Period; consequently, women found themselves at the end of the war in nearly the same discriminatory employment position they had faced prior to the war. While 45.3% of women were employed in higher paying durable goods production in 1943, only 25.0% were in such jobs in 1946 (Schloss and Polinsky 1947). At Trans Canada Airways (TCA), for example, a massive recruitment policy aimed at female workers stressed patriotism and temporality: female employees were praised for their ability to fill a vital but temporary employment gap (Helms Mills 2002). Endeavors to maintain the pre-war status quo were also evidenced in the retraining programs and the disqualification of married women from unemployment insurance (despite their having been required to pay premiums). The US Employment Service referred white women to clerical jobs and low-paying unskilled work in manufacturing while channeling black women into domestic service and laundry (Anderson, 1982). In Canada, retraining programs emphasized domestic/familial responsibilities or clerical tasks, similarly ensuring that movement of women into male dominated industries was temporary (Pierson 1983).

Why did the historic opportunities for women to emerge from the female job ghetto and their subsequent resistance to losing these opportunities fail to become part of the public story of female war workers? The anticipation of female labour as a temporary measure and the reluctance of many women to retreat from their positions as well-paid workers in previously male dominated fields speaks to a collision of discourses.

The Discourse of the Home(front)

War recruitment and employment strategies were conceived and executed with the goal of a return to the status quo. Ultimate reconversion was anticipated: “There is little doubt that women will be required to leave their jobs at the end of the war to permit the return of men to their jobs as they are released from the armed forces (McKelvey, 1942: 39).” This was true at companies such as TCA where returning servicemen also replaced women in jobs that had been traditionally female, such as flight attending (Helms Mills, 2002).

A key element of recruitment strategies was the propaganda programs executed on the home front to bolster flagging labour markets by encouraging the entry of female workers into war-time production and support services. “Convincing women that public need should override their personal convenience became one of the biggest selling jobs of the war (Weatherford, 1990:117).” The US War Advertising Council, for example, created ads encouraging women to enter the labour market, but the participation of the US Magazine Bureau was perhaps most successful in generating the mythology of the female war worker as a patriotic (and temporary) phenomenon: “The fraternity of young women and young men engaged in a common endeavor will furnish an inspiration for romantic treatment (US Magazine Bureau 1942).” Collective action was required—males were responsible for the war-front; females were responsible for the home-front: “In this total war a nation’s army is the whole nation” (US Magazine Bureau, 1942). Magazines were encouraged to emphasize the temporary disruption of the status quo as necessary to ultimately preserve the status quo: “The challenge that Hitler has flung in the face of free Americans is that precisely because we are a free people we will not submit to the restrictions on our traditional ways of living without which victory in a total war cannot be won.... [magazines are to bring home to their readers the need for] whatever disruption of our traditional customs civilian logistics makes needful (US Magazine Bureau, 1942).” Disruption of the status quo was emphasized, not its abandonment. By “doing her share” on the home-front, often by engaging in war industry labour, a woman was the helpmate of the male doing the “real work” of war on the front lines.

Typical of these attitudes is this war time Canadian editorial which speaks to the deviance of the woman who would choose to maintain employ post war and places responsibility on society in viewing war time workers as helpmates to prevent women from maintaining employment post war:

Production heads agree that at least 85% of them want to [return to the home]. But they say it’s up to YOU, the Public to accept them as a normal, natural part of your town or city or neighborhood, if you consider them simply as women who happened to be way from their homes while working to help win the war—if you see that they get decent living places, decent food, a chance to have their children cared for—they’ll slip back easily into home life.

But if you isolate them and set them apart as “those women” they might not (Dempsey 1943).

The discourse of the female worker had two effects: the muting of resistance and the empowerment of a sex.

First, dissipation of opposition of the employ of women was supported by the cry to patriotism, emphasizing the temporary “emergency” nature of the situation. Hence for the opponents of female war participation, the undercurrent that nothing would ultimately be different muted resistance. Supporting women’s engagement as the helpmates in the home-front was a patriotic duty. Nonetheless “public disapproval of working wives still lingered. (Weatherford, 1990:117).” Even when emotional support was provided by family and community for engagement in war industry work, assistance in familial responsibilities was lacking—the discourse of family/home as a female responsibility did not shift. “There is little evidence that family members shared her housework (Weatherford, 1990:164).” Women’s “helping out” through outside employment was temporary; no change of domestic responsibility was thus warranted.

Opposition to female engagement in war industry was also curtailed by the reinforcement and preservation of notions of femininity—“a girl would still be girlish” in her specially designed work overalls that accentuated feminine curves: “How a woman looks is a matter of concern because it affects her efficiency” (Chatelaine Magazine, Sept 1943 – see Dempsey, 1943). Rosie the Riveter, the poster-“girl” for war industry labour, is presented as an attractive, young, curvaceous, white female with perfect makeup. “Quality production was rewarded by bonuses (a beauty kit was typical) (Weatherford, 1990:119).” Hence, the presentation of beauty remained central to the presentation of woman. At TCA, for example, company propaganda focussed on the female employee as if to “explain” her presence. Corporate materials tended to single out young, single and ‘attractive’ women to frame discussion of the role of sexuality in ensuring a (post-war) future role for women as wives and mothers (Helms Mills, 2002). Discourse, therefore, revolved around the role of women in the maintenance of the “home-front” rather than the movement of women into the male domain of work. Women would still be women. The boundaries of the “home” were extended to include the “home-front”. The female was portrayed as the “helpmate” to the male doing the work of war. This role was portrayed as compatible to previously held notions of femininity. Masculinist notions of the role of women had not abruptly changed, they had merely accommodated a temporary reallocation of duties in a way that continued to cast the female in a secondary and supportive function.

Previously established notices of masculinity were also reinforced by the war effort. Although the female was portrayed as the helpmate, the primary responsibility for the war effort was placed on the male. During the war, the government, the military and the communications industry constructed women as objects of male obligation. Men were to fight, not as an obligation of citizenship, but to protect their sisters, wives, mothers and daughters (Westbrook 1990).

Discourse of Work(er)

The second effect of the propaganda campaign, however, was not anticipated. Opposition to female labour was curtailed by the discourse of women as helpmates, but a discourse of capability was also necessary to mobilize women once opposition was dispelled. The (albeit temporary) movement of women into male dominated industries hinged upon the reinforcement of the female worker as both physically and intellectually capable of making the necessary contribution. Rosie was portrayed as a highly feminized figure, *and* she also displayed muscled biceps and strength. “You can do this” was the second message of the propaganda campaign: “they left their kitchens for [aircraft production] and other industries, learned quickly and were wonderfully successful (Weatherford, 1990:117).”

Thus, while on one hand quieting opposition to female labour by a discourse of helpmate and maintenance of the status quo, female recruitment was also predicated on the discourse of women as competent players in the work domain. Hence, many women came to question previously conceived notions of femininity as weak, helpless, and ineffectual.

The tension between the discourse of helpmate and the discourse of competent worker was played out in the popular press, which, while emphasizing ability, reinforced femininity, even helplessness: “They are more conscientious than men on the testing machines... nothing gets by them unless its right.... They take orders easily have the patience of Job and are more frank than men. When they make an error, they come tell me. (Weatherford, 1990:132.)” In an 1943 Canadian article entitled “What they’ve found out about us” examples of female competence, such as “output of women was better than that of men” are paired with assertions that “we’re more erratic”; “women can’t always stand up to the job as men can;” “women need more frequent rest breaks”; and “we’re eternally feminine (Chatelaine Magazine, 1943 – see Dempsey, 1943)”.

Self recognition of competence was not easily displaced. After the war, when encouraged or forced out of their jobs, many women questioned the inevitability of their displacement given their proven ability. They had, in their opinion, proved their competence in the work domain and wished to remain. The economic advantages to women of wartime hiring patterns, when viewed against a history of systematic exclusion from better-paying jobs, are one indication that the war meant more to women workers than an opportunity to defend the country. American surveys taken in 1944-1945 revealed that 75 to 80 percent of women in war production areas planned to remain in the labour force after victory was won, and they wanted to keep the jobs they were then performing (Pidgeon 1947). This reluctance to leave wartime employ was echoed in Canada:

During the war we did everything a man could do except fight, and after it was all over there was a lot of unrest as well as happiness and sadness all mixed together. Some women were saying to themselves, “I don’t really want to have children. I don’t have to be a housewife. I want my own freedom, now, because I’ve proved that I’m as smart as any other person....” So if people did marry, they had a different outlook because

they were different women than they had been before the war (Gossage 1991).

To those who had, often reluctantly, accepted the temporary female labour market as a necessary and temporary war measure, the role of woman as helpmate to the male meant the immediate and unquestioned return of women to domestic responsibilities—the place where she could now best “help.” There was no longer a “home front”, merely the “home”.

Part of the efforts to reinforce traditional gender roles and male leadership after the war involved encouraging women to become subordinate, understanding, and passive to help heal the wounds of war and help men reintegrate themselves into civilian life (Rosenberg 1994). Resistance by women to the forfeiture of their jobs was seen as surprising, unfeminine, or was simply ignored (Anderson, 1982; Rosenberg, 1994). Although the reluctance of some women to a return to domesticity did receive some coverage in the popular press, these stories were mere whispers when compared to the dominance of the stories emphasizing the embracing of the status quo. “Many stories during the reconversion period dealt with relations between women and veterans wherein the focus was on male’s confusion over their peacetime identity rather than on adjustment of working women to losing their war jobs.... The major theme of the post-recruitment period was that marriage and children were essential for female fulfillment (Honey 1984: 169).” The discourse of helpmate remained intact, with only the specific duties and responsibilities shifting.

Post War: The Boys are Back

The dominant presentation in the media of women readily embracing the return to domesticity was not reflective of many women’s reality in the post war era. Friedan (1963) contends that this was exacerbated by an idealized notion of domesticity that dominated women’s magazines of the time. No doubt such an idealized notion of the family is to be found. However, other studies of women’s magazines during this era suggest that in a number of cases “domestic ideals co-existed in ongoing tension with an ethos of individual achievement that celebrated nondomestic activity, individual striving, public service and public success” (Meyerowitz, 1993, quoted in Horowitz, 1998:182). That, “far from imagining the home as a haven” women’s magazines often “rendered it as a deadly battlefield on which women lost their happiness, if not their minds” (Moskowitz, 1996, quoted in Horowitz, 1998:182).

First, although many women did leave paid employment post war and return to the home, the majority simply returned to poorly paid employment, rather than to a protected domestic nest with a (financially) supportive husband (Ware 1989: 239). Consequently, women’s earnings were reduced and they lost the protection of labour unions (Hartmann 1982). As of 1950, 28.6% of all adult women in the US were employed; constituting 30% of the total labour force; married women represented 52% of working women (Hartmann, 1982). The number of women in paid labour did not return to prewar levels; women who

had previously not engaged in market work prior to the war sought continued or new employment. By 1960, 40% of all women were working; in 1940, only 20% of women worked (Kaledin 1984). The employ of women in the better-paid male dominated positions, such as those occupied by women during the war, however, was severely curtailed (Kaledin, 1984). Although objectively the presence and success of women in male dominated industries spoke to their ability to participate in the realm of work, the discourse of work as a masculine domain was preserved through the power of the discourse of patriotism and the maintenance of the discourse of family as encompassing the home front. Advancements made by women regarding access to equitable employment were never really advancements—they just felt like they were to women who perceived a broadening of the work domain to include their participation. Women, according to the dominant discourse of the era, however, were temporarily “helping out” in a manner compatible with their pre-existing role of helpmate to the male. Now it was time to “go home”.

Secondly, in that World War II demonstrated the range of competencies for women (Kaledin, 1984: 64) and challenged the myth that women were unreliable and incapable workers, it created a sense of personal emancipation which was not readily abandoned by all women: Engagement in war industry stimulated an “increase in self-esteem and belief in women’s own capabilities [which] spilled over into more egalitarian family and marital relations in the postwar years (Gluck 1988: 240).” This may, in part, explain the tensions found in women’s magazines by Meyerowitz (1993), and Moskowitz (1996) (see Horowitz 1998).

This demonstration of ability, although challenging personal ideas of womanhood and femininity, “was not translated into a direct challenge of the status quo in the public realm (Gluck, 1988: 240).” Although on an individual level women, and some men, supported the ambitions of some women to maintain employment, on a societal level, the acceptance of gender roles remained intact for both males and females: “The key to this confusion seemed to be whether or not the questions were personalized, for discussion of women’s proper place meant one thing when viewed as an abstraction and quite another when viewed as a personal decision (Weatherford, 1990: 307).”

The dominance of the male-stream discourse was sufficiently pervasive in the reframing of gender concerns from a liberal agenda:

Feminists were almost unconsciously switching to a more egalitarian, directly competitive view. However, any discussion of this change (on the rare occasions when it occurred) was framed in terms of the needs of the war and not the needs of women. Changes that really meant increased opportunity for individuals were announced in terms of the needs of the nation, so that once again, women found themselves putting the group ahead of individual needs. (Weatherford, 1990:133).

Although many women were employed, during the war years, in unionized environments, the support of these unions for their female members is questionable

(Horowitz, 1998; Weatherford, 1990). “Student radicals in the 1930s had paid some attention to women’s issues, although questions of class and race, along with events in Europe took precedence (Horowitz, 1998: 53).” Further, during the war years, “unions were so eager to demonstrate their patriotism that they overly generously expanded the wartime ban on strikes to include an effectual ban on any viable union activism, including the recruitment of women. (Weatherford, 1990: 151).” Conservatism in American unions was thus strengthened by the discourse of patriotism placing the unions in a limited position of support for female members in the post-war era.

Yet, women ended the war years having experienced the benefits of employ in male-dominated industries. The post war exclusion of women from many industries and the maintenance of the work domain as a masculine prevue did not necessitate the dismantling of personal/individual level gains. Many women had emerged from the war years with a sense of competence that challenged masculinist notions of work. That these personal gains did not necessarily translate into a shift of the dominant discourse speaks, as discussed, to the strength of the dominant discourses of the war era.

Seedlings of optimism for more inclusive policies towards women were present however, as “many aspects of feminism flourished right after the war” (Horowitz, 1998, p 124) among women workers in industrial and service jobs. “They experienced more fully the forces of racial and sexual discrimination and dealt with the challenge of combining employment with the obligations of motherhood and domesticity earlier than their suburban counterparts (Horowitz, 1998: 125).” The activism of working-class women in the immediate post war era is well documented (Cobble 1994). Labour radicalism in the late 1940s, however, was to be extinguished in the Cold War era, particularly through the effects of McCarthyism.

Women’s career aspirations were to be also systematically suppressed by the emergent discourses of the post war era, which reinforced the gendered boundaries of work and home by reinventing them in new socio-political discourses. Although not the only casualty of McCarthyism, gender issues were to be treated as subversive and Un-American. The dominant discourses of work and family did not shift to reflect individual women’s personal level of development until the rebirth of radicalism in the post-Vietnam era (and even now gains are tenuous) due to the strength of the emergent discourse of the cold war, with its attendant discourse of masculinity, whose necessary corollary was a highly constrained view of femininity. Women’s personal gains were to be challenged by absorption into the “feminine mystique” (Friedan, 1963). An examination of the discourses of masculinity and femininity under cold war influences, such as McCarthyism, demonstrates the entrenchment but also the reinvention of gendered boundaries between work and home.

The Cold War Discourses

The wartime alliance between America and the Soviet Union was giving way to mutual hostility, and the possibility of atomic weaponry added a new dimension of terror to warfare, bringing the threat of destruction directly into American homes. The Cold War,

manifested in the US as a reaction against communism, was part of a transformation in American international relations from a model of sporadic interventionism to a positioning of sustained global power. This transformation, we will argue, had profound implications for gender roles and relations, which capitalized on the discourses of the war era whilst relegating females to an even more confined and limited role: “The resurgence of a feminine stereotype in US popular culture paralleled the evolution toward superpower status and permanent global security commitments (Grant, 1994:120).”

A warm hearth but a chilly place for women

In *The Feminine Mystique*, Betty Friedan labeled and exposed the repressive stereotype of femininity that had gained prominence in popular culture in the postwar/cold war era of the 1950s. This stereotype called for women to embrace domesticity as “the fulfillment of their femininity” (Friedan, 1963: 43). The war years’ lessons of female strength and competence was repressed; women’s educational goals were redirected from career development to “graduat[ing] with a diamond ring” (p 153); career development through education was a goal Friedan observed had come to be viewed as “strange and embarrassing” (p 19). Both men and women reported to pollsters that they wanted large families, with the woman at home with the kids (Weatherford, 1990). The patriotic spirit that encouraged women’s work during the war years was drawn upon to reinforce women’s renewed role of homemaker: “Surely our magnificent young brides of today who have grown up during a tragic period will get together with their husbands [have children] and help the country out of this dilemma [of declining population growth].... Three children per married couple should be a minimum goal (Chatelaine Magazine, may, 1946 – see Franks 1946).” Early marriages were on an increase, in part because youth saw “no other true value in contemporary society” (Friedan, 1963:188) and thus the “mystique of feminine fulfillment [through family and home] became the cherished and self-perpetuating core of contemporary American culture (p. 19).”

Although many women remained employed in the post-war era, the challenge of their employment to prevailing norms of gender escalated despite the demonstration of competence during the war years: “why could she not be contented with her flat and household tasks (Franks, Chatelaine, 1946).” The baby boom of the immediate postwar era spoke to the relief of survival and a desire for normalcy. The presence of young children, and the resultant time demands, necessarily quieted rumblings of discontent regarding women’s limited functions. Although the baby boom was evidenced in other countries post war, Friedan postulates that in other countries it was not permeated with the mystique of feminine fulfillment to the same extent as in the US. “The feminine mystique flourished in part because it filled a gap in what might be described as national identity (Grant, 1994:123).” Just as during the war years, when soldiers were called to fight to protect wives, mothers and children, the cold war era eased the transition of the US into a global power by extolling the values of family. But this time the battlefield was America; men would fight for the “American way of life” from their own hearths. Women’s work was to maintain the “hearth and home.” “The image of the woman as ultrafeminine and dependent invigorated the need to protect her and what she stood for.

The feminine mystique, then, was part of an image of gender relations that provided legitimacy for the state's activities abroad. (Grant, 1994:124)."

Anxiety post-war that a return to economic depression was inevitable also mitigated some of the resistance to a return to domesticity for women; that jobs would be limited necessitated priority employment for males (Weatherford, 1990) in that the dominant discourse of work as a male purview remained intact. Although the dramatic increases in production necessitated by World War II lessened, the enhanced foreign program of the Cold War also stimulated production. Coupled with a dramatic increase in consumer production, prosperity ensued.

Women, however, were no longer the producers; they were the consumers. Friedan (1963) presents an early example of marketing research whereby women's views of their own femininity were used to influence appliance purchases. The purchasing power of women and the return of women to traditional roles (whether in the home or in traditionally female labour markets) are illustrated by advertising campaigns of the early post war era. 7-up, for example, ceased claiming it could produce a good disposition in women in order for them to win a better job, and switched to boasting that it could help them be happy homemakers (Honey, 1984: 179-180). Ads in the Reconversion Period featured babies, even for products that had nothing to do with infant care; other ads featured stories of patriotism and victory, even if the link to the product being sold was tenuous. The construction and furnishing of an ideal home was women's contribution to post-war development. Friedan (1963) quotes an American educator as arguing that women be excluded from college because "the education which girls could not use as homemakers was more urgently needed than ever by boys to do the work of the atomic age (p. 23)." Her patriotic duty was to maintain the home: "there is much you can do about our crisis in the humble role of housewife."

The mystique was also reinforced, according to Friedan, by a societal apathy in the early post war period. The mystique was "part of what happened to all of us in the years after the war... it was easier, safer, to think about love and sex than about communism, McCarthy, and the uncontrolled bomb (Friedan, 1963:186-187)." This general sense of apathy and conformity was also taken up by social commentators (Riesman 1969; Whyte 1956) and movie makers (cf. High Noon).

In addition to legitimizing war losses, the ideation of American family also "buttressed the image of masculinity and eased the remilitarization of American society in the early 1950s (Grant, 1994:123)." "An exaggerated cult of masculine toughness and virility" (Cuordileone 2000) legitimized conservative American foreign and domestic policies and usurped both liberal and radical agendas, which were characterized as effeminate. Through this process, the role of women was further boundaried, and gains in female labour participation even more repressed.

The role of the male also became more clearly boundaried and tied to patriotic duty. To mount its campaign against potential Soviet aggression, America relied on masculine imagery. The policy of containment required that America "muster up the political

manliness to deny Russia either moral or material support (Kennan, 1967: 581).” Traditional concepts of femininity were emphasized to develop more “manliness through contrast (Grant, 1994: 125).” “Polarization of images” of hard/masculine and soft/feminine dominated the discourse of the cold war era (Bell, 1955). Femininity was heralded as an ideal *if* it was exhibited by women, and as a “real or potential threat to the security of the nation” if exhibited by men. “The lines were thus drawn... between being a soft wailer or a manly anticommunist doer” (Cuordileone, 2000:13).

The polarization of images becomes more graphic and obscene with McCarthy who blamed “America’s position of impotency” on liberalism. Opposition to his anti-communist agenda was challenged with the dualism “If you want to be aga inst McCarthy, boys, you’ve got to be either a communist or a cocksucker.” “In much right wing rhetoric [the liberal] was feminine in principle, effeminate in embodiment, and emasculating in effect (Cuordileone, 2000:15).” The suppression of the left (including radical and liberal traditions) was effectively complete (McAuliffe 1978). To support an agenda for change, whether the cause be more inclusive policies for women or an anti-racist agenda, was to be deemed a Communist or, worse, effeminate.

A concern for masculinity through this era was evidenced in the popular press. “The Decline of the American Male” was caused by a repressive collectivist society that “smashed the once-autonomous male self, elevated women to a position of power in the home and doomed men to a slavish conformity not wholly unlike that experienced by men living under Communist rule (Cuordileone, 2000: 17).” Men were victimized by overbearing women who were presented as masculinized versions of the female, similar to the Soviet woman (Whyllie 1956). Soviet women were characterized as tough, weathered, unattractive and masculine; American women’s attempts to develop independence were “Un-American” and a move towards communism. To deviate from established sex roles was to undermine American ideals fought so for recently.

“Uncertainties about the hardness of the nation’s cold warriors hovered over the manhood debate (Cuordileone, 1989, 29)” but responsibility was not placed on political policy, but on the mother who had created “immature” men through excessive mothering. “The gravest menace” and “threat to our survival” came in form of the mother (Strecker, 1946).

The feminine mystique and the image of masculinity were partnered. The “proper” orientation of women as passive and submissive partners to the male was exploited as the prototypical American ideal. Males were to respond, yet again, to protect this ideal. Under Cold War discourse the boundaries between male and female roles, which had experienced some softening during World War II, were refortified. Male “impotence” as a threat to the “free world” resulted from an allegiance of men with feminine values, caused by too assertive females. The exaltation of the nuclear family and domestic ideals constrained the personal gains made during the war when women experienced relative autonomy.

World War II created a context for radically altered gendered labour processes. Women, in unprecedented numbers entered the labour market, called primarily to fill gaps in war production. Although women have always worked, in and outside of the home, the war created space for women to gain employ in previously male-dominated industry, with significantly higher salaries than offered in the female dominated industries, such as domestic labour. World War II is credited in part for creating the context whereby barriers to the employ of women began to erode (Weatherford, 1990) thus allowing the discourse of work to expand and allow female participation. This paper, however, presents an alternate perspective.

During World War II, emphasis was placed on ending some of the worst practices of sexism. Legal, social or business policy, which had barred women for participation in some industries, was challenged in the context of wartime production demands. Labour shortages were threatening necessary production levels and bodies (even female bodies) were needed. The context in which movement of women into the labour market occurred was the war effort. This was a framework that valorized the new subjectivity of the warrior which served to recast women as being on the home-front. Males were doing the real work, fighting the war; women were providing the support at home—maintaining the home (the nation) until the men’s return. In this context, we contend that women’s role, although experiencing a shift in daily responsibilities, was not radically altered. The discourse of work—the real work continued to be done by the males—did not validate the female as a full participant. She was a temporary helpmate to the cause of war. The discourse of home/family was temporarily broadened to allow for women “helping the men” by engaging in war industry labour. The woman remained the helpmate to the male. In this paper we contend that the “gains” experienced by women during the war did not result in a shift in the dominant discourse of work, hence the gains were more illusionary than real.

Under cold war discourse the boundaries between male and female; work and family became entrenched. The feminine and the masculine, as clearly defined roles, were equated with Americanism, the ideal which communism threatened. The male, strong and hard-working committed himself to the ideals of capitalism; the female, submissive and supportive of her male partner committed herself to her family. Deviation from established sex roles was characterized as “un-American.” In the era of McCarthyism, where deviation from state-determined patterns of behaviour resulted in significant persecution, radical as well as liberal challenges to the status quo were suppressed.

The unquestionable acceptance of these roles, apathetic or repressed response to cold war crises, and a consumer orientation in the post-war era created a “mystique” which, although first identified as an issue for women, can also be characterized as the essence of the American culture in the post-war period.

Management Theory, Feminism and Gender at Work

As has been well documented, management theory “neglected” issues of gender (Hearn and Parkin 1983)(Hearn & Parkin, 1983) until well into the closing decade of the Twentieth Century, and even now it is still marginal within mainstream accounts and discussions (Mills 2001; Mills and Helms Hatfield 1998). Explanations for the “neglect” are few and far between but we suggest here that analysis of the Cold War era provide some important clues.

Our discussion of the discourse of gender suggests that World War II opened up tensions between traditional notions of women as wives and mothers and the realities of wartime work experienced by large numbers of women. Confusion was added to as government and employers heralded the obvious skills and competencies of working women while stressing the temporary nature of women at work. These tensions were reflected in divided opinions of female workers, with a number prepared to ‘return’ to the domestic sphere but with a number equally determined to remain in their jobs. The latter had reason “for cautious optimism” (Horowitz, 1998:125). New Deal legislation, World War II employment opportunities and a commitment from the National War Labor Board to the principle of equal pay for equal work, helped to give women a more powerful position in government and the economy (Ibid.) Thus, by 1945 women “comprised a higher proportion of the labor force, 36 percent, than ever before. Almost three million were union members” (Ibid.).

Yet, as we have documented above, instead of opening up notions of women’s role the post-war era saw the emergence of a new form of the traditional female role of wife and mother in the development of the feminine mystique. The power of the new discourse can be viewed in its presence around the discourses of the workplace and management theorizing.

The Cold War contributed to this new discourse in a number of ways. One, we call the masculinization of socio-political life, through an emphasis on fears of warfare and a renewed need for defense. Two, the creation of a prevalent cold war enemy as ruthless, godless, sexually ambivalent, and anti-family. Three, the introduction of a series of disciplinary practices. Four, the development of new objectivist discourses of research and professional life in academic.

While World War II had once again privileged the notion of man as warrior it had nonetheless opened space around the notion of woman as domestic helpmate by shifting the emphasis from home to home-front (i.e., workplace). The latter had been occasioned by the need for increasing numbers of workers to replace those ‘called to arms’. The Cold War was different in the last regard. The new, undeclared war – despite the hot Korean War – did not call forth the need for large numbers of female workers. Indeed, part of the discourse was built around the notion of women as the bedrock of the new American family. The Cold War did however conjure up new images of manhood as tough, resilient, unwavering (Robin 2001). This was in large part to defining images of the

enemy as ruthless, uncompromising, intent on domination (Robin, 2001) – images that also reflected prominent masculine traits. It has been argued elsewhere that shifts to more clearly drawn notions of masculinity also dovetailed with a sense of masculine angst and ambiguity that marked the post-war era (May 1989a).

In contrast to the godless communist a new discourse of Americanism developed which had at its core political conservatism, religious conviction, and commitment to the traditional family. In this emergent discourse women viewed as dedicated wives and mothers. The working and intellectual women began suspect, and enemy of the status quo. Within that context the popular television show, “I love Lucy”, serves as a manifestation of idealized values. Lucile Ball, the television producer is hidden from sight as Lucy, the star of the show makes audiences laugh with her many failed and irrational attempts to enter the workforce, only to be thwarted by her own inadequacies and the intervention of husband Ricky.

Ironically “I Love Lucy” was nearly taken off the air when red baiters accused Ball of being a one-time member of the Communist Party. Ball, along with her grandfather and brother, had been a member of the Communist Party in the 1930s but under pressure recanted and declared herself a god fearing loyal American who had only joined to please her grandfather. That Ball took this extraordinary step was due to the widespread introduction of government loyalty oaths, legislation against Communist Party membership, the curtailment of trade union rights, blacklisting, and the use of the House Committee on Un-American Activities (HUAC) and other bodies to threaten the liberty and livelihood of those deemed to be displaying un-American values. The use and outcomes of anticommunist legislation became known as McCarthyism by its victims. It had a powerful impact on progressive social movements in the 1940s and early 1950s, including feminism, “which it forced underground” (Horowitz, 1998:12). According to Horowitz (1998: 149):

“Women in unions and housewives’ leagues knew that their hard-won gains of the early and mid-1940s were tenuous and reversible. By the late 1940s, their worst fears were realized. McCarthyism had a chilling effect on women’s activism, drying up middle-class support for trade unions, especially militant ones, turning most unions against radical activity by women, and scaring many in the rank and file from commitment to progressive causes. It is hardly surprising that the government focussed its energy on driving the Congress of American Women out of existence. In 1948 the government placed it on the Attorney General’s list of subversive organizations, and in 1949 HUAC carried out an investigation”.

Even liberal women’s organizations, including the American Association of University Women came under attack from anticommunist forces. Organizations such as HUAC contributed to the curtailment of feminist ideas and activism particularly through repressive measures but also through its gendered language “as it conflated women, homosexuality, Communism, and progressive politics” (Horowitz, 1998:140). Thus, arguably, “the Cold War linked anti-communism and the dampening of women’s

ambitions. The connection between women, anti-communism and conformity appeared in many forums With men dedicating themselves to specialized bureaucratic work in a nation engaged in a fight against a Soviet Union that suppressed individualism, it fell to women to restore value, integrity, and wholeness to American life” (Horowitz, 1998:124).

Feminism was the only victim of McCarthyism. Hollywood came under attack by anticommunist politicians and “corporate leaders who hoped to convert national values and popular imagery away from doctrines hostile to modern capitalism” (May 1989b: 127). Images of independent women virtually disappeared from the screen to give way to dominant images of the cowboy and the conquest of the West. Unions came under attack, especially those that pursued progressive causes, including anti-racist and anti-sexist policies. Universities were also hard hit, with a number of progressive scholars losing their jobs (Schrecker 1986).

Within this environment it is perhaps hardly surprising that gender issues were absent from management study. Women were being portrayed as inimical to the workplace, feminism was seen as subversive, and it was risking unnecessary attention to write about the ills of capitalist society.

Nonetheless, that is only part of the story. We also need to examine developments within the social sciences themselves. For one thing the universities remained bastions of male dominance. During the onset of World War II universities such as Harvard, Yale, Amherst, and Williams were still only admitting men as undergraduates, and “had no women with regular professorial appointments” (Horowitz, 1998: 34). Very few women were employed as management theorists and the contribution of those who were, such as Mary Parker Follett and Lillian Gilbreth was hidden from history until quite recently (Tancred-Sheriff and Campbell 1992). In the field of psychology few, of a growing number of women, were involved in industrial or experimental research, or held university teaching positions. Female Ph.D.s in psychology “were usually tracked into service-oriented positions in hospitals, clinics, courts, and schools” (Capshew and Laszlo 1986: 160).

The masculine character of the social sciences was strengthened by warfare – at first World War II and then the onset of the Cold War. According to Ball (1998:76), “the welfare-warfare state that emerged in the Depression and cold war eras created the conditions which the various social sciences . . . became valuable, if not indispensable, adjuncts of corporate and state power”. In fact, the perceived character of WWII contributed to a militarization of the university, as vast sums of money was poured into research by the armed forces, who, in turn, required applied results to be developed in an atmosphere of secrecy. These trends were intensified in the post-war era and the notion that ‘un-loyal’ Americans could betray, what had become, military secrets. Thus, what emerged was “a vast institutional infrastructure – government granting agencies, private foundations, and the modern university, in which the increasing professionalization of the social sciences proceeded apace – for supporting research and training” (Ball, 1989: 77).

This major a considerable contribution to the development of the behavioral sciences, which emphasized applied, objectivist research focussed on the control of individual behaviour (Robin, 2001). Perhaps unsurprisingly the behavioral sciences came to dominate post-war management theory. As Raymond A. Bauer expressed it in a 1958 edition of the Harvard Business Review: “The social sciences are an especially pertinent subject for businessmen to consider, for they deal . . . with the organization of people and the control of behavior” (quoted in Ball, 1989: 80).

The emergent character of the new professionalism can be seen in the reaction of the Psychology profession to the involvement of their female colleagues in war work. As early as 1940 American psychologists had begun mobilizing for national defense, and were recruited for war work by a number of government agencies and the armed forces. Much of their activity was centrally coordinated through a newly established Emergency Committee in Psychology (ECP), which “rapidly assumed primary authority for mobilization plans, and through its quasi-independent Office of Psychological Personnel served as an employment agency for psychologists seeking military and government positions” (Capshew & Laszlo, 1986:162-3). It didn’t take long before female psychologists came to the realization that they were being excluded from the process. As a leading female psychologist noted, “as the list of activities and persons rolled on, not a woman’s name was mentioned, nor was any project reported in which women were to be given a part” (quoted in Capshew & Laszlo, 1986:163). So widespread was the practice that a number of female psychologists soon formed a National Council of Women Psychologists (NCWP) to agitate for change. Initially women were dealt with in terms of a traditional perspective. War work was considered ‘man’s work, and women’s role was to “keep the home fires burning”, and the “best they could expect was to ‘wait, weep, and comfort one another’ (Capshew & Laszlo, 1986:163). Indeed, when a number of female psychologists combined to protest their exclusion they were told by the ECP “to be good girls . . . wait until plans could be shaped up to include [them]” (quoted in Capshew & Laszlo, 1986, p. 163). Eventually the ECP shifted gears by forming a ‘Subcommittee on the Services of Women Psychologists’ (SSWP). The SSWP, far from dealing with the problem, addressed the issue by appealing to female psychologists’ sense of professional identity. Appealing to their identity as psychologists, the SSWP encouraged women to ‘rise above divisive polemics’ (Capshew & Laszlo, 1986:168). Stressing professional ethics, the members of the SSWP were “charged with emotionalism and lack of objectivity” (Capshew & Laszlo, 1986:172) and urged to think of themselves as psychologists rather than female psychologists. Even the more radical SPSSI failed to recognize female equity as an issue. The overall effect was to divide the members of the SSWP, many of whom felt that the organization should be disbanded at the war’s end. By the end of 1945 of more than 1000 psychologists that managed to directly serve in the US armed forces less than 40 were women. Gender politics and a stress on professionalism limited the role of women.

With the onset of the Cold War the new behavioral sciences were informed by discursive practices, which stressed warfare, objectivism, career, professionalism, and instrumental outcomes. On their own these factors were enough to favour masculinity over femininity, but in a context of Cold War imagery and discourse they appear to have overwhelmed not only the potential of the female academic but also images of women at

work. The feminist mystique, in part an outcome of these discourses, and in part a mirror of the tensions involved served to exclude women from theories of work. As a social construction born of feminist critique, the feminist mystique also contributed to a new set of tensions that placed womanhood at the centre of a divide between woman as homemaker and as professional; a debate that was to place women at the crucible of divided angst ridden subjectivities, as they continued to be hidden from history in theories of management.

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