

Utah Valley University

From the Selected Works of Susan R. Madsen

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Advancing Theories of Women and Leadership

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SELECTEDWORKS™

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**PRECONFERENCE PROPOSAL:
INTERNATIONAL LEADERSHIP ASSOCIATION CONFERENCE
2014**

Advancing Theories of Women and Leadership

Drs. Julia Storberg-Walker & Susan R. Madsen

SECTION I: Information –General

Session Description (up to 200 words)

Although there are many leadership frameworks, models, and theories, the majority of them were developed by men and are based on male-normed assumptions (Jogulu & Wood, 2006). There is clearly a gap in the literature in terms of individual and organizational leadership theories that focus on women. To help address this gap, in January 2014 a group of 70 scholars started an intensive collaboration to generate new theories of leadership for women. They will meet in Utah in May 2014 for a two-day theory building colloquium, titled “Advancing Theories of Women and Leadership.” The collaboration and May 2014 Colloquium will catalyze the refinement and/or creation of scholarly theories, generate focused and sustained research agendas, and advance the next generation of research related to women’s leadership and leadership development for girls and women. This proposed preconference is designed to build on and expand the work that began with the Colloquium. Conferees will have the opportunity to contribute their diverse views and perspectives to this important work. Goals for this preconference including mobilizing new and established scholars toward theory development, connecting scholars from different institutions and disciplines, and stimulating rigorous and sustained scholarly research on women and leadership.

Detailed Description (500-1000 words)

This preconference workshop, sponsored by the Women and Leadership Affinity Group, will provide a needed space to build on the May 2014 Colloquium and will contribute to the conference theme of “Conscious Leading for Global Change.” Specifically, this preconference will address the question: “How can women and leadership theory from diverse perspectives contribute towards conscious leading for global change?”

The May 2014 Colloquium was created to meet a need outlined in the “Asilomar Declaration and Call to Action on Women and Leadership” that emerged from the June 2013 WLAG Women and Leadership conference at Asilomar. By the time of the ILA conference in October 2014, 70 people from around the world will be working together to advance women and leadership theory. From January – April, 2014, the 70 participants who will come together for the May Colloquium are collaborating through electronic communication technology, and in May they came together to share theory building ideas and findings. This proposed session will provide another venue for theoretical development, provide an opportunity for new voices to join the initiative, and connect women and leadership theory with the long-range goal of fostering related global change.

Who will attend? It is anticipated that many attendees of the May 2014 Colloquium will also attend the October 2014 preconference session; however, participation in the Colloquium is not a

requirement for the preconference. All voices will be welcome. Participants of the Colloquium, however, will already be committed to an assertive and sustained research/theory building and publishing agenda on women and leadership that is, nonetheless, welcoming to the ideas of new collaborators. Collectively, the Colloquium participants represent a diverse yet cohesive collaborator of scholars from multiple disciplines and perspectives. In general, participants are one of three types of research scholar: (a) established women and leadership scholars, researchers, or theorists; (b) established scholars, researchers, and theorists in an area related or relevant to the women and leadership domain; or (c) new scholars (e.g., assistant professors, promising doctoral students) who are familiar with the existing literature and plan to seriously engage in women and leadership scholarship in upcoming years. We anticipate that other scholars will be eager to participate in this proposed preconference session.

Event Format: This preconference session will mirror and build upon the successful procedures implemented January and May 2014. After a welcome, introductions, and a broad overview of the day, the preconference will begin with a short introduction to applied theory building. Next, presentations from the Colloquium working groups will describe their progress to date as well as identify specific challenges or problems they have encountered. The presentations will also address how the group's work contributes to conscious leading for global change. The working groups will address any questions posed by attendees, and the broader collaborative discussion and work will begin. This will be done by breaking into small groups of shared interest.

To address the question "How can women and leadership theory from diverse perspectives contribute to conscious leading for global change," participants will self-select one of the five diverse perspectives or lenses below. The perspectives or "lenses" are:

- *Identity:* This perspective focuses on the construction and internalization of a leader identity and suggests that identity creation is central to the process of becoming a leader. "Internalizing a leader identity entails a set of relational and social processes through which one comes to see oneself, and is seen by others, as a leader" (Ely, Ibarra, & Kolb, 2011, p. 476).
- *Leadership Purpose and/or Calling:* "A leader's identity is tied to his or her sense of purpose. Leaders are most effective when they pursue purposes that are aligned with their personal values and oriented toward advancing the collective good...a central part of...being seen as a leader is developing an elevated sense of purpose and conveying that sense to others" (p. 476).
- *Second-Generation Gender Bias:* This perspective adopts a critical stance to focus on the hidden structural and cultural barriers to women as leaders. Moving beyond the explanation that the inequality is a result of intentional actions, this perspective focused on the "second-generations forms of gender bias, the powerful yet often invisible barriers to women's advancement that arise from cultural beliefs about gender, as well as workplace structures, practices, and patterns of interaction that inadvertently favor men" (p. 475).
- *Power:* This perspective focuses on the role of power and influence in women and leadership, and it often considers leadership in terms of the source and amount of power available to leaders. Importantly, although men and women often enact power differently, theories that explain what may be considered 'feminine' perspectives and practices of power are scarce.

- *Intersectionalities*: This perspective takes into account the many intersecting contexts, or intersectionalities, faced by women who aspire to be or are already leaders. This group will work on a theoretical framework seeking to explain how intersectionalities influence women's and girls' leadership aspirations and the factors that describe how women and girls lead and/or develop leadership.

Each team will be facilitated by at least one Colloquium participant to ensure continuity; the goal of each team will be to consider how their chosen perspective can contribute towards conscious leadership for global change. The result will be a list of recommendations for future research, ideas for improving leadership development programs; and/or suggested next steps for improving the status of women and leadership in the world. The final component of the day-long preconference is reconvening the full group so that each group may report its progress, findings, and recommendations. The session will conclude with ideas for next steps and a call to action to continue the applied theory building journey. Exact timeframes have not been included as we want to finish the design after the May Colloquium.

Proposed Agenda:

- Welcome and Introductions
- Applied Theory Building Lesson
- Break
- Colloquium Reports, Q&A
- Selection of Groups
- Groups Eat Lunch Together
- Breakout Sessions for Group Work
- Reconvening of Full Group for Report-Outs
- General Discussion & Q&A
- Concluding Remarks and Next Steps

References

Ely, R., Ibarra, H., & Kolb, D. (2011). Taking gender into account: Theory and design for women's leadership development programs. *Academy of Management Learning & Education*, 10(3), 474-493.

Additional Information

- *How does this workshop support the conference theme?* See opening paragraph
- *Is your workshop sponsored by an ILA Member Community?* This preconference will be sponsored by the Women and Leadership Affinity Group
- *What is the format of the event?* It will be a workshop with large group and small team working groups
- *Who should attend this workshop?* Scholars or scholar-practitioners who were interested in advancing women and leadership theory
- *What would attendees gain from attending this workshop?*

SECTION II: Event Information – Logistics

- Workshop length: Full-day (6 hours)

- Minimum No.: 15
- Maximum No.: 75
- Location: Conference hotel

SECTION III: Alternate Track

- Sponsorship: Women and Leadership Affinity Group
- Additional Sponsorship: Leadership Scholarship

SECTION IV: Projected Budget

- There will be no costs associated with the organizer or presenter fees. Our hope is that the cost of this preconference session will be as low as possible. We will consider costs of having a lunch included with this preconference.

SECTION V: Participants

- Session Organizer: Susan R. Madsen
- Workshop Leader(s): Susan R. Madsen, Julia Storberg-Walker, Ann Austin, and Karen Longman