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SENIOR WOMEN COMMUNITY COLLEGE ADMINISTRATORS:

LIFE IN HIGHER EDUCATION'S INNER CIRCLE

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SENIOR WOMEN COMMUNITY COLLEGE ADMINISTRATORS:

LIFE IN HIGHER EDUCATION'S INNER CIRCLE

By

Barbara Maruschak Tedrow

A Dissertation

**Submitted to
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ABSTRACT

SENIOR WOMEN COMMUNITY COLLEGE ADMINISTRATORS: LIFE IN HIGHER EDUCATION'S INNER CIRCLE

By

Barbara Maruschak Tedrow

This study investigates how senior-level women administrators at community colleges construct leadership identities. For women at community colleges, the construction of a leadership identity is a dilemma. The community college's egalitarian mission is in conflict with its traditional organizational conceptions framed by masculine orientations. This is an orientation that is generally neither open to nor inclusive of women's tendencies to use relational responses. Using data from thirty interviews, the study's findings based on qualitative research methodologies show how contextual forces shape a woman's leadership identity. The study's implications suggest ways that organizations can foster women's leadership in more creative comprehensive ways.

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Midland, Michigan 48640

To my family

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

A friend once told me writing a dissertation was like convalescing from a lengthy and distressing illness. I might compare it to finding my way through an underground tunnel. Both metaphors emphasize that writing a dissertation is a grueling but transformative experience, best appreciated when completed. Therefore it is with heartfelt thanks that I acknowledge those who supported me in the difficult journey to completion.

I am indebted to Robert Rhoads, my advisor whose direction, patience, and criticisms helped me turn my idea into a study. In addition, I thank Ann Austin, Maenette Benham, and Marilyn Amey, members of my dissertation committee. Each woman gave me her sincere encouragement, an insightful critique on the study's content, organization, and its future implications.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Community colleges are often described as the most accepting higher education environment (Brint & Karable, 1989). As the “people’s college,” first generation college students and students of diverse backgrounds comprise the largest population at community colleges. Moreover, community colleges at the faculty and administrative levels, are reported to be more diverse than research universities because they have included personnel with nontraditional backgrounds (Moore et al, 1983; Townsend, 1995). For example, data reveal that women make up roughly fifty percent of the faculty at community colleges (Townsend, 1995). This is in comparison to four-year colleges and universities that report women hold about thirty percent of the faculty positions (The Almanac of Higher Education, 1995). From this background, one might conclude that the community college is a dynamic institution, ripe with possibilities for change and innovation. The paradox is that we also know these colleges for their bureaucratic and hierarchical cultures dominated by masculine leadership perspectives (Amey & Twombly, 1992; Twombly & Amey, 1994). The contradiction between the image of the inclusive “people’s college” and the administrative conceptions strongly favoring masculine orientations provides the background in which the results of the study must be interpreted.

This study investigates how senior-level women administrators at the community college construct a leadership identity in the context of the preceding contradiction. To accomplish this goal, I analyze how organizational culture, gender, professional

successes and struggles, educational background, and early life experiences work together to shape a woman's leadership identity. This study assumes tension exists within organizational life because research over the past two decades has suggested that women tend to see the world differently than men (Belenky, Clinchy, Goldburger, and Tarule, 1986; Gilligan, 1982). This difference often situates women as outsiders within their workplace culture and forces them to construct leadership in distinctive ways as a means to function effectively (Kanter, 1977; Ferguson, 1984).

Using qualitative research methodologies, I interviewed thirty women to examine how each viewed herself as a leader within their community college. A useful tool involved asking the women to create a metaphor to discuss their leadership role in their organizational culture. In evaluating their responses, I came to realize the importance of their organizational culture in the construction of the women's leadership identity. I found that analyzing each woman's leadership identity by traditional leadership categories, such as relational, instrumental, or androgynous (mixed) characteristics developed by such standardized measuring instruments as the Bem Sex Role Inventory (BSRI), did not pay adequate attention to context. However, by analyzing the data through a response schemata such as adaption, reconciliation, or resistance, I could add depth to the women's responses as I considered their organizational context. In particular, each response schema was better able to show how organizational culture, gender, professional successes and struggles, educational background, and personal life experiences interweave to form a leadership identity. This analysis showed that while one schema may be dominant for a particular woman, the participants in negotiating their careers through

the community college culture generally used all the response schemata. To what degree the women used relational and instrumental behaviors, and in what response pattern, depended on factors such as the way each woman understood organizational cultures in relationship to gender issues and other issues of difference. Other dimensions to their leadership identity were the result of factors such as the use of a critical perspective in their decision making processes, educational background, and personal life experiences.

The voices of the three women's in the next section highlight the basic ways senior-level women administrators responded to their organizations' cultures. "Filling Big Shoes" is one woman's story of how she used adaption to traditional male oriented standards of her organization to be successful. "Keeping Your Place" shows how a senior-level administrator used reconciliation to her organizational culture through stereotypical womanly behavior and meeting traditional standards. "Breaking Through" illustrates a story of a resistance approach to traditional organizational culture and a senior-level administrator's struggle to include the relational paradigm in her institutional culture.

A. Voices from the Inner Circle

Regina Ibsen, Sonya Ziegler, and Terry Rheinhardt are pseudonyms for three study participants. Each woman tells of her struggles to respond to the demands of organizational life at the community college. For example, Regina Ibsen, with twenty-nine years of work experience, tells of her path to success and its cost. Sonya Ziegler, despite a stellar academic record and extensive knowledge of community colleges, reveals how

she struggled to survive and earn her way to a senior-level position by overachieving, remaining silent, and reconciling multiple expectations. Finally, Terry Rheinhardt's account explains how her progressive education, which emphasized individuality, self expression, and social responsibility, enabled her to resist accepted norms of her college to pave the way for women and relational ways of leading in her institution.

These women's voices highlight three responses to traditional organizational cultures: adaptation, reconciliation, and resistance. They are not meant to delimit but to show the range of responses these women used to make sense of their organizational culture. Regina's story exemplifies conformity or adaptations made to traditional organizational practices and standards that have made her successful and useful to the college. Sonya's story, on the other hand, explains how she must modify or reconcile her behavior to be consistent with the culture of the traditional organization while maintaining appropriate womanly behaviors. Reconciliation as defined in this study is a response frequently used by women in situations where nonacceptance of relational paradigms exists. Finally, Terry's story highlights how she defined herself and her leadership through resistance to accepted norms by integrating relational and instrumental behaviors, so that she could be "herself" and act on her values. Each woman constructed her leadership identity to deal with the contradictory nature of the community college culture. Each faced the challenge of a culture that espouses an inclusive mission while building its structure on traditional organizational constructs that are neither inclusive nor open.

1. Filling Big Shoes - Adaption

Regina Ibsen found she had big shoes to fill as she grew on the job. Regina explained that her male supervisors encouraged her career development and she adapted to their expectations and standards with enthusiasm. She discussed several impressive accomplishments such as guiding the building of a new center that houses university classes, the formation of a human resource office, and the development of a fringe benefit program as the capstones of her twenty-nine-year career.

When asked to explain her leadership in a metaphor, Regina said she saw herself as a lone wolf because wolves are known for their independence. Regina's independence, from her account, stemmed from her early family experience. She grew up in a single-parent family. Her parents divorced when she was young and she lived with her mother in the city with her father nearby. After her father died, Regina spent a great deal of time with her grandparents and less time in the city where her mother worked. Regina poignantly described her grandparents' influence:

My grandparents were from Western Europe and hard working. They had a farm, a fruit farm near here, although they didn't always work it. It was kind of a part-time thing. When I was young, I had the opportunity to work with them. They used to bring in migrant workers and, at a young age, I used to help keep their books and write the checks.

Regina spoke fondly of her grandfather and remembered him as an active Democrat and a strong union advocate. However, she proudly emphasized she is a Republican and was recently named to an important state board by the governor of her state.

Regina began her career as a student worker in the department she now

supervises. Describing her college culture as a family, Regina said her jobs grew as the college grew and employee demands expanded. Moreover, she developed skills and experience that were useful to the organization, because she was more than willing and able to do the job even though she did not have the appropriate credentials. Over time, she completed an associate's degree at her community college, a bachelor's degree at another institution, and finally, earned a master's degree in business administration from a nearby university.

Regina was trained by and worked for men who supported her advancement through the organization. Eventually, she had conflicts with some of her male colleagues and thus developed assertiveness as another skill. In a pivotal moment in her career, she told the college president that he would have to choose between her and another male employee who continually obstructed her efforts. The college president chose Regina and ended the man's employment. Since then she has grown in her ability to identify problems and has developed a rational problem-solving style. These skills helped to elevate her to a position on the president's senior staff.

Nonetheless, some aspects of her success have confused Regina. Though she is a senior-level staff member, she believes the president keeps her at a distance. Moreover, she doesn't relate informally to the women with whom she works and has few close colleagues. Nor does she have much time for informal chatter or discussions with her staff. This is especially true in the morning, which is her best work time. Small talk does not interest Regina, because she does not talk much about her own family, and family is the major topic of conversation among the women. Regina also

believes the women on the staff do not accept her position of authority because many knew her as a student worker. She is frustrated with her subordinates' inability to complete projects without constant supervision.

Regina used the metaphor of a "lone wolf" to describe her leadership style. She keeps to herself, though she is responsible for moving the group along. Her identity as a leader, though successful on the organizational level, has created some confusion in the interpersonal realm. "I'm sure that the staff thinks that I'm an ogre. I feel like I don't fit into any of the gender things. I don't really fit in over here with the men and I don't fit in here with the women. I'm just kind of out there."

Regina Ibsen provides a glimpse at a senior-level woman administrator who uses an adaptation leadership style to conform to masculine or instrumental standards of traditional organizations. Regina's account suggests that adaptation to values such as maintaining an emotional distance and employing objective thinking have worked well for her. Regina is assertive, goal oriented, a master at rational problem-solving, and an astute judge of organizational inefficiencies. Regina's identity as a leader is aloof but nonetheless caring. She would like to pursue the goal of equalizing the salary inequities between women and men doing the same job. Regina periodically considers ways to equalize the salary scales without upsetting the entire college budget, but has yet to find a workable solution to the problem. These attributes and her caution make her a valuable asset to the organization. However, she suggests her success has had some costs. She feels isolated and distant from both female and male colleagues, even those who support her work and rely on her abilities. She has far exceeded her goals often

doing more than required, so she is not sure why this is so. Why does she persist with her conformity despite her sense of isolation and feeling of being a “lone wolf?” One reason is that she enjoys the benefits of her hard work and is energized by the ongoing challenge she faces. In some ways, her manner of relating to colleagues has become natural to her now. She does not always like the isolation but accepts her role as a “lone wolf” who moves the group along. To a degree, Regina fits into the culture. She believes that her decisions and skills clearly have helped the college. Regina highlights the sacrifices and challenges women often must make in adapting to a masculine-oriented organization. The story of her adaptation and those of other women will be presented in Chapter IV.

2. Keeping Your Place - Reconciliation

Sonya Ziegler grew up in a community college family. Her father was the founding president of a community college in another state, and everyone in her family pursued careers in education. From observing many experiences of the teachers in her family, Sonya decided she did not want to teach, so when she went to college she majored in journalism. She laughingly explained that she chose to use her journalism degree as a community college administrator, rather than at a newspaper, because she thought she would not have to deal with so many deadlines. Though she was not aware of the many deadlines involved in administrative work, Sonya was keenly aware of the unique features of the community college such as its egalitarian mission, its distinct culture, and the importance of community relations.

When she completed her bachelor's degree with honors at a small liberal arts college, she married and moved to the small cosmopolitan area where she now lives with her husband. That was twenty years ago. Sonya began her career as the lone woman on the staff. Today at her community college she is a senior-level administrator responsible for directing a major support service that deals with the community. In the interview, Sonya described her college culture as community-oriented because many years ago the businesspeople of the area provided the political force to create its establishment. She explained:

It was the people who said we want to have higher education opportunities available for our young people. At the time, the young people were leaving the area and not coming back. So to make a future for the region, the businessmen decided we needed to create this community college opportunity. Local, quality and affordable education was important to the growth of the geographical region.

Sonya's role now is to use the community as a resource and advise the other members of the senior administrative staff to meet the goals of her community college.

Despite the importance of her job, Sonya said she often feels out of the mainstream. A factor contributing to her feelings of being an outsider is the hierarchical nature of her organization. A major factor is that Sonya is employed in a support service area and not in academics. The core of the institutional mission, academics, with its faculty imperatives colors the entire culture of her college. Sonya believes that this makes her an easy target for faculty who look at her area as dispensable in times of financial crisis. This also makes her uneasy about her place at the college. Sonya described how she has come to terms with the situation:

I used to resist being seen as dispensable. I remember one of the first days I was on the job here in my little broom-closet office, one of the most vocal faculty members came in to tell me that they didn't need me. He asked why the administration hired me and told me I was going to have to do a lot to prove that I was of value to the college. He said, "the faculty is where it really all happens." The faculty bias is there at this college. I try not to have those similar but contradictory biases. For me, to paint all faculty with the same brush I would be just like that man. Administrators cannot all be painted with the same brush just as faculty cannot. I'm not in conflict with faculty members --- I don't want to leave that impression.

Sonya's remarks offer a glimpse into her reality and her sense of being on the margins. She must harmonize the expectations of several groups: the faculty, her superiors, the people reporting to her, and the community. Her juggling act shows she is flexible, but it also takes all her energy. Sonya explained that her first reaction to a lack of acceptance by the powerful faculty and to her boss's expectations was to overachieve. No one asked or advised her to overachieve; it was a natural reaction. Sonya said over the years she noted women responding to these contextual pressures in a distinct way: "I think that's one of those differences between the males and females in administrative positions. We women (this is the case for most of the women I know) constantly operate at 150 percent and do more than is expected because you have to do that to break even."

Sonya has had a variety of bosses. Each offered opportunities and challenges. One supervisor focused on journalism and not on fund raising. Another boss decided her office should not be represented on the administrative staff, so she was taken off for several years. When she applied for the top job in her department years ago, she was even passed over for an outside man who, according to his resume, had more years of experience in public relations. Sonya kept her plans to herself and developed fund

raising skills despite its lack of acceptance at the time.

Sonya has learned to reconcile the many demands though it has not always been easy. Once, while working for a demanding boss, Sonya's desire to prove herself wore her down and she was forced to take a sick leave. She even seriously considered leaving the institution after making a plea to her mentor, the president, who would do nothing to alleviate the intolerable situation for her and the other employees. Both men have since left the college and there appears to more reasonable leadership. Since then she faces the demands and stress in healthier ways. For example, when the current president asked her to move her office, Sonya said she thought it through and reacted in a healthier way:

I could have just dug in my heels and said, 'No, we are not moving.' We moved out of the administration building on main campus as part of a plan to put students first --- to make sure that all of our student services are in one building on one floor so students don't have to go chasing all over campus to get their [services]. I knew our office would no longer be in that loop or visible or as visible. Sometimes it takes extraordinary measures to keep students a priority, so we moved.

Because Sonya feels so much is expected of her and because she must continue to prove her value, overachieving is now second nature to her. For example, her department's philosophy is service oriented; therefore, they accommodate the needs of the internal constituents, such as faculty, to meet their goals. Sonya's leadership metaphor reflects the nature of her position:

You know, magicians use the interlocking rings to separate and put back together. I think that probably typifies me because I can't do this by myself, and yet there are times when I have to be independent. Ultimately, I always rely on the team around me. So I think the fact that the rings fit together and yet can be separated when

necessary would probably describe my leadership best.

However, the position of supporting others is difficult because Sonya or her staff receive little recognition from the college for their accomplishments. Sonya explained:

When we have those situations that arise where we know we can help somebody internally . . . we try to give exceptional customer service. We thought if any department or division on campus needs to be a model, it is this one. Yet despite extraordinary efforts, when internal quality service surveys are given, the office is routinely rated below average by faculty. Fellow administrators and support staff don't rate us that way, but the faculty consistently do. So I think it's just going to be an ongoing task, and I'm not sure that we're ever going to convince everybody. There are some people who don't understand and will never understand. I think if we try to convert them, we're probably wasting our time.

Sonya must also serve the community and its needs to foster its support of the college's goals. Sonya's role makes it important that she remain even tempered. This has not been a problem, since she does not lose self-control often. Yet Sonya admits she can become angry if someone commits to a responsibility and does not follow through. Because her role depends on her ability to work interdependently with other areas of the college, when individuals don't fulfill their commitments, Sonya's job becomes even harder. Overall, Sonya has learned to accept a position on the organization's margins outside the academic core mission. By being flexible, finding ways to bridge the expectations of diverse groups, understanding community needs, and being helpful on an almost daily basis, Sonya has survived. Moreover, she survived because she made few enemies and was at the right place at the right time when it became apparent her community college needed her fund raising skills.

Sonya's leadership style of reconciliation also seems to correspond with her family

life. Though she would like to return to school to earn her masters or even a doctorate, Sonya has not done so and can't consider the possibility for a few years. Pursuing an advanced degree would take away from her family responsibilities because her children are still in school. Also, Sonya believes her mother-in-law would disapprove of such a decision.

Sonya's account tells how she reconciles contradictory expectations at home and at work. Reconciliation is distinct from adaption, because reconciliation helps the woman modify her behavior to deal with the double bind of being a working women. Just as a good daughter or wife might be, Sonya is flexible, doing the best job she can to help others and maintaining stability in the face of change. She also relies on self talk to deal with unfair judgements and situations to keep them from affecting her self esteem. Reconciliation is necessary for Sonya because it brings harmony to a situation where the expectations are ambiguous and often contradictory. She faced the demands of a culture that expected her to spend a large amount of time modifying her behavior to suit various supervisors and situations. One can only imagine what Sonya might have accomplished had she had opportunities for growth. Her "Reconciliation." story and that of others will be highlighted in Chapter V.

3. Breaking Through - Resistance

While Regina Ibsen provides an example of women as adapters, and Sonya Ziegler reveals a pattern better characterized as day-to-day reconciliation, Terry Rheinhardt, a community college president of ten years, tells a story of resistance.

Terry grew up in a family of teachers on the East Coast. "My mother is Irish and my father Polish." Terry's family was religious and she entered the convent as a young woman. It gave her a progressive education where she learned that a critical perspective and reflection enabled her to act in socially responsible ways. Because Terry also was encouraged to develop her individuality, she left the convent for a life style which she felt would allow her to more fully express her identity. After teaching a few years, Terry received a Ford Foundation Fellowship which allowed her to earn a master's and doctorate in English, English literature, and intellectual history from a leading research university.

Terry choose a book as her leadership metaphor because it symbolized teaching and learning, which she believes helps every administrator to be an engaged and thoughtful leader. Books symbolize Terry's personal love of teaching and is reflected in her work history. Terry, who has brought many women onto her administrative staff, is confident about her position at her college and how she is perceived as president. She explained:

My competency isn't challenged very much because I've been in the classroom all my life. I'm a really good teacher and I love it. I have a degree that's as good as anybody else's, from one of the best schools in the world . . . I guess you've got to love what you do, and I guess I didn't really aspire to the position. It just came to be the next logical thing to do. I think not to love what you do and not to be grounded in the heart of the mission of the institution, which is teaching and learning would be difficult . . . I did what I did because of the circumstances in which I found myself . . . In hindsight it was the right thing to do; but in a sense it's like it was the opportunity that I was ready for.

Terry described her college culture as diverse because there has been an influx

of immigrants to her district in recent years and this phenomenon has changed the demographics of the college. As a top administrator, Terry defined diversity in terms of gender, ethnic, and philosophical diversity. However, she explained that identifying and hiring women and men of color for administrative positions has been difficult. Terry says the college is trying to do better.

In the interview, Terry described a situation where gender issues were at the core of a serious conflict. She said that over the last few years Board members tried to maneuver her into choosing men for senior-level positions. The main pressure came from a senior-level board member who was getting nervous about having so many women on the senior administrative staff. After Terry was selected as college president from a national search, the Board told her they had been especially impressed with a male candidate they had rejected for the position filled by Terry. They suggested she hire him for the position of academic vice president. "I can't do that," she told them. "You have to have a national search . . . You don't understand. He doesn't want to be an academic vice president; he wants to be a president. That's why he applied for this job." Nonetheless, the board persisted with its demand. Unmoved, she countered, "I will have a national search and we'll hire the best person for the job." After they completed the search, the committee brought her a dilemma. She explained:

In the last round of interviews my executive assistant was in the pool. They agonized. They finally said, 'We cannot recommend to you three people from the candidate pool. We cannot recommend one. The committee knows it's not our prerogative ...but we can't find anybody that could do the job as well as [the acting vice president], but she doesn't have her doctorate.'

Terry met with the co-chairs of the search committee to discuss alternatives. They brought them to the next board meeting. Together they made their argument to hire a woman without a Ph.D. She explained how she made her case to oppose the traditional standards:

The files of eight people are on my desk, three women and five men. The three women are by far the strongest candidates . . . You're telling me I have to hire a man. Now, I can pick one of those men out of there and hire him, but it's the wrong thing to do and I will not do it . . . I am recommending to you that we do exactly what the committee suggests and appoint the acting academic vice president and not go through another national search.

After much discussion, the board agreed and Terry claimed a victory for herself and the search committee.

Terry's account reveals her resistance to the traditional standards imposed by her community college board. In a culture that values distance and objective responses, resistance could put Terry at risk. She reacted boldly and with conviction. Moreover, she continued to resist conformity over an extended period despite the board's insistence she hire a man as academic vice president. Why did she persist? She believed it was the right thing to do because she wanted to hire the best person for the job. As a new college president, Terry set the tone for her tenure as president with the outcome of the first interaction with the Board. If she had capitulated to the board's demands, she would have been a target for other power maneuvers. By supporting the search committee, she created a working coalition with college personnel at all levels. Her resistance became not an individual voice, but a voice in concert with a collective group. Terry understands the meaning of resistance because her education and life

experiences, which stressed individuality and self expression, firmly implanted in her mind the idea of justice and social responsibility. She resisted conformity at several other points in her life as when she left the convent. Terry's education also exposed her to the intellectual history of ideas and to notions of oppression and resistance. This background gave her the knowledge and skill to build coalitions by equalizing the balance of power between the faculty, administration, and the Board of Trustees.

The stories, *Filling Big Shoes*, *Keeping Your Place*, and *Breaking Through* highlight the responses women make to adapt, reconcile, and resist the community college's traditional organizational orientations. They show how factors such as the culture of an organization, gender issues, and personal and educational background shape leadership identity. The roles these women play at their colleges represent the three traditional functional entities of most traditional higher educational institutions: student services, community outreach, and academics. Regina is in Student or Administrative Services; Sonya, Community Outreach, and Terry, as a president, is focused on academics as a president because of her faculty background. Student Services and Community Outreach have been traditionally viewed as support to the core mission of the college, the academic area with its faculty oriented concerns. Therefore, the women must negotiate another contextual issue the perceived importance of the department in their college culture. Their stories illuminate the complex dynamics at work in women's leadership at the community college.

B. Defining the Problem

The question addressed by this study is: How do senior-level women administrators construct leadership identities to function at community and two-year colleges in the United States? I define leadership as the ability to interpret the culture of the institution, thereby helping others find a common vision of the organization in formal and informal leadership roles (Bensimon, Neumann, & Birnbaum, 1989). Foster (1989) contends that today two frames conceptualize traditional educational leaders: the business/public administration model and the political model. The most popular business model is the bureaucratic manager who develops goals to meet organizational needs. As leaders, they are the link between labor and the administration, focusing on motivating individuals for production. This model promotes effective management such as situational leadership (Fiedler, 1967), which focuses on choosing individuals with appropriate work attitudes and who show a high level of competency with specific skills. Making the right choice also enhances the position of the superior. The bureaucratic leadership model is usually gender-blind and built on the masculine- oriented organizational models with attention given to outcomes (Blackmore, 1989). The second leadership frame is the political model. Also known as the transactional model, it is built on relationships with such groups as unions, instructors, or the community. Successful leadership in this model shows competency in maneuvering and managing the interaction between work groups.

While bureaucratic and political models are the dominant leadership frames in U.S. education today, in this study I give particular attention to a more recent conception of

transformational leadership (Foster, 1989). In view of gender issues embedded in traditional organizational structures, I examine how women leaders facilitate within an institution a common vision that builds community and deals with gender and other differences. Transformative leadership aspires to include values other than authority and goal setting to create a common vision of organization that recognizes and learns from difference (Foster, 1989). At the core of this leadership identity are critical and transformative practices, as well as, educative and ethical practices. For example, transformative relational leaders are critical observers who consider the past and current constructions of reality, but hold up ideals of justice by seeking to include all groups into a community. "This means a reconceptualization of life practices where common ideals of individuality, self expression, and democracy stand important" (Foster, 1989, p. 52).

Foster stresses the critical perspective because it is at the heart of transformative leadership oriented to social change. Rather than being locked into tradition, Foster views leadership and organizations as socially constructed realities and seeks to deconstruct its traditions and norms. Thus women prompt changes for the good of the community as based on reflection of the past, future, and the self. Self-reflection is encouraged as part of the critical process because it is necessary for the transformation of social consciousness.

Social change is not about revolution or destruction of all authority. Social change happens in small segments when groups work together for gender and racial equality. Transformative leaders have a personal and a civic morality as they constantly

seek to improve social conditions which are either “dehumanizing or threatening.” (p. 56)

Thus, Transformative leaders live out the ideals inherent in a progressive educational philosophy because they “combine the notion of a civic moral, inherent in democratic principles, with the aim of nurturing the individual to take responsibility for her/his educational growth” (ASCD Yearbook, 1982, p.1).

Belenky (1996) brings this relational transformative leadership identity into sharper focus by describing individual behavior, which is community-focused rather than self-focused as a patriarch ruling over others. An individual transformative leader creates other leaders. In this sense, Belenky describes leadership as shared and communal. While transformative relational leaders are often engaged in serious battles with repressive individuals and systems, they seek to transform rather than destroy their oppressor by focusing on strengthening and entrusting the silenced. In summary, women’s leadership in this study is examined through traditional frames as well as transformative leadership perspectives focused on critical, educative, ethical attitudes, and actions. These models, bureaucratic, political, or transformational, can be correlated to the three leadership styles developed in this study— adaption, reconciliation, and resistance.

The basic hypothesis of this study is that women as leaders must contend with traditional organizational settings that often marginalize them due in part to their ways of thinking and behaving. This hypothesis is grounded in the literature on women's identity, which contends that women develop relational ways of thinking and behaving. Relational ways of knowing, as Gilligan (1982) and Belenky, Clinchy, Goldburger,

Tarule (1986) argue, are tied to socially constructed gender roles. Further, relational ways of knowing often exist in opposition to the primary patterns of traditional organizational structures (Ferguson, 1984; Iannello, 1992; Smircich, 1985). Therefore, a central assumption of this study is that:

Traditional organizations tend to function as male-centered with norms and standards reflective of male values and ways of knowing. Specifically, traditional organizations tend to embrace hierarchical structures governed by a few with rational and objective rules of behavior and language are characterized by individual activities and linear thinking which are designed to increase conformity, stability, and productivity. In traditional organizations competition to gain status and power is essential to the success. Consequently, women often exist as “outsiders” within these traditional organizational cultures because of their tendency toward such behaviors as relational ways of knowing and acting.

Understanding the behaviors women enact to succeed in such settings can help higher education institutions identify barriers that discourage women from seeking membership at the senior administrative level. An understanding of women’s choices may provide insight into how environments can be created where relational ways of knowing are more likely to be embraced, thus offering a wider range of leadership styles and opportunities for women and for men.

The theoretical perspective derives from studies suggesting that leadership style is best understood as a continuum, with relational style at one end and instrumental style at the other end (Bem, 1977; Wahl & Vocante, 1993). An ethic of care characterizes the relational style of leadership and is shown by a concern for others and a desire to foster relationships. Such a style promotes collaboration, cooperation, and networking. An instrumental style emphasizes autonomy, control, and competition (Smircich, 1985). The

literature suggests that women tend to use relational styles, while men tend to have instrumental styles (Bensimon, 1989; Denmark, 1993; Gilligan, 1982; Lyons, 1983). While tendencies may exist, it is more likely that both genders use both styles. In other words, it is too simplistic to suggest that all women are relational leaders and all men are instrumental leaders. Context affects the way an individual responds to situations and environments.

In addition to context, Collins (1985) and hooks (1994) suggest that a woman's position along this leadership continuum will further be affected by her self-definition as an "insider" or an "outsider" within environments that are considered hierarchical and directive. Because men have dominated senior administrative positions in higher education and contributed in significant ways to organizational structure, colleges and universities tend to foster instrumental styles of leadership. Thus, both women and their relational styles of leadership are often situated outside the organization. Aisenberg and Harrington (1988), in discussing the lives of women faculty say that women in academe may indeed be outsiders in the sacred grove.

In a broad sense, an "insider" is an individual who exhibits behaviors and mental and personality attributes defined as acceptable to a particular culture (Goffman 1990). By comparison, an "outsider" is someone who fails to meet the standards of behavior or accepted norms of the culture. The term "outsider" may also refer to someone who, because of social distance, has not been defined as a member of a specific group. For example, a professor of sociology at Harvard University may not be considered an insider at another university's sociology department despite similar

values, norms, and beliefs.

For purposes of this study, a senior-level administrator is an individual in a position such as dean, director or executive director, vice president, assistant to the chancellor, president, or provost. These positions have a high level of responsibility for institutional operations and decision making and traditionally are most often filled by men (Moore & Sagaria, 1991; Warner & DeFluer, 1993). Thus, their male colleagues often outnumber the women in such roles, situating them as outsiders in the work situation. In summary, this study investigated the experiences of community college women at the senior administrative level against this traditional backdrop to answer the following research question: How do senior-level women administrators construct leadership identities to function within community and two-year colleges?

C. Significance of the Study

Knowledge obtained from this study will lead to greater understanding of how community and two-year colleges can be altered to better accommodate and reflect women's diverse leadership styles. Such a transformation may make the participation of women in senior-level roles more likely. Thus, a secondary concern of this study is increasing women's participation in higher education leadership.

Women in higher education have largely remained under-represented in senior-level administrative positions. As Sandler explains:

Women administrators remain concentrated in a small number of low status areas traditionally viewed as women's fields (i.e., nursing, student affairs, affirmative action) or other academic support roles such as

admissions officer, registrar, or bookstore manager. Or they are locked into associate or assistant positions with little chance of advancing (1986, pp. 175 -176).

An unanswered question is: Why has the number of women in senior-level administrative positions remained relatively low despite their increased participation in middle-management positions (Moore & Sagaria, 1991; Wahl & Vocante, 1993)? Recent research points to organizational structure as a possible explanation. Wahl and Vocante (1993) suggest that the low participation rate may be due to a system that is unfriendly to women's ways of knowing, therefore requiring women to compromise too much of their identity to participate. Although a faculty position often leads to an administrative position, studies on women faculty by Aisenberg and Harrington (1988) and by Moore and Sagaria (1991) found that under-representation may be due to women's career choices. These studies suggest that the system creates a situation under which women cannot feasibly negotiate a continuous work pattern while managing personal and family responsibilities.

As a result of this study, I suggest that women's participation rate on senior-level administrative teams may be low because women's ways of knowing and leading cause them to be marginalized within higher education institutions. In effect, women's views are treated by the majority of the senior-level administrative culture as outsider perspectives. Therefore, in the sacred grove of senior-level administration, women face significant barriers to career growth and advancement.

A significant finding of this study concerns the ways women respond to contextual factors such as community colleges cultures. Such a finding may provide

insight into why women are underrepresented on senior-level administrative teams. Furthermore, this study highlights the major compromises in personal goals and choices women are often forced to make to enter and operate within senior-level administration. The compromises also serve as a deterrent for many women to seek administrative positions. Through understanding obtained from this study, I offer suggestions that can make the community college climate more suitable and desirable for women leaders. Ultimately, these insights may make it possible for all leaders, both men and women, to embrace multiple ways of knowing and foster the development of cognitively diverse leadership styles.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Women's Leadership

Women in higher education are less likely than men to participate in upper levels of leadership (Warner & DeFluer, 1993). One-half the women holding senior-level positions as deans are in traditionally defined women's fields such as nursing, home economics, the arts, and continuing education. Furthermore, more than half of these positions are in liberal arts colleges, while similar positions in the larger research comprehensive universities are held by men.

Community colleges reported the greatest increase of women in senior-level positions between 1986 and 1991 (Faulconer, 1995; Warner & DeFluer, 1993). This data makes community colleges an interesting site for analysis. For example, does the hypothesis that higher education institutions are defined by traditional hierarchical structures also apply to community colleges? Perhaps at the community colleges some progressive changes have taken place. Is the climate relatively friendlier to women's ways of knowing, despite Amey and Twombly's study (1992) suggesting that the community college leadership paradigm is male-centered? If the climate is more supportive, how is it so and what is happening? This study is designed to show how women work within community colleges as organizations, and, in particular, how the prevailing structures of such organizations shape their leadership identities. Is the increasing percentage of women leaders in community colleges a reflection of a

women-centered organizational structure? Or, is it due to the community college's relatively lower status in the higher education hierarchy? The literature is vague about these factors and other possibilities that may be at work in shaping women's career paths at community colleges.

The research on women's administrative leadership is helpful when considering community college organizational contexts. Research by Bensimon (1989) suggests that within higher education relational leadership is needed to change traditional structures. Relational leadership seeks to use collaborative problem-solving rather than hierarchical leadership models which direct from behind or in front. Ferguson (1984), Iannello (1992), and Smircich (1985) also contend that to move an institution from a hierarchical top-down structure to a flatter structure requires relational and flexible leadership. They further argue that relational leadership benefits higher education overall because this philosophy tends to foster inclusive policies for the benefit of multiple and diverse constituencies. In particular, relational leadership tends to move beyond decision-making based solely on cost efficiency. Relational leadership also considers context and culture when addressing current educational issues such as diminishing resources and changing student and faculty needs (Amey & Twombly, 1992; Pearson, Shavlik, & Touchton, 1989; Wahl & Vocante, 1993).

A study by Wahl and Vocante (1993) on the surface reveals some contradictions to this argument. For example, they examined women's leadership at a research university and found that all senior-level administrative women in their study had masculine leadership styles as identified by the Bem Sex Role Inventory (BSRI), while

senior women faculty identified their leadership style as more versatile using both instrumental and relational styles. This seems to support Kanter's findings (1977) that suggest women have to behave like men to hold senior leadership positions and have their achievements recognized. For example, Kanter explains how embedded masculine traits of rationality and task orientation in leadership images are inherent to traditional organizational theory:

This thinking elevates the traits assumed to belong to men with educational advantages to necessities for effective organizations; tough minded approach to problems; analytical abilities to abstract and plan; a capacity to set aside personal, emotional considerations in the interests of task accomplishment; and a cognitive superiority in problem solving. (Kanter, 1975, p. 43)

These findings lead one to ask: What is it about the senior-level administrative circle in higher education that limits participation of women with relational styles, or at least relational and instrumental styles? Are women chosen for administrative positions because they have masculine styles, or do they adapt these styles?

The argument suggesting that organizational structures would change with the addition of women to senior-level leadership roles is not straightforward. Hersey and Blanchard (1982) and Powell (1988) question the connection between gender and leadership style. Baxter and Lansing (1981) found that, although women may have different opinions than men regarding war, peace, child care, the poor, and education, when in leadership positions they do little differently from their male counterparts. Furthermore, political research shows that increased participation by women in governing bodies shows little difference in legislation proposed or enacted (Kathlene,

1989).

As for these apparent contradictions, psychological research has uncovered factors that may explain women's adapting masculine styles when in leadership positions. Eagly and Johnson (1990) investigated the relationship between gender and leadership style. Their analysis compared findings from three types of studies: laboratory, survey, and organizational. In experimental laboratory studies and survey studies women tended to use an interpersonal style; men were more task-oriented. In on-site organizational studies, however, no significant difference existed between genders. Overall, their study indicates that, while women may tend to have a set predisposition for relational styles, contextual factors may modify that style.

Eagly, Makhijani, and Klonsky (1992) investigated the relationship between gender and evaluation of leaders. Finding that women in leadership positions were evaluated slightly more negatively than men in similar positions. Specific circumstances appeared to affect the negative evaluations. For example, they were more likely to occur when women chose to deviate from relational gender roles and engage in autocratic, detached leadership behaviors typically associated with men. Also, when women occupy men's fields and are evaluated primarily by men, they tend to be negatively evaluated. These findings suggest that traditional workplace standards put women in a double bind. Bateson (1972) defines a double bind as a situation where an individual by obeying one rule automatically disobeys a second. The double bind is that men expect women to conform to masculine work standards, but when women conform, men judge them harshly. Furthermore, the second finding suggests that men

may judge the performance of women in masculine fields using stereotypical gender standards. Further study is needed to understand precisely what causes these negative evaluations within a given context. In summary, we know that women who enter male fields must negotiate a double bind by working harder and adapting the appropriate style to gain acceptance and access to information and resources. Such hard work and behavior management do not necessarily guarantee success because the tendency exists for women to encounter negative evaluations by co-workers and superiors, especially in masculine career fields.

A study by Stokes (1984) at the University of Florida illustrates this point. She found that the mere presence of women in senior-level administrative positions was not the solution to the problem of designing organizations around more relational orientations. Stokes argues that women cannot employ relational leadership styles because the organization's norms produce conformity to traditional male styles. If women choose not to conform to male gender norms, the resulting social isolation presents barriers that make it difficult, if not impossible, for them to do their jobs. Logically, isolation increases an individual's sense of being an "outsider," and may discourage a woman from pursuing relational styles even further because of her need to connect to others and to achieve in her job.

Kanter (1977) contends that many women in senior-level administrative positions are outnumbered by men and are viewed as tokens or outsiders within organizations. Furthermore, women may be viewed as tokens or outsiders because masculine traits (competitiveness and instrumentalism) continue to be more highly

valued than feminine traits (collaboration and affiliation) despite increased participation rates of women in the workplace (Broverman, Broverman, Rosenkrantz, & Vogel, 1970; Williams & Best, 1990). This phenomenon creates a foreign environment for most women. However, a study by Brown and Geis (1984) suggests that the stress of an unfriendly environment can be modified, if not eliminated. They found that when women were given support (authority legitimation), thereby mediating the consensus values about the favored leadership style, discriminatory bias against women could be weakened.

The paradox between women's leadership styles and their actual behavior may be largely due to the masculine or hierarchical context of most institutions, to being outnumbered, and to peer norms. This paradox situates women as outsiders and shapes their leadership style by inhibiting relational styles of leading (Brown & Geis, 1984; Kanter, 1977; Wahl & Vocante, 1993).

Wahl and Vocante (1993) identified some specific institutional barriers that exclude relational ways of leading. They found that a predisposition of the senior administrative circle to masculine styles may influence the selection process. Also the senior-level administrative women in their study saw the under-representation of women in administrative circles as a result of other career choices by senior women faculty. The senior women currently in administrative positions did not regard the organizational culture with its expectations as a problem. The researchers speculated that this lack of empathy by senior-level women is the result of the blind acceptance of traditional organizational structures.

Despite the differences of perception both women faculty and women senior-level administrators in the Wahl and Vocante (1993) study saw themselves as outsiders in a ritualized setting dominated by masculine norms and a higher representation of men. Both senior tenured women faculty and senior-level women administrators agreed that: (1) women have to work twice as hard as men to be accepted, (2) women were more likely to assume personal responsibility for failures in their careers, and (3) women were excluded from male information networks.

Research on faculty development is pertinent here because senior-level administrators often come from faculty ranks. Morgan (1987) argues that women faculty must learn to think like men. While embracing the cultural behavior and values of academe (rationality and critical analysis), women faculty also must learn to negotiate a variety of roles, such as mother, daughter, wife, peer, mentor, friend, and professional expert. Morgan describes the role adaption that women must learn as the "bearded mother" -- implying that they have to be both male and female. However, Aisenberg and Harrington (1988) maintain that even with beards women are still outsiders in the academe.

Although leadership and gender differences are popular research topics, there is seldom a focus on how women's self-definitions as cultural outsiders shape their leadership experience. Also missing is research on the behaviors women use and attitudes they hold to achieve and maintain membership in senior administration within community and two-year colleges. Questions addressed in this study are: (1) What type of leadership styles are used by women community college leaders and how are these styles shaped by their organizational culture, and (2) How can the inner circle of leadership be open to women

so relational styles can be embraced?

B. Theoretical Assumptions

Three primary assumptions undergird this study: first, women more often than men, use relational ways of knowing and reasoning; second, traditional views of organizations do not provide an adequate framework to analyze structures that produce and foster gender bias, nor do they offer an adequate framework to analyze leadership; and third, cultural context is important to understanding women's leadership styles.

1. Assumption One: Gender and Ways of Knowing

According to Gilligan's research (1982), women tend to use relational ways of knowing and reasoning. Advancing the work of Chodorow (1979), Gilligan theorizes that women's identities are formed through intimacy and that this becomes the basis for women's developmental processes. Because female children do not need to separate or differentiate from their mother, most often the primary care giver, to develop an identity as women, girls can continue to maintain a sense of attachment to their mother and grow personally. Boys, on the other hand, must differentiate from the mother and reject, to a degree, the intimacy that they established early with their mothers to develop a masculine identity. Boys, and later men, therefore, relate to others and the world in a more detached, autonomous way.

While early childhood experiences influence gender identity, ongoing socialization continues to shape different roles for girls and boys, and men and women. For women the

belief that they are to care for, help with, and respond to others carries over to adult relationships. They can express inappropriately the need to be caregivers in certain adult roles, especially the roles in formal organizational settings, where male detached, instrumental values are the norm. For instance, women can use relational behaviors as an over-dependence on the need to please others. Ferguson (1984) explains, however, that the conditions of unequal power foster women's dependence on the need to please others, which is common to the cultural experience of most women. Administrators should not construe this as a weak response. Women who do not seek approval as expected can be affected negatively by public opinion of their abilities. According to Ferguson, women's initiatives to gain approval through asking advice, keeping their supervisor informed, or through a steady stream of questions, may be an astute political strategy to gain favor and to survive professionally.

Lever's (1976) and Maccoby's (1990) seminal studies on the influence peer groups have on gender roles suggest that context is important to understanding how the differences between men and women emerge. For example, Maccoby's study found that behavior differences between the sexes are small when subjects are observed or tested individually. However, gender differences do emerge in social situations and the types of differences are often dependent on the gender composition of the group. Further, Maccoby found that same-sex compatibility appeared at an early age. Girls tend to form close relationships while boys' relationships are oriented around mutual interests in activities. In this environment men learn the importance of maintaining their status in the male hierarchy. Also, the Maccoby study found that when other men are around, males are

inhibited from entering equal exchanges with female partners. Maccoby contrasts the differences between male and female patterns. The female pattern is a facilitating style. Female activities, she observed, are meant to keep interaction going and to encourage intimacy such as supporting, agreeing, and making suggestions. On the other hand, the male pattern is restrictive and tends to derail or inhibit the interaction, through contradiction and interrupting. As adults, women disclose more, describe more, and move toward a greater intimacy. Men are more task-oriented and are more likely to share activities rather than talk.

Lever's study (1976) suggests that childhood play rituals maintain and support traditional adult gender roles. For example, boys engage in large-group public outdoor games while girls engage in private smaller groups, mostly indoors. Also, when there are not enough same-age members, boys include younger children, who are expected to keep up with the older ones, stifle their frustration, or drop out. Older girls who play with young children tend to play at the level of the youngest child. Boys' games are competitive more often than girls' games. Finally, girls will play in male-dominated games more than boys will play in female games.

In summary, Chodorow and Gilligan's work on women's tendency to develop a pattern of connection to others with an ethic of responsibility, and the interactive play rituals studied by Maccoby and Lever, show that boys and girls learn gender role-formation through family socialization and peer interaction. The studies illustrate how behavior codes foster stereotypical behavior to gain acceptance within the culture. The cumulative effect of these interactions prepares young boys for a career in an adulthood

defined by men and male-centered organizations. Girls, on the other hand, are prepared for adulthood with social skills for the family and developing relationships, in what is generally considered the private sphere.

2. Assumption Two: Organizational Theory

Traditional views of organizations do not provide an adequate framework to analyze structures that produce and foster gender bias, nor do they offer an adequate framework to analyze leadership. While traditional views are most often used to examine colleges and universities a cultural frame that focuses on gender issues guided by feminist theory may serve to shed light on some struggles women face in today's organizations, and especially at community and two-year colleges.

Traditional Organization Frames

Birnbaum (1988) contends that higher education structures are generally understood by four organizational frames: bureaucratic, collegial, political, and symbolic or cultural. The bureaucratic frame looks at organizations as the scientific management of subsystems and at institutional processes as the measurement of outcomes. Such organizations have clearly defined lines of hierarchical authority. The hierarchy enforces compliance to rules and regulations, which in turn brings stability through efficient and effective operations.

The collegial frame appears to be the opposite of the bureaucratic frame because it focuses attention on consensus decision-making. The hierarchy in a collegial institution,

though flatter, is present in another form. The group with the most status and the ability to influence decisions is the senior faculty. Senior faculty and senior administrators see each other as equals with the right to discuss and influence each other's decisions. Though the views of the students and staff may be considered, this senior group has the most power. Furthermore, the senior faculty, who are often recruited for high ranking administrative positions, advance colleagues with similar values. They give recruitment and retention of these individuals top priority those chosen must conform or become isolated.

Political and symbolic frames also offer distinct contrasts to each other. The political frame gives attention to opposing claims to power. Political frameworks are applicable when institutions are large and when the diversity of the interest groups (i.e., disciplines and departments representing different ideologies) makes it difficult to achieve a consensus because no group is strong enough to dominate the others. Authoritarian decrees are impossible to enforce because of expectations of the various groups. Therefore, those who want specific outcomes spend time building coalitions, negotiating tradeoffs, and forging compromises.

The symbolic or cultural frame views the culture of the institution and the ways members make meaning through various processes and structures. Leaders in the symbolic frame provide direction through the subtle facilitation of institutional processes. For example, rational data-gathering methods are often used to create a common perception of reality and the values that are important to the particular institution. This type of symbolic functioning by leaders uses rational objective processes to create impressions of effective management when in actuality the cause and effect processes are unclear and imprecise.

The leaders' use of the symbolic frame protects the existing culture and furthers the leaders' agenda for change, by showing stability during tumultuous times (Cohen & March, 1974).

In summary, taken separately the four analytical frames of traditional organization theory do not question the male-centered values of instrumentalism and rationality. Moreover, in the Western tradition of social organizations, despite other prevailing frameworks within a given organization, bureaucracy sets the tone for reaching goals and developing processes for production. Traditional organizational structures are environments where authority is in a line of command, pyramid-shaped, and where authority flows down and information flows up. Given this background, it is not surprising, that leadership research using a traditional framework has focused on masculine traits such as level of self-esteem, competitiveness, directness, and achievement-related skills (Bensimon, Neumann, & Birnbaum, 1989; Denmark 1993). Such research has not considered the relational type of leadership attributes which women may bring to organizations.

Culture and Feminist Frames

Of the four traditional organizational frames, the symbolic or cultural frame provides a useful analytical lens when combined with gender concerns. Ferguson (1984) and Iannello (1992) use culture and gender to analyze women's positions in the contemporary organizations to develop an alternative conceptualization of organizational structure. By taking the position that women experience the world differently from men,

they seek to create a new vision of organizations around women's diverse perspectives. As an example, women's ways are learned through traditional gender roles, which tend to situate them within the "private" realm of family life, often this personal development is subordinated to the family. Gilligan (1982) addresses this sense of women as "self-sacrificing". Women, though historically confined to the private realm, have learned to build, produce, and communicate with people in creative ways that promote inclusiveness and connections (Ferguson 1984). It is this "different voice" of women around which Ferguson (1984), Iannello (1992), and Smircich (1985) develop an alternative model for organizational structure -- a women-centered organization suitable to women's ways of knowing. A central feature of this conceptualization is a rejection of the dominance of masculine hierarchical thinking, not its exclusion or elimination.

Iannello (1992) characterizes non-hierarchical structures in several ways. First, they flatten the authority of a few into a shared authority with the collective group. However, should authority or a type of stratification be created, the delegated authority is flexible and open to being repealed by the group. Second, the flattened hierarchy creates a climate of consensual decision-making. Iannello maintains that consensual decision-making involves a process where "after an issue is discussed by organization members, one or more members of the assembly sum up the prevailing sentiment, and if no objections are voiced, this becomes agreed-upon policy" (p. 27). Third, non-hierarchical structures feature social control through peer pressure. "Social control is rarely problematic because of the homogeneity of the group's values. Such homogeneity of values is usually a conscious aspect of membership selection" (p. 28). Fourth, differentiation or division of

labor is negligible, especially between intellectual and manual labor. Employees are cross-trained, thereby knowing the culture and the job well enough to have demystified the expert's role. Accountability is largely the responsibility of the collective peer group. This allows for more holistic egalitarian relationships between work group members by reducing role or work relationships.

In summary, Ferguson (1984), Iannello (1992), and Smircich (1985) use culture and gender frameworks to reconceptualize organizations. Through these two frames, they highlight dominance and subordination between men and women to illustrate the subtleties of power and control. They suggest that through women's personal identity and tendencies toward social interactions framed by connection and collaboration, organizations can build a non-hierarchical culture.

3. Assumption Three: Cultural Context and Identity

Cultural context is important to understanding leadership identity. Bureaucracies shape individual behavior through fostering compliance to institutional goals and traditions (Ferguson, 1984). Conformity to goals and traditions is maintained and fostered through competition and communication patterns. A competitive climate creates an adversarial atmosphere where responsibility or blame for failure is put on another group or individual. Moreover, because participants are generally seeking individual recognition, they are diverted from looking to each other to develop creative new options to solve problems and grow. Competition also complicates the position of women, who as outsiders often must negotiate alone the expectations and the realities of an organizational

culture.

In a traditional sense, women as leaders are required to embrace the goals of the organization through its mission and focus on the values of goal attainment and efficiency. Through socialization, they learn techniques of impression management, as outlined by Ferguson (1984), Tannen (1994), and Lakoff (1975), to maintain these goals and values. Impression management includes smiling, ridding oneself of anger through psychological self-talk, and avoiding displays of passionate attachment that could inhibit one's usefulness to the organization. Simply put, workers must learn to take the role of the superior, internalize it, and use it as a guide for behavior. Therefore, subordinate women managers must learn to sense the moods and prejudices of their superiors. In this way, the manager presents a position of unbiased detachment to an issue as a form of impression management. Their supervisor uses this to guard against attacks of insubordination or resistance and also to pursue advantage over others by presenting the appropriate face. In low-level jobs, where they are often positioned, women are particularly vulnerable to this form of control because they are accountable for their own actions, yet dependent on the actions of others as a measure of success. This situation often leads to an over-dependence on rules because of limited options to control situations. It also accounts for reports that when women are given leadership positions they are often perceived as "lording it over" others (Kanter, 1977).

Bureaucracies also shape behavior through ritualized communication patterns and language codes. Institutional communication patterns, often called technocratic language or pseudo-neutral administrative language, are used to describe interactions in mechanized

and/or objective terms in order to manage mishaps or mistakes. The goal of techno-speak is to cover up institutional struggles so that other interpretations can be created to explain disturbing processes. Blaming problems on “red tape” is one example. Techno-speak also serves to silence responsible and prudent opposition, institutional members tend not to resist because they fear isolation or punishment, and thus limit their responsible dissent.

The Role of Communication

The role of communication is important in understanding the influence culture has on shaping identity because an individual’s language reveals values and assumptions about the social world. Words not only reflect attitude, they shape action (Tannen, 1998). Qualitative research relies on language as its primary source of data. Research on women’s communication patterns is helpful in analyzing women’s descriptions of their senior-level leadership experiences. Lakoff’s (1975) research on women’s language patterns is based on two assumptions. First, as the dominant cultural group, males control organizations in almost every culture (Tiger, 1969). They set the stereotypes of other groups and define acceptable behaviors. Second, the norms to which women are expected to conform often become stereotypes and shape the interactions between men and women within a given organization. Only the woman’s position within the hierarchy mediates the extent to which the stereotypes affect her (Kanter, 1977). For instance, women in the higher levels of an organization have more ways of diverting from feminine stereotypes than do women lower in the hierarchy, therefore a woman president or vice president may not see gender as an issue because she has more power.

Lakoff argues that men's and women's language patterns are different. Women's language patterns have a tendency to use personal indicators because they signal to the listener that the speaker is interested in having them respond to their statements, thus providing a means to connect. Such personal speech indicators are synonymous with women's informal speech patterns because they soften women's moments of assertion. According to Lakoff, because of the double bind women must negotiate within the workplace women generally have fewer moments of outright assertion as compared to men. Therefore, Lakoff maintains, we must judge women's communication patterns within the context in which they are spoken. Men's language patterns also reflect how they think and their gender socialization. They show men's tendency to establish a camaraderie with other men to achieve a goal. Therefore, we expect men to speak and think clearly, concisely, directly, and to the point. Additionally, men may joke or react gruffly, but gloss over major disagreements. Neither pattern is inherently superior to the other, but in the workplace the standard language pattern is the instrumental or masculine style.

Women's speech patterns reflect a tendency and willingness to know another as an individual. Their use of indirect, repetitious, meandering, unclear, and exaggerated language to share and express emotion is distinct. Lakoff maintains that women want to know each other as individuals so they can work together when needed in small intimate groups. Therefore, the masculine standard presents a special problem for women in traditional organizations. To be heard, women must adapt men's speech patterns, but not adapt so much that women reject them (Tannen, 1994). This is the woman's double bind and the contradictory messages they must reconcile. (Bateson, 1972).

Lakoff identified the following as typical of women's language: (1) hollow adjectives such as "wonderful," "super day," "spectacular"; (2) attached questions: "it's a beautiful day, isn't it?" or "I think it's the right thing to do, don't you?"; (3) evasive statements: "I sorta would like to go" or "Well, I kinda like that room better." --- words suggesting that the speaker is uncertain about her position; (4) the use of intensive "so": "I want that so much" rather than "I would like that very much"; (5) superpolite forms; women are expected to learn to make just the right statement at just the right time and are expected to say "thank you" and "please"; (6) speaking in italics; as if italics strengthen their thoughts. For example: "I would like this in by Friday (if this fits your schedule --- hopefully it should it not be too much trouble)" . . . ; (7) the use of gestures and wider range of voice intonations: "It is cold in here," which really means, "Please close the window." Lakoff speculates that women use these language forms to insure they are heard and to insure they receive a response that they have been heard. It also circumvents the double bind of being knowledgeable and being acknowledged without appearing aggressive or haughty. McIntosh (1985) also argues that a woman's tendency to begin with an apology when speaking in front of a group or giving her opinion, is her discomfort with her role as expert. Tannen suggests these patterns discredit the messages women send to other women, but may in fact help their relationships with men because the women appear to be less intimidating. Language also reflects a woman's sense of her own position within the culture or group.

Silence, also a part of communication, serves as a language code. It may mean something different for men and women. Women who remain silent in meetings often do

so because the situation intimidates them, while men's silence often is a signal of disapproval (Tannen, 1994). Spender's (1989) research shows women have one-third the talk time of men, but often are perceived as talking too much. This rule is dismissed only when the woman is the highest ranking officer in a particular situation. A woman, therefore, does not just attend a meeting. She must be conscious about when she remains silent, what she says, how she says it, and how long she takes to give her response. Although middle-class women tend to avoid arguments, fights, and confrontation, Tannen (1998) and Ong (1981) found that women will engage in verbal aggression when it concerns something they believe in, therefore, choosing when and how to engage in confrontation becomes the issue.

Language reveals basic values and assumptions of a culture. It is also a tool to control interactions although total control through communication is almost impossible to maintain for several reasons. First, the delegation of authority makes interpretations of orders difficult to enforce uniformly because controlling only welcome information is impossible. Second, individual goals motivate more than institution goals. Therefore, those who want to advance controlled top-down change may have difficulty explaining change to suit all facets of the hierarchy. Finally, where power exists, resistance exists. Individuals resist demands for conformity and find ways to define themselves by reinterpreting events to fit accepted operating procedure (Ferguson, 1984).

Outsiders: Attitudes and Actions

Research by Lakoff (1975) and Tannen (1994) shows that a woman's speech

pattern often reflects her feeling of being discredited. Goffman's (1990) study of social stigma also supports the notion that cultural context affects the identity of women in the workplace. Goffman argues that a culture's definition of "normal" places individuals in positions as insiders or outsiders through many subtle but real messages that are experienced through language and relationships. The lack of full acceptance is present even when the woman's performance is superior or her credentials impeccable. Furthermore, the dominant culture expects the woman to accept the discredited cultural definition and behave in stereotypical ways. McIntosh's (1985) research suggests when we expect women in the workplace to replace their relational ways with traditional expectations, they often feel like frauds, not belonging, or being there under false pretenses.

Goffman (1990) generally found that those with a social stigma responded to their cultural norms through a set of behaviors ranging from conformity to a militant or separatist stance. The stigmatized may deny the definition as outsider and blend in as much as possible with the dominant culture. As described previously, women who are viewed as outsiders often give too much attention to detail and or a rigid enforcement of rules to achieve acceptance through outstanding performance (Kanter, 1977). Or as Goffman detailed, those with a stigma may choose to behave in a clownish way by acting out exaggerated stereotypical behavior.

Gherardi (1995) investigated how women respond to their position as outsiders within organizations and developed fuller descriptions to show the complexity. She explains that a woman's response to hierarchies and inequality is often based on her

socialization to power relations developed in her family of origin and also on how the organization views outsiders. For example, she found that one group of women enacts the positional archetype of the strong independent woman. Such women may take one of three positions: (1) acting as sisters with other women against men or other women; (2) being the favorite daughters of the father separate from other women; or (3) women behaving as the hard working aunt who does not become involved in family politics but can be counted on for her faithful routine of high quality work.

Another group may enact the positional archetypes of the vulnerable woman. Such women may be: (1) wife who acts as mediator between the challenger and the father (or president); (2) mother to a group of women who need nurturing and; (3) daughter to the mother who has created a dependency. A woman's sensitivity to conditional acceptance prompts a situational awareness. Her actions related to self-disclosure and stance are based on her perception of the accepted or rejected norms and standards of the particular situation (Goffman, 1990). Therefore, women may play many different roles within a given context (Gherardi, 1995). The work of sociolinguist Ann Sheldon (1992) supports this notion of the multiple stance through her idea of "doubling." Sheldon found girls in play groups used a "double-voiced discourse" because they simultaneously considered their own and another's agenda while making initiatives to achieve group harmony.

Goffman (1990) observed that social and family support plus one's group tradition (if one grew up among other outsiders) influences the individual's interpretation and reaction to the negative outsider definition. Most professionals who are outsiders, for example, develop a code of conduct that helps distinguish the necessary

conformity, personal information to reveal or conceal, and what behavior to change (Collins, 1986). Today, because a woman's leadership identity is largely defined by her acts and her ability to communicate in the workplace, she must overcome the expectation that good girls do not speak up as well as the fear of an antagonistic response (Jehlen, 1984; Tannen, 1998). Ong (1981) also argues that women must understand the historical origins of western educational traditions based on adversarial rituals between student and faculty and its military orientation to change the culture. They must have other cultural frameworks for the construction of knowledge such as enlightening an inquirer and demonstrating an earnestness of investigation. Once learned, the outsider passes on these informal codes through the outsider network where they are important to survival.

A successful outsider joins the system and makes it, playing by rules of the culture. However, the responses from the other men and women of the organization set the tone for her reaction. Kvande and Rasmussen (1995) found that men react to women in their organizational hierarchy according to their own age, experience, and positional status. Research suggests that senior-level women who are tokens or outsiders are often less likely to help new women in an organization because it might upset the delicate hard won acceptance by male peers (Kanter, 1977; Yoder, 1985). Also, the woman who has made it as the "first woman" may have a sense of pride or specialness created by her visibility. While visibility becomes hurtful when she makes mistakes, the same woman could jeopardize the specialness of her hard-won position if she is associated with new untested women who do not meet the standards. More likely, the woman enjoys the special status and does not want to share it and risk diminishing her sense of importance.

From this overview of literatures on culture and identity, it is clear theoretically how a woman's leadership identity is in part a response to her organizational culture's norms and her outsider status. She also shapes her leadership identity by her position in the hierarchy, early family and life experiences and educational background which includes her knowledge of gender and other issues of difference and their roles in organizations.

C. Summary

The literature reviewed for this study covers relevant research on women's leadership at community colleges. Additionally, theories that ground the three theoretical assumptions of the study were outlined. First, "Gender and Ways of Knowing," outlines why women tend to use relational ways of knowing more often than men. Second, "Organizational Theory", describes an inadequate traditional framework for examining gender issues in contrast to culture and feminist organizational frames. Third, "Culture and Identity", explores the assumption that cultural context shapes leadership by examining how communication, attitudes and behaviors of others within the cultural context of the community college influences the way a woman constructs her leadership identity.

Research on senior-level women at community colleges is limited, but acknowledges an increase of women in senior level positions from 1981 to 1991. Moreover, studies suggest that the differences between the leadership style of men and women establishes a difficult dynamic for women to negotiate. As a result women are caught in a double bind. By embracing expected traditional organization standards and their masculine norms, women inadvertently break the code of expected feminine behavior, and may not be accepted by females or males. If they fail to embrace masculine values, their success is limited.

How and why this conflict between instrumental behaviors, typically men's, and relational behaviors, typically women's, permeates women's leadership experiences may be analyzed by examining the theories that ground the three basic assumptions of the study.

Traditional organizational paradigms generally do not help to explain the experiences of women within traditional organizations because they do not acknowledge gender differences and complexities; however, the cultural frame, when used with feminist theory, offers insight into the leadership experiences of women.

Cultural context shapes identity (Lakoff, 1975; Tannen 1994) so that a woman's leadership identity is shaped by family, life experiences, education, her role within the organization's hierarchy, and the response of its members to her presence.

In summary, the literature and supporting theories provide a backdrop for investigating how senior-level women administrators respond to their context and become transformative leaders within the college environment. In the following chapter, I explain the strategy used in conducting the study of community and two-year college women senior administrators.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH DESIGN

Organizational culture, guided by feminist work on gender, was used to analyze how senior women administrators construct meaning in the community college context. To gather data, I used qualitative research methodologies, which offered greater flexibility for unraveling the organizational context and for understanding the many behaviors and attitudes women construct in response to their circumstances. Qualitative methods allowed for adjustments based on individual differences (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Specifically, this study focuses on the question of how senior-level women administrators construct leadership identities at community and two year colleges in the United States and looks at:

- (1) The struggles women face in forming their leadership identities.**
- (2) Women's perceptions of gender influence on the process of their developing as leaders.**
- (3) The responses senior-level women administrators use to negotiate their organizational culture.**
- (4) The intersection of women's personal and leadership identity.**
- (5) The consequences of women's responses to managing their professional and personal lives.**

Finally, the study addresses what knowledge might be gained from women's experiences

which may be helpful in transforming organizational culture within the community and two-year college setting into a more inclusive and creative culture.

A. Data Collection Techniques

The principal instrument used for data collection was the formal structured interview (Appendix B). After three pilot interviews were conducted, the final interview questions were developed in collaboration with my dissertation chair, Dr. Robert Rhoads.

Following the initial interview with each participant, and after preliminary data analysis, a short second interview was conducted, allowing the participant to review the transcript and offer additional thoughts or clarification. This amounts to a "member check" and adds to the credibility of the interpretation by the researcher (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Member checks also broaden and deepen the researcher's understanding of the data.

Where possible, I used memos, job descriptions, personal notes, appointment books, mission statements, strategic plans, and other written reports or artifacts deemed helpful in interpreting the organizational context and the experiences of the specific individual. These material artifacts supplied key information about the organizational context. For example, an artifact may be a subject's pen given to only top performers. The pen, in this case, represents a ritualistic artifact of honor. A day planner may be interpreted as a utilitarian artifact, meant not for show but for efficiency. Finally, the artifacts with their contextual meaning supplied evidence of the congruence or *****

incongruence between what the subject reported during the interview and what she actually did on the job (Hodder, 1991). Ultimately, this helped construct a web of associations and provided for a richer description allowing for more subtle interpretations (Geertz, 1973).

B. Sample Selection

I selected the Midwest as the primary region for this study. Thus, I could identify participants who would be within reasonable traveling distance. Senior-level women administrators outside the region were included in the study if they were traveling to this area, or if I were traveling to their locality for a conference or meeting. In all, thirty women from thirteen different community colleges were selected to participate. Twenty-seven were employed within the primary region and three at community colleges outside the Midwest. The racial breakdown of the participants is as follows: twenty-four whites and six African Americans.

To identify women with a high level of administrative responsibility, I used job titles listed in the 1996 Higher Education Directory as a guide. I consulted colleagues who worked with institutions in the general area and I also worked with the Institute of Women's Leadership in Phoenix, Arizona to identify potential candidates. The final study group was made up of women who held positions such as director, dean, vice-president, provost, assistant to the president, president, or chancellor. Each participant was a member of the senior executive staff holding a position with a high level of responsibility for institutional operations and policy. Because my study dealt with the way women

handle leadership-related concerns, it made sense to choose women who clearly had leadership demands placed on them and interacted regularly within the highest levels of the institution.

A chart profiling the participants by position level, age, highest degree earned, years at the senior level, and enrollment size of their community college is provided in Tables Section, Figure 1. Senior-level positions were categorized as follows: Level I - chancellors and presidents; Level II - vice presidents and provosts; and Level III - executive directors, directors, or special assistants. These position levels were developed to provide additional data about the participants and to insure confidentiality.

According to the Higher Education Directory, community colleges fall into four enrollment groups: Group A - community colleges with less than 1,000 students; Group B - 1,000 to 4,999; Group C - 5,000 to 9,999; and Group D - 10,000 and over. My original goal was to interview three subjects from two different institutions within each enrollment group. This was not possible, however, because most community colleges in the geographical region studied fell into Group D.

Introduction of the study and entry into each institution was sought through face-to-face contact or phone call. Subjects who informally agreed to participate were thoroughly informed of the nature of the research project in a follow-up letter. A formal consent agreement, according to guidelines of the Michigan State University Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects (UCRIHS), was developed for all participants to sign. This process met the Human Subject requirements of Michigan State University and approval to conduct the study was formally granted. (See Appendix A)

C. Collecting and Managing Data

The formal interviews were tape recorded and transcribed verbatim. Transcripts, once completed, were filed under a pseudonym for each participant. I maintained a list of each participant's name and pseudonym for my own records. This was explained to the subject during the initial phase of the interview and other observations and reactions to the interviews were recorded in a journal.

D. Data Analysis Strategies

The data analysis was conducted as a two-phase process, first interpretive, then a quantitative oriented process. The first phase involved reading and rereading textual data from interviews and documents and allowed me to become thoroughly familiar with the data (Marshall & Rossman, 1989).

The second phase involved synthesizing the data into categories, themes, and patterns. This grouping of the data was generally based on the study's principal theoretical assumption that women more often than men use relational ways of knowing and reasoning. This strategy helped me to evaluate the strength of the principal assumption. For example, did the data analysis reinforce the assumption that women more often than men use relational styles of leadership? Or to the contrary, did it raise fundamental questions about the validity of this assumption?

Initially, I organized the data from the participants according to their tendency to use relational or instrumental behaviors, loosely basing these on the Bem Sex Role Inventory categories. To verify my categorization of the leadership identities, I developed

a matrix that cross checked and verified specific behaviors of the participants as instrumental, relational, or mixed leadership characteristics (Miles and Huberman, 1989).

The leadership behavior analysis also included various speech patterns that revealed qualities associated with women's decision making. As noted in Chapter II, Lakoff (1975), Spender (1989), and Tannen (1994), showed that speech patterns reflect a person's organization of reality. Each participant's transcript was analyzed to identify relational leadership characteristics as: (1) use of attached questions and italics embedded within their communication style, (2) use of stories to make important points, (3) expressed recognition of gender issues, (4) discussion of the intersection between work and family, (5) tendency to play supportive roles, (6) preference for working and leading in teams, (7) concern for community, (8) preference for less competitive situations and concern for connecting to others, and (9) establishment of a network of supportive female colleagues.

Instrumental leadership characteristics were also identified as: (1) masculine speech patterns (linear and concise), (2) individual responsibility with little or no reference to family or personal context, (3) rational objective explanations, (4) concern for efficiency and organization, (5) preference for independent leadership, (6) concern for hierarchy and position, (7) use of aggressive behavior, (8) engagement with competition, and (9) concern for reaching goals.

Once the data were organized, it was clear to me that simply identifying women by their tendency to use relational or instrumental behaviors was not adequate for making sense of women's experiences and for conveying that knowledge to others. Based

on a more inductively oriented process (Patton, 1990) three major categories emerged: adaption, reconciliation, and resistance. These categories are largely based on Goffman's research and define the response of individuals who are stigmatized by social categories. This allowed me to focus on why certain behaviors were chosen and provided a means to link behavior and context. Adaption identifies the tendency of women to conform to traditional standards, often using instrumental behaviors to meet expectations. Reconciliation identifies women's tendency to harmonize or try to fix the situation by using instrumental and relational behaviors in a compartmentalized fashion. Finally, resistance identifies the response of women who integrate relational and instrumental behavior and work collectively to build coalitions to create a more inclusive college culture.

From this second analysis, I found that all participants used both relational and instrumental behaviors. The degree to which a woman used each set of behavior characteristics appeared to depend on context and personal inclination.

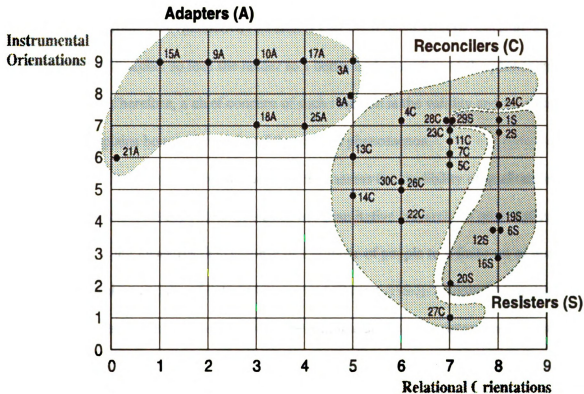
I then examined the data to assess how the women responded to their context; the community college culture. To understand this context I asked the women to identify a metaphor that would describe the culture of their community college. Normally, to study organizational cultures, an ethnographic study would be conducted. In this case because community colleges do not have enough women at the senior-level to get a comprehensive picture of the culture of one community college. I used the stories of the thirty women with the descriptive metaphors to construct a comprehensive picture of a general community college culture; I then evaluated the link between the instrumental college

culture and the women's tendency to use relational responses.

To show that these conceptual frameworks intersect and overlap, I plotted the thirty participants' instrumental and relational leadership characteristics on a scatter chart. From this, I was able to illustrate how response strategies corresponded to instrumental, relational, and mixed leadership behaviors.

The following chart illustrates how relational and instrumental behaviors intersect and overlap with response patterns of adaptation (A), reconciliation (C), and resistance (S).

Leadership Identity Chart



Note that adaptation and reconciliation leadership response patterns overlapped with instrumental and relational behavior patterns. A high relational score did not mean women necessarily engaged in collective resistance to include relational ways of knowing. This indicated that several factors shaped the response of these women to their organization's culture. The woman's leadership identity was shaped by the culture of her organization, gender issues, her educational background, and knowledge of how the cultural context affects human behavior. Just how women interweave these factors to

construct a leadership identity is explored in the chapters on adaption, on reconciliation, and resistance.

E. Issues of Credibility: Validity and Reliability

One strength of qualitative research is that the presentation of descriptive data enables the researcher to lead the reader to a better understanding of the phenomenon under study. Therefore, a chief concern of such research is the validity and reliability of the data as it explains how and the why of the studied phenomenon.

Validity and reliability standards used to assess the credibility of qualitative research are different than those of traditional quantitative research. In quantitative research, a study measures the response of a number of people to a finite set of questions so a statistical composite of data can be created (Patton, 1990). Validity in quantitative research is tested through an analysis of the testing instrument to determine if it measures what it purports to measure. Reliability, or dependability, of such a study is determined by reapplying of the test instrument and assessing its ability to obtain similar findings.

In qualitative research, the study involves on an in-depth detailed investigation of a selected phenomenon, typically with fewer study participants than in traditional quantitative studies. The methodologies of qualitative studies may include observations and interviews conducted by the researcher/field worker. Therefore, the proficiency, competence, and rigor of the field worker are important factors for assessing validity issues. Lather (1986a, 1986b) suggests that such research studies ought to be judged by validity criteria such as face validity, construct validity, and catalytic validity.

Face validity insures that the researcher's descriptions and interpretations make sense to the research participant. This is done by giving the research participant the right to discuss the researcher's findings and interpretations. Lincoln and Guba (1985) describe these as "member checks" because they allow the researcher to test interpretations through discourse with the research participant. I accomplished this by providing transcripts of the interviews to the participants for review and comment.

Construct validity relates to the study's theoretical explanation and to whether or not the findings support the initial argument. It requires the researcher to assess and report whether or not the original interpretation of theories undergirding the study is altered by the findings. An initial theory of this study is that women use relational ways of knowing more often than men. This theory is derived from gender identity and cultural context theory as previously outlined. Moreover, leadership research has connected these concepts to women's leadership styles. For example, recent research categorizes women as having relational leadership styles, instrumental masculine styles, or androgynous styles (Wahl & Vocante, 1994). A qualitative researcher examines and reexamines such categories (and theories) as the study progresses. In the process of this ongoing assessment, I found that masculine, feminine, and androgynous categories of leadership was too simplistic and did not capture how and why senior-level woman administrators chose a particular leadership style. I found that context had a major impact on the leadership style of the study participant.

Catalytic validity relates to the notion that the findings should produce change (Lather, 1991). The goal of my study is to obtain knowledge that will lead to a better

understanding of how community and two-year colleges can be altered to accommodate diverse leadership styles consistent with women's tendency to use relational behaviors, and through that understanding, to serve as a catalyst for change. The concept of catalytic validity alters the traditional test of reliability. A duplication of the research to get similar findings, as one would do in quantitative research, would be highly unlikely if this study is successful.

Tierney and Rhoads (1993) offered the following set of questions as a guide in examining reliability issues in qualitative studies:

- * Are the voices presented in the study believable?
- * Is the situation plausible?
- * Where does the author/researcher fit in the formation of the text and what other interpretations might be offered?
- * Has the text enabled the reader to reflect on his or her own life and work?

As Tierney and Rhoads point out, if these conditions are met, a study is more likely to produce change. Validity and reliability in this study involve continual assessment of theory and its basic assumptions, feedback from research participants, and a determination as to whether or not the study prompted change. In summary, a primary validity test of this study is whether it prompts a self-reflective process and can be a catalyst for change within community and two year colleges.

Finally, a triangulation method of data analysis was employed to support both the validity and credibility of the study. To do this I use both a matrix and a scatter chart to

analyze leadership behaviors and verify the credibility of my interpretation of these behaviors (Miles and Huberman, 1994). The matrix was used to specifically identify the participant's leadership style in terms of relational and show instrumental behaviors and shows how the two intersect in quantitative terms. The scatter chart (page 60) was used to illustrate how leadership characteristics converged with leadership response strategies of adaptation, reconciliation, and resistance. The use of metaphors to verify the participant's self-described leadership identity and her community college culture were also used to help verify the study's assumptions and interpretations.

F. Limitations

Interview transcriptions were the primary source of data for this qualitative study. According to Ferguson (1984), conversation, if considered analytically, reveals an understanding of an individual's experiences in life, how power works, and how knowledge is defined. There are, however, some limitations to this perspective. For example, one two-hour interview with a study participant does not insure that a researcher has captured anything more than a sampling of the participant's thoughts. Another limitation is the unstable nature of the interview experience. For example, how much is revealed is dependent on the level of trust and the choice of the individual participant at the time of the interview. Also, the relationship between the researcher and the participant can be a factor in the responses given by the participant. If the tone is formal then the person interviewed is less likely to be open. Therefore, the interviews in this study, while covering a broad range of topics, cannot be claimed to give a comprehensive picture of the

individual's assumptions about the world and her place in it. Nonetheless, the study does provide an initial view of the experiences thirty senior-level women administrators in the community college organizational context within the United States.

Another limitation of the methodology of the study is the question of the researcher's objectivity in relationship to the overall study. I am a ten-year employee of a community college. My experience could potentially create bias in my interpretation of the study data. However, since bias is inherent in any research, my attachment to the topic does not discredit the study's findings. In many respects, my insider's point of view helped lead to a more informed analysis and interpretation of the data.

The final limitation of the study's methodology is that the organizational culture of the community college analyzed is a composite culture constructed through the voices of the women and the imagery of the metaphors they used in descriptions of their organizational contexts. This methodology was used rather than the stronger ethnographic research, because too few senior-level women administrators exist at any one community college in the study to construct an ethnographic study.

G. Summary

This analysis of the experiences of senior-level women administrators moves beyond the traditional research on women's leadership. Women leaders are more than a textbook of conceptual categories. They are shaped by and shape their environments. The interview methodology and protocol were developed to focus on the interpretation and definition of the women's work experiences as senior-level administrators and as women.

My research identified three leadership patterns: adaption, reconciliation, and resistance. The following chapters describe how women responded to their community college's culture. In each chapter, I also describe the behavioral responses within each leadership patterns. By profiling the participant's responses in this way, the study illuminates the norms, traditions, and personal experiences that converge to build a woman's leadership identity. I also present an overview of the role communication plays in the development of a leadership identity, attitudes that are relied on to rationalize the behaviors associated with the woman's leadership patterns, and the costs and benefits associated with the particular leadership behavior profiled.

CHAPTER IV

Adaption

The research on gender and organizations has centered on whether women can fit in and how they can do it . . . The plots of these books stress that the individual woman is the source of her own success or failure . . . and [she] bears the responsibility for societal and organizational patterns. A woman accepts the assessment of her deficiencies and learns to overcome them by adapting her behavior to male characteristics. She does not question the wisdom of the present structure, nor does she argue for changes in the organization (Smircich, 1985, p.9).

The community college is probably not the first place that the senior-level women administrators in this study faced the masculine world and its standards. The community college is, however, where gender distinctions may have reached a new level of prominence because of the increased number of women administrators entering senior-level positions. Community colleges, therefore, provide an ideal context where women's responses to traditional organizational standards may be studied.

The overarching experience of the senior women administrators in this study centered on adaptations to "fit in." Nine of the thirty senior women administrators in this study relied primarily on a traditional leadership orientation with its instrumental or masculine orientations to construct their leadership identity. All the women in the study, however, used aspects of the instrumental orientation to define themselves, but in varying degrees.

In this chapter, I discuss how traditional organizations shape the senior-level woman administrator's leadership identity, communication style, attitudes and behaviors, and I show the cost and benefits of these adaptations.

A. Leadership Identity

A metaphor helps to generalize a complex phenomenon. They can also give shape and voice to feelings at the heart of a phenomenon. The leadership metaphor given by each participant in this study helped explain how the senior-level woman administrator viewed her role within her community college culture and perceived herself as a leader. Nine participants used adaption as their primary leadership behavior to “fit in” to their traditional community college culture. This was reflected in metaphors such as a conductor of an orchestra, a wolf leading a pack, a sheep dog setting limits, or a head goose that falls back in the line letting others take the lead from time to time. Generally these images describe a person in charge or one at the highest rank of their institution or department. Leadership from this viewpoint is goal-oriented, often acting as the link between labor and outcome (Foster, 1989). Leadership as adaption accepts existing traditions. These traditions focus on effective processes that are outcome-oriented and negotiated with several constituencies to maintain a balance of power. How successful women leaders constructed leadership identities around these traditional frames is profiled in the next section.

The cases of Louise Jennings and Madeline Hall, presented in this section, illustrate how adaptation to traditional standards influences the construction of leadership identity. Their stories also show how each woman’s knowledge of organizational theory with its embedded images of leadership and gender, her personal experiences and beliefs, and her educational background interact to form her leadership identity.

1. Louise Jennings - Action Oriented

Louise Jennings, a community college president, used the “head goose in a wedge of geese” as her leadership metaphor. She chose the metaphor because she willingly leads but will share leadership from time to time by letting others move up front. Lou, however, is always ready to take over when she decides the situation demands that she move up front. This metaphor also helps explain her leadership expectations. Lou is forthright about wanting “can do” people around her. She is always in search of practical and goal-oriented people. She is especially disapproving of individuals who are theoretical but cannot meet their goals. Moreover, she does not want excuses for inaction. Lou’s description of leadership and leadership expectations are defined through an instrumental perspective because she wants women and men who will be productive. As the “head goose” she is hierarchical and action-oriented. As a leader, she strives for maximum effectiveness as defined by traditional standards of productivity.

Lou believes the culture of the college is friendly because she, as head representative of the management, tries to include all the institution’s groups in enacting its mission. Lou is adamant that she wants everyone to feel included so “there are certain things you do and don’t do to interact with the middle-level managers or faculty.” She explained:

There’s a pecking order within the faculty and some are more articulate than others. Some are more academic than others. I think you need to be very, very sensitive in terms of where folks are and how they perceive themselves and, therefore, how they can be treated. That’s true of the whole institution. For example, I feel very strongly that our janitorial staff is a very important part of this institution and they need to be made to feel that they are an important part of the institution.

This means an occupational faculty, general education faculty, and janitors may have different responsibilities, but their goal is to move in the same direction in pursuit of the college's mission. Lou confirmed that janitors are especially important because a clean institution shows that the college is well-organized and people take care of details. Also, when asked about the many women on her senior administrative staff, Lou agreed that there are many senior-level women on her staff, but dismissed that as not unusual. "How people perform is a far greater issue at this college than whether they are a man or a woman."

Lou grew up in a city, the only child of working-class parents, where her father worked on an automotive assembly line. Her career within a masculine-dominated field began when she was the only woman in her doctoral program. Her assigned mentor, a man, did not want women in the program, so she had to prove herself and did so successfully. "I was truly the token woman. I don't regret it because he was very influential. He was a vice president at the university. He knew his way around politically and he helped me a lot. He gave me my start. "

After she got her doctorate, she was selected for a faculty position at the university. In time, they dismissed her when they reorganized the department. "I took it on as my problem, my errors, and my weaknesses. It took a toll and it was devastating." People had acknowledged her hard work, but it wasn't enough. The reality of organizational life, where hard work is not enough, shook her confidence and hope for the future.

After the downsizing, her mentor at the university guided Lou to the community college. Lou said that:

When I was let go from my position at the university, he called the city's community college and said, "I have someone for you." So when I started at the community college, I had few women colleagues.

Lou followed the lead of the administration at the community college and was at the right place at the right time, and therefore climbed the hierarchy rapidly. Now after twenty years administrative experience, Lou said this about leadership:

I've changed my opinion about leadership over the years. I think in this day and age that there is no one way to be a leader. I don't think there is any one kind of personality. I don't think there is any one kind of style. I think that in my opinion if we could, we should teach people how to assume different kinds of leadership styles for the situation. I change my style depending on my stress level and what we're working on. I mean, I can be pretty directive at times. I've been told that over and over again. I have a very strong personality (whatever that means). That can be effective at times and it can also be very ineffective. So I think my changes are that I've become more confident over the last couple years.

Lou explained her tactics to get her administrators to be productive:

I've tried all kinds of tactics. I've tried stamping my feet. I've tried screaming. I've tried everything as well as I've gone into writing. At this point I just decided that I was going to be as directive as I possibly could. "These are the things that have to change. This is what has to happen and this is what is going to happen. If it doesn't, this is how I'm going to make it happen. Now, what are you going to do about it?" Low and behold, it worked.

Lou acknowledges that reactions vary from person to person. What works for one may not work for another and she believes leadership is trying to figure out what makes the person produce. Lou explained that learning to read people and situations is not easy:

I've made a lot of mistakes. I've come down hard on some people who I shouldn't have because I misread their personality and their strengths. I found out

that they are much softer underneath than I had anticipated. It hurts me when I've done that because you can destroy a person and I don't like that.

Acknowledging her mistakes is especially painful for Lou because she always wants to do a good job. She says she is very interested in the health of her college family and the health of the larger community. "This means at times, hard decisions must be made, so people have to go." Of special concern to Lou is that even though she has several women at the senior level, women are conspicuously absent at the middle-management level and she is not sure why.

Over the years, Lou often called other presidents, all men, to get advice about specific issues such as the budget. Yet she would not say she had a strong working collegial relationship with the men. Lou said that her husband has been a tremendous support through the years and often gives her advice. He has a similar position in a nearby school district. Not until a nearby community college named a woman as president did she have a trusting relationship with another president. Being a community college president, she says, has been very painful at times, whether she is leading in the front or from the back.

2. Madeline Collins - Dotting I's and Crossing T's

Madeline Collins grew up on a large dairy farm. As her father's helper, she was responsible for a variety of challenging jobs. One job she loved was guiding the farm's sheep dog to bring home the cows. Madeline explained the sheep dog kept the cows moving pushing them back in place when they got out of line. One challenge in her life

was beginning college at eighteen. As the first person in the family to attend college, she had to argue with her father, and eventually her high school counselor, who thought she should go to a small college. Madeline persisted and graduated from one of the most prestigious universities in the world, where she has completed all but her dissertation for a terminal degree. Ironically, as a president she finds many useful metaphors from her early experiences on the farm. She used a sheep dog as metaphor for her leadership identity because as president she must set and keep limits within her college's union culture.

Madeline explained that the college administration had been slowly moving away from the union rules, moving into their own territories and not talking with each other. Furthermore, the college was failing financially and enrollment was declining. Because Madeline had earned a reputation for her organizational and marketing abilities, along with her clarity, and precise knowledge of the union contract from her previous assignment, she was chosen president. Madeline also explained that her mentor, the former president, supported her candidacy. So three years ago, with her list of exemplary professional accomplishments, including the presidency of the faculty union when she was a faculty member, she was chosen to revitalize the campus. "I was chosen president because I had put a lot of systems in place [at her previous college] and had the reputation for having the I's dotted and the T's crossed."

As the designated change agent at her college, organizational revitalization for Madeline has meant several firings plus facing severe public criticism. She acknowledged that the job of setting limits has been difficult. She explains her relationship with the faculty:

They're like kids. You set up limits and they're pushing the limits. Everybody here pushes limits all the time but I'm the one who puts the limits in. I'm not just a gatekeeper, I'm also the limit person. I'm trying to change direction. I often feel like the tug boat taking the ocean liner out.

By most accounts, Madeline's presidency is very successful. The college's enrollment has increased, she and the union are on better terms, and new programs have been established. She has shown highly-developed organizational abilities by improving many college processes such as a no-cancellation schedule and engaging in the economic development of the area through training programs. Her struggle has involved facing some very tense times such as the stress of harsh, mean-spirited personal attacks that made the front page of the city's newspapers. Nevertheless, Madeline's accomplishments proved that she thrives on challenge and that despite many obstacles she has created a more productive campus.

Though she had to dismiss people when she first took the position, Madeline would rather save good people and work with them to see if they can be brought along. For example, at her campus, Madeline evoked change by mentoring several women in administrative positions. However, she emphasized that they had to buy into her vision. A recent success story concerned a woman she encouraged to attend the Women's Leadership Institute. It seemed after the woman attended the Institute, she understood Madeline's idea of leadership and what had to be done. The woman is now supporting the college's changes, thereby supporting Madeline's vision of what has to be done.

Madeline's experiences in her district make her a pioneer, but her belief in the mission has buffered the often harsh experiences she has had to endure. Madeline believes

in the community college because it is one of the last places where students who don't have many opportunities get a second chance to be pioneers as well. She knows from personal experience how much an education can change a person's life. Moreover, as the first women president in her district she is one of three women out of eight presidents in similar positions. "Previously there was only one woman president at a time. They've always been kind of the odd person out or kind of tokens. We're not tokens anymore. The Chancellor of this district is very open to leadership by women." Madeline's notion that they accept women's leadership is not quite accurate. In actuality, the district's most senior staff around the Chancellor is made up mostly of men with one lone woman. Women's leadership, though becoming more visible, remains relatively marginalized. Madeline maintains, however, that her community college district offers leadership opportunities for students and women administrators.

Madeline and her husband are partners in education and the parents of two grown children. Over the years when the children were small, she supported her husband's quest for tenure at a major research university, working evenings while he worked days. Now it is her turn and he supports her in coping with the tremendous public pressure of her presidency. Madeline plans to retire in a few years because she believes the maximum productivity of any president to be about five to seven years.

The stories of Lou Jennings, Madeline Collins, and Regina Ibsen represent adaption to traditional standards as one way to construct a leadership identity. Regina's story was presented in chapter one. Although these women primarily used traditional leadership identities, they are not one dimensional leaders. When the situation or context

called for another response, they could also use reconciliation or resistance as will be shown later.

B. The Role of Communication

Communication is the public focal point where a person's identity, as defined by internalized learned behaviors and attitudes, intersects with external contextual forces (Jehlen, 1984). In chapter two, I outlined a pattern of tendencies that distinguishes men's and women's communication styles. Masculine communication patterns include concise, clear, unbiased language, and power symbols such as the business suit. These language patterns and symbols are the first signatures of power adapted by women in conforming to traditional organization cultures. Moreover, the use of masculine communication patterns is often the benchmark for assessing a woman's leadership potential. Women in this study typically adapted masculine speech patterns, dressed in no-nonsense tailored clothes, and maintained a neat orderly office to communicate an image of efficiency and power. Often her office was arranged so that the line between herself and a subordinate could be distinguished, perhaps with a desk serving as a barrier.

Community college president, Lou Jennings, used visual symbols such as appropriate business dress to show personal authority. Lou also used orderliness and cleanliness to present herself and her college as efficient and effective. College operations were set with this priority in mind. Lou Jennings explained why she places such importance on maintaining facilities:

We care about you . . . We care about our faculty. We want our faculty and

students to have a clean, right environment. That's not going to happen if the folks who are responsible for that don't feel that they're an important part of the institution. The custodians and maintenance people are a part of the team and get special attention at this college.

Lou's impression management strategy links language and symbols. Anyone can use words to say they are efficient, effective and caring, but this president proves these qualities by presenting a clean and organized physical plant.

Within the traditional context of the community college, communication is a verbal performance that arranges the significant players in their order of importance. How the players acknowledge a participant, who is ignored, included, and supported in the conversation identifies and sustains the network of social, political, and administrative order. President Madeline Collins told how communication skills played an important part of her professional identity. She has learned to analyze each situation and adapt her message to each group. She has learned to be direct and give generic information relevant to a particular group clearly outlining the purpose of her talk and her decision. She moves from the larger issue to the more detailed as objectively as possible. Madeline recognizes this strategy has served her well and acknowledges that it has become one of her leadership strengths. Exceptional communication skills helped make her leadership visible:

When they needed someone who could speak with precision and would have the organized documentation to prove the district's case, I was on the witness stand. They cross-examined me nonstop on some of the issues because they knew me and they knew I was a law and order person. If there's a rule, hey, you're suppose to follow it.

She can analyze a problem or dilemma, identify the key issue, and provide the needed remedy. Madeline described her analytical process:

I'm very conscious of the group and I think that also comes from having taught communications. Your audience is everything. If you don't speak to your audience, they're not going to hear what you're saying. If I speak to them [my subordinates] the same way that I speak to my fellow presidents, the message would not be accepted.

When Madeline speaks with her executive staff, she is more informal than with any other group at the college. With these six people, she has an agreement that there will be laughter at the end of each meeting. "We're not going to walk out of here depressed under any circumstance." When she meets with the union, she adapts another stance. "I maintain a certain posture with them and watch my words carefully because they can be actionable. I know that. I mean, I'm a professional in grievance hearings, arbitrations, and as a witness . . . I have been sued by every force in the book...we're in a litigious society."

Madeline's descriptive analysis of her communication strategies with her college constituency illustrates her understanding of communication. Madeline found that effective leadership comes through astute political acumen communication skills, problem solving abilities, and knowledge of the rules.

Each woman's organizational role requires a particular set of communication skills. For example, one senior-level administrator explained that she could not directly manage faculty and remain effective. At her college the academic vice presidents or deans are most effective when they build a consensus and do not engage in fiat when dealing with faculty. However, in service departments where they can measure outcomes and production, the senior administrator can take on a more directive managerial role.

Another senior administrator confirmed this perception of consensus building with

the faculty but adds a traditional twist to its interpretation. In her community college culture, which she said is often called a family, the faculty wants a hand in every decision. However, the family has favorites. Though she was considered an insider when she was faculty, she was aware that many people were not. She describes the situation this way:

It always amused me, (although maybe it wasn't so amusing to the people who were there) that we do a lot of talking about the family. But everybody wasn't in the family, you know. I mean those people who were in it thought it was wonderful and they've always felt that the college was special. But if you are not part of the favored group you are not included so a lot of people and groups were and are left out [of any consensus building].

This description suggests that, while it appears that consensus building is an integral part of her faculty culture, a defined hierarchy limits whom they include. The chosen faculty who follow traditional values work with the men around the president. Furthermore, they build communication networks in the locker room after the noon pickup basketball game, customary golf outings, and bowling leagues.

Several senior-level women administrators emphasized the importance of adapting neutral and objective communication skills. One young woman, for example, found that, after being named vice president of operations, she was often running the college on the days the president was gone. To her surprise, people who had worked with her for years saw her in a way that differed from her previous faculty role. With her new status and visibility they took everything she said seriously . . . "It was a rumor a day." Accordingly, she has learned to choose her words carefully and tries not to create rumors. She explains that one's place within the organizational structure frames one's interpretation: "A secretary will hear and see issues in ways different from someone in

middle management." This explanation illustrates why neutral or objective administrative discourse is an important part of traditional organization cultures. Neutral discourse is equivalent to a "time out." It maintains stability and control of a situation until an answer can be found, defends the administrator from attacks, and gives time to develop a counter move.

Elaine Hill believes she became a leader because of her ability to identify problems and address their source directly. She has twenty years of experience rising in the organizational hierarchy through her readiness and willingness to do the job when superiors, all men, left the college for other positions. Assuming these responsibilities caused a problem for Elaine. It surfaced in her job evaluation a few years ago. Her experience is a lesson in appropriate communication skills that displayed awareness of her culture, its notion of leadership, its expectations, and her need for justice. Elaine had taken on new responsibilities over time without a salary adjustment. "I did some checking and I found very quickly they paid all the women less at their job level. At one point, I was paid less than anyone in my division. I was paid less than anyone in the division below me and I was equal to one man in two divisions below me." After giving some thought to the situation, Elaine decided to talk to the president, beginning the conversation in a diplomatic way. "I think you have a serious problem," she said explaining the overall inequity of women's salaries compared to men at the same level. Then she tactfully explained her personal salary dilemma. The president responded, "Well, I didn't know that was happening." Elaine gently but firmly offered this advice to him, "Well, it would only take about ten minutes for personnel to get the information for you if you're interested in

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looking at it.” After the president reviewed the data, he said, “Well, maybe you’ve learned a lesson. Don’t take on anything next time unless you’re gonna get paid for it.” With this story, Elaine showed her communication skills by expressing concerns to a superior without alienating him. Moreover, Elaine was no longer naive about salary equity and took personal responsibility for monitoring her salary.

Elaine had explained her problem objectively, as though she were helping her president with an institutional concern. In that way, she showed her sense of duty and loyalty to the president and to the institution. Furthermore, she gave him time to save face. The president responded, but never admitted that the pay inequity was an organizational problem. He, in fact, made Elaine responsible for her own pay inequity. He said that she should learn a lesson from this and not take on new jobs unless they pay her fairly. By accepting his interpretation of the standard, Elaine gave the impression of cooperation. She showed respect for his position as president and his associated power and wisely chose not to embarrass or attack him.

These examples of communication by women suggest that leadership involves the adaption of both verbal and symbolic communication skills including the ability to read individuals and groups, and to tailor the message to gain understanding and acceptance. The adaption of a neutral or objective communication style, a factor that identifies some women as potential leadership material is also important. Communication style is so important to varying degrees that it tended to shape the leadership identities of all the women in this study.

C. Adaptation Attitudes and Behaviors

Research by Gherardi (1995) suggests that women's attitudes and behaviors in the workplace are largely based on their interpretation of hierarchy and inequities learned in their families of origin. She contends that when women enter the workplace, "it can be compared to children entering the world of adults. Each new work role has its own inflexible etiquette and the implicit rule is not to ask questions . . . It's a subterranean world in which everything takes on an opposite meaning" (p. 97).

1. Assimilate the Mission and Standards

The tendency of women to use relational ways of reasoning and knowing was an advantage to the senior-level women administrators in this study making it easy for them to embrace the altruistic vision of the "people's college." Most of the women empathized with the notion of giving a second chance to students who don't have much opportunity. One woman called this her way of "saving the world." "Funding for college is not as available as in the past, so my job is to get and keep people in school. This is even more important today," said one president. Perhaps this response should not be a surprising revelation because many study participants were first-generation college students and could personally relate to what an education could do for an individual's life.

The altruistic or relational attitude appeared to give many women administrators incentive to conform to standards because this was the familiar model used to facilitate the mission of the college. They knew few other leadership or organizational models to consider. They summed up their altruistic attitudes in the following statements, "I love

education - that is why I am here,” and “The community college really relates directly to the reason I went into teaching. I believe all people can learn and our job is to set up an environment in which they can find the ways to learn. As administrators, we need to facilitate that.” Specifically, one woman, who manages finances and operations, is proud to be associated with the efforts of her college to provide a practical education so people can help themselves.

Several women explained that they related to the community college because of their experiences in the community. One president grew up in a family of union organizers and community activists. She saw activism as an important part of being a responsible adult and professional. Another president told her faculty: “You have to know your community and that means you measure yourself by how much your community is in your college . . . how much you are participating in your community . . . I will be out in the community and I will expect you to be out in the community, too.” With these descriptions, the women administrators show how their tendency to relational attitudes influences their leadership identities. The remarks also highlight an important contradiction that women must come to terms with as they conform to traditional organizational expectations: The contradiction is that despite their relational orientations to connect with a sense of responsibility to others they are expected to embrace traditional leadership standards based on instrumental or masculine values which are not inclusive. Moreover, the women must actively meet the traditional standards or risk not being identified as a leader.

The women in this chapter assimilated the standards of traditional organizational

life through a process of conformity to expectations. They were motivated by their desire to be effective in doing something good for others. With few alternative leadership models in mind, they learned their behaviors through mentors who choose them and/or careful observation of the culture. These attitudes, along with learned behaviors from educational experiences and interactions within their families, were the elements women drew upon to construct their leadership identity.

As stated previously, Gherardi (1995) contends that the attitudes and behaviors of women toward hierarchy and inequity in the workplace generally reflects those learned in their family of origin. Gherardi does not distinguish a woman by her family role but emphasizes a cultural pattern that links a certain type of femaleness and maleness to family roles. Gherardi identifies “diversity, plurality, and ambiguity to feminine responses to hierarchy and inequality” (p. 83). The women in this study who relied on adaption often played the role of the favorite daughter, the sister who works with women and men against other women and men, or the favorite aunt who is nonpartisan between competing groups but can be counted on to do a quality job. The favorite daughter conforms by taking sides with the hierarchy and is often the official representative for the established order. She is the “right hand,” person who through tireless work can give advice because she has made herself indispensable. She scorns weakness in others and loves the astute and the victorious”(p.75). All adaptive leadership roles required the established norms of professional behavior such as discipline, rationality, objectivity, impersonality, and the development of specific administrative skills. Using this backdrop, I now turn to specific behaviors that women who are adaptors in this study used to fit into

their organizational culture.

2. Keep a Distance

Women who are adaptors often thought it best to keep colleague or professional relationships at a distance. One president explained that leadership required a degree of isolation. Several vice presidents from large urban community colleges feared by having friends on campus, they would be perceived as showing favoritism. One woman often has lunch with a family member creating a space where she can think and talk freely. Another woman summarized the whole notion of distance by declaring that she makes better decisions if she remains aloof.

Margaret Ulster, an African American, has been a member of the senior administrative staff since the early seventies. She highlighted this attitude of keeping a distance saying that presenting an aura of objectivity is important to her. She maintains a distance so that she can make decisions based on all the information. She does not give too much in meetings for fear that anyone gets to know her too well. Margaret wants to remain unpredictable so “they” have to figure her out. She does not want to give the impression of making promises she does not intend to keep. If she is too friendly or accommodating, people may conclude that they can easily sway her. Margaret avoids discussing issues that might be problematic and incorrectly interpreted.

An example of Margaret’s distancing is her decision not to take a job as affirmative action officer early in her career in order to avoid becoming stereotyped. Though she officially keeps a distance from this type of role, privately she remains a

supporter of efforts to resolve racial discrimination. When a problem surfaces that may relate to gender or race, she concentrates on understanding individual behavior a strategy which helps her maintain an unbiased image. Margaret insists she maintain a neutral position even on issues she feels passionate about such as civil rights. This reflects her conformity to traditional masculine expectations embedded in the community college culture. According to Org (1981), the tradition of objectivity began in higher education because it was to be a place of unbiased reason and where the teaching of logic would be revered. As early as the time of Aristotle traveling poets because of their ability to stir and influence the emotions of the people were considered dangerous agitators. After that, administrators and faculty were placed in a position where they could not acknowledge personal values without causing suspicion and disdain.

A vice president explained how her personal beliefs and her lack of neutrality caused great problems at one point in her career when there was much political strife at her college:

It was a two-camp situation. Faculty members had reason to be disillusioned with some of the leadership. One group wanted it corrected through negotiations and another group wanted a union. I was on the union side. This was during the civil rights movement and when individualism was of primary importance. I was working staff development at the time and because I was identified so strongly with the union camp I felt that a lot of the arguments against me were being waged for political reasons. I felt that it was not easy to do what I believed really needed to be done because no matter what I did it was seen in the light of this larger struggle. There were days when I really didn't like to come to work.

Today she acts with caution and hears all sides before taking a position on an issue. She understands that most issues are complex and the answers are not always clear-cut:

I'll tell you I've changed. I have gotten so dumb. I said, you know, I wish I'd had this problem 20 year ago because 20 years ago I would have known the answer. I would have known it was the right answer. I don't know anymore. The older I get and the more experience I have, the more I have come to live in a world of gray.

One way to display objectivity and unbiased thinking is to minimize or deny opinions on controversial topics especially those related to gender. In earlier stories introducing the adaption response, Louise Jennings denied gender issues explaining, that at her college what a person accomplishes is more important than their gender. Madeline Hall acknowledged but minimized gender issues, saying that gender bias may have been prevalent in the past, but the numerical representation of women has changed over the last few years. Therefore, from her experience women's leadership is respected.

Sue Olsen, an administrative operations vice president spoke for several women in the study by declaring, "Gender just never seemed like a real issue to me. I've seen differences between men and women, but I don't know that I could attribute it as much to gender as to individual personalities." She went on to describe other women administrators who were aggressive and operated much like a man in battle. On the other hand, she had worked with and for men who are not at all conflict-oriented. " So . . . I don't think I could make any distinctions based on gender in the people that I worked with." Several other women expressed a disinterest in gender issues as not relevant to their experience.

Some women may have denied or minimized gender issues for several explanations. Impression management may be at the core of this stance. The women's lack

of response to gender-related issues shows trust in the system as it exists. By ignoring the influence of gender issues, the participant deflects possible flaws within her organization and her complicity (Ferguson, 1982; Gherardi, 1995). Other women just do not see gender issues as relevant. Women administrators who express this view are positioned in roles where they have little knowledge of other employees' experiences at lower levels in their institution. In other instances, women may deny or ignore gender issues because collegial relationships are important alliances for future movement within the college. To acknowledge gender issues might be counter productive to building alliances. The women who have won a special position often are hesitant to share this with other women, especially if the others have not proven themselves professionally (Kanter, 1977; Yoder, 1985).

Overall, senior-level women administrators who are adaptors in traditional organizational cultures tend to maintain their position by keeping a distance from colleagues and from controversial issues to fit in with traditional cultural norms and gain acceptance.

3. Learn a Needed Skill

The women with adaptive leadership identities have developed technical skills which not only help their institution but foster their own sense of self-reliance. Sue Olsen, a vice president of operations at a suburban community college, said she would advise women seeking a senior position to have a technical skill such as finance or computers. Taking her own advice, she developed skills that positioned her so that she can

maintain an independent attitude and be perceived as self-motivated. Being independent helps her remain objective about issues. She recalled having to figure out a complex budget on her own because she did not have a mentor to help her learn the job. She believes learning by herself has its benefit. "By not having a mentor, I have a level of self-confidence and a level of independence that those who have mentors do not have. They are more dependent. I didn't have that opportunity to experiment or ask for advice. I just had to do it." Acting as a mentor to other women is not part of her vision of leadership. Sue prefers mentoring men because she works mostly with men. She further explained that she grew up working with her father after her mother died so this preference for working with men has long been a part of her style.

Once a woman proved herself competent to the community college senior management team, she was often encouraged to get additional credentials. The participants in this study tended to return to graduate school to earn their Ph.D., Ed.D., JD., or Master's degree after they were appointed to an administrative position. Typically, this was done to develop expertise or a special skill needed at the administrative level of the particular college. Over the last several years, many of their advanced degrees have tended toward technical or speciality degrees rather than professional degrees from colleges of education. Examples of specialty degrees they earned are law, finance, master's in public or business administration, and computer technology. Ferguson (1984) suggested that they generally ground these programs in traditional views of organizational life. Unfortunately, this orientation suits the needs of the current organization, but offers little direction for women to creatively explore

critical frameworks or alternative organizational structures.

Community colleges often recognize relevant expertise and official credentials when choosing women for senior administrative positions. One president in this study who does not have a doctorate, said she brings just the right blend of expertise and credibility to her community college. She was chosen for the position because she is respected in her community. In addition, she had nearly twenty years of administrative and faculty experience. Also, she represented, the African American community, one of the college's key constituencies and brought strong ties and understanding of this community to the position. Because a geographically defined area supports a community college, its constituency reflects the demographics of the area. As an African American, she provided the leadership and dynamic role model her college needed to correct its mismanagement and improve its poor self-image. As a role model, she offers the community promise and pride in their ethnicity and racial identity.

Another community college president, also without a doctorate, was hired because of her strong organizational skills. She said the selection committee made no secret of it, "I was chosen because the college was failing financially and came close to not receiving accreditation during the previous accreditation visit." Because she showed skills associated with efficient and productive leadership in dealing with similar challenges at her former college, she was chosen as a change agent for her current college. These examples show the importance adaptors place on skill based formal education and on-the-job learning in the development of their leadership identities and career advancement.

4. Be Prepared

“Be prepared” is more than the Girl Scout motto, it is also the motto of astute senior-level women administrators who are adaptors at the community college. Two vice presidents spoke displaying their leadership by focusing on details and doing their homework on projects. An academic vice president says she learned the details of the union contracts and the rules that govern interactions with the Board of Trustees as an adaption to make herself more effective. For example, she learned that when faculty has a grievance, the best approach is to state the policy and refer them to a specific clause in the contract. If it is another administrator who has a problem, she refers them to the contract. Because the policies that define interactions with the Board of Trustees have not changed in years, she knows them quite well and can advise others about how to handle issues and conflicts with the Board. At times she has shown competency by warning her president not do the things she was doing. However, in dealing with superiors she is quite cautious believing that this focus on details can make her appear harsh and inflexible. She is working on becoming more diplomatic and less authoritative.

Another woman found that she can reduce her insecurity about a project if she knows the policies of the college and the union contract. Before she begins a project, she studies its underlying philosophy and background as well as the associated costs and benefits. Most of the women declared that they tackle projects thoroughly so that they can defend their position from any point of view. Being prepared is an important adaptive response and shows how adaptive behaviors help construct a woman’s leadership identity.

These accounts may explain why women administrators are often criticized for

being rule-minded and showing disdain to others who do not follow process.

Dependency on rules can replace not only the non-availability of information from colleagues, but can also serve as a justification for the decisions made and reduce criticism of the decisions. A problem with this focus on detail is that these senior women administrators may appear rigid in interactions or projects, thus making them seem rule-minded and inflexible. This quality differs with women's expected relational position and sets them up for harsh treatment from both men and women.

5. Compete

Traditional organizational cultures foster competition because it keeps the hierarchy in place (Iannello, 1992). Therefore, women who are adaptors feel pressure to compete on the traditional organizational culture's terms. A president of a small Midwest community college recalled places that she worked where competition clearly shaped the organization's traditions and norms. To prove competency and effectiveness, every administrator worked long hours and then took paper work home. "It was expected. If you didn't, they didn't think you were effective. Then it became a battle of pointing out your mistakes or the fact that you were unprepared." She explained, "If I was not being stabbed, I was doing the stabbing. It was standard operating procedure." However, she felt uncomfortable with the situation and explained that she was different from the others because, when she was doing the "stabbing," she always told the truth.

Another president explained that her fiercest political battles have been with other women:

I think women have a hard time accepting another woman being the ultimate authority. And I think we still haven't moved as far as one would like in terms in kind of forgetting the gender thing. Let's get down to brass tacks; the competition problem, I think, is still there. And that's real unfortunate, but it is there.

Yet another women dean told of a younger colleague who was interested in moving to a higher position and asked for her advice on issues. The dean said she felt used because after earning the position, both were members of the president's staff, and the younger woman "stabbed her in the back" publicly. The older woman identifies this behavior of the younger women as a character problem.

Sue Olsen experienced a similar political battle when she supported the hiring of a women academic vice president thinking she would be a good addition to the team. As she got to know her better, Sue's perception was that the women had a Jekyll and Hyde personality. "She had a very pleasant side to her, but she also had a very ugly side which became clearer the longer she was there. Finally, the woman went into open battle with the president over a number of issues." Because the college was a part of a large urban culture, the battle between the two took on major political overtones. The woman won, the president, a man, was fired and the woman elevated to the presidency:

It was impossible not to take sides in this battle. I sided with the current president and so when she became the new president I had to leave. She was going to, I mean, she was out to fire me. She had to work hard to develop a background, you know, in any institution you just can't fire without reason. You have to show cause. I knew that over time, no matter what I did, she was going to develop cause.

In this case, Sue choose to leave a situation where she would be at the mercy of a threatening and fierce competitor who would eventually win and where she would lose.

One woman told of a competitive situation with a male colleague. An emergency arose when she and a male colleague were left in charge of the campus. Because the president was out of town and the state inspectors required that a decision be made about building codes, the two decided together a course of action. However, when the president returned and heard of their decision, she was furious. It had greater implications than the two had considered. The possibility arose that irregularities the state inspector uncovered could damage the college's image. However, the male colleague "left the meeting and let me take the blame for the situation." Though the president overreacted and her fears never became real, the woman still wonders how or whether she can even the score with her male colleague. She felt victimized but could not complain because her president hates complainers, victims, and people who make excuses for their mistakes. Furthermore, this type of behavior by her male colleague is considered fair play in her institution because competition is at the heart of its traditional organizational culture.

6. Replicate Traditional Leadership Values in Hiring Practices

Women who are adaptors tend to hire individuals with traditional organizational values. Lou Jennings, a community college president clearly knows that choosing the right person is important to the success of her organization, and she wants people with traditional values to match hers. Most of the faculty and the administrative staff are made up of men and women with traditional leadership styles who enact and set the traditional standards of organizational life. Therefore, whether they are men or women those hired are measured by this standard and must conform to it to be defined as leaders.

Lou Jennings and many other women in the study believe that hiring the right person is essential to the success of the college. Lou wants people who are willing to work hard. "I don't get along with people who don't." She does not want those who are "intellectually off in the stratosphere," nor, those who cannot bring theory to reality and make it work. Lou does not care for people who are always making excuses about not getting their job done. "I'm not interested in excuses. I also believe that behaviors such as laziness can change if the person wants them to." Lou does not want complainers, victims, or people too good to get their hands dirty. Finally she commented, "You can have all the equipment that you want, (but if) you don't have the right people around, it's not gonna work."

Lou and her staff recognize that few women are at the middle level of management ready to move into senior positions. Hiring priorities systematically exclude women who do not have traditional masculine work styles and related skills and therefore, exclude many women from the candidate pool for such positions.

7. Validate Yourself through "Self-Talk"

Successful adaption to traditional organizational standards often meant that the women needed to learn to validate their accomplishments through positive self-talk and not to rely upon the organization and others for validation. One vice president explained how her self-esteem has improved since she has conformed to the culture. She has even learned to live with the general coldness and aloofness she experiences prevails from central administration having learned not to take it personally, "Who knows why they

don't like you? It can be racial, style, gender, or whatever. When the testosterone flies at the main office, it can be for any reason." She has learned not to attract attention to herself by asking questions or by being helpful. From her account adaption has had some benefits. By concentrating on the rules and regulations and not on why people don't like her, she has been able to survive in her combative college culture.

Managing negative moods through positive self-talk is essential to conformity helping to create a positive impression because others perceive that competent leaders are in control of their emotions. President Lou Jennings described her system for handling self-doubt and anxiety:

There are days when I think, oh my Lord, I should just stay in bed and keep my head covered. We'll all be better off. But for the most part I think, okay, I can do this. You're going to be able to manage this . . . Most problems are going to resolve themselves . . . It seems overwhelming and I think I just can't do it. I don't know how to deal with this. Then you find out it is going to work out. It's not pleasant, sometimes it's very painful, but this is life. This is part of the job.

Lou stays calm and avoids panic with positive self-talk realizing that doing nothing is often the best course of action. When problems of a political nature arise, they often have a way of resolving themselves without intervention. Though Lou's feelings of panic often required consultations with her spouse, who holds a similar position, she found that by presenting herself in a positive way, despite feelings of isolation, anxiety, and incompetency, she could create an impression of competency.

Another president, Madeline Collins, reported that she felt like the most hated woman in town, but she decided not to take the attacks personally. She learned to

think of the hostility as one would when a child says "I hate you." To both Lou and Madeline, this self-talk was an important adaption to create their successful presidencies helping them to present a positive face.

Several women said that they handle the shame or ridicule surrounding personal attacks through positive self-talk. Then they take on a grand project to prove their competency. By overachieving, they demonstrate their competence to themselves and others by accomplishing visible and difficult goals. Yet another woman handled her negative moods when her competency was questioned by overlooking the negative remarks and seeing the people as uninformed. She tried not to condemn anyone but just move on and accept the situation. By learning to self-validate their accomplishments and talking themselves into a positive stance and into action, senior women administrators can project an aura of strength and certainty that traditional organizations interpret as competency.

Overall, Gherardi's descriptive analysis of positions women may take in the work place as a response to hierarchy and inequity was helpful in interpreting women's attitudes and behaviors in their organizational culture. The need of senior-level women administrators who are adaptors to "fit in" to traditional standards is prompted by the culture's definition of leadership as functional and productive. Because so few women are in senior-level administrative positions at community colleges, this token position accentuates performance pressures and helps explain women's adaptive behaviors. Some of those behaviors are over attention to detail and competitiveness to prove competency, separation of work and personal relationships, dissociation from controversial issues,

hiring like-minded colleagues, and the need to self-validate.

D. The Costs and Benefits of Adaption

In the previous section, I discussed attitudes and behaviors of women administrators who construct a leadership identity by adapting to traditional organizational standards. In this section, I explore the costs and benefits of such adaptations. The contradiction between their relational tendencies and the actual traditional practices of the community college put women in a double bind. When they achieve through traditional processes, they jeopardize the quality of their relationships with both men and women. The following are accounts of how colleague relationships changed when senior-level women administrators became representatives of the hierarchy.

Isolation. A cost of adaptation is a sense of isolation. The shape and intensity of the isolation varies according to context but nevertheless is potentially damaging to the individual woman. One woman said that she received the shock of her life after the president promoted her to a senior position. Long-time friends did not include her in faculty gatherings and they did not invite her to eat lunch with her work group. As a founding member of one of the local faculty unions, Madeline Collin's first job as president was to redefine the union contract she had helped to write thirty years prior. The faculty reacted and she endured long-term mean-spirited public attacks because of her work. Madeline's office is close to the chancellor's and some faculty were going directly to the chancellor with their concerns. Therefore, she and the chancellor agreed that should any faculty or administrator try to bypass her authority she would be kept

informed. This worked well to protect her from isolation and sneak attacks.

Two senior-level administrators explained that when they made changes to remove racial quotas for employment and kept a purposeful distance from issues such as affirmative action, the African American community isolated them. As a result, they were accused of turning their backs on the African American community. However, the women believed they could not change their position on the issue and remain effective leaders.

One community college women administrator described a recent dramatic situation illustrating the vulnerability that can result from being isolated. A high ranking official at her college who had been chosen as a change agent received much acclaim for her distinctive innovations and efforts to create a more diverse institution. She was a task master with a traditional authoritarian leadership style, so despite her many successes, she alienated both men and women in the college and on the Board of Trustees. When her term expired, the board ended her employment without cause in a very public hearing. Observers speculated that she had become too successful making the former administrators look bad. Her assertive manner also alienated those board members who were not committed to the changes she initiated. This suggests that even when a woman's adaption appears successful, it can often isolate her from the political maneuvering within her community college and make her susceptible to actions such as betrayal and even firing.

Regina Ibsen the adaption prototype described earlier claimed, "I really don't fit in over here with the men and I don't fit in here with the women . . . The women keep me

at arms length....I'm just kind of right out there. The women keep me at arms length."

She infers that a woman who becomes too successful breaks the stereotypical female role of nurturer, intimidating both men and women. This can isolate her and make her politically vulnerable. If she does not adapt, others may perceive her as too different. When she is not taken seriously, she is respected by neither men nor women.

Does this isolation extend to a woman's personal life by affecting her relationships at home? The data are unclear. Of the participants who constructed predominantly traditional leadership identities through adaption, I found no set pattern of successful or unsuccessful marital relationships due to their careers. Some African American women in the study suggested that they believed that few African American men could handle the demands and constraints of a spouse's career. These women have given up earlier illusions that they might marry. Other women in the study, both African American and white, reported that their spouses had supported their careers often acting as mentors. Several said that their spouses had retired and followed them in their career moves. All women who reported divorces during their careers hesitated to say that their marriage ended primarily because of their career goals and adaptations. As one administrator explained, her marriage ended because she and her former husband were going in different directions in life.

Failure to maintain supportive relationships. A competitive culture stymies the collective emotional growth of an institution because it restricts collaboration and dialogue between women, men, racial, and ethnic groups. One African American woman explained that without exception white women within her community college system have

disappointed her because they are so competitive. “There is no more vicious a woman out there than a Caucasian woman because she brings with her a lot of entitlement. They come in the form of the Jewish princess, Mayflower queen, the prima donna. They make it within their institution by whatever means necessary.” This woman has tried to build professional friendships with some of her white female colleagues but without success. “The minute your guard is down they put you in your place. It’s so competitive; they bring a lot of baggage.” They also bring many perceptions of race and leadership as well as how to get ahead.

The work of bell hooks (1995) suggests that despite the call for sisterhood and collegueship by feminists in the workplace, tension still persists between white and black women. Specifically, hooks maintains that, until white women come to terms with their role in the organizational system that oppresses black women and men, trust between the two groups is unlikely.

Overall, competition within an organization is a destructive force. It does not foster community, collaboration, and meaningful exchange about differences. Furthermore, competition between departments and individuals produces winners and losers. Winners are entitled to attitudes and behaviors of superiority and privilege while losers face additional hostility.

The restraint of individual and institutional growth is another cost of adaption. Yoder (1985) suggests that women administrators have received benefits and privileges associated with their willingness to adapt. It is not likely that these women will include other women in the inner circle. First, they do not want to put their competency in

question if they make a mistake in judgement about other women. Second, they are less likely to include women with different leadership styles because they do not want to have their loyalty to the institution questioned. Third, they do not want to lose their status of specialness. Thus an inadvertent cost of adaption is that few women or minorities reach middle-management positions. Those who could are reluctant to move into senior administrative positions because they must conform too much or have already conformed enough to a culture based on traditional standards.

President Lou Jennings's remarks illustrate this frame of reference. Though many women serve on her senior administrative staff, she describes them as task oriented people; not particularly visionary leaders. That they are women is incidental to her college's organizational culture. Because she is not knowledgeable of leadership styles other than her own, based on traditional conceptions, Lou has not considered alternatives and the strengths of other leadership styles. Nor has she seriously considered the beneficial long-term effects that relational paradigms might bring if introduced into her college's culture. Instead, Lou looks for women who are practical, not too theoretical, and who do not give excuses for failures; "people who can make things happen." If the individual does not follow the traditional standard, they must change to succeed at her institution. Other women administrators also reflect Lou's attitude. The implied conclusion is that younger women who do not strive to "fit in" by adapting, generally do not "have what it takes" (the emotional character) to do the job. This suggests that those who have adapted believe that senior women administrators must fit a certain mold to be leadership material. How ironic that Lou put creative effort into making physical

maintenance a major part of the organization's culture, but that she did not go to the same effort to make relational ways of knowing and relational paradigms just as acceptable. Clearly, a major cost of adapting is that it sets limits, does not create a diverse climate which could spark creativity and personal growth. Adaption does not foster the altruistic values of social change such as uplifting of women, new immigrants, and racial minorities so needed with today's demography.

Despite the women's isolation and the institution's loss of human potential and creativity, a few participants reported satisfaction in learning new skills and a sense of achievement resulting from adaption. To these women, adaption meant predictable guidelines to success and the hope that if they get "it right" they will be rewarded. An African American woman spoke of the advantages:

I think that this job [at my local college] has done a lot to build my confidence. I remember my first few years in my undergraduate education when I said, "I just can't do this because I'm not college material." Then to turn around and to look at those individuals who have come here with Ph.D.'s and are now reporting to me, sometimes it's rather awesome. I sort of look back at it and I am stunned but I feel good. I really feel that the advice that I'm giving is correct (based on the rules and regulations). They respect it and they go by it. It's quite an experience . . .

A sense of respect for her position in the hierarchy has given this woman a feeling of accomplishment. However, in comparing the overall costs and benefits of adaption to the individual and to the institution, it appears that the costs outweigh the benefits.

E. Summary

Adaption is a natural reaction for women who want to achieve, especially those

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raised in a patriarchal family where pleasing parents, particularly their fathers, has equated to goodness and acceptance (Gherardi, 1995). Adaption to traditional organizational cultural context was the overarching experience of the thirty women in this study. Though the findings suggested a range of conformity, nine of the thirty women tended to use an adaptive response strategy laden with instrumental behaviors as the main core of their leadership identity. Believing in the altruistic mission of the community college, the women profiled here were willing to accept, not question, its traditional orientations in theory or practice. They rationalized that adaption was a necessary response if they were to have any success in furthering that mission. Unfortunately, adaption often prevented them from considering what they could have brought to the organization.

Women who chose to adapt viewed leadership either through the bureaucratic model built on production and outcomes (Blackmore, 1989) and/or the political model built on relationships with unions, instructors, and the community. Because both models are gender blind, explicit and implicit gender issues and other issues of difference were unattended or invisible to these women. Nevertheless, gender issues were a consistent source of tension in their adaptive processes.

Women who had constructed an adaptive leadership identity made conformed to “fit in” so their work and achievements would reflect the community college’s notion of competency. They engaged in a learning process to acquire basic skills of negotiating and managing their image of effectiveness. They learned to communicate, speak and dress the values of the college culture, and to maintain a detached and dispassionate approach to

their interactions with people and their ideas to avoid appearing biased.

Because adaption skills are in direct opposition to behaviors associated with relational ways of knowing which favor connection to others, conformity to traditional expectations puts women in a double bind. When women obey the rules of traditional organizational standards, they break the rules of behaviors typically associated with women. When women break traditional gender roles they pay the price of becoming isolated from other women and from men. The cost to the institution is that it diminishes institutional growth because it separates colleagues. Problem solving in such a climate is an independent activity rather than a collaborative community effort.

Adaption creates two dilemmas for women trying to “fit in” to traditional organizations. The first, because of their commitment to egalitarian ideals of the community college and their desire to achieve, they must accept traditional organizational orientations that are hierarchical and non-egalitarian. If they do not conform to these traditional orientations women are seen as ineffective. A risk they cannot take if they want to succeed. Consequently, the women subjugate relational ways of knowing, leading, and organizing. Second, after successfully adapting to traditional standards, the women no longer “fit in” with their women colleagues. In the end, the adapters are outsiders in relation to both men and other women, because they have rejected relational ways of leading and organizing.

The stories of Lou, Madeline, and Regina illustrate the range of conformity in this chapter. These women should not be viewed as one-dimensional leaders. Though they clearly had a strong tendency to use adaptive strategies, but the data also suggested they

used reconciliation and resistance strategies to achieve and succeed in their community college culture.

CHAPTER V

Reconciliation

The successful woman is capable, competitive, and gets along well with men. The female manager is “feminine but not seductive, assertive but not aggressive . . . [The woman who tries] to strike the appropriate balance between masculine and feminine behaviors will inevitably fail to accomplish her goal to be accepted, since in order to do so she will have to be a different thing to different people” (Koester, 1982, p. 170).

Women who use both relational and instrumental behaviors based on contextual considerations to construct their leadership identities are termed reconcilers. Adaption to instrumental or masculine norms at community colleges was established as the overarching experience of senior women administrators. As cultural outsiders, however, women conforming to masculine norms do not necessarily earn acceptance. To counter this lack of acceptance, women in this study often used relational responses or instrumental responses depending upon the context. This contextual-based reconciliation of behavior responses is a way to reduce the stress of their outsider status. For most of the women highlighted here, reconciliation also provided a means to fix the situation harmoniously and helped them to survive on a day-to-day basis. The dual nature of reconciliation is built on the women’s ability to read work situations clearly and manage appropriate responses which then allow them to use either relational or instrumental behaviors as context demands. To determine the evolution of this response, I investigated the participants’ leadership identities, the role of communication, reconciliation attitudes and behaviors, and the costs and benefits of reconciliation.

A. Leadership Identity

That some women used either relational or instrumental behaviors depending on context is a reasonable response to a complex situation. By using alternative behaviors, women leaders can work within the traditional organizational system without threatening too many women and men. Women who used reconciliation often gave metaphors such as a kaleidoscope and a miner boring through rock, a bear, and a group of interlocking rings to explain their leadership identities.

1. Patricia Krugger - No Junior Leaguer

Patricia Krugger, a vice president with a warm engaging personality described her leadership style:

The kaleidoscope on my desk is somewhat indicative of at least, I don't know, of my leadership style. It's how I see things - constantly changing but every pattern is pretty. You know, you do have some control over it. All those pieces are already there. I didn't create it. But they can be rearranged. It is also like being a miner trying to crawl through this rock because some days are like that, too. You are looking for the end of the tunnel, at least the light at the end of the tunnel. Crawling and digging through rock.

This description highlights the relational side of Patricia's leadership style when she is working with her staff. When they work as a team, they each bring in skills that complement hers. She endeavors to make them feel included and important professional colleagues. For example, Katie, a longtime trusted colleague reads people well. Katie often restrains Patricia from being too empathetic and naive about employees' motivations. At times, Patricia gets her feelings wrapped up in employees' personal

situations. On such occasions, Katie might warn her, "Now don't go hugging and crying when you meet with this person. Remember the reason we are firing him is that he has been pilfering funds from the college."

On the instrumental side, Patricia is a direct assertive supervisor. She has high standards, pays attention to detail, and completes tasks. She wants the total commitment of her staff when working on an assignment. Patricia said one of her biggest compliments came from an older man on her maintenance staff who told her he liked working with her because she was just one of the guys. Patricia did what she needed to do in working with that person to get the job done. "If he sees me as a feminist bitch, I am not going to be able to work with him. Nor are we Junior Leaguer socialites around here. We all come from working-class backgrounds." Hard work, visible accomplishments, orderliness, along with appropriate attitudes and behavior are important instrumental features of Patricia's leadership style. These feature makes sense when Patricia describes the culture of her community college: "cleanliness is next to godliness." Her leadership metaphors were the kaleidoscope and the miner. Each illustrates the compartmentalized instrumental and relational aspects of her leadership style.

2. Linda Tifton - A Tough Competitor

Linda Tifton, a vice president at a suburban community college, used a bear metaphor for the two sides of her leadership: a likeable warm character to her staff but a fierce protector of turf to outsiders. "We are a transfer culture," Linda explained. Most of the students are full-time traditional college-age students. This culture is different

from most community college districts which have an abundance of part-time students who drop in and out. Because Linda is responsible for research and community relations, she is compelled to have high standards and be aware of the latest technology. To get the most from her predominantly female staff, Linda uses a collaborative open-door leadership style. She knowing her staff's weaknesses and strengths, makes every effort to help them grow in their professional skills.

Whenever working with her boss or others outside her department, Linda puts on another face in order to defend her territory and support her staff. She compares herself to a bear because the staff perceives her differently depending on the context: fierce in some situations, likeable and reassuring in others. She described herself as flexible and consistently honest. Men in her organization do not intimidate her. She can small talk with any of them because she genuinely is knowledgeable about their interests, such as sports. She developed her expertise in the new educational technology, therefore, maintains relationships with people in very different ways: with male colleagues through sports and technical knowledge and with subordinates by relational behaviors such as never asking them to do anything she wouldn't do. "I stuff envelopes with the rest of them," she flatly states. She has an implicit agreement with her staff that she will not behave haughtily or act superior. In return, she expects absolute honesty and loyalty from them. Linda wants to hear about problems from her group rather than from someone outside the department.

3. Irene Morgan - The Spot Quiz

Irene Morgan, a vice president, says that her community college is like a family but describes it as cold and demanding. In this family, meeting standards is taken so seriously that it almost made her ill. Although Irene had fifteen years experience and impressive accomplishments when she was hired for her position, they were not enough for her supervisor to treat her as a professional. Nor were her considerable abilities in mathematics and rational analytical skills enough to meet the standard.

Irene quickly learned that working at this college had many contradictions. She had to prove her competency daily, far beyond a normal transition period. She described in painful detail how she had to start from "scratch." For three years, her supervisor, the director of accounting, gave her a daily spot quiz. As a "dutiful daughter," Irene placated and complied to maintain her connection to this male supervisor because her future was literally in his hands. He had the power to dismiss or advance her career. She explained:

I was walking into an arena where everyone knew more than me including the VP of Instruction . . . I never knew what to expect. It was my own inadequacy because I did not have the degrees on my wall. Every day I would go to the director and there would be a new spot quiz . . . He didn't think I knew what I was doing . . . Finally, I figured out that he was no more knowledgeable than I was . . . He never could find "the chinks" in my armor. His chinks were bigger [than mine]. I would say I handled it by being over prepared.

The "examination" model used to establish Irene's competency was harsh. The daily quiz resulted in self-doubt and low self-esteem that virtually silenced her for three years. Under these circumstances, Irene could not consider mentoring or networking with others

because she believed she had nothing to give and no one valued her opinion. It took her three more years to get to the point where she could ask questions or say, "Why don't we look at it this way?" or "How about if we change the way we look at things?" In time, she realized that she knew more than he did. Irene wonders if her training had to be so harsh. She also questions whether the strict standards actually set back her ability to develop confidently and creatively. Irene turned her response to this continuous scrutiny by her boss from a self-defeating into strength building. For her compliance during those years, she was promoted to a senior position. Only then but with much anxiety, did she finally begin to speak up. Just recently, she told the president of her college that a project assigned to her was physically impossible to do within the given schedule. She considered that a step toward integrity. Also, she decided to work on her Master's degree in Public Administration to get over "credential intimidation."

Based on these accounts, the range of reconciliation behaviors the women chose was often related to their position in the hierarchy. As supervisors, Patricia's and Linda's stories show how they compartmentalized their work lives. They used competitive and astute political behavior when working with colleagues and superiors outside their group and they responded empathetically as a sister with their team of subordinates. They expected loyalty from their team in return and when necessary were direct and confrontational with a deviant team member.

Irene and Sonya, reconciler prototypes profiled earlier earned their way to the board room by virtually remaining silent during much of their professional careers. Each earned her way to the inner circle through trial and error. Each described her entrance into

the community college when she was young, naive, uncertain, trusting, but full of promise. To their bosses, they were receptive, passive, and flexible. These relational qualities helped them meet the standards of entry-level employees. They placated their superiors by satisfying their demands. They defended their right to enforce standards although they became ill from such an environment. Eventually, Sonya and Irene realized that the competitive culture of their community colleges would never allow them to rest and they would have to continually prove their competency. Hard work was not necessarily the gateway to success in such a hierarchy. Each woman was at the right place, at the right time, with a set of skills the college needed and neither had made too many enemies.

For reconciliation leaders, the use of both instrumental and relational behaviors depending on context is an attempt to satisfy a culture dominated by traditional instrumental standards, an environment where ignoring the relational behavior could be damaging. According to sociolinguist Sheldon (1992), who studied play groups, this reconciliatory response may begin in childhood for girls. Young girls used a “double-voiced discourse” as they simultaneously considered their own and another’s agenda while constantly making initiatives to achieve group harmony. In this study I found that women often used a “double voice” to communicate that they are competent to both men and women. This was done in decidedly different ways depending on their position in the hierarchy.

B. The Role of Communication

Leadership is defined as the ability to interpret the culture of the institution,

thereby, facilitating a common vision of the organization in formal and informal leadership roles (Bensimon et al 1989). Once they acknowledged the differences between relational and instrumental leadership expectations, the women in this study came to understand the contentious aspects of the two leadership styles. This awareness put a new dimension to leadership choices (Kanter, 1977; Yoder, 1985). A study by Deborah Kolbe reported by Tannen (1998) suggested that women generally respond to fighting or confrontation by avoiding it. They would rather placate acting as problem solvers from behind the scenes. Yet leadership is judged by the ability to sell ideas. Women using reconciliation tended to look for harmonious solutions to problems even if it meant compromising their views. Women leaders who work with divergent expectations often attempt to reconcile this situation by compartmentalizing relational and instrumental thinking to communicate their ideas. For example, the women in this study frequently softened direct orders while maintaining an image of friendly competency. They also used language forms such as parenthetical statements, tag statements, and questions to soften their authority or expert role. Typically women learn these skills through observation and refine them through their experience in a man's world.

Sheila Danforth, a community college president, declared that because clear guidelines do not exist for communicating successfully in every situation, every senior woman must develop her own strategy within her own context. Sheila developed a new tone of voice and told humorous stories to persuade others to her way of thinking. Sheila is the youngest of seven and grew up among many brothers. She is comfortable with instrumental behaviors and is not afraid to participate in the world of men. Because she

was the youngest of seven children with many brothers she said, “I learned to feel comfortable with men. So that may have influenced some things for me differently than maybe the average women. I don’t mean that I haven’t known there were certain things that were a problem.” Nevertheless, when she began her career journey, she found that to be effective she would have to make some changes.

Sheila took lessons to moderate her voice so she would speak clearly and with a softer intonation and not appear shrill or loud. She wanted. “I was sulking . . . about my voice, you know, because I learned that I was the loudest person around . . . I mean, I just laughed louder than anyone else. I talked louder than anyone else and so that was embarrassing me. So I took lots of voice and diction courses to get over that.” She has learned how to keep her directives light through humor. With her soft voice and her humor, she manages to be assertive without being abrasive. When she was the only female reporting at the president’s cabinet level, one of the men asked her to play racquetball. She responded to her male colleague, “Bill, I appreciate the intent but unless I’m going in the locker room with you, it won’t put me any closer to the dean’s job, cause those positions are really not cut on the court.” Through humor and stories, Sheila added a southern-like charm to her leadership and, in this situation, she expressed her knowledge of how the selection process for dean really worked. She described features of her leadership identity through her leadership metaphor of baking an angel-food cake. To lead, she must build a closeness to people or for her it doesn’t work. For Sheila leading is not pushing and shoving people but is similar to making an angel-food cake. One gently folds the ingredients together:

You have got to constantly fold in your ideas (to their thinking) . . . If I throw a trial balloon out, you've got to fold in one group of influence at a time. Employees should be thought of as a series of sociograms you got to fold in. And so I've often used the analogy of making an angel-food cake because you don't beat it as opposed to any other item you might bake. The angel-food cake requires that you gently but constantly fold in the next ingredient.

Women who use reconciliation behaviors often give assurance and encouragement when they speak to others in professional roles. Christine Noe uses this strategy within her institution. Christine, a vice president of student services, has a counseling background and often acts as a bridge between adversaries in a self-described hostile environment. She negotiates her way through the college hierarchy by making friends, passing along information, giving advice, and being a good listener. She has helped clean up some institutional messes for instance by convincing a top administrator to retire. Task-oriented, Christine is responsible and has initiated many innovative programs that have received national recognition. Today, she no longer does the micro-managing of these initiatives. She is looking for new challenges. As a bridge to the main power structure, Christine brings people together by finding common ground and keeps a dysfunctional institution from erupting. However, traditional organizations do not recognize these types of communication skills as a valuable asset to the institution. Today Christine is looking for another challenge because she believes that the current administration has not identified her skills as important for the presidency at her college.

Women who are reconcilers also communicate through informal channels. Members of the dominant group at community colleges often get information and keep

it among themselves. Gale Goffman, the only woman administrator on the male-dominated senior staff at her college, learned to get the information by techniques she described as follows: "I developed a working relationship with one of my male colleagues because he has a lot of information. He's very open in one-on-one and likes to complain because he is under a lot of stress." She has learned by sincerely listening to his venting, he will tell her what she needs to know. In contrast, the new president is very closed with his communication. In Gale's experience information-sharing with the new president is selective, based on his opinion if he likes you. She intuitively feels that when she is in meetings with men they are sorry she is there because they must restrain themselves from telling their hunting stories. It seems they are thinking: "The 'nicey-nice' person is here . . . You know, we want to just talk about the business of the meeting and get onto the stories." Gale sees a marked distinction between how men and women experience her college's culture. Because the men dominate, they resent having to change their stories and off-color hunting tales to include her, the only female administrator. Gale gets the information she needs but finds it mostly through informal tedious channels. She has two communication networks, one for friendship and another for obtaining professional information.

Women who are reconcilers communicate by connecting with others. For example, one senior-level woman described herself as a problem solver connecting or acting as a bridge between others who are in conflict:

When I look back, I ask myself why they picked me for this senior position. . . . I think it is because I go back and forth between people to see if I can't figure out what's making them unhappy. And can we work this out? Then I go to the

other one and I go back and forth and that's how I handle faculty . . . We just almost always end up working it out. Even with faculty who are known to be crazy, I am able to work things out.

Another communication skill used by reconcilers is the ability to read an audience and choose relational or instrumental communication based on its receptivity.

One woman quickly learned to speak so as never to make the dominant-culture men look bad. Her strategy also pertains to communicating with women who use an instrumental or masculine style of leadership. Consideration of situational factors helps women put the odds for winning on their side when they have to fight a battle. In a situation where gender may be an underlying issue, one vice president described how she had to change her communication style when speaking to a male trustee:

I am very astute politically when it comes to external concerns. But internally, I have always just been a straight shooter and basically said what's on my mind. I'm easy to read because I verbalize it.

Unfortunately, she misread that situation by identifying the Board of Trustees as an internal group and using the direct approach. After a few direct confrontations, her boss (a woman) told her:

. . . . 'You must learn to watch your words. They view it as disrespect when you confront their questions. . . .' It wasn't that I felt they were stupid because they were here only once a month. I was being challenged by two male board members - they [were] constantly challenging my knowledge base.

Now her president will joke when she slips back into her old ways: "There goes any future presidency." She has learned not to be defensive and to use a more indirect feminine approach when dealing with the men on the Board of Trustees. In this way they see her

as less threatening.

Women who modify their behavior to reconcile traditional norms with relational norms often lead and communicate through persuasion. They use persuasion because when they are more directive, as in the instrumental style, they run the risk of being censored and excluded. Sarah Long said her work environment has a “let’s take tea with a task” orientation. As academic vice president, she says that she feels like an octopus most of the time. She must be agile to juggle many different issues and groups. Moreover, she must persuade each group in different ways to her point of view. Her ability to persuade is important to her leadership effectiveness. Sarah said she is constantly compelled to censor and or translate her words for fear of misunderstanding because of the factional dissensions between departments. For instance, she described the outcome of a recent newspaper interview where she was misquoted as suggesting that the college no longer needs good lecturers in the classroom. This caused a minor uproar among the faculty. Another misunderstanding occurred when she received minutes of a faculty organization meeting. Upon reading the summary, she found that they had misinterpreted her. She brought this to the attention of the chair. He responded that because of this interference she would no longer get the minutes to the meeting. They took her name off the mailing list. It also infuriates Sarah to have offered an idea to a group only to have it totally ignored until one of the men brings it up later. He is then applauded for his creative genius and the group acts as though it were the first time they ever heard the idea.

Sarah concluded her interview by remembering the days when she was a middle manager and could creatively involve herself with projects. She finds all this “figuring out”

about how to communicate with others tedious and stressful . . . "I do sometimes resent how much of my time this life takes." She confesses that it is a relief to be with other female administrators because she can be herself again without have her competency constantly questioned.

Women who are reconcilers learn to accept that despite their achievements, they will be subject to personal attack and will have their competency questioned. One woman bridges the gap between her self-image and those who are critical with her this way:

I just accept it. You know, I believe strongly that there is a personality type of people who--and some of them I like a lot personally--who just no matter what are suspicious, are negative and aren't sellable. And I'm not that kind of person. I can't deal with it very well but I've learned to just accept and like you would in anybody else. I sort of think of it as a character flaw. [She laughs] And I'm nice to them and hope they do better and I think many of the people have become more trusting.

From the preceding stories, it is clear that the women's reconciliation strategies are developed to soften directive communication so as not alienate senior men administrators and some women. However, when women soften traditional communication patterns and engage in indirect language they are likely to have their competency questioned. Often, when they use a direct style of communication women are considered haughty and overbearing by some groups. If work groups could be compartmentalized into men's and women's groups, switching communication styles might help. But because most groups are mixed, women are often in a no-win situation and cannot effectively make that switch. When a community college is deeply divided along gender lines, this analysis suggests that no matter which strategy a woman uses, it will not insure she can effectively persuade or

lead others without criticism.

C. Reconciliation Attitudes and Behaviors

Much more than reconciliation is involved when women combine relational leadership responses with instrumental leadership responses. It also means survival. Such women are concerned with accommodating the context and bringing harmony and order to a contradictory set of expectations. In the process they hope to prove their leadership abilities.

1. Assimilate the Mission

Thirteen women in this study tended to use reconciliation by constructing a dual but compartmentalized, relational and instrumental, leadership identity. They embraced the mission and the performance standards espoused by the traditional organization. They also related to the altruistic theme embedded in the open access mission of the college.

women who are reconcilers experienced a socialization process in which they learned the skills of adaption to which they added feminine or relational behaviors. Gherardi (1995) contends that because authority in the workplace is expressed through masculine models, as in most families, men's instrumental bias is found in mentoring and resource allocation. Women adapt instrumental values to achieve and get more information to achieve in the future. In reality they remain outsiders. Insiders are often ambivalent about the presence of women in the workplace. Kvande and Rasmussen (1994) found four response groups among men to the presence of women in their workplace. One

group was older men, who played traditional roles and were uncertain about women's presence. The second group, competitors, see women as intruders and construct reasons to maintain their hostility keeping the women in a subordinate status. Criticisms include not linear enough, too motherly, no sense of humor, and lack of motivation. Group three is a cohort of young men who are accustomed to competing and working with women. The fourth group is men who are satisfied with their careers and are not competing with men or women. Women respond to these various attitudes through their reconciliatory behaviors.

The standards associated with relational behaviors allowed women to create a work climate that fostered collaboration, consensus building, and supportive leadership styles while achieving instrumental goals. This often resulted in the women being unseen or having their personal accomplishments presented under guise of their supervisor's success. These women developed pseudo split-personalities resulting from their use of relational and instrumental behaviors based upon contextual expectations.

2. Becoming a Member of the Family

As previously described, the nuclear family is the primary training ground for women to reconcile relational and instrumental behaviors in a compartmentalized fashion. When women adopt a relational role within an organization, they often use behaviors similar to those of wife or daughter. In these roles, they learn to charm others and to observe the moods, biases, or weaknesses of those in charge. As well, they often let the parent figures save face by covering up mistakes for them. In the particular college culture

where women viewed people as family, they learned to mend hurt feelings and acted as bridges between opposing forces. Just as wives and daughters do, the women elevated each individual in the contest to show the good in both. These skills are frequently unacknowledged because they are not part of the traditional organization framework for assessing competency, nor are they measurable by conventional means. Vickie Barnes, an academic vice president described herself as "wife" to her female president. In addition to her role as leader of the faculty, she is the second person in the college hierarchy and watches the "environment" and helps with the "scanning" of people who may be troublesome for the president. Vickie explains how that relationship evolved:

I was not looking for a mentor but when I got to the administration as dean, my president was then the vice president. It was a very difficult time and I think she was looking for a friend. She needed someone to talk to and cover her back. I provided that kind of relationship. As time went on, as friends tend to do, I began giving her advice. At one point, she said, "I'm headed for the presidency and I want you to come with me." And I said, "I really don't want to go with you. I don't want the vice presidency because I really need to figure this job out." But things moved faster than we thought and both of us jumped into it ready or not . . . I went along because she relied on me to do those things that she did not have experience in, which could be helpful in her presidency.

While the president had the central administrative experience, Vickie's experience filled the void, i.e., background as chairperson, dean, and the all important knowledge of faculty contracts. She provided for her president an island of safety as a trusted colleague and friend. The president's goal was "to make sure that I had what I needed to stay with her, you know. So whatever mentoring was needed she would insist I attended national workshops." At first her relationship to her president was about her asking advice from the president. In time, however, she came to see the difference that she

could make through her ideas. She now gives advice more often. In her fantasies, she wonders what it would be like to be president. She hasn't decided who will be her "wife." Vickie's experience suggests that in a hierarchy, even if a woman is at the top, a loyal "wife" continues to be useful. Vickie and her president have compartmentalized areas where they can use the relational styles within their partnership but they can put on instrumental masks for the outside when necessary.

In some situations, reconciliation of the instrumental and relational models incorporated in the family model does not work. Hilary Abbott, a community college president, explained a situation she encountered on her way to the presidency. Hilary played a plurality of roles at her college, collaborating with both men and women colleagues. However, when she was vice president, she played the role of the "favorite daughter" acquiring power by making herself indispensable. "I noticed through the years men always want somebody to do their work, so I used my abilities to make them dependent. That's how I got my power." Hilary clarified that being indispensable did not mean giving sexual favors. She emphasized that she did not have, and would never have, a romantic relationship with any supervisor.

In one of her earlier senior administrative positions, Hilary began working with a president who was new to the district. She had grown up there and knew it well. Hilary, who is African-American, was vice president in a behind-the-scenes support role for the president. She liked the job because it was secure and she knew how to make the president look good. During a messy district crisis, the president delegated her to "clean up" because she was more aware of the nuances involved in the local politics. Hilary said that

she handled the situation well and received recognition for its resolution. Unfortunately, by making herself indispensable and recognized for accomplishments, she inadvertently threatened the president. Her friends warned Hilary that he was trying to discredit her and gave her examples of ways he was distancing himself. Hilary refused to believe their warnings. However, when she noticed he was having private business luncheon meetings with her adversaries, she began to suspect that warnings of his betrayal might be true.

The betrayal finally became clear when the president set up a college-wide evaluation of his staff so that his friends, both men and women, could participate along with the faculty. Only ten out of one hundred faculty participated. Four evaluation forms had negative comments about Hilary. Later, in her performance review, the president clearly began using his position of authority to demean Hilary by reading aloud the negative evaluations. "He sat there trying to humiliate me and denigrate me. He even said something about my weight . . . It was very personal. . . . I stood up, leaned over the desk, put my finger in his face and said, 'You won't fuck with me and get away with it'." Hilary knew he heard her and understood the warning when a flicker of fear had crossed his face. Hilary said she did nothing to get herself back on track with the administration and, in particular, the president. She wanted nothing more to do with advancing in the administration. About a year later, the president's enemies mounted an effort to discredit him. Hilary refused to participate. She did not try to get even with female colleagues who had worked with him to betray her. Below the surface, the episode caused Hilary to doubt her judgement about people and her ability to read the environment. Hilary said for a time she behaved as though she had lost faith in herself and her ability to prompt change. This

resulted in low self-esteem that lasted for years until she could come to terms with all the factors in the incident.

At first Hilary had tried to harmonize the different expectations from her colleagues and her superiors. The two sides of Hilary collided, however, when her reconciliatory response no longer created harmony but opened her to attack. For women in traditional organizations expressing anger of this intensity is unacceptable behavior (Ferguson, 1984). Nevertheless, Hilary found it necessary to regain her authority and self-respect.

The women who use the reconciliation style respond to the need to survive by developing the capacity to use both relational and instrumental responses, thus accommodating the double bind. Women achieved or maintained their status without exclusively using hierarchical, often, aloof behaviors associated with masculine standards. Such behaviors used by women tend to alienate both women and men colleagues. Specifically, these women handled reconciliation in ways that were reminiscent of the family roles of a serving wife or daughter. Other relational behaviors included in their repertoire were silence, placating, making others look good, ignoring discrediting comments, and not confronting difficult situations directly except in extreme cases.

3. Gender as an Issue

Women who have a reconciliation leadership style acknowledged that gender issues affected their leadership identities. In contrast to women who were adapters either dismissed or denied the existence of gender issues. One academic vice president said

that the divide between men and women's ways of doing things is more obvious than ever. She is a consensus builder in the upper circle of her college. She finds that the men at her college generally prefer to work in directive, closed systems because the systems are more manageable and controllable. "The men are in charge and this is their preference. It is an unusual man who works in an open system because that is about communicating and learning." She added that men act as the gatekeepers because they are needed in closed systems. "They really don't want new ideas. Most want to make the existing power structure more efficient. Gatekeeping or controlling information is not necessary in an open system because inclusion is the goal."

Another veteran vice president, finds working with many of the men in her campus frustrating and summed up her perception of the difference between the genders: Overall, she. "They're [the men at my college] a really dull group. Really, they don't have a whole lot of new ideas. That's my basic problem with them. I think men (in this institution) generally are very conservative. They want to keep the social order and they want things the way they are . . . " She also believes that most men can't understand an outsider's position, the experience of many community college students. She wonders how effective these men are as administrators:

If the president [a woman] or I say something critical, it is taken in a different way than if a man had said it . . . There is undeclared strife between women and men that goes on unacknowledged. I think they believe they are dominated by women and that is an undercurrent among the men here. I have no empirical proof. They would deny it.

Although reconciliatory women were willing to acknowledge gender issues as

related to their leadership styles, they felt powerless to do anything about them. Their sense of powerlessness may be due to their seeing gender differences as creating inevitable difficulties between men and women within the organizational structure. One woman commented, "You know... you hear it over and over, but it is very interesting to try and truly communicate with another person. We're using the same words but we may have entirely different meanings for them, given our background, given our experience. I think there's some gender difficulties there." She said that the men compliment her for communicating so well, but then are resentful of the fact. "I think that we meet every week, and then when I say 'let's give it up,' they say, 'oh, no, no,' 'cause they know what they get from the interaction."

Another woman explained how the climate of her community college has changed with the new president. He would say he liked women and would be dismayed and offended if he were accused of being sexist. "...I don't think he dislikes them. But I think he likes women to be in the middle and be all the 'working bees.' In that way, he can hang onto some of the guys and then they can pull the strings. He's a pretty singular leader and really not a collaborative leader."

Women who primarily used reconciliation acknowledged gender issues although they have not engaged in an in-depth analysis of how gender shapes behaviors and attitudes. In particular they had not analyzed how we learn these behaviors, how we can unlearn them, or how gender bias is enacted in institutional policies. Generally, these women are juggling so many different responsibilities to maintain their effectiveness and to maintain a level of acceptance that they have little time for an in-depth analysis of gender

issues at their institutions.

4. Acquiescence and Silence

When the women in this study first adjusted to their environments through reconciliatory behaviors, they learned to sense the moods of their superiors and responded appropriately to expectations without being told. These women tended to conform so that they could have opportunities to use their real strengths in activities giving meaning to their jobs. For example, Kay Walston, a senior administrator in charge of developing a new campus saw herself as a crystal ball, with a clear voice. She described an early career experience when her dean expected her to develop a new way of doing business and of presenting herself. He decided that Kay needed to improve her organizational skills and Kay understood that she must acquiesce to his expectation to win his support. "I guess ultimately I gave in because going ahead was easier just because he was my boss. It influenced me to be more detailed." Today her organizational skills help her in administering a new campus center but she admits they are not the outstanding feature of her leadership identity.

For years when she was a faculty member, Kay observed deans and decided she wanted to be an administrator because she thought she could handle the people problems with more sensitivity. When she began her administrative career, she endeavored to bring people together. Whether the process looked tidy and orderly to others was secondary to her goal. She understands now that, had she not read the situation correctly and conformed to the standard of organization, it would have been

disastrous for her career. Efficiency was important to her getting ahead in the organization so that she could use her people skills.

Gloria Williams, a support service senior administrator, chose reconciliatory attitudes and actions to fit her community college culture. She told about taking a maternity leave and nearly being dismissed from a job where she had achieved much success. Shortly after her second daughter's birth, Gloria went to the personnel office to pick up her contract but it had not been processed. The director of personnel, a woman, explained that if her position was vacant when she returned from maternity leave they would see about placing her in it again. In short, the college gave no guarantees that the job would be hers when she returned. Gloria considered suing but decided not to pursue that because she feared that it would probably ruin her career. In time the situation resolved itself but it left her edgy, mistrustful, and vigilant. She is proud that she managed the situation without a confrontation and did not have to threaten the top administration. She got what she wanted: she got her job back.

Another woman spoke of the advantages of perfecting the art of silence. Silence can help a woman overlook suggestions that she is not competent. Silence lets others save face. Silence gives one time to observe and assess contextual power patterns. Finally, silence gives one time to choose the battles to fight, because confrontations should be kept to a minimum.

The experience of two women brings these points together. One academic vice president's was cautioned not to disagree with the men in the central administration. She was told that it was important that she be a well-mannered participant of the organization

and that it would do her little good to get angry and attack the men for their mistakes or slights.

Another woman explained how she adjusted to the expectation that she conform to traditional standards by acquiescence and silence:

I've learned to sit and wait better, to keep my mouth shut to collaborate with the guys. To respect the "good old boys" and their power is important. In the past, I sometimes got the boys and their power mixed up. They're who they are and I have to work with them. Well, I respect, I try to understand what makes them who they are and try to develop a relationship with them so that I can get what it is that I need to do. I try not to be real judgmental when I think sometimes they're ignorant. I try to learn how their system works even though I can't get in it nor do I want to be in it, I really no longer want to be in it. I only want to know enough about it so I can do what it is that I need to do. You know, it's kind of like my dad's generation, when they say, "hi honey, hi baby to me." You know, my dad's friends, I no longer get insulted. And that's their culture. They mean it as a term of endearment. And boys, old boys aren't always terms of endearment but I try to take them for where they came, where they come from.

Reconciliation clearly is a leadership style that attunes women to the traditional structure and to was of reducing conflict.

5. Limited Career Aspirations

Many women who identified themselves as reconcilers said that they are deliberately limiting their careers although many have the skills and experience to advance. Some gave family priorities as the reason, however, they also based their decisions on the realistic assessment of their environment. Linda Tifton married ten years ago, has been a vice president for seven years. She likes her life just the way it is. When she considers the political and performance pressures inherent in a presidency at most community colleges,

she concludes that she has found her place in the hierarchy:

Think about it. Really. You know, life's too short. And there are a lot of ways that you can be challenged. I never have aspired to be a president, and I don't want to be one because I don't like the political games. And I think that if you're very comfortable with political games, you can be president. But understand that, wherever you are, it's probably going to be short term. And that's just not a lifestyle that I would say to women to get involved with. I would say to women, "become a vice president." There's more stability so that you can have a personal life, too.

She talked further about herself as vice president and the balance she needs to maintain her integrity. "I'm not some robot or beast. I think I am myself and that is very threatening to some people. I intend to stay this way." Many women ruled out further advancement because they did not have the support of their families or the energy to earn their doctorates or other advanced degrees. Each woman defined her aspirations according to her context, and most women included personal factors in making their decision.

I found women leaders who tried to reconcile relational and instrumental behaviors developed a distinct leadership identity. An identity based on survival strategies such as the acceptance of gender tensions, the value of acquiescence and silence over confrontation, and limited career aspirations.

D. The Costs and Benefits of Reconciliation

The attempt to reconcile both the instrumental and relational expectations within a traditional community college context often comes with a price. It is impossible to be all things to all people.

Performance Pressures. Most of the women who used reconciliation strategies

took personal responsibility for their job successes and failures. This had repercussions. The literature confirms the tendency for women to personalize their failures (Ferguson, 1984; Kanter, 1977; Tannen, 1994). Women often equate professional failure with personal failure and this makes them vulnerable to organizational attack. One senior administrator considered herself a failure because she could not get her college support staff to initiate change. Also, she believed it would be a personal failure, if she could not resolve a disagreement with her current president. Another woman told of hiring a female specialist to develop a tutorial program and finding that the women's communication style was too abrasive for her colleagues. She saw it as a personal failure. She had not recognized this abrasive quality in advance when she interviewed the women; nor had she realized that the woman did not have the necessary skills to reconcile the instrumental and relational patterns needed for working effectively in that environment. The administrator had set herself as the standard. After all, if she could reconcile this communication expectation, surely this woman could as well. While women who are reconciliation leaders had used relational styles successfully in working with groups and establishing warm professional relationships, they had also integrated the individual responsibility model inherent in masculine models. Consequently, they often blamed themselves for failure in situations that had elements over which they had little control.

Vulnerability to attack. Because perceived failures are intrinsically painful, women who use reconciliation behaviors tended to shy away from risks and confrontations with colleagues and superiors. Ironically, the women's need to be liked, their reluctance

to cause problems or engage in messy battles often makes them targets in their competitive environment. During the time her college was undergoing major reorganization Gloria a vice president was asked to lead an initiative to revitalize one component of the college. Although it removed her from a track toward a higher administrative position just when she was at her peak in terms of effectiveness and proficiency, Gloria, as a reconciler, was willing to accept this position.

Women reconcilers pay a price for their need to please and to avoid confrontation. As Christine Noe moved through the ranks of the colleges she encountered men who were unaccustomed to working with women. Some tried to take advantage of her concern for them and her willingness to please. Christine thought she could save the world. She was single, young, and attractive and she found that her supervisor made unwanted advances or set up situations where personal interactions would occur. The situation became so stressful that Gloria considered leaving. These incidents happened at a time before laws were established about sexual harassment. Gloria feared she might be held responsible for a scandal so she remained silent. During this time she met her future husband and got married. That seemed to settle the whole situation because the supervisor stopped his inappropriate advances. Gloria doubts that such incidents are as prevalent now because sexual harassment laws would make it less likely for this to happen. Nevertheless, women continue to be cautious about raising problems. This reluctance makes them vulnerable to attack and often delegates them to auxiliary positions out of the administrative mainstream.

In her accounts of interactions with faculty, Sarah Long suggests that she

sacrificed creativity because she continually molded her responses so as not to threaten other. Sarah remembers warmly the days when she was a middle-manager and could develop a project or be intellectually challenged by helping someone in the classroom. "Administration; I will admit I'm doing it because that is finally what was available to me and I needed to earn a living. If I had my way, I'd be back in the classroom right now."

Health Issues and Stress. Women who are reconcilers reported concerns about their health. Among others, Vicki Barnes confirmed her prevalent stress-related health issues. Although her confidence continues to grow as a senior administrator, Vickie finds stress a part of the experience:

I developed high blood pressure. I've had less time to devote to me, which means I do less exercise which, of course, probably brought on the high blood pressure to begin with. My stress leads to distress and that's been a problem. I know when my head starts hurting, I know I have a stress-induced sinus condition. I actually had lumps on my neck, and when it stiffens I know that it's stress. I do realize that I spend far too many hours here. My kids are in college and I'm divorced. I could go home, but what do I do when I get there. Just watch TV and eat. You know, so there's no point in rushing home to that. I'm far too exhausted at the end of the day to go to the health club. The mental stress takes over the physical well-being. I'm going to work on finding some time for me and voicing my concerns about my health and taking action. You know, I'll be fifty next year. I think it's time to start worrying about getting to sixty.

The confrontation and eventual battle Hilary Abbott had with her boss burdened her with the stress of self-doubt for years. As a team player, she could read people and situations; she could not accept that she had misread him. Another vice president said that stress was a central part of her life because she never knew when a confrontation could break out. She was never sure what her superiors expected or what they meant in

their communication.

Sarah, a vice president at a large urban community college said that her stress does not leave even during sleep. Admittedly, she is a perfectionist and fearful of making mistakes. Over the years, Sarah worked at being less of a perfectionist but with limited success. She continually has nightmares about work and has even tried writing them down. One morning she woke up humming a song after a nightmare:

I had one dream where we were having a shootout with people at the school. We were all meeting to determine how we were going to kill somebody and I had to bring in the gun and hide it. It was wild. After a long time I figured out the song inside the dream, it was the Beatle's song that goes something like this, "I'd love to be, under the sea in the octopus's garden in the shade."

Sarah believes these subconscious messages are telling her it is time to leave. She sees herself as a creative and happy person, but her job does not bring that out. Women are put at risk by a personalization of failure based on their sense of responsibility and need for connection to others. While personal responsibility made them high achievers within their community college, it also tended to serve as a barrier to taking risks and dealing with hard issues. By play it safe avoiding confrontations, and staying within gender roles limits, the women actually made themselves more vulnerable to attack. This contradictory action and reaction fostered self-doubt and lack of confidence. As a result, women who used reconciliation strategies to survive often reported personal stress and related health problems.

Reconciliation as a short-term survival strategy may help reduce conflict in an immediate situation. Ideas for specific programs can be promoted and tasks can be

completed. The women who use this survival strategy may also build a small group of supporters so they are not totally isolated within their organization. Over time, however, women who use reconciliation indirectly advance traditional standards to compensate for its dysfunctional and outdated role expectations. In short, the predominant use of reconciliation limits potential growth for women and for the institution.

E. Summary

Several lessons can be learned from this examination of reconciliation leadership identities. First, the use of both instrumental and relational behaviors within a traditional context may be a reasonable approach to solving the dilemma of the double bind for women. However, deeper examination reveals major limitations in leadership strategy. Relational behavior as an added strategy to the traditional instrumental behavior is useful in some situations; however, the leader is not necessarily recognized for her competency and effectiveness. In fact, colleagues and co-workers may think of her as insincere or lacking integrity. Fluctuation between relational and instrumental behaviors can make a woman seem unpredictable or inconsistent because of her compartmentalizing of the two responses.

Second, woman may respond to the double bind by taking on the role of “daughter” or “wife” to show their loyalty and prove their competency by capitulating to their superior’s demands. Therefore, they often remain silent. Passiveness often comes at a cost to self esteem because they began to doubt their abilities. The women leaders avoided risk because they feared making mistakes.

Third, women who used reconciliation strategies typically acknowledged gender as an institutional issue. However, though they were aware of gender issues, they generally felt powerless to do anything about them. Such issues are impossible to address or negotiate if their effects cannot be discussed. Reconcilers keep gender issues to themselves because there they do not have the support to address them within their organization. Solving gender issues in hierarchical situations where non-emotional responses are expected adds another barrier to their resolution. Because women could see no way to change the environment, they decided to limit their careers. This lack of hope and unwillingness to take risks or engage in messy confrontations to change the situation, meant that traditional standards were maintained making women more vulnerable to attack from others. Tannen (1994) reported that when corporate leadership changes and people in the hierarchy jockey for position, men are especially likely to try to move in on areas held by women. This definitely happens in community colleges. Moreover, women were susceptible to being placed in dead-end career paths. While reconciliation strategies might be a good idea initially, over time they were not helpful to the individual or the institution.

Finally, I noted that women who primarily used reconciliation strategies appeared stressed and insecure during their interviews. Their responses were uneven and fragmented. Considering the competitive and combative environment they described, it is not surprising that such speech patterns existed. To most of these women, I had come to interview and had not earned their complete trust. Moreover, I was asking them to speak honestly about their work experience. I believe that these women were being cautious,

considering the impact of their words and how they might be reported It is not every day a stranger arrives in your office to ask that you speak honestly about your work experiences. My interpretation is that the senior women administrators were practicing caution, considering the impact of their words and how I might report them. During the interviews I learned that dealing with the mental stress of one's environment and one's image is a constant concern of these senior women. Yet most of them wanted to report their experiences to let others know what it is really like to be "in their shoes." Perhaps this is a step forward to empowerment and change.

CHAPTER VI

Resistance

Many people resist organizational demands for conformity; if done with skill, one can resist and survive, but one seldom both resists and prospers (Ferguson, 1984, p.191) . . . It is possible to resist bureaucratic domination if a substantial number of people act collectively and in a nonbureaucratic fashion to challenge the discourse (p. 298).

To resist is to oppose conformity to expected standards. Resistance can be expressed as an individual or collective act. For instance, individual resistance to traditional organizational demands could be a refusal to comply with expectations of an intolerable situation. For example, women individually resisted conformity by refusing to work on Saturdays or evenings because it would interfere with their family time. Others refused to serve on committees that met after work hours, refused to comply with the dress codes, or refused to accept denigrating comments from supervisors.

Collective resistance, the second type of resistance typical of women discussed here can foster the development of organizational cultures. Women who are resisters build coalitions for collective action to include relational ways of knowing. Collective resistance can redefine an organizational culture and change leadership dynamics. This process of cultural change involves a dialogue that questions the institution's traditional authority structure and its definition of reality. Incorporation of the relational organizational model insures a process of ongoing cultural change. Such change does not require the overthrowing or replacement of the traditional culture. Instead it makes way for slow incremental change. In this way, relational aspects of organizational life such as collaboration and inclusion can be enacted. In essence, leaders in this chapter sought to

decentralize traditional norms through collective action. With this philosophy, the senior women also acted as transformative leaders.

The four women profiled here have used resistance leadership. They acted as advocates for leadership and institutional practices that were relational and inclusive. As well, the women advocated a holistic development of the whole person for students, professors, and administrative colleagues. Terry Rheinhart, introduces at the beginning of this study, advocated linking mind, body, and spirit. As advocates of this practice, the women used a relational response to build coalitions creating a new reality where community and inclusion are of a primary concern. Terry Rheinhart, Ann Roe, Carolyn Finley, and Lisa Yoder, and others describe their leadership identity, the role of communication, resistance attitudes and behaviors, and the costs and benefits of their leadership style.

A. Leadership Identity

Women who are resisters work as advocates of a growth process. They used leadership metaphors as teachers/learners, gardeners, and a group of people holding hands while crossing a street. These women are concerned with the development of an ongoing dialogue, which offers individuals the freedom to define themselves through speech and interaction with others. Ferguson (1984) noted that this dialogue is often criticized by traditionalists for its seeming lack of order. Discussion and analysis from many perspectives allow for the deeper meaning of an issue to emerge and by revealing the motivations of the various groups. This opens the process of making consensus thereby

restricts the domination of one group over another. Resistance leadership allows the groups to establish a new standard for making decisions. Women who facilitate such change tend to act from the center urging the inclusion of other leadership styles. This philosophy makes it easier for women having relational ways of knowing to become a part of their institution's culture and facilitate learning from differences. The eight women included here told of developing opportunities for individual growth and expertise for their employees. They also fostered an organizational culture where relational styles had an equal status with traditional organizational paradigms.

College president Terry Rheinhardt described her leadership philosophy with the metaphor of a book symbolizing the teaching and learning process inherent in leadership. Because leadership prompts an exchange of ideas, knowledge, and values. Terry sees herself as both learner and facilitator. As facilitator, she acts as consciousness-raiser and organizer so that groups of people can collectively decide the most constructive, creative, and caring direction in which to move. Terry also strives to develop a collective conscience that has a sense of right and wrong so that the college continually holds equity of power and fair processes as an institutional value. Terry has a sense of ethics that prompts her consistently to look for ways to include groups that are not already involved in the governance process of her college.

Another community college president, Carolyn Finley, has worked in many traditional organizations over her twenty-year career. These organizations were typically highly competitive. Based on this experience, Carolyn has concluded that people work better when they are respected and have opportunities to collaborate. Carolyn feels she is

personally more effective and her organization is more successful when she functions as a team leader in accomplishing organizational goals. As a facilitator, Carolyn includes relational leadership to foster openness, inclusion, empowerment of individual expertise and collaboration in coalitions. Ultimately, Carolyn is seeking from her employees a personal and civic morality to improve social conditions in her district.

Within Carolyn's leadership style her personal skills worked for the benefit of the college. She is astute at identifying and developing talented people. Her current vice president of operations is a young woman on the faculty who is goal oriented, good in mathematics, and works well with people. Carolyn knew she had the expertise and care in leadership that the institution needed so she put resources into developing this woman's talents. By example, Carolyn cultivated the college culture, setting a tone where a sense of humor and risk taking were accepted, a place where comfortable hard work and honesty were promoted. Carolyn described her college as a "place where you can be yourself" where the leader does not have to be formal, remote, queenly, or withhold information to manage people. When promising individuals are identified, they can grow with a job and the institution. "It is really nice. It's in this kind of place that you can say you are really having a good time." Carolyn is an effective leader who changed her college culture with relational behaviors. The college culture includes many different people in the decision-making process creating a warm, respectful working environment where hard work is rewarded. Carolyn's leadership illustrates how she has changed the culture of her college since she became president seven years ago. She conceded that the organization was ready for change because it was near financial collapse and facing a public scandal; it had little

choice but be open to a new way of doing business. Nevertheless, it was an intimidating responsibility and Carolyn is very proud of the results. Ten years later the college is not only financially stable; it is known for its creative programs that include all segments of its rural constituency.

Lisa Yoder another community college president described her vision of leading as the metaphor of “everyone holding hands when crossing a street.” Lisa explained that the European town where her mother lives today was almost all destroyed in the war more than fifty years ago. Because she and her family were a part of the rebuilding of their community and country, Lisa learned that war produced few solutions. “I remember growing up in that kind of environment. It was kind of a, you know, it’s an experience that moves you toward a consensus and peace-making. I think our generation realized that there will always be conflict. War is not the answer.” Lisa says her role as leader is to nurture others and to challenge them by asking the hard questions. She is passionate about looking for answers together. According to Lisa, reflection and action are a healing art. Lisa’s life experiences in postwar Europe have drawn her to many mentors and role models. They have given her a vision to guide her as an activist and transformative leader. She was fortunate to attend a college in the United States where she learned the importance of social and political involvement. Lisa walked in a candlelight peace march in the small town with the college’s dean of students leading the march.

As a new president, Lisa strives to live out the values her mentors taught her. This motivates her to be as open and honest as possible when dealing with problems at her college. Many of her constituents have recognized this philosophy in her behavior.

Employees have responded quite positively to Lisa, and she interprets this as evidence of their respect.

Ann Roe, academic vice president, sees her job as that of creating an open environment in which her faculty can be creative and develop their skills. She never shied away from speaking out on controversial issues. In fact, Ann never thought she could thrive in the administrative culture, therefore she never really sought a senior-level position. When she began at the college she was actively involved in social justice issues outside the college. However, throughout these years, the faculty had accepted her views. Because the president had set a tone which promotes the relational paradigm as part of the organizational culture, she had the freedom to be herself. Through the use of this philosophy, Ann worked maintaining her own integrity and benefited the college through her use of collective problem solving. When the college hired her to take the vice presidency, Ann thought again of reducing her affiliation with controversial social justice issues. Her concern was that her personal philosophy on these issues might conflict with the role of administrator. However, after reflection, she decided not to make any change. Today, she continues enacting that philosophy in her role as vice president. Ann sees no reason to present a false picture of neutrality.

These four women have chosen resistance leadership. They have integrated relational ways of knowing into their leadership identity through committed action to transformative values; such as inclusion, individual growth, expertise, collaboration, coalition building, and honest ongoing dialogue.

B. The Role of Communication

Women more than men are motivated to engage in dialogue and confrontation to support their ideals and passion (Tannen, 1998). The women in this chapter used a type of communication called “resistance discourse” (Ferguson, 1984) which seeks to question the accepted basic assumptions guiding organizational cultures. It challenges and confronts biases by prompting reflection before action. Resistance discourse emphasizes professional growth and development, promotes cross training and collaboration, and the inclusion of the community. These practices negate the need for traditional leadership responses such as withholding of information and using deference language used to talk to one’s superior. Such practices are inadequate and inefficient in today’s information age (Senge, 1990).

In organizational meetings where resistance discourse is used, the group operates without hierarchy and generally sets aside rigid rules of order. Group members take turns with facilitation, routine work, and other important tasks. Meetings are informal. When a decision is to be made, the facilitator sums-up the prevailing opinion and if no objection is raised, the decision becomes policy.

According to a president in an organization where resistance discourse is used, intense dialogue is often part of the process. This is especially true when the dialogue centers on perceived inequities such as concerns between group inequities about salary, faculty appointments, or curriculum. One community college president said that this type of communication is often unsettling for men on her campus and also to traditionalists of both genders who are accustomed to orderly meetings governed by Robert’s Rules of Order. One of the president’s male colleagues described his first meeting with a group of

women. He wanted to be open, but he was dismayed at the interaction between women he thought he knew. Their exchange became exciting when they free associated ideas rather than keeping to a particular agenda. "He was the only male and he said . . . this was the greatest experience ever for him. Nevertheless, it took him a while to be able to track what was going on in the meeting because we [women] were able just to let our minds flow and explore."

Women who use the relational styles believe intense informal dialogue is one of the it's strengths. Intense discussions evoke emotions and suggest a discrepancy between what is happening and what is expected to happen. Emotion then is a signal to reflect on such discrepancies. While critics have suggested that too much emotion distorts reality, advocates argue that the lack of emotion also distorts reality. The relational style indicates that emotion reveals the best picture of reality, of the multiple realities that exist within an institution. In this way, the individual and the collective body can engage in better decision making because they understand these multiple realities and can consider them when solving a particular problem.

Honest dialogue is important to the senior-level women administrators who favor resistance leadership. They actively searched for institutions where they could be "themselves." When Carolyn Finley began applying for her first presidential position, she said honesty was her rule. In interviews she always told the truth about her qualifications would be clear to the interviewers. "I think there are different leadership styles that are appropriate for different jobs. And I also think there are times when I can see that an acid autocrat might be needed." Honesty has been Carolyn's standard

way of handling interviews and dealing with problems. She believes that the truth about who she was ultimately worked to her benefit because she found an institution where her personality and her role complemented one another. Carolyn admits to times when perhaps she was too open and honest. Rather than always considering what was politically correct, Carolyn acted on her own sense of right and wrong. She often refused to minimize problems as the group would have liked. In the past when Carolyn found that she did not fit with the culture of an organization and the climate could not be changed, she would leave. Carolyn knew when she had found the right position as president a community college where she could be herself and grow:

It has to be a mesh in my mind. The search committee has to agree they "like you." And, you've got to like them, too. It's a two-way street. It's like falling in love, I think. You can't measure how much or why you fell in love, but you did. And when I interviewed for this job, I knew I wanted to be here. I also knew they were going to ask me to be here. It was just a meshing of people on the committee and me.

In her role as president, Carolyn tries to develop this environment for others. To eliminate power games and create a climate where people can be honest and be "themselves":

When I came, I said to the staff, [the college] is an open book. Our books are open. Everything we do is open. There's no point in lying about anything. Now, I have changed that somewhat by not lying but by withholding information at certain times. For example, we've had a rash of robberies, so I withheld information so the ongoing investigation would not be jeopardized . . . The only time to ever withhold information would be if it were going to damage someone's career, or if you were going to harm something like, you know, an investigation. [Otherwise] what is there to hide?

Carolyn's decision to develop an open climate fosters the growth of her

employees, the students, and the entire institution. She describes her senior staff as individuals who are accustomed to working as a group. They have a good sense of humor and try not to take themselves too seriously. “After all,” she joked, “in the area where her community college is, ‘college people’ are considered misfits.”

Ann Roe explained how communication and leadership go hand-in-hand. Ann believes that a transformative leader will consider the other person and their perception of a problem. “If it is your problem and it interferes with your work, then I as a leader, must own part of that problem, even if it doesn’t seem like a problem to me.” Ann described a situation that was created years ago when the college was founded. Using an interdisciplinary philosophy, faculty and counseling offices were placed helter-skelter throughout the college. This was acceptable when the college was small, but as the college grew, counseling and student support services were often perceived as ineffective because of this decentralization. A group of faculty and administrators wanted to reorganize according to traditional disciplines and administrative departments leaving student services out. After much dialogue, Ann, speaking as a faculty member, pointed out that the groups were behaving as adversaries rather than the complementary teams they were developed to be. The college needed both groups, academic faculty and student services, to offer a quality educational experience. Ann gave examples of this interdependency throughout the college, eventually persuading the groups to reflect on these ideas and look for solutions rather than engage in blame and accusations. After much dialogue, most of the faculty and staff agreed that they needed each other to do their jobs well for the students. By dropping the adversarial nature of the problem, the groups began to focus on ways to relocate the

disciplines and the service aspect more effectively. They reorganized maintaining the interdisciplinary philosophy which was the hallmark and strength of their community college. Ann explained that the group came up with this creative compromise:

Each division should have a mix of student development, faculty members, librarians, vocational and baccalaureate, so that now one of our divisions is humanities, mathematics, and technology. And another division is computers and communications. We've retained some of the best features of the interdisciplinary philosophy but considered the disciplines. We worked through our differences to the point of compromise.

Ann clearly helped to build a new vision based on understanding and consensus.

Over the years, Ann has come to understand that listening is important to communication. Years ago she would have decided exactly what to do after only a few words about a problem. Today she does not jump to conclusions; she listens with more compassion. "The older I get and the more experience I have, the more I have come to live in a world of gray. I mean, I know there's black. I know there's white. And if push comes to shove, I'll pick one or the other. But I can see more and more the complexity of issues that makes it---that makes it a more considered process of deliberation."

Relational leaders using collective resistance viewed themselves as change agents. They placed a high value on communication skills as part of their leadership. By engaging in responsible, informed, honest dialogue, active listening, and consensus building, these women moved their colleges to a new cultural norm. They created institutions where consideration for the common good is important. This new cultural norm is based on respect for the past, but reconceptualized so that common ideals of individuality, self expression and democracy are incorporated.

C. Resistance Attitudes and Behaviors

Senior-level women administrators who used collective resistance as described by Ferguson (1984) were closely aligned to Foster's (1985) conceptualization of the transformative leader. These women defined their leadership through their use of collective resistance, open attitude, educational background, and personal experiences. They break from traditional organizational cultures that require that women lead only with instrumental behaviors focused on production and efficiency. They also break with the consistent use of reconciliatory behaviors which allow the traditional organization to go unchallenged without dialogue. These women seek to include other ways of leading and organizing that transcend the narrowness of traditional ideas.

1. Assimilate the Mission and the Standards

Women leaders who use collective resistance embrace the egalitarian notion of the community college mission and take it to a new level of understanding. They believe that knowledge and experience have the potential to change people and situations. They believe that education is the expression of freedom because it links awareness and practice to develop the whole person. These women resist traditional norms that obstruct the development of knowledge and experience for women and other groups who have been left out of power settings within organizations. As resisters they are change agents using relational ideals to build a consensus within coalitions, moving the organization and the individual to new levels of awareness and direction.

Women who use resistance leadership view themselves as stewards of the community colleges' egalitarian mission. Characteristics of resistance leadership include: (1) the belief that education and leadership opportunities can foster self-esteem and institutional growth; (2) ability to build coalitions; (3) background and skill to foster the transformative qualities of the teaching and learning process within groups to move them to constructive action; (4) ability to use and foster the acceptance of relational ways of knowing; (5) ability to read environments to identify and understand obstructions; and (6) individual integrity.

The women in this study envisioned a community college environment with standards that allowed them to "be themselves" as leaders. To integrate relational and instrumental behaviors and speech patterns without fear of being isolated, this environment allowed them to work with integrity and live out the values that motivated them. They did not feel forced to adapt, or pretend to adapt, traditional standards that projected a "professional" image with little substance. They wanted to be able to talk passionately and intensely about their work in authentic constructive ways. They also wanted others to do the same.

Lisa Yoder earned the trust of her faculty because she is honest about problems and issues. She appreciates and supports scholarly values. Lisa has an undergraduate degree and a doctorate in literature. She received an education comparing many different philosophies of knowledge and life. It fostered her appreciation for metaphor, writing, research, and feminist theory. After completing her doctorate, Lisa became assistant director of a woman's program at the university. Later she was appointed affirmative

action officer of the first community college where she worked. Through these experiences, Lisa became aware of the strengths of the relational leadership and organizational environments. Today she uses this understanding in many college wide initiatives. The college named her an academic vice president in spite of her lack of faculty experience. In that position, she advanced an academic progressive education philosophy. Lisa appreciates academic excellence, understands teaching, and fully uses her skill of bringing together a group of diverse people to solve problems and build coalitions. She believes that this is her expertise she must share with her local community and college community. In this way she creates opportunities for women and other groups who have not had leadership or educational opportunities.

Terry Rheinhardt describes herself as “always a teacher.” Even as president, she teaches a literature course once a year. This continually strengthens her credibility as with the faculty. When she was academic vice president, Terry earned their support by negotiating a contract that she would have considered equitable for herself. Terry continually tries to learn from those around her, often urging coalition building to resist restrictive standards and prompt change.

Carolyn Finley is another administrator who has a resistance leadership identity. She has an impressive history of demonstrated skills in academic administration and is known for her ability to create a friendly and effective college climate. A pivotal point in her twenty-year career was her success in bringing together the college and the community to pass the district’s first millage vote. This was an especially poignant accomplishment because the college was in the midst of a financial crisis that had caused a public scandal

and threatened the existence of the institution.

In summary, women who use a resistance leadership identity are transformational leaders. They resist hierarchical, restrictive policies and embrace egalitarian ideals in the college's mission by incorporating elements of relational behaviors. This sets a new standard for defining leadership. While such leaders may have respected credentials, expertise, and demonstrated achievements, they are not elitist about their expertise. They readily share with others and encourage constructive criticism and activism in their institutions and communities through coalitions and consensus building.

2. Soften the Competitive Climate

Carolyn Finley provided a perspective on how she softens the competitive climate by using a mutual-gain bargaining process. In the college's geographical area there is so little that everyone needs to work together to keep the college functioning. Carolyn said that her college's organizational chart looks like a pyramid, but in reality it reflects a hierarchy of responsibility but not of power. "We've instituted a very strong mutual-gains bargaining process and it's working." The process involves finding common ground and problem-solving through equal access to information. In this way opposing groups and the organization gain. Carolyn explained that, by using this problem-solving process, contract negotiations have become more inclusive and open. "Until we did this," she said, "negotiations often got bitter and contentious." They began with formal basic training at a local university educating both sides in problem solving. The process formed the model for all problem solving across the campus and gradually changed its

culture.

Similarly, Terry Rheinhart explained how her organization softened the competitive climate through education and encouraging the free-flow of ideas. A member of Terry's staff said that, when the administrative staff is facing a tough decision, knowing who is president would be hard for an outsider. Terry is generally well informed about the latest educational research findings, of special concern because of the growing ethnic population in her district. She also encourages her employees to be informed about issues. She wants them to understand how their work-life contributes to their personal identity and to the identity of the college. Terry is an advocate of professional development which benefits both the individual and the college. Terry's college also uses a mutual-gain bargaining process. This and other types of empowering strategies makes a difference to the growth and vitality of her institution because they foster cooperation rather than competition.

2. Lead by Consensus

Earlier Terry Rheinhart, the resistance prototype recounted her struggle with the Board of Trustees. She told of the board's pressure forcing her to name a male academic vice president. This incident prompted Terry to work with a group of colleagues to build a consensus around hiring a vice president. The woman who had held the acting position was not in the candidate pool because she did not meet the standard doctoral qualifications for academic vice president. Beyond completing two masters' degrees, she had completed all but her course work in a doctoral program but she had not earned her

doctorate by completing a dissertation. Terry's persistent questioning inspired the group to ask why the selection criteria were set originally and whether they could be modified to accommodate the woman's solid qualifications. After the committee researched the issue, they met with the board to present their proposal. In short, the informal coalition looked at all sides of the credential issue, worked together to formulate an argument, and won a moral victory when the Board of Trustees agreed that the woman was the best person for the job. They decided through a consensus that her academic experience and educational background were equivalent to a doctorate and provided sufficient background for the academic vice presidency position.

3. Empower and Include

At Carolyn Findley's college the vice president of operations said that she thrives on challenge and is excited about reorganizing departments. She loves her senior position because it gives her the ability to provide the resources to help people. In this way, she empowers them to do their jobs, achieve their goals, and take calculated risks. "It's so nice to be the person to support people in their endeavors." She happily explained that she likes working with Carolyn because she feels empowered to make informed decisions.

Carolyn Finley said that a concern for empowerment changed the tone of the college from apathy to one of involvement and community. She reported that one group found a way to save thousands of dollars on advertising and effectively carried out the change on their own. The group accomplished this goal and recognized each other for the effort. Carolyn is an effective leader because she fostered full participation by empowering

others to solve their own problems. Through this philosophy she reduced competition.

Finally one woman who aspires to be a transformative leader, gave her reasons for empowering men and women and including both instrumental and relational behaviors in her leadership identity:

I have about 19 to 20 people in my division. Two of them are males. Most of them are support staff. I sincerely value working with those two men because they work very differently than the females do and very much the same, too. So I see my role as I need to nurture their leadership, too. But I really believe kind of with Gilligan's stuff that females are more other directed as leaders or feminine as more typically other directed and masculine as more typically outcome directed. I think that to [survive and be financially solvent], you know, we have to change pretty radically now. I have been reading some of the predictions, some schools are going to close and so forth and virtual university and all those kinds of things. If we don't change radically, we might not be here. So I think in order to change radically, you have to have collaborative leadership, too. I don't think you can force people to make some of the changes that they're going to [have to make], so we better nurture leaders or we really will not help our college culture.

4. Aspire to Values Not to Positions

On a personal level, Terry Rheinhardt speaks for many other senior women administrators in this chapter when she explains her leadership philosophy:

I really didn't aspire to any position. It came to be the next logical thing to do. I think . . . to love what you do and . . . to be grounded in the heart of the mission of the institution, which to me is teaching and learning, is the best possible guide for one's career track.

President Lisa Yoder's story illustrates the resistance behavior of aspiring to values and not to position. Lisa states that, although the faculty often gets a bad reputation for being difficult, she actually enjoyed the role of academic vice president and the position it can play in the organization. This worked well with faculty: "As an academic VP you know that the focus is ...if you can get faculty to understand and trust you it's easier than

being president.” Lisa says that, because she admires intelligence and the pursuit of ideas, the faculty’s passion for intellectual confrontation over ideas does not upset her.

Therefore, she and her faculty work well together. When the presidency was opened at her college last year she applied and because of this faculty support, was chosen to serve as president. Lisa is now in a position where she can show those values to the entire organization. She is affective because she initially looked for a position where she could enact her values and, in time, won the respect of both faculty and staff.

5. Strive for Authenticity

Women who use a resistance leadership identity were often concerned with questions of authenticity, and therefore displayed emotion and passion in their interactions. While they did not advocate continuous displays of emotion, most of these women explained that they could be angered over particular issues and did not hide it. For example, questions of integrity could get one community college president upset. She explained, “Yes, I get angry. However, I always try to talk it over with the person and move on. I also accept that some people will never be happy.” She recalled how she invited a group of faculty to her office when they wrote an unfair attack on her and her staff without getting the whole story. She expressed her anger and then worked with the faculty to set up a better process for handling disagreements.

While all the women who used this leadership response acknowledged that the current academic climate requires attention to institutional effectiveness, this alone is not enough for a successful organization. They generally stressed the importance of not

becoming too enamored with trends such as Total Quality Management (TQM), strategic planning, and outcomes assessment. These women are concerned for their entire college climate, not only measurement of achievement and process control. They showed that they got the same results working with diverse well-informed teams. As Terry Rheinhardt explained, "After all, you don't fatten a pig by weighing it. You nurture it."

6. Grow with Controversy

To dispel the notion that conformity to the relational organizational paradigm creates a utopian climate, women administrators emphasized that disputes continue to arise over perceived inequities. Terry Rheinhardt expects that intense dialogue will always be a part of her leadership. Her disagreement with the Board of Trustees proved that she had to take a stand and defend her thinking while being open to other viewpoints. An academic vice president who has used resistance behavior to build coalitions for change in her college said that, while the climate is generally calm among the faculty, the future will probably be full of salary disputes for most community colleges.

I predict in the next five years we will have more of a mass of junior faculty whose vested interest in negotiations are not going to be satisfied with retirement packages. They will be looking for perhaps salary to be allocated on the basis of a flat dollar amount rather than percentages. Right now senior faculty members who are at the top of their salary range want a percentage raise.

A community college president from a large urban district told a story of a very public disagreement with her president. At first, she withdrew and took a moratorium to reflect on the situation. Her president was asked to resign a short time later and, after

much consideration and consultation with her network of supporters, the woman applied for the presidential position. Initially her district's central office rejected her application. However, after some background work where she used her network of friends, she continued in pursuit of the office. Her efforts resulted in her being named her president of her college, chosen from candidates across the United States. However controversial she may be at times, she is known and recognized for her integrity. She has welcomed all groups into her college and made it the center of the community with many innovative, nationally-recognized programs. Consequently, the college is financially solvent for the first time in years. Truly, she has transformed her community college into one that promotes the individual, self expression and civic responsibility, one that elicits community pride:

I used the knowledge of this city to help others. We were, I mean, we were major partners and players in a national political convention. I just negotiated a \$1.6 million agreement with the Sports Center, and they're giving us scholarships. They use our parking lot. We don't just get straight money but they are paying us by supporting programs. That is the entree into the business community that women and men from our community did not have access to before.

6. Link the Personal and the Professional

Women resisters who used relational behavior to prompt change often talked about the importance of linking their personal life experiences with their professional careers. This leadership philosophy enables them to have integrity because they can enact what they believe. Terry Rheinhardt explained that her responses as an advocate for inclusive structures came first from her experience as the oldest of six children. "We were taught by our parents that you are your brother's keeper." They reinforced this again when

she went to parochial school where she admired the nuns who also taught these values. When she went to the convent, the Jesuits educated her in high school and college. Jesuits then were a liberal order of priests. This was a time when the church was teaching students to think critically about their religion and religious life. "They did such a good job they essentially educated most of the women out of religious life because they were taught to resist conformity." Through this experience, Terry learned that giving opportunity for growth to individuals while maintaining a connection to others can produce constructive growth. This, she believes, is the essence of education as a transformative experience. Terry says she is a real-life case study in living a life where you love what you do and feel passionately committed to the lives of others. After leaving the convent, Terry was living on a pig farm in a remote area of the Midwest when she found a part-time position at the local community college. This led to her first administrative position. When she told her Ph.D. advisor that she was moving from teaching to administration, he made a surprising comment. "When I was going to become the dean, I called my adviser, explaining that, 'I'm going to be the dean. I'm going to teach still but I'm going to be the dean of the faculty in liberal arts' . . . He said, "Oh, Terry. I'm so sorry. Good teachers are so hard to find and administrators are a dime a dozen . . . What you learned on the pig farm will really help you."

Other women described similar personal experiences that affected their leadership style. Carolyn Finley came from a family of Baptist ministers and community activists. Growing up she accepted this philosophy of service to the community; today it's an important part of her leadership identity.

Lisa Yoder grew up in Europe immediately after World War II. Her mother, a traditional homemaker, and her father, a research chemist, expected that they would educate her despite the devastation of war. In graduate school, she developed her skill as a problem-solver. From these experiences, Lisa knows that solving problems is a way to help people live together peacefully. She bridges the gap between the sometimes unrealistic expectations of faculty and staff by being open and honest. "People have already told me that I'm one of the most open people they have ever met. I try not to create impressions and expectations that I cannot meet. I truly like to . . . promise and deliver."

One senior women administrator summed up the link between personal experiences and leadership effectiveness:

I think first of all that the most important part of being an effective leader is to know a lot about yourself. You've got to start with the personal. I think that's why sometimes leaders don't emerge until a little bit further on in their careers or why some people never emerge as leaders. They really haven't gotten in touch to know very much about themselves. I think before you can reach out and interrelate with people and then manage people, you better have a pretty clear understanding about what motivates you first and where you come from.

7. Create a Supportive Environment

Women who used collective resistance often emphasized the importance of having supportive family and friends to support them during difficult professional times.

One woman administrator said that her entire family supports her career and personal development. A parent of young children, her family and her in-laws moved from the city to live nearby, so that they can provide continuous and reliable child care. This was

important because as a parent of young children both she and her husband frequently work long hours on their jobs.

Women administrators described their spouses support. One president explained that through her rise to the presidency, she had the total support of her husband. “He wants me to become the best I can be and understands the stress related to the job.” Her husband, now retired, can move wherever she finds a job. She concedes that he laughs at how much work she brings home saying that he wonders and worries about her response to performance pressures as he observes the night work. Balance, he reminds her, is very important.

In general, women who use relational ways of knowing and leading reject a narrow reliance on traditional processes. They choose behaviors that soften the hierarchical and competitive climate of the community college, that build a consensus and empower others. Furthermore, they aspire to values and not to positions, they seek authenticity over making an impression and they accept controversy. They link who they are as a person to who they are as a leader. These leadership behaviors build connections and trust between the woman and her constituency.

D. The Costs and Benefits of Resistance

By breaking with traditional standards and integrating relational behaviors into their leadership style, the women here paid a price for their roles as change agents.

Significant costs were associated with their nonconformity.

Challenge to authority. By breaking with traditional leadership styles, the

women challenged existing norms, choosing to be different. One president said she was careful not to appear to use her status in interactions, therefore understating her authority, treating colleagues as equals. She acknowledged that she had a special role but did not “lord it over” others. Speaking of “lording it over” another,” one president declared that she did not have one superior bone in her body. Other women administrators who chose the resistance strategy reported that they use humor a lot to lighten up their supervisory position.

By choosing resistance, these women made themselves vulnerable to having their leadership challenged by traditional leaders for not being “presidential” enough. One woman said that in general she has a good working relationship with her faculty and her staff. However, on the state level one director, a male, thinks she is “way out” because she uses informal language and does not act like a president should. She accepts his disapproval as the price she must pay for her style and her honesty. Nevertheless, she wonders if this man discredits her professional reputation to other colleagues.

Another community college president, who described her communication style as “up close and personal,” has made some very unpopular changes in her college over the last several year. She decentralized the system and gave back power to the campuses. She changed a practice of giving particular roles to minorities. This fits with the relational style because it opens the institution to the possible inclusion of different gender, racial, and ethnic groups, in more than just token roles. This removal of the inherited job tradition caused a backlash from the minority group. She also encountered resistance between the senior faculty and administrators whom they brought in through other administrations.

During the interview, she emphasized that she did not send other people to do her “dirty work,” she always talked in person to those who were affected by the changes, explaining the moves as openly and honestly as possible. Nevertheless, she has not always been successful in getting others to understand her reasons. Her authority has been challenged over this process and she has even been accused of abandoning the racial minority group of which she is a member. Hearing such accusations is very painful for her.

An academic vice president explained how men and women who maintained traditional styles in her college challenged her credibility. “They respect women in senior positions for the power and decisions they make,” she explained. However, [we women] are not necessarily liked and are subjected to covert attack, indirect undermining, and backstabbing. The men make negative comments to others in a surreptitious way in a context where people cannot question them to get the whole story. She said that such comments often go beyond known facts. The attackers, women and men in traditional power positions, use fear to stop change. They predict that open and honest dialogue or those with different ideas will cause horrific consequences to the institution. They imply that they need to protect the institution from the foolish, naïve mistakes that open leadership will cause. They present their way, typically more closed, as the right way. Sometimes this attack comes up as a concern; sometimes it is camouflaged among other agenda items. Of course, the insider group will have discussed the real concern earlier. They will have already formulated a group opinion and gathered support to stop a change:

Since the guys have probably all talked about the subject (in a group in the gym, over coffee or other informal contacts) these comments often strike the person in question as a surprise. I think the strategy is to surprise, disarm or place on the

defensive in order to influence and/or negotiate decisions more aligned with their preferences . . . The men prefer to work in closed systems because these are more manageable and controllable.

Men will work in alliance with other women who have conformed within the traditional styles to mount these surprise encounters. The women reported that, while such challenges to authority can be stressful, an awareness of the challenge and their predictability reduces the fear. Having supportive colleagues available to plan appropriate responses helped these women face challenges with less anxiety.

Consensus takes time. When senior-level women administrators spoke of the training and education required for the use of consensus processes, they emphasized that time and homework were factors. For example, one college found it necessary to train all the work groups involved at a nearby university. This training laid the basis for mutual-gain bargaining with an emphasis on knowledge of college issues, listening skills, and interpersonal communication skills.

Consensus has become so much a part of one college's organizational culture that when leaders there decide without consulting others they risk the loss of support. Ann Roe explained that any senior administrator who makes a unilateral move without consulting others "better have a darn good rationale for it." Consensus or group problem solving can inhibit those who are less verbal and less skilled. Advocates for consensus building argue that the time is well worth the effort. The cost of professional development is less expensive in the long run because fewer legal mistakes are made. Moreover, the mistakes are less public. Professional development, focused on consensus building,

empowered employees because it prompted a sense of ownership and self esteem.

Hard work and stress. Performance pressure for women, who are resisters is different from that of women who are adapters or reconcilers. As one woman explained, the overwork and stress related to her job was not because she was afraid of failing or trying to maintain credibility. Rather she was so empowered with opportunities that she had over committed herself. In our interview she reported that she could not remember when she had last taken a vacation. At that time, she had been sick with an undiagnosed ailment and I learned later the illness forced her to take months off from work. Other women reported that the stress of returning to college to earn advanced degrees was hard on their families.

Another type of challenge was sometimes necessary for women who use resistance. This was the hard decision to move when their college was no longer receptive to the woman's relational leadership style. These women were likely to move on when the institutional context became non-growthful and no longer supported them. For example, several women told of situations where they realized that their philosophies and "being who they are" made them adversaries of key power figures within their institutions. Therefore, in time, in order to grow in their profession, these women accepted the need to move and found places with a friendlier climates where they could institute their educational and leadership philosophies.

Thus it is clear that resistance is costly. This unconventional style opens women to attack. Moreover, it requires time, patience, hard work, endurance, investment in professional development, and keen awareness.

Benefits. Besides prompting growth for the individual woman, resistance leadership can bring change to a college by including new groups. Women who use resistance advance group consciousness raising and problem solving. This can lead to a collective new vision for their community college, a vision where ideals of individuality, self expression, and democracy can be realized.

Several women expressed the satisfaction of doing a job and carrying out the values that offer individuals of all groups an opportunity to grow. "See this picture; this is my leadership symbol. It is a picture of me celebrating when all the college worked to win that first crucial survival millage. See, I'm saying "Nooooooooooooo!" (I can't believe it!) and they got a picture of me doing that just as it was announced on the radio. That symbolizes the joy I have in what I do."

One vice president who uses resistance type of leadership described how she and her colleagues have gone through many life experiences. Having known each other through marriages, divorces, birthing of children, deaths of parents, break ups, and second marriages, they understand each other. "Because we see each other as people on a journey, it has carried us through rough times." Despite the intense period of growth between 1970 and 1977, "when the college literally became born again, we retained respect for our differences." The college has had both good and bad times:

Right now, the culture of the institution, I think, is characterized by a mutual respect, a willingness to work with one another, a posture that says ok--I'm going to trust you but that doesn't mean I'm going to turn my back all together. And so I think there is a healthy recognition of the differing and competing sometimes interests. But also, at least on the academic side of the house, a recognition that there is some interest that transcend our--our definition of ourselves as faculty or administrators.

A dynamic community college president, an African American, reflected on the benefit of her years at the community college, poignantly describing her many nationally recognized achievements. These achievements, however, were obviously unimportant to her role as a transformative leader:

I'm here to make sure dreams don't die. Dreams have the ability to (transcend the most hideous circumstances). There is always that flicker of hope and it's up to us to keep it going. Those of us who have made it, we may have been changed by the system but we will also change it. Now that we are on the inside of the system we have a responsibility to stand up, speak up, and reach back!

E. Summary

The eight senior-level women administrators who defined their leadership in terms of resistance have many common characteristics. Their relational skills and experiences are important features of their collective resistance strategies, along with their strong command of instrumental behaviors. As advocates of inclusion they saw education as a process of transformation and freedom; therefore their jobs as administrators were to create climates for transformation. Accounts by Lisa, Terry, Carolyn, and Ann illustrate their leadership philosophies using resistance behaviors. They described their resistance leadership style as transformative. Common threads among these women are their valuing of progressive educational ideals and capacity for a critical reasoning based on knowledge of feminist and social theories. These dimensions of their knowledge and experience influenced their perceptions of how differences such as gender impact their college's culture and individuals in the college and motivated them to be inclusive in their leadership

identity. Lisa said that her experience of Postwar Europe her participation in women's studies programs, and her role as an affirmative action officer helped form her identity as a leader who could bring people together to solve conflicts. As well, Terry's knowledge of progressive theological theories with its emphasis on empowerment and inclusion is impressive. Ann's involvement with social justice issues helped shape her leadership identity and guided her confidently to use resistance as part of her leadership.

Women who used resistance were transformative leaders who felt free to use behaviors that they characterized as integral parts of their personalities. Many women said literally, "this is me - this is who I am," thus expressing the ability to live out her personal values within her leadership role. To these women this was integrity. They became examples for others, empowered them to build coalitions, study issues, dialogue, and problem solve to build a better college and community. In this way, the empowered group constructed new ways to get things done, and these leaders provided pathways for women to develop expertise to share with the community.

Resistance leaders create an environment in which rejecting bias can take the egalitarian ideals of the community college to a new level to uncover barriers in the traditional organization. By incorporating relational ways of knowing into their leadership styles, they redefine leadership. These women encouraged the use of alternative discourse in meetings to build a consensus after respectful yet sometimes intense dialogue which allowed looking at a problem from various perspectives. On the surface, this alternative discourse method might appear to be a high risk process because of its seemingly untidy and uncontrolled nature but the women in this chapter believed that it ultimately brought

inclusiveness and vitality to their institutions.

Women who used resistance styles rejected the idea that they could manage change in simple, goal-directed ways. They encouraged the analysis of a problem from many different perspectives and they have shown by their success that this process works. These women saw themselves as facilitators of processes to which they brought the power of their convictions, academic credentials, expertise, and communication skills to make group problem solving a constructive model for change.

As resisters, they softened the competitive climate of their college, empowered others to become involved in decision-making processes, and they let their values drive their career paths rather than striving for a position. These women sought authenticity over creating impressions and were not afraid of controversy. In addition, they nurtured and challenged those around them to grow.

As with any behavior choices, there were associated costs such as vulnerability to attack and criticism, consensus as a lengthy group process, personal health issues, hard work associated with earning appropriate credentials and expertise, and job change. The women featured here were successful because they were able to set the tone of problem-solving methods by creating equal status for relational and instrumental behaviors. Moreover, they developed collective resistance within the college culture to support their leadership initiatives. These women had a sense of integrity and a desire to make a difference for others in the world.

CHAPTER VII

THE STUDY SUMMARY AND IMPLICATIONS

The stories of Regina Ibsen, Sonya Ziegler, and Terry Rheinhart were chosen to bring the issues of this study into focus. They illustrated three distinct responses, used by senior-level women administrators to construct leadership identities within the culture of the community college: adaption, reconciliation, and resistance. These strategies were identified from data gathered during in-depth interviews with thirty women. They were asked to describe their leadership identity in terms of successes, failures, family background, educational experiences, and perceptions of gender. From these data, I identified two sub-issues. First, the importance of cultural context in defining women's leadership identities. Second, the women's perceptions of gender issues within their organization.

In this chapter, I summarize the theory, methodology, and findings as they relate to the central research question of how women at community colleges construct their leadership identities. I based this study on three assumptions: (1) women, more often than men, use relational ways of knowing, (2) traditional organizational theory does not provide an adequate framework to analyze structures that may foster gender bias, and (3) cultural context is important in understanding leadership identities. These assumptions are grounded in studies suggesting that community college cultures generally define leadership through traditional frameworks, as well as literature on women's leadership, organizational theory, gender, and the influence of culture on

identity.

A. Theory, Methodology, and Findings

1. Theory

Feminist and cultural analytical theories are important for understanding how women construct a leadership identity within traditional organizations. Between 1986 and 1991, community colleges reported an increase of women in senior-level positions (Faulcomer, 1995; Warner & DeFluer, 1993). Even with this increase of senior-level women remain under-represented in proportion to the total number of women employed at community colleges. The question of why this is so, can partially be answered by the present study on how women construct their leadership identities at community colleges. Hopefully, the knowledge gained here will provide the impetus for increasing women's representation at the senior level.

In considering organizational cultures, research by Bensimon (1989) suggests that community colleges need relational leadership to change their traditional structures. Relational leadership uses collaborative problem-solving rather than hierarchical leadership that directs from behind or in front. Ferguson (1984), Iannello (1992), and Smircich (1985) also argue that to move an institution from a traditional hierarchical, top-down structure to a flatter structure requires relational and flexible leadership. They further argue that relational leadership benefits higher education overall because this philosophy tends to foster policies to include multiple and diverse constituencies.

The suggestion that organizational structures would change with the addition of

women in senior leadership roles is not a straightforward argument. Hersey and Blanchard (1982) and Powell (1988) question the connection between gender and leadership style. Baxter and Lansing (1993) found that, although women may have different opinions than men regarding war, peace, child care, the poor, and education, when in leadership positions they differ little from their male counterparts. Thus, a question remains: When women enter higher education administration what happens to keep them from translating their ideals into organizational structures?

Relational and instrumental ways of knowing are connected to socially constructed gender roles of women and men (Lever, 1976; Maccoby, 1990). Women most often use relational ways of knowing to understand the world (Gilligan, 1982; Belenky, Clinchy, Goldburger, Tarule, 1986). Studies show that women are expected to use such behaviors (Williams & Best, 1990) and they are treated harshly if they do not (Tannen, 1994). These theorists point out that relational and instrumental patterns should be thought of as a continuum because women and men may use either pattern depending on context and factors such as career struggles, successes, educational background, life experiences, and knowledge of gender issues.

Relational thinking, linked to women's stereotypical roles, often exists in opposition to the primary patterns of traditional organizational structures and expectations. Most community colleges use traditional organizational methods, which do not easily fit relational styles and women must contend with these structures which often marginalize them. As shown by Goffman (1990), individual responses to a social stigma in traditional organizations range from conformity to separation. Leadership

research suggests that a woman's style can range from traditional such as charismatic or production-oriented to transformative such as agents for social change (Blackmore, 1989; Foster, 1989; Ferguson, 1982). In summary, the construction of a woman's leadership identity at the senior administrative level is complex. She must integrate aspects of the college culture, her cumulative life experiences, educational experiences, and her sense of purpose as a woman into this identity while operating in a setting that marginalizes women.

2. Methodology

To uncover the complex process of constructing a leadership identity in the contradictory culture of the community college, I initially used a qualitative methodology. To gain a perspective on how a woman responds to her organizational culture, I interviewed thirty women. In addition, to the in-depth interviews, I conducted a short second informal interview. The informal second interview allowed the participant to review the transcript of her first interview and added to the credibility of my interpretations and served as a means of broadening and deepening my understanding of the data (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

In addition the multiple data-gathering methods, I used a triangulated analysis of the data for a more quantitative approach. After quantifying the tendency of each woman's to use relational, instrumental, and mixed leadership behaviors, I used a matrix table to compare the behaviors of each woman with those of others in the study. The second part of the analysis involved identifying the response patterns of each woman to her

organizational context: adaption, reconciliation, or resistance. Finally, I plotted the quantified leadership behaviors and the response patterns on a scatter chart (Miles & Huberman, 1994) to illustrate how the data overlap, intersect, or never meet.

3. Findings

Generally, leadership styles of the women in this study could be placed into one of three response patterns: adaption, reconciliation, and resistance. However, it is important to recognize that no woman used one type exclusively: while preferring a particular response pattern in practice the women used all three patterns. Of the thirty participants, nine preferred adaption, thirteen used reconciliation, and eight used resistance. Given the instrumental values and norms inherent in community college cultures women in this study chose adaption as their response to traditional standards. Their particular organizational context and educational background largely determined their leadership styles. The culture also presented women with a set of contradictory expectations creating a double bind. If the women's adaptive response patterns were embedded in the masculine instrumental styles, they were often not accepted by either men or women. Yet they responded using predominantly relational styles, their accomplishments were not recognized.

Women who used an adaption response to construct their leadership identity relied on following the rules and regulations. Conforming to traditional rituals and practices such as unbiased conversation, distancing, and competitive political maneuvering were also important skills. These behaviors maintained the organizational culture and marked the

women adapters as leadership material in traditional settings.

Women who used a reconciliation response to construct their leadership style relied on both relational and instrumental behaviors to harmonize the expectations of both men and women they did so in a compartmentalized way. Because the women did not integrate relational and instrumental paradigms, the women shifted between the two depending upon contextual expectations. For example, they maintained instrumental behaviors when working with the highest levels of the institution and used relational behaviors when working with groups of women colleagues and subordinates in the lower levels of the institution or in informal contexts.

Women who constructed their leadership identity based on a resistance response worked to create a context where the relational paradigm had equal status with the traditional paradigm. Though these women generally tended to use a high degree of relational behaviors; they also used instrumental behaviors. A central feature of their identity was the integration of relational and instrumental behaviors on their own terms. Notably, the women who chose resistance used a form of collective action and matched the description of the transformative leader as described by Foster (1989). These women advanced consensus building and honest, open communication, all of which fostered inclusion and collaboration. Leaders using this response saw themselves as transformative because they were not blind followers of cultural norms. They engaged in critical self-reflection and looked for ways to build community by including other leadership styles represented by women and minorities within their organizations; they challenged the institution to reflect on the ethics of conflictual situations, by facilitating an

educational process that fostered critical reasoning and empowerment. These women saw educational leadership as more than the passing on of information to strangers. They used collective resistance through dialogue and interaction to effect incremental cultural changes in their institution, often playing the role of facilitator, group organizer, and consciousness-raiser.

I identified a double bind that women must negotiate, which formed the basis for many of their struggles. Specifically, they had to respond to a traditional organizational context that expected them to use instrumental behaviors then penalized them when they did, for not acting according to the traditional feminine role. Specifically, if the women's responses were embedded in instrumental masculine behaviors, they were not accepted by men or by women.

Although the main goal of this study was to learn how women construct leadership styles at the community college, I also came to understand how women made sense of the gender issues they faced. Most of the women faced such issues although they were not outspoken about them and occasionally did not even acknowledge their presence. Women who adapted a leadership style, to fit into the organization tended to deny the existence of gender issues at their college. Also some women who used an adaption leadership style were in positions where they no longer could see gender bias, and they denied ever having experienced discrimination based on gender when they were at the lower levels of an institution. Women who used adaption tended to accept the individual responsibility model; they believed that their behavior choices had little to do with context.

Women who used a reconciliation leadership identity acknowledged the problems

associated with gender differences and could style their impact, but they did not know how to deal with them institutionally to reduce their effects. They were literally overwhelmed with the continual balancing act that required them to modify their behavior to suit the expectations of that specific context. Therefore, these women had little time for in-depth analysis of how gender bias affected them and their institutions.

Women leaders who chose resistance often used collective resistance to act on issues and transform their institution in incremental ways. They recognized gender issues and developed a strategy to deal with them. These included softening the climate of competition, fostering collaborative problem solving, building coalitions, and encouraging respectful dialogue. Inclusion and a climate of openness allowed their colleagues to recognize and deal with gender issues, not as polarizing issues but as an opportunities for growth and creative change.

In summary, I found that women's leadership identities constructed around the response patterns of adaption, reconciliation, and resistance, were in part a response to their particular organizational context. This context was typically of traditional masculine ideas of leadership as defined by men, for men. The degree and strength of preference for instrumental behaviors within the responses adaption, reconciliation, and resistance depended not only on the organizational context but on the women's knowledge of organizational cultures, gender issues, and early life experiences.

B. Implications

Ongoing reorganization and downsizing in the workplace require that people

attend college throughout their adult life to update their skills. Also, the influx of immigrant groups to the United States, high student drop out rates, the growing population of students of color, and technological advancement give the community college a plethora of issues with which to contend.

The community college's challenge is to develop leadership that has flexibility to anticipate these changing needs and to them. Based on this research, traditional organizational structures instrumental leadership styles appear to be inadequate. They tend to be associated with maintaining the status quo, rather than with flexibility to accommodate changes. The women I identified as resisters used a leadership style that could make the institution more responsive to change and better able to fit the changing environment in which must operate.

Resisters are transformative leaders who can move community college leadership beyond the traditional idea of leaders, as simply managers and political strategists, to define leadership in a way that empowers all employees through effective decision making (Foster, 1985).

1. Implications for the Individual

The resistance leadership styles promote creative change that make inclusive community colleges possible. The use of the resistance leadership pattern requires many elements. First, women must have a strong sense of ethics about including marginal groups. Second, they must openly share these ideals through well-developed writing, speaking, and interpersonal skills. Third, the women should also have critical thinking

and grounded in progressive educational ideals which focus on individual expression, a community and civic morality, and an understanding of leadership from a traditional and critical perspective. Finally, women must be willing to seek out institutions in which a resistance leadership style will be accepted. At times this may mean moving to a new institution. With attention to these aspects of their leadership experiences, the individual senior-level woman administrator can develop the skills of collective resistance to become a transformative leader.

2. Implications for Institutions

The three most important findings of this study are that context plays an important part in shaping a women's leadership style; that traditional organizational cultures in most community colleges often serve as a barrier to the selection and development of women's leadership; and that such cultures not only restrict women's access to senior leadership roles but can channel them into leadership styles that are less desirable than the women are comfortable using.

First, community colleges are to serve the needs of the community and students they must have transformative leaders. Foster (1985) envisions transformative leaders as individuals that facilitate dialogue, strive for a sense of community based on traditions, but continue the quest for justice, equality, and growth. Leadership, therefore, must be aware of and critical of its influence and its constituent's circumstances and not exclusively driven by market forces. This vision recognizes self-reflection as an ongoing organizational practice which provides an opportunity for all women and men in the

organization to understand the structure, its dynamics, and its limitations. Within this broad understanding, equal validity is given to the relational and traditional organizational styles when evaluating leadership.

The local community college must re-examine the selection process for choosing women to participate in the Women's Leadership Institute developed by the late Dr. Carolyn Desjardins. The majority of women have had limited access to the Institute because, in many colleges, the selection process is placed in a competitive format. Leadership must look for ways they can better use the knowledge that women gain from their participation at the Institute. Though the Institute introduced relational concepts of leadership into the community college culture, it has had only modest influence. When the "chosen" woman returns to her home institution, her new awareness or efforts are often given little support or recognition. Many women in this study recognized the Women's Leadership Institute as a source of professional growth, however, the relational style and the notion of supportive women's networks within each community college has not been fully developed. Most important, the general acceptance of relational leadership remains on the fringe and is not considered an equal to traditional methods of leadership in the community college culture.

Third, to support transformative leaders, community colleges must critically examine their governance structure. For example, leaders must have a sense of fairness to balance the representation of relational and traditional styles on important committees such as search, policy, and tenure. Attention must be given to the Board of Trustees and representation of relational styles. These changes within the governance and

administrative structure will open the way for the development and inclusion of transformative leadership and the responsible development of women's leadership.

Fourth, community colleges should consider practices such as mutual-gains bargaining as a means to build coalitions for group problem-solving. Such new practices use the alternative organizational conception in situations that were traditional battlegrounds in the past. Such processes include critical reasoning rather than criticizing and problem solving to reduce contentiousness.

Fifth, community colleges should encourage employees to take responsibility for their own career development. By encourage, I mean require employees not only to earn academic credit, but to continue to develop themselves professionally, so that the cost of educational degree programs can be used as a tax writeoff. Also, the community college could periodically provide three-month sabbaticals for administrators along with external internships to allow them to develop skills and understanding of other cultural and organizational cultures.

A final implication extends beyond both individual women and community colleges and addresses higher education and community college preparation programs. An advanced degree in educational administration should prepare both men and women by teaching the distinction between instrumental and relational behaviors. Critical reasoning would be an important part of such program. However, I suggest a curriculum that would include the history of intellectual development as it relates to work, technology, and the growth of industrialization through modern and postmodern era. They would ground the curriculum in the development of schooling and university life that teaches instructional

methodologies to foster liberation or transformative educational experiences. A particular emphasis would be on the holistic development of the individual rather than the individual as a functional component of the economy. This emphasis would give attention to issues of gender, race, and class as they affect the development of the individual. Such a program should do more to provide mentoring and research opportunities for all students, not just full-time students or those on campus. Within this curricula context, students would gain a fundamental knowledge of traditional organization theory and alternative organizational conceptions. Students should be given opportunities for envisioning new practices and be encouraged to take time for reflection. As the training ground for administrators, this university curriculum would provide students with the tools to creatively integrate relational and traditional styles into their institution and to develop leadership styles that ultimately will allow them to be more effective and creative leaders.

C. Conclusion

I found all the women in this study to be caring and conscientious leaders. Overall, each had come to terms in some way with the double bind of working in a traditional masculine culture and its contradictory expectations. Paradoxically the community college in the United States known as the “people’s college,” is organized in line with traditional administrative conceptions strongly favoring male orientations, which are neither inclusive nor egalitarian. The resolution of this paradox was the overarching experience of senior-level women administrators and became the backdrop for examining how women respond to their organizational culture. Moreover, the analysis of this

resolution has major implications for how women create their leadership identities.

Because traditional standards generally judge women's leadership, women who adapt these standards often become alienated from both women and men. To other women, they are traitors for rejecting women's ways of leading, and to men, they are no longer "woman" enough.

These findings suggest that women have creatively responded to their environments, but more could be done to support their development as leaders and to use the tendency for their relational ways of knowing. To do this community colleges must put more effort into developing cultures where resistance leadership is fostered. When a sustained comprehensive effort is made, the community college will truly begin to fulfill its mission as the people's college.

APPENDICES

Appendix A - University Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects

Approval Letter

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

October 9, 1996

TO: Barbara Tedrow
3702 Applewood
Midland, MI 48640

RE: IRB#: 96-576
TITLE: SENIOR WOMEN COMMUNITY COLLEGE ADMINISTRATORS:
LIFE IN HIGHER EDUCATION'S INNER CIRCLE
REVISION REQUESTED: N/A
CATEGORY: 1-A
APPROVAL DATE: 10/09/96

The University Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects' (UCRIHS) review of this project is complete. I am pleased to advise that the rights and welfare of the human subjects appear to be adequately protected and methods to obtain informed consent are appropriate. Therefore, the UCRIHS approved this project and any revisions listed above.

RENEWAL: UCRIHS approval is valid for one calendar year, beginning with the approval date shown above. Investigators planning to continue a project beyond one year must use the green renewal form (enclosed with the original approval letter or when a project is renewed) to seek updated certification. There is a maximum of four such expedited renewals possible. Investigators wishing to continue a project beyond that time need to submit it again for complete review.

REVISIONS: UCRIHS must review any changes in procedures involving human subjects, prior to initiation of the change. If this is done at the time of renewal, please use the green renewal form. To revise an approved protocol at any other time during the year, send your written request to the UCRIHS Chair, requesting revised approval and referencing the project's IRB # and title. Include in your request a description of the change and any revised instruments, consent forms or advertisements that are applicable.



OFFICE OF
RESEARCH
AND
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STUDIES

**PROBLEMS/
CHANGES:**

Should either of the following arise during the course of the work, investigators must notify UCRIHS promptly: (1) problems (unexpected side effects, complaints, etc.) involving human subjects or (2) changes in the research environment or new information indicating greater risk to the human subjects than existed when the protocol was previously reviewed and approved.

If we can be of any future help, please do not hesitate to contact us at (517) 355-2180 or FAX (517) 432-1171.

University Committee on
Research Involving
Human Subjects
(UCRIHS)

Michigan State University
232 Administration Building
East Lansing, Michigan
48824-1046

517/355-2180
FAX: 517/432-1171

Sincerely,

David E. Wright, Ph.D.
UCRIHS Chair

DEW:bed

cc: Robert A. Rhoads

The Michigan State University
IDEA is Institutional Diversity,
Excellence in Action

MSU is an affirmative-action,
equal-opportunity institution

Appendix A - Consent Form

Consent Form

I.....freely consent to participate in the research procedures outlined in the introductory letter sent on I understand I may choose not to participate at all, may refuse to participate in certain procedures or answer certain questions or may discontinue the interview at any time without penalty.

Also, I understand that my identity and the identity of other subjects will not be revealed in any publications or presentations. In addition, all reasonable efforts will be made to present the data in such a manner that your colleagues will not recognize your institution. There is, however, the risk that despite all reasonable efforts that you and your institution may be recognized. Within these restrictions at the end of the study, you may request a summary of the study results.

Signature.....

Date.....

UCRIHS APPROVAL FOR
THIS project EXPIRES:

OCT 09 1997

SUBMIT RENEWAL APPLICATION
ONE MONTH PRIOR TO
ABOVE DATE TO CONTINUE

Appendix A - Project Description

University Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects (UCHRIS)

Project Description

The purpose of this proposal is to present a theoretical perspective and a research strategy for understanding the leadership styles women adapt to function effectively in senior-level administrative positions in community and two-year colleges. My hypothesis is that women, in order to be effective leaders, must make adjustments within traditional organizational settings. This hypothesis is grounded in the literature on women's identity, which contends that females develop relational ways of thinking and behaving because of their initial childhood bond with their primary female caregiver. This gender identity is further shaped through childhood and adolescent peer relationships. In adulthood, women who have primarily adapted relational ways of knowing are often in opposition to the main patterns of traditional organizational structures.

The central assumption of this proposal is that : traditional organizations tend to function as male-centered operations and establish standards toward that end. Specifically, they tend to embrace hierarchical structures governed by a few, and guided by rational objective rules of behavior and language designed to increase linear conformity, stability, and productivity. Traditional organizations are also arenas where competition to gain status and power are essential to the success of the individual. The type of adaption needed to function in such an environment poses a serious challenge to women's sense of self.

As a qualitative study, my research will focus on how senior women administrators at two-year and community colleges make sense of their experience. I will seek answers to the following:

- (1) Do senior women administrators make adjustments in their leadership styles to accommodate their institutional context in order to be successful?**
- (2) If so, what adjustments do they make?**
- (3) What are the consequences of these adjustments?**
- (4) What knowledge can we gain of women's adjustments as a means to transform organizational culture within the community and two-year college settings?**

Procedures

The principal instrument for data collection will be the formal structured interview, approximately two hours in length. In addition to the interview, observations of senior-level staff meetings will be used to describe the context and interactional styles of the senior-level management team. Following the interview and observations, a short second interview will be done to allow the subject to review the descriptions and written observations. This audit (Janesick p. 101) will insure the validity of the interview and observation data. It will also broaden and deepen the researcher's understanding of the data.

Also, if applicable, I will use memos, personal notes, appointment books, mission statements, and strategic plans or any other written report or artifact that may be helpful in interpreting the organizational context and the senior-level administrative team as well as

the individual under study. Where appropriate these artifacts will supply information about the participant's cultural context.

Subject Population

Twenty to 25 senior women administrators from community and two-year colleges will be selected from positions as chair, dean, vice president, provost, assistant to the president and president as indicated in the 1996 Higher Education Directory. These positions have a high level of responsibility for institutional operations and policy. An introduction to the study and entry into the institution will be sought through a face-to-face contact or through a phone call. A follow up letter will then be mailed which will contain basic information about the study and a reminder of the interview data and time.

Six study participants will be chosen from institutions which fall into four enrollment categories: (A) less than 1000 students; (B) 1,000 - 4,999; (C) 5,000 - 9,999; and (D) 10,000 and over. Specifically, my goal is to interview two sets of three subjects from two different institutions represented in each enrollment category.

13. Anonymity/Confidentiality

A formal consent agreement, developed according to the Michigan State University's Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects (UCRIHS) guideline, will be signed by each participant. This document, to formalize the confidentiality component of the study, legally assures that names of the subjects and of their institutions, along with the interview narrative and other notes, will be kept in confidence.

Data collected from the formal interviews will be recorded and transcribed verbatim using a personal computer and will be filed under a pseudonym for each participant. I will maintain a list of each participant's name and pseudonym for my own records, but this list will not be disclosed to others. The subject will be made of these procedures during the initial phase of the interview. My reactions to the interviews will be recorded in a journal and stored along with field notes on a personal computer. Observations will be recorded and filed on a lap-top computer.

Risk/Benefit Ratio

Risks: The risk to the participant in this study is minimal.

Benefits: Understanding the adaptations women must make to succeed in such systems can help higher education institutions identify barriers that either encourage or discourage women from seeking membership at the senior administrative level. Most importantly, an understanding of these adaptations may help to create an environment where relational ways of knowing are more likely to be embraced, thus offering a wider range of leadership styles and opportunities for both women and for men.

Appendix A - Letter to Study Participant

Dear

Thank you for agreeing to be a participant in my research project. As explained in our phone conversation the purpose of the study, "Senior-Level Women Community College Administrators: Life in Higher Education's Inner Circle", is to understand the leadership styles women adapt to function effectively in senior administrative positions in community and two year colleges. As a qualitative study, the main procedures used will be an in-depth interview, observations, and a short follow-up interview. Please allow two hours for the in-depth interview and one-half hour for the follow-up session.

Per our phone conversation you have agreed to participate in a two hour interview, on _____. In addition, I will observe a senior-level meeting where you are a participant, and at a later yet-to-be arranged time we will meet for a short one-half hour follow-up interview to make additions or corrections to the interview transcript.

Confidentiality and anonymity shall be honored at all times about the contents of the interviews and meeting. All results will be treated with strict confidence and the subjects will remain anonymous in any report of research findings. Within these restrictions at the end of the study, you may request the study results at any time.

If you have any further questions about the study and your participation please contact me at work (517) 686-9422 or home (517) 835-7527. Please return the following consent form by.....

Appendix B - Interview Protocol

Senior-Level Women Administrators at Community Colleges

I. Introduction to Interview

Developing Rapport with Interview Participant

"Let's begin with the verification of some basic information", via the participant's resume i.e., "I see you graduated from or have had a number of positions or graduated....."

(1) Your Name.....

Work Address..... Work Phone.....

Home Address..... Home Phone.....

(2) Position.....

(3) Name and address of your institution.....

.....

Enrollment Category (Check One)

less than 1000.....

1,000 to 4,999.....

5,000 to 9,999.....

10,000 and over.....

What percentage of your students are transfer oriented versus
occupationally degree oriented seeking terminal degrees?

(4) Education (Resume)

A. Undergraduate Education

Institution.....

Major and Degree.....

Year of graduation.....

B. Graduate Education

Institution.....

Major and Degree.....

Year of graduation.....

C. Ph.D. Program

Institution.....

Major and Concentration.....

Year of graduation.....

(5) Racial Identity.....

(6) Year of birth.....

(7) Birth Order.....

Interview Questions

I. Background

(1) What was the major influence that moved you to this career track? (Parents, colleagues, or personality, other)

*** What is in your personality that draws you to this field and in particular this position?**

(2) Are you married?

*** How long? Is this your first or second marriage?**

*** Do you have children? If so, how many? Briefly explain i.e. age of children and current level of responsibility or involvement?**

(3) In what ways does your spouse or significant other support your career efforts?

(4) What other significant adults have impacted life choices?

*** Explain who they are and how they affected your life?**

(5) Please draw a life line of the critical events that brought you to this position?

*** Have you had any "time outs" in your career such as raising children, move to other career fields. Please explain briefly.**

*** Has health been an influence in your career? Explain.**

How many years have you held this position at the senior level?

*** When was your first year?**

*** Were you appointed or were you selected from a national search?**

*** What other senior level positions have you held
and where?**

II. Culture of the Organization

(6) What rituals, stories, artifacts, best illustrate the institutional culture of this organization?

(7) What is it like to be a senior administrator (president, V.P.) within this organization?

*** How do others perceive you and your role within this organization?**

*** How do you negotiate this gap and perceived differences? Please give stories to illustrate.**

(8) How are women in senior positions viewed in your organization?

*** In your opinion how are they viewed by other women, men,
and the institution in general?**

*** Please give specific examples that illustrate your perspective.**

(9) Explain the conflicts that occur within the institution.

*** What do you see as the major political conflicts within the institution? Give examples.**

*** What are some attitudes that cause problems? Give examples.**

*** What are the barriers? Give examples**

(10) Are there differences between how the various constituencies...faculty, administrators handle conflict?

*** Is gender a factor in how conflict is handled? What other elements affect**

conflict?

Views on Leadership

Lets look at the artifact(s) you have brought to describe your leadership.

(11) How do you define leadership?

(12) What is your leadership philosophy?

- * How has it changed over the years?

(13) Have you had mentors...informal or formal?

- * What was their leadership philosophy and how did they influence you?

- * Who are they and what did you admire about them?

- * (If they were the opposite sex) Do you think there was significance to the individual's gender and the type of relationship you had?

- * How have these mentors impacted your (career) life choices?

(14) Have you been a mentor to women in your organization?

- * Please explain the relationship.

(15) Doyouu think gender affects gatekeeping strategies for new leadership positions?

- * Explain with examples.

Pivotal Experiences in your Administrative Career

(16) Tell me or draw me a model of the high and low points of this job.

- * Tell me a story about your major success.

- * Tell me a story about one of your failures.

(17) How do you deal with situations where your competency is questioned?

- * Can you give some examples.

- * Describe the feelings.

(18) How have you changed to better fit this job?

- * Or have you?

(19) Have you had to resist your organizations expectations?

- * What support did you receive?

- * In what ways did you refuse to change?

(20) What advice would you give to women aspiring to senior positions?

+(21) How would you rate your institution on a scale from one to ten in terms of openness?

What barriers do you see in (your) organizations that prevent it from opening up?

OR

+(21) How would you make your organization more open?

Follow Up Interview

After the in-depth interview, the subject will be sent a transcript as well as summary of the findings. The following questions will be asked:

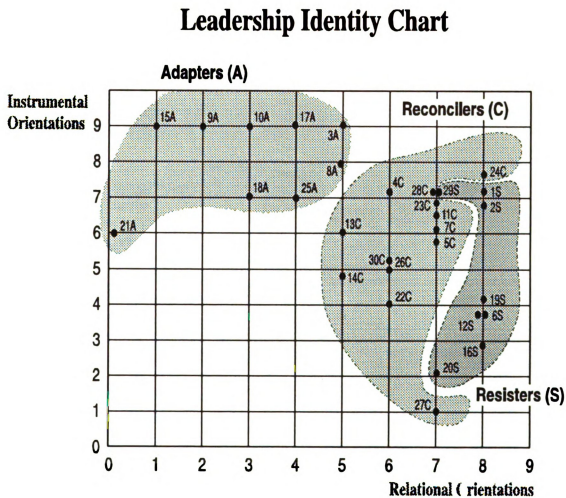
- (1) What is your reaction to the interview transcript?**
- (2) Has anything changed since the interview?**
- (3) Would you like to add anything to the interview?**
- (4) Have I missed any questions or points you think are important to senior-level women administrators?**

TABLES

Figure 1 - Study Participant Chart

| Pseudonym | Sr. Cabinet Level Post | Age | Degree | Race | Years at the Senior Level | Marital Status | College Enrollment |
|----------------------|------------------------|-----|--------|------|---------------------------|----------------|--------------------|
| 1 Hilary Abbott | #1 | 46 | MA | AA | 10 | Single | B |
| 2 Vickie Barnes | #2 | 49 | MA | AA | 5 | Divorced | B |
| 3 Madeline Collins | #1 | 58 | MA | C | 10 | Married | C |
| 4 Shelia Danforth | #1 | 53 | EdD | C | 7 | Divorced | B |
| 5 Hazel Evans | #2 | 44 | MA | C | 2 | Married | B |
| 6 Carolyn Finley | #1 | 63 | Ph.D | C | 17 | Married | B |
| 7 Gale Goffman | #2 | 46 | MA | C | 5 | Married | B |
| 8 Elaine Hill | #2 | 60 | MA | C | 11 | Remarried | B |
| 9 Regina Ipsen | #2 | 49 | MBA | C | 12 | Married | B |
| 10 Lou Jennings | #1 | 60 | EdD | C | 21 | Married | D |
| 11 Patricia King | #2 | 47 | MA | C | 14 | Married | D |
| 12 Sarah Long | #2 | 57 | MA | C | 11 | Divorced | D |
| 13 Irene Morgan | #2 | 48 | BS | C | 5 | Remarried | D |
| 14 Christine Noe | #2 | 53 | EdD | C | 11 | Married | D |
| 15 Sue Olsen | #2 | 50 | MPA | C | 8 | Married | D |
| 16 Belinda Paul | #2 | 61 | Ph.D | AA | 3 | Married | D |
| 17 Katherine Quinley | #3 | 55 | MS | C | 10 | Divorced | D |
| 18 Denise Ralston | #2 | 39 | MBA | C | 1 | Married | D |
| 19 Terry Reinhart | #1 | 54 | Ph.D | C | 17 | Married | D |
| 20 Anna Roe | #2 | 54 | MA | C | 3 | Divorced | D |
| 21 Jill Roth | #3 | 53 | Ph.D | C | ? | Married | D |
| 22 Maggie Swayer | #2 | 60 | EdD | C | 15 | Divorced | D |
| 23 Linda Tifton | #2 | 54 | Ph.D | C | 7 | Married | D |
| 24 Mary Taylor | #1 | 53 | Ph.D | C | 15 | Married | D |
| 25 Margaret Ulster | #3 | 52 | Ph.D | AA | 20 | Married | D |
| 26 Marion Volk | #1 | ? | JD | AA | 11 | Married | D |
| 27 Kay Walston | #1 | 58 | Ph.D | AA | 1 | Divorced | D |
| 28 Gloria Williams | #2 | 50 | MS | C | 1 | Married | D |
| 29 Lisa Yoder | #1 | 51 | Ph.D | C | 2 | Married | B |
| 30 Sonja Ziegler | #3 | 42 | BA | C | 5 | Married | B |

Figure 2 - Leadership Identity Chart



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