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Influence and Integrity: Women Managers in Higher Education

by

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Abstract

This study explores the perspectives of seven women higher education middle managers regarding their influence and power. The purpose of the study was to describe individuals in interaction, rather than theorize about the nature of postsecondary institutions. The findings of the study are defined by three different sets of interactions. In their interactions with staff, several participants balanced strategies of both authority and connection, developing an ideology of teamwork that provided a mechanism for disguising authority, reducing conflict, and eliminating the dissonance arising from different cultural expectations of "women" and "managers." In their interactions with campus colleagues, a triple focus on image, people, and task appeared to be an integrated strategy utilized by a number of the women managers to enhance influence through interpersonal connections. In their interactions with their supervisors in the university hierarchy, a number of the participants described activities which moved these relationships away from dominating-power and toward facilitative-power relationships. The participants variously negotiated both meaning and compensation activities, built collaboration by establishing trust and character, and resisted domination through their alliances and connections. In all three sets of interactions, the managers' strategies for power focused on building influence by establishing professional and personal reputations of reliability and integrity. Their reputations as managers of good character provided the base for increased connections and alliances and for cultivating organizational resources.

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CHAPTER 1

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

Discovering a Topic

When I was 18 years old, attending my second year of university on a shoestring budget, I found myself in a desperate search for suitable summer employment to end my budding career as a chamber maid. To my relief I was hired as a clerical worker by the provincial government, and happily went to work at the beginning of May, unaware of the lessons in organizational theory which I was about to learn.

Confronted with a job that consisted of dividing a pile of paper into two piles of paper, wrapping an elastic around each, and starting on the next pile of paper, I realized by 0930 that I had a major problem. By 1030 I had solved my problem by deciding to see how quickly one could divide up piles of paper. At 1430 I had another problem when my co-workers called an informal meeting in the women's washroom and informed me in no uncertain terms to slow down. At 1445 our "team" had a solution: I had agreed, not to slow my work pace, but rather to select only the thickest bundles of paper for sorting. Our washroom discussion had uncovered the facts that the managers measured production by counting the number of bundles sorted, rather than the individual pieces of paper, and that consequently certain individuals' predilection for selecting thin bundles had been a source of continued conflict within the work group. We agreed as well that a small increase in overall unit production would be acceptable to ensure the supervisor's acceptance when she eventually uncovered the fact that my fingers were flying while my co-workers relaxed a bit more than usual.

We returned to our desks a happy and cohesive group, having developed a camaraderie that would last the subsequent four months and that created an opening for sharing of our personal lives. For the period of those four months, my co-workers took me under their wings, both at work and on the weekends. With my boyfriend securely out of town, working on a barge in the Mackenzie River for the summer, they invited me with them on their weekend social quests for romance in the local bars and into their apartment homes for balcony barbecues. I slowly realized that one of my co-workers, at the age of thirty-three, yearned for marriage and a family, although my new colleagues alternately scolded her for her vulnerability and tried to prevent her from lending her savings to boyfriends. Another colleague proudly showed me the picture of the handsome man who had married her at the age of eighteen and then left her with a baby daughter to raise on her own; I met him when he returned later that spring, to be lovingly nursed by her through the summer before dying from cancer in the fall. And so—with these able teachers and mentors—I proceeded from my first lessons in the washroom on conflict management, co-workers' normative influence, organizational culture, and the limitations of hierarchical supervision, to lessons throughout that summer on the inseparability of paid work from life, love, divorce, children, and death in women's lives.

A year later, determined to shuffle paper in a more meaningful fashion, I became one of 20 "summer students" in the Office of the Registrar at the University of Alberta, unaware that this time I was embarking on a career. Assigned to a desk in a neglected corner that contained the office's worst typewriter and the piles of applicant files that the infamous Rosemary had been saving for her luckless summer staff since February, I happily plunged in behind them and within two weeks emerged to take in the view. And what a view: long rows of female clerical workers working under florescent lights, with the male managers' offices ringed around the edges for access to the windows; cords hanging from the desks linked to the continual din of 50 typewriters and telephones and the thump of the sealer used to imprint convocation parchments; and in the center of the room, a red light with a wire and switch dangling from the ceiling over the one computer terminal available to all, the light a control mechanism to prevent wasteful lineups and an inspiration for many bawdy jokes.

That summer from my corner viewpoint, I saw my fellow summer students variously work, sleep, and entertain each other; I saw the office managers rush in and out of meetings in the big office next to my little corner; I gradually learned most of the names of those stressed men from my co-workers; and twice I even saw the Registrar. Through my experiences as a student I knew that the university had a new "advance" registration procedure that summer. From overheard conversations I learned that the decisions on this project had been made with very little time for implementation and that the computer programming to assign students' course choices to timetables was therefore still underway. And in early September, as 17,000 students arrived on campus to pick up their timetables in the gymnasium, my frantic supervisor told me that I knew as much as her permanent staff did about the new system, and sent me across the street to work at the "problem desk." There, along with a dozen other equally confused registration clerks, I had the incredible view of my own personal line of distressed students, stretching down the length of the gymnasium and out the door. Thus I began to discover the linkages between environment, people and organizational effectiveness, and the significance of employee participation in successful decision making and planning.

Three years, two degrees in English literature, and a brief stint as a book editor later, I returned to the Office of the Registrar to gain a year of supervisory and computing experience as a first step in my new goal of a career in public administration. Seventeen years later, I remain a committed employee of the University. As the first woman to achieve the rank of Associate Registrar in the 90-year history of the university, my organizational experiences have sensitized me to gender as an issue in organizational interactions and in my own administrative strategies. Because I work with multiple clients—applicants, students, parents, high school teachers, faculty, fellow administrators, senior administration, government, staff, various supervisors—I have become interested in organizational theory regarding interaction, communication, decision making, influence, and change in the workplace.

My position as Associate Registrar & Director of Admissions on a large university campus where large portions of administrative policy and authority are highly decentralized has made me aware of and interested in issues of power and influence. I have had to navigate my way continually in this terrain, while attempting to improve service to students and standardize some of the university's admissions procedures. It is clear that my position has very little formal or legislative authority; in fact I do not even have a vote on the faculty Admissions Committees of which I am a member. At the same time, I have worked hard over a long administrative career to initiate policy changes and cultivate significant influence over the decisions in the functional areas that report to me, which include recruitment, registrarial publications, college transfer credit liaison, admissions, awards and convocation. Within this context, I define *influence* as having one's advice taken into serious consideration, and *power* as enforcing one's recommendation regardless of whether there is agreement or disagreement and regardless of who is doing the agreeing or disagreeing. How much power, if any, I actually have in relation to these functional areas is a matter of some internal debate for me. Therefore my interest in themes of power and influence are directly related to my administrative career.

Purpose of the Study

Background

This research project arose out of the personal and professional interests and experiences I have just related. My approach to and interest in management focuses on building and maintaining relationships for effective decision making, and on accepting responsibility for the decisions made. This does not deny the importance of planning, budgeting, project management, attention to process and systems design. Rather, I see these aspects as technical abilities that competent managers acquire, whereas the art and challenge of management lie in interaction, in the living out of relationships in the workplace. The projects and decisions within our lives are value-laden and choice-laden whether we choose to acknowledge this or not. My life and work experiences frame my values and this is part of what I brought with me in defining this study. The values that I strive to achieve as a person and a manager include integrity, self-knowledge, respect for others, recognition of power in my interactions with others, continued learning, the obligations of individual choice, and responsibility for those choices. At the same time, individual values and actions are bounded and constrained by the contexts of our lives and the discourses of power in our culture and particularly in organizational bureaucracies. In my particular experience, this tension has most often been felt in relation to gender. Without doubt, this sensitivity to issues of gender influences my interpretations of my work world. It is my approach to management, my personal value system, and my interest in gender issues, that have provided a general contextual framework for defining the purpose and research approach of this study project.

Purpose

The overall purpose of the study was to explore issues of influence and power in the stories of seven women higher education managers as they described their experiences and interactions with other members of the university community. A subsidiary purpose, in the focus on women participants, was to expand our understandings of the perspectives of women working in higher education bureaucratic cultures. It is not a purpose of this study, however, to make gender comparisons between male and female experiences. The study is deliberately focused on descriptions of the work world itself as experienced by managers who are women, rather than the issue of gender difference. Another subsidiary purpose, in the focus on middle managers, was to add to the existing descriptions of middle management in postsecondary education environments.

Theoretical and Practical Significance

The literature examining educational administration in higher education usually focuses on the roles and actions of the senior academic administration—the President, Vice-Presidents, Deans, Chairs of Academic Departments—on the primary teaching and research functions, or on the overall culture of postsecondary education. Very little attention has been paid to middle management and the extensive bureaucratic support functions in higher education. Similarly, the research literature arising from the various professional organizations in these support areas is largely of a functional variety, focusing on "how to" aspects of their functional mandates. Examination of the perspectives and experiences of middle managers/career administrators within the organizational context of the university is therefore rare.

This may be a reflection by researchers of status divisions within the university. There may be an assumption that all leadership occurs at the senior administration level, and that career administrators are bureaucrats who simply implement procedurally the policy decisions that have been made at higher levels in the organization, therefore providing limited material to interest the researcher. This study begins to fill in this gap. The research investigating the experiences of women in postsecondary institutions is also very selective, generally focusing on equity issues, the development of women's studies, or the study of women in senior academic administration positions. This study therefore contributes significantly to a scant body of knowledge dealing with women who work in other administrative capacities within universities.

The study has practical significance on several levels. First, this dissertation text and the papers resulting from this study describe some previously undocumented perspectives for a broad audience of practising managers in higher education. These readers will turn to reports of the study for validation, ideas, argument and support in relation to their own experiences and viewpoints. For example, my preliminary presentation of some findings at the June 1995 Western Association of Registrars and

Admissions Officers of Canada was greeted with interest and enthusiasm. Second, the texts resulting from this study will also be a reference for senior administrators in higher education who are interested in attaining a wider understanding of the role of the career middle manager, and the experiences of women managers, in order to facilitate their own relationships with career managers in their institutions. For example, the Senior Women Academic Administrators of Canada invited me to discuss the study findings at their April 1996 conference. Finally, the study proved to be a tremendous learning environment for the study participants and me to explore and enhance our individual understandings of our management styles and processes in the daily practise of our jobs.

To help inform my own understanding of the area, I turned to the academic literature in organizational theory, women's studies and higher education administration to provide theoretical and environmental contexts for examining the idea of power and influence in the participants' work interactions. In this regard, the literature that was most useful pertained to organizational culture, to feminist perspectives on women's experience of work and managerial roles, and to theories of power developed from both traditional organizational theory and feminist perspectives. These materials helped me examine my own biases and assumptions as I prepared for the interviews with study participants.

Literature Review

Higher Education Culture

What exactly is *organizational culture?* Bennis (1969) defines culture as "the systems within which people work and live . . . a way of life, a system of beliefs and values, an *accepted* form of interaction and relating"

(p. v, emphasis added). Schein (1985) describes culture as "a pattern of basic assumptions . . . *taught* to new members as the *correct* way to perceive, think, and feel" (p. 9, emphasis added). Much of the literature on corporate culture (Bennis & Nanus, 1985; Deal & Kennedy, 1982; Schein, 1985) takes on this prescriptive character, speaking from the perspective of the managerial problem of workforce control. Implicit in these approaches is an assumption that organizational culture is a construct amenable to manipulation and change by organizational leaders and members. This point of view starts from the perspective of management and focuses on values formation, without attention to what is suppressed by the organizational culture or the various interpretations ascribed by the culture's members rather than the administrator or researcher (Geertz, 1973; Mumby, 1988).

Chaffe and Tierney (1988) describe and label seven different overall cultural types in their case study of seven colleges and universities. Supplementing this descriptive approach to overall cultural types is the complicating factor of subunit cultures competing within organizations (Schein, 1985). Early approaches to the study of culture in postsecondary education (Adams, 1976) define organizational cultures within universities according to functional groups: faculty culture, student culture, senior administration, and, sometimes forgotten, the nonfaculty employees. Tierney (1988) alludes to a subculture, anticulture, and disciplinary culture as three possible cultural subsets, introducing but not pursuing the idea of resistance to overall value systems supported by those in power. Birnbaum's (1988) description of the cybernetic institutional type is essentially a recognition that multiple cultural types (collegial, bureaucratic, political, and anarchical) co-exist on all campuses. The idea of multiple cultures with value systems that are not just different, but often in actual opposition, is developed further in Bergquist's (1992) description of four university cultures (collegial, managerial, developmental, and negotiating) which operate interdependently, with each culture set and its members forming particular alliances with other cultures within the institutional environment for specific strategic purposes. A key component of Bergquist's argument is that individual faculty move from one culture to another over time in their search for affiliation and integration with the university environment. Discussion focuses on faculty and institutional leadership (Bergquist, 1992; Birnbaum, 1988; Tierney, 1988) and assumes that support staff, middle managers, and other senior administrators all reside within the confines of managerial or bureaucratic culture, undifferentiated by the varying power positions of these three groups. Because senior administrators are usually also faculty members, there may be room to argue that in fact senior administrators share more cultural continuity with Bergquist's collegial, developmental and negotiating cultures than they do with the culture of the support staff and middle managers. Or perhaps it would be most accurate to break down Bergquist's managerial culture into a managerial culture and a support culture, recognizing that middle managers would therefore have a foot in both the managerial and support-staff camps at various stages.

Generally, Bergquist (1992) and other theorists discussing culture in organizations also ignore aspects of gender as a factor in determining membership in various organizational cultures. It is interesting to speculate that gender might be a contributing factor for women middle managers to have a greater sense of membership in the support culture posited above, rather than the managerial culture of higher education institutions. Whatever the case, issues of gender, linked to the concept of culture, raise questions about the power relationships within cultural concepts in higher education such as *collegiality* and *management.* Mumby (1988) makes the connection between ideology, organizational culture and power explicit:

> In the context of organizational cultures, we can say that ideology plays a central role in the legitimation and reproduction of organizational meaning structures. Ideology functions to secure certain hegemonic configurations by legitimating those meaning structures that favor the powerful. Thus while most cultural approaches are content to describe the extant meaning formations in organizations, the approach adopted here is concerned with demonstrating *why* certain meaning formations evolve at the expense of others. Culture therefore involves not only meaning formation, but also meaning *deformation*—situations in which ideology structures contradictions and inequities into the very framework of the social system. (Mumby, 1988, p. 73)

Mumby focuses on the theoretical notion of ideology as the link between organizational culture and power relationships in the organization. This conceptual link is one that can also be seen evolving in feminist analyses of organizational structures, culture, and interactions of power.

The Feminist Perspective: Women at Work

A major area of concern in organizational theory in many areas, including analyses of culture and power, is that traditional research reporting in organizational theory is often blind to issues of gender, with findings of male experience in the work environment generalized to human experience (Shakeshaft, 1987). In addition, where the distinction of experience by gender is made, "segregation of male and female roles has led to separate models for studying work, a 'job model' for studying males and a 'gender model' for studying females" (Harriman, 1985, p. 4). Feminist researchers have been filling in this gap with a variety of approaches exploring women's participation in the workplace.

In Kanter's (1977) liberal feminist critique of the bureaucratic workplace, she suggests that position location in the organization is the prime determinant of organizational behavior, and that the explanation for the different experiences of women and men lies more with power differences than with gender differences. Ferguson's (1984) radical feminist critique draws on Foucault's analysis of the discursive nature of power, making an analogy between patriarchal domination of women in the larger culture and bureaucratic power that induces the "feminized" behavior of the powerless in the workplace. Ferguson (1984) disagrees with Kanter's (1977) projection that increased participation by women in positions with power will change the organization; arguing instead that change from within the bureaucratic system is impossible due to the power relations inherent in bureaucracy, power relations which will corrupt women participants as surely as male participants. Harriman (1985) argues that it is sex role orientation (i.e., masculine, feminine, androgynous), not the actual sex of the individual, that is most significant in terms of behavior and perceptions of individuals in organizations. Recent theorists are consistently pessimistic about Kanter's claims that change will be achieved through access and representation, arguing that barriers to women will not disappear until the androcentric nature of our culture changes (Eisler, 1987; Harriman, 1985; Shakeshaft, 1987).

Just as organizational theory has tended to look at male and female participation in terms of a job model and a gender model (Harriman, 1985), however, the literature by women for women in terms of organizational practice has tended to be split into a male/job model and a female/culture model. In the male/job model, traditional literature providing advice to women entering the corporate management world assumed male ways of doing and knowing as the organizational norm and focused on advising women to adopt male culture and behaviors as the road to organizational success (Harragan, 1977; Hennig & Jardim, 1976). In the female/culture model, a strong strain of feminist literature has argued for women's difference, suggesting that women's interactional and organizational styles are more participatory, sharing, inclusive, nurturing, and process oriented than the male norm of competition and domination (Eisler, 1987; Gilligan, 1982; Helgesen, 1990; Miller, 1976). The latter perspective is rejected by other researchers (Freeman, 1990; Wolf, 1993) who argue that these connective behaviors are the products of cultural socialization and that women in the workplace have "the same skills and motives—strong needs for achievement, independence, and control—as their male counterparts" (Freeman, 1990, p. 221).

In addition to the specific gendered roles of individual women, feminist researchers have explored the structures and processes of organization. Eisler (1987) argues that the basic division of male/female underlies all social systems and constructions in our culture, creating a domination paradigm that determines hierarchical and authoritarian structures as the norm, to which she opposes the possibility of a partnership model. Other researchers draw on postmodern conceptualizations of power and make the case that underlying the Weberian notion of a rational bureaucracy is an unacknowledged but basic discourse of sexuality (Burrell & Hearn, 1989; Pringle, 1988; Sheppard, 1989; Witz & Savage, 1994). Thus bureaucracy creates apparently neutral, fair rules and regulations to disguise the underlying power of class and gender interests that privilege men. Witz and Savage (1994) draw on Dorothy Smith's work to argue for an analysis of gender relations in public and private social worlds based on the social division that assigns abstract conceptualization as the male sphere and the concrete activities of "facilitating, cleaning, tidying, bolstering, soothing, smoothing over, sustaining" (Witz & Savage, 1994, p. 25) as the female sphere in both the workplace and the home. This analysis has interesting implications for women as they move into management positions. To what extent do women then become dependent on the "tidying" functions of other women? And to what extent are women socially expected to maintain these continuous "tidying" functions in relation to their male subordinates, peers, and superordinates, even as they move up through managerial ranks?

Feminist researchers therefore present a variety of challenges to traditional, rationalist management perspectives of organization and power. The strength that feminist research brings to organizational theory is alternative visions of how organizational culture is interpreted and how organization members choose to organize decision making and enact power within the institution. The idea that managerial (and other) women may perceive themselves, not as passive victims, but rather as active agents of change (Connell, 1987; Freeman, 1990; Wolf, 1993), provided a positive starting point for discussion with the participants in this study on how they have negotiated power and influence in their organizations. The essential point may be not only the alternative understandings of our world developed by the feminist perspective, but also the issue of agency and choice. That balance between structural views of power inherent in organizational systems and the role of individual agency in submitting, resisting, or changing power relationships within organizational systems (Connell, 1987; Freeman, 1990) is central to this study of managerial women in higher education.

<u>Power and Influence</u>

Understanding the dynamics of power in university and college settings appears to be an essential skill for successful higher education leadership and management. Studies of power in organizations have taken several approaches. One approach looks at power from the individual point of view, using a framing that is either psychological (McClelland, 1975; Winter, 1973) or relational (Burbules, 1986; French & Raven, 1959). Other theorists have examined power from a structural point of view (Mintzberg, 1983; Pfeffer, 1981, 1992; Salancik & Pfeffer, 1974). Postmodern and poststructuralist influences have stressed the idea of power as embedded in all language and systemic in organizational discourse and ideology (Clegg, 1989; Foucault, 1980; Mumby, 1988). Feminist theory has argued against the zero-sum competitive idea of power as a limited resource, introducing the concepts of empowerment and affiliation as alternatives to domination and political theories (Eisler, 1987; French, 1985; Helgesen, 1990; Kanter, 1977).

Discussions of power in the literature arise from a multiplicity of approaches and result in a diverse range of definitions. In examining this range of definition, I have grouped my review around common perspectives that I have labelled structural power, political power, personal power, interpersonal power, power as domination, and generative power.

<u>Structural power</u>. Legitimated authority structures that are vested in bureaucracy and assumptions of privilege prevent, deny, or suppress the acknowledgement of other power relations (Burbules, 1986; Ferguson, 1984; Nyberg, 1981). Bureaucratic controls result in an environment where "individuals are isolated, social relations are depersonalized, communications are mystified, and dominance is disguised" (Ferguson, 1984, p. 10).

Structural power as represented in bureaucratic systems is a strong factor in the maintenance of the status quo and the prevention of change.

Traditional organizational theorists have identified specific structural factors that have a significant impact on power relationships within the organization. Organizational managers may have greater relative power in their organizational relationships if they control resources or activities upon which other groups depend, either to cope with uncertainty or because they are central or hard to replace with alternatives (Hickson, Hinings, Schneck, & Pennings, 1971; Hinings, Hickson, Pennings, & Schneck, 1974). Whereas routinization of tasks in the bureaucracy leads to powerlessness (Ferguson, 1984; Kanter, 1977), the initiation of extraordinary activities by being the first to do something, by reorganizing structures, or by taking successful risks increases power through increased visibility and manipulation of organizational uncertainty. Boundary-straddling positions have greater potential for power in interactions, arising from both the resource or information that flows across the boundary (Brass, 1984) and increased organizational visibility if these are seen as relevant to the pressing concerns of the organization (Kanter, 1977).

Specific types of activities and control over resources are therefore seen to increase power in relationships, and power in turn has been shown to increase resource allocation further. Pfeffer and Salancik (1974) find that subunit power is related to the proportion of the budget received and that powerful subunits have a looser link between resource allocation and actual workload than less powerful units. Other longitudinal studies suggest that previous power, measured in terms of budgetary indicators, is a strong predictor of future power regardless of strategic contingency positioning (Boeker, 1989; Lachman, 1989). Thus existing structures within the organization play an important role in power relationships. Attempts to change or ameliorate structural power conditions lead to a discussion of political power.

Political power. The term *politics* is used here as a neutral (rather than negative) term to represent the formation of alliances and coalitions with other people or units in the organization in order to influence decision making from a stronger power position. Political activity is a major factor in power relationships in large postsecondary institutions (Baldridge, 1971; Birnbaum, 1988; Pfeffer, 1981) where the institution is too large and diverse to achieve consensus among its constituent parts and where bureaucratic authority alone is deemed unacceptable for decisions in the organizational culture. Thus, in addition to the formal structure and the power relationships inherent in the position of people and units on an organizational chart, there is also an informal organizational structure that represents the political alliances between organizational actors, subverting the formal structure. Or rather, there are many simultaneous and sequential informal structures, as alliances and coalitions shift around different issues (Baldridge, 1971; Bergquist, 1992; Birnbaum, 1988; Kanter, 1977).

Political strategies can operate in conjunction with the legitimate forms of authority in the organization or outside the legitimate structure in an antagonistic manner (Mintzberg, 1983). Activities of resistance/insurgence, whistle-blowing or take-over attempts are antagonistic to the organization. Counterinsurgency measures, alliance building, and rivalry operate as substitutes for formal systems of authority; and strategies of sponsorship, empire building, budgeting, building expertise, and line-versus-staff opposition co-exist with legitimate systems in the organization (Mintzberg, 1983). Management of political language and symbols plays a critical role, with managerial control and political competition occurring at the symbolic level in addition to the areas of interdependencies and power relationships between units (Mumby, 1988; Pfeffer, 1981). The ability of individual managers to make these symbolic claims with success are determined in part by their level of personal power.

Personal power. The discussion here of structural and political manifestations of power has focused on the nature of formal organizations and the links between organizational components and actors. A vital piece in any discussion of organizational power—usually missing from the perspective of the organizational theorist, however—is the nature of the individuals involved. When power is defined as a relationship, the personal power of each actor in the power relationship will influence outcomes.

People have different aptitudes for the role of influence and power. McClelland (1975) found that the most effective male managers had a high need for power and a low need for affiliation; however, he also distinguished clearly between socialized power, "characterized by a concern for group goals" (p. 263) and personalized power, focused on individual goals. The concept that different individuals have differing needs for power and for affiliation is significant for understanding the power relationship. Personal power builds from a number of characteristics of the individual. Factors such as competence, wholeness, self-esteem, a sense of autonomy, stamina, resilience, and openness to change contribute to personal power for women (Marshall, 1984). Personal characteristics perceived in effective organizational "politicians" include being articulate, sensitive, socially adept, competent, popular, extraverted, self-confident, aggressive, ambitious, devious, focused on the organization's well-being, highly intelligent, and logical (Allen, Madison, Porter, Kenwick, & Mayes, 1979). A manager with strong personal power may be able to overcome a deficiency in structural power within the organization's political decision making. Personal power is also vested in a manager's contacts and network. The number of contacts that a person has in the organization and external to it, whether used for advice or simply communication in terms of job requirements, increases influence (Brass, 1984; Krackhardt, 1990).

Interpersonal power and choice. French and Raven (1959) defined five types of interpersonal power that may be acting between managers and staff members, including reward power, coercive power, legitimate power, expert power, and referent power. The essential variance among forms of interpersonal power rests in the kinds of consent between the target and the agent, from acquiescence under threat, to consent based on incomplete or slanted information, indifference due to habit, conformity to custom, or commitment through informed judgement (Burbules, 1986; Nyberg, 1981). However, the degree to which these forms of power interaction are available in a power relationship will depend on other factors about the individuals, such as gender (Ferguson, 1984), concrete resources available, status, expertise, and self-confidence (Harriman, 1985). That is, the ability to use interpersonal power is tempered by the other aspects of power in the interactions noted above; namely, structural, political, and personal power.

Early examinations of power in organizations treated power as an objective thing, a possession used by the elite who have access to it. Within this conceptual framework, issues of choice were seen as pragmatic decisions on gaining compliance (French & Raven, 1959), as political strategic decisions (Baldridge, 1971), or as irrelevant in structural and strategic contingency theories (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1974). Views of power as relationship process (Burbules, 1986; French, 1985; Mumby, 1988;

Nyberg, 1981) address both sides of choice in the issue of power in organizations: both the agent and the target of power make decisions regarding the power interaction between them.

Power as domination. A relationship of power as domination/ compliance has been the unstated, assumed power relationship in most traditional organizational theory. This assumes an emphasis on the "power over" component as the arena of decision making (by analyzing from the managerial perspective in organizations) and largely disregards the correlating choice of compliance from the targets of power. However, there is a continuum of possible forms of consent, from power as domination with submission as compliance-response (acquiescence under threat of sanction), through power as domination with false consciousness/consensus as compliance-response (compliance based on partial or slanted information or understanding, indifference due to habit or apathy, or conformity to custom) and finally power as generative with empowerment as the compliance-response (commitment through informed judgement) (Ferguson, 1984; Mintzberg, 1983; Nyberg, 1981). Burbules (1986) defines *compliance* as the "broad range of relationships in which, for a variety of reasons and with varying degrees of enthusiasm or reluctance, persons cooperate with the demands or expectations of others, either by action or by inaction" and includes as well cases where "compliance is secured by an exchange relation, either one of economic incentive or one of social compromise" (p. 100, emphasis removed). The significant factor in these analyses of the types of compliance decision making is that there is always a factor of choice involved for both the agent and the target in organizational decision making. The effect of compliance is maintenance of the status quo in the power relationship.

An alternative response to power maintained through domination or authority is resistance (Burbules, 1986; Ferguson, 1984; Foucault, 1980; Mumby, 1988; Nyberg, 1981). As there are degrees of compliance, from acquiescence under threat to informed consent, so are there degrees of resistance, from outright antagonism and conflict to various strategies of withdrawing consent (Nyberg, 1981). Resistance in power relationships is always a possibility that must be considered by the agent of power in terms of what forms of interpersonal power ensure compliance, what strategies for using political power will constrain potential resistance on the part of other organizational players, and what forms of personal power can increase interpersonal good will and reduce resistance. It should be emphasized that although resistance weakens the existing power relationships, this can be perceived as a positive as well as a negative outcome from a traditional managerial standpoint; resistance can be the starting point of eventual productive change (Burbules, 1986). Nevertheless, where resistance occurs, the overall energy available for formal organizational goals may be weakened, as the agent of power must draw on resources of interpersonal, structural, political or personal power to respond to the resistance; and the agents of resistance must draw on their resources within the same power framework to maintain their resistance.

From the perspective of the dominant, or powerful, group, the problem of power is "obtaining compliance despite an underlying conflict of interests; of making the disadvantaged complicit in perpetuating their disadvantage" (Burbules, 1986, pp. 97-98). The operation of systemic power does not require conscious decision making and choice on the part of either organizational player in the interaction and is most effective when the operation of power is not conscious (Pfeffer, 1981). Non-decision making and inaction, the exclusion of issues from the decision/choice plane, is an operation of power as well (Lukes, 1974); and dominant groups may shape the perceptions and perceived needs of subordinate groups to an extent that the latter (and perhaps the former as well) are unaware of the operation of power in manipulating their consensus: "Social actors are not likely to complain about situations that they consider to be part of the natural order of things" (Mumby, 1988, pp. 59-60).

Generative power. Analysis of power relations in terms of power domination and compliance, false consciousness, and resistance responses assume that power is a "zero-sum game in which gaining or maintaining an advantage for one person or group necessarily entails disadvantaging others" (Burbules, 1986, p. 97). The final choice in the power relationship is the choice of sharing power, not as a form of delegation, but rather in terms of empowerment. The effect of empowerment is that sharing power increases the overall power within the system. Interactions based in empowerment, rather than competition and domination, are inclusive, open to diversity, self-renewing, and responsive; and generate (rather than use up) energy and self-realization (Konek, 1994).

Formal corporate strategies for increasing organizational effectiveness by sharing power include the quality circle concept in total quality management theory and variations on teamwork and team management strategies. Feminist theory was one of the first sites to pose the idea of empowerment as more than another management technique, but rather as a much deeper philosophy providing an alternative paradigm of power rooted in an underlying conceptualization of social relations as connection/pleasure rather than domination (Eisler, 1987; Ferguson, 1984; French, 1985):

> It is frequently difficult to distinguish between power-to and power-over, since the latter is often seen as a means to the former. But power-to primarily increases pleasure, and power-over primarily increases pain. Power-to involves expressiveness and a degree of autonomy; whereas power-over involves structure, coercion, fear, and sometimes violent cruelty. (French, 1985, p. 444)

It is essential to the empowerment concept that this form of power relationship expands the options and resources available to all the players in the power relationship, strengthening both relationship and function. Rather than viewing power as a negative concept of dominance, empowerment theories recognize the positive aspects of power in a scenario where the continuum of compliance/resistance decision making has been replaced with a web of connection and cooperation to expand the power framework for all players (Helgesen, 1990; Konek, 1994). Whether such webs of connection and cooperation can develop and survive within existing societal and bureaucratic structures, however, is often perceived as doubtful (Burbules, 1986; Eisler, 1987; Ferguson, 1984).

Conclusion

A Conceptual Approach

Within the conceptual approach of this study, the concepts of authority, influence and power are examined in terms of the interactions and relationships between individuals, rather than as objective commodities that can be measured, stored or acquired by an organizational unit. This orientation does not deny the existence or importance of power and influence differentials between organizational departments or units; rather it is designed to recognize such structural conditions as only one of the threads in the web of decision-making relationships within the institution. The Foucauldian analysis of power as a discursive relationship inherent in the concept "organization" is recognized as a powerful philosophical explication of bureaucratic organizational process (Ferguson, 1984; Foucault, 1980). However, this study's practical intent is on examining what the participants actually choose to do within the constraints of organizational structures and discourse as the participants understand them to be in higher education. A general definition of power and influence as the ability to interact with others to achieve specific desired results was the starting point with most utility for this study.

My review of the literature provided a picture of interaction in organizations as a complex and interrelated process, linking the ideas of organizational culture, structure, politics and interpersonal interaction through a concept of power as process. Therefore, as I started the interviews in this study, I viewed power *as the process that occurs in organizational interactions by which organizational members, through interaction with each other, achieve desired results in organizational decision making.* This approach integrated the idea of power as a resource that is used instrumentally to achieve desired results, and concepts of power as relationship between organizational members, in the suggestion that power can be a generative, rather than constrictive, source of energy created in the interaction between individuals.

Essential to this redefinition of power in the interactions and interpersonal relationships between individuals is the issue of individual choice for all participants in the interaction. Balanced against the personal power of individual choice are the systemic forces of discursive power and power-as-domination built into the structures of hierarchy and bureaucracy and making cultural and social demands on both agents and targets of power, in the one case to act out the role of superior and in the other case to choose forms of submission or resistance. Each organizational member operates within a context of power as it is constituted for that individual, and makes choices in relations of power with other organizational members, each of whom have their own individually constituted understandings of power and choice. Their decisions interact in terms of both individuals' choices for action and the effect on the power position of the individuals in the relationship. Ultimately, it is this interaction of individual choices that serves to maintain, decrease or increase the impact of power in each individual's interactions. My own bias is that the choice of power-as-empowerment is the most effective alternative, as it results in an increase in the resources available in the power frameworks of all the individuals in the interaction.

As middle managers in the hierarchical structure, the participants in this study are both agents and targets of power in their interactions with members of the various communities within their universities. The study looks at the findings, therefore, in the context of three of those communities with whom the managers have frequent interaction and examines issues of power from their points of view with their staff, with administrative and faculty colleagues across campus, and with their supervisors in the institutional hierarchy.

Organization of the Study

The next chapter discusses the analytic approach I took within the study, and outlines in detail the research design and methodology I used to acquire the data presented in the study. The subsequent three chapters present the study findings and discussion of these findings. The presentation of the data from the interviews, and my analysis and interpretation of the data, are not separated into individual chapters in this study. Instead, the analysis and discussion of the findings are included as the data are presented. The presentation builds cumulatively the description of the participants' decisions and experiences in their respective environments, foregrounding their voices in each section. Each chapter ends with my discussion of the themes arising from the presentation of the findings in that chapter, organized around my interest in themes related to authority, influence, and power that arose from the data. In a practical application for higher education managers, the final chapter links the concepts of authority, influence, and power from the literature with the themes of connection, character, and integrity from the study.

CHAPTER 2

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

Methodology: Interpretive Research

The philosophy underlying this research project draws on a tradition of research variously known as qualitative or interpretivist. It assumes that organizations are socially constructed and that organizational members have multiple perceptions that are unique to each of them. Common understandings between organizational members are obtained through social interaction, but this commonality has limited duration (often only for the length of the meeting). Therefore, my research stance does not assume an objective, exterior reality or truth about organizational goals or interactions. The goal of this project was to look at organizational interaction from an emic point of view (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992), documenting the stories of selected women managers in university organizations in order to understand their own interpretations of their interactions and experiences of power and influence.

My own stories of my experiences as a woman middle manager in a large research university, leading to my interest in this area of study, and university colleagues' evaluation of my competence and trustworthiness in both my own profession and within women's networks, were important starting points for establishing a relationship of sympathy and trust with the research participants. Therefore my relationship with the participants in this study was interactive rather than distant or objective, and my ability to establish empathy and understanding in these relationships influenced the richness and depth of the data that participants chose to share and contribute to the project. From the complexity and multiplicity of their experiences, some patterns emerged that reflected their perceptions of authority, influence and power in their interactions in their organizations. At the same time, my own "story," as outlined in the previous chapter, informed and framed my interpretation of what I read, heard and saw throughout this study.

Given these understandings that reality is constructed by individuals, that the relationship between the values and experiences of researcher and researched is intertwined and creative in itself, and that my purpose in exploring experience was to arrive at descriptive contextual knowledge, the methodology of this study was framed within a paradigm of naturalistic (Guba & Lincoln, 1982, 1985), constructivist inquiry (Guba & Lincoln, 1994).

Study Design

Selection of Participants

One of the first issues in defining the focus of this study was to determine the range of positions which would be included. The study concentrated on the university environment, exploring the experiences of women university managers with issues of power and influence. The study focused on women higher education managers who are in positions of administrative leadership in their institutions, but who occupy what I have termed *career positions.* That is, these are individuals whose primary identification and main role in the organization is within the management position they occupy, and who do not have an *a priori* role of university faculty member.

This study involved individuals who hold *career administrative positions;* therefore the study focused on individuals who occupied positions one or two steps down from the senior executive level within the organizational hierarchy, and whose employment contract and commitment is specific to the managerial position they hold, usually with the expectation of permanent rather than term employment. My general focus was on selecting individuals who are heads of administrative (not academic) departments or units within departments; that is, individuals in positions with formal leadership responsibilities and budgetary and staff authority within the university hierarchy. By selecting women working at this level in the hierarchy, I assumed that they would have developed strategies in their work world to deal with organizational politics and issues of power and influence.

By contrast, the study specifically excluded women in senior administrative positions (executive level positions), who normally are faculty members and hold term positions of 3 or 5 years and move on at the end of their term to a different administrative posting or return to teaching and research activities in their academic departments. The focus instead is on the next "layer" in the hierarchy, looking at career administrators who occupy permanent appointments and do not generally hold joint teaching or research appointments, so that they do not usually have this alternative disciplinary allegiance or employment prospect.

Additional criteria for selection of the research participants included several further delimiting factors. The area of responsibility of the research participants was delimited to student service areas of the university, in order to take advantage of my own knowledge of context during the interviews. Therefore, managers in technical support areas such as human resources, computing, accounting, physical plant and maintenance were excluded. This identified women managers working in the areas of student services, registrarial (admissions, student records), financial aid/awards, and alumni/ development for inclusion in the study. Of these functional areas, three were chosen, because I decided to select a minimum of 2 participants from any functional area for the study, in order to increase participants' confidence that they would not be identifiable.

The research participants are women. The study speaks to the experiences of women managers in postsecondary education and does not compare male and female gendered experience. Because the number of women heading administrative departments in higher education is limited, and it was necessary to protect the identities of participants, the study included participants from a number of universities as well as a number of functional areas. Therefore another selection criterion for participation was the nature of the institution employing the participant. Because colleges tend to have longer term, professional senior administrations, I assumed that the interactions and responsibilities of middle managers might be substantially different between college and university environments. Therefore this study was delimited to participants employed by universities. Only universities from English-speaking Canada were chosen, as I do not have sufficient French language skills to interact in French-speaking environments or analyze French language interview texts.

As time and travel money were limited, further restrictions were necessary regarding the numbers and locations of study participants. Because I had only one year of leave and a requirement to return to full-time employment with my university in September 1995, the period of time that I had available for interviews and in-depth data analysis was restricted. In addition, the study topic, focusing on sensitive issues of power and influence, required that I establish the rapport needed to achieve depth and disclosure in the interviews (Adler, Laney, & Packer, 1993; Glesne & Peshkin, 1992). Of the participants in the study, I knew the pilot participant and one study participant fairly well, had talked to two others briefly at professional conferences, and met the remaining women for the first time when I arrived for our interviews. I felt that multiple meetings with the participants were important to establish a context of trust and confidence in the interviews, both with the participants who had previous knowledge of me and with those who were meeting me for the first time. This assumption was confirmed in the pilot study, and again in the interviews with study participants.

Participants were limited to women working in universities in Central and Western Canada. I spent a minimum of 5 days in each of eight locations, to schedule three interviews with each participant and still have flexibility to cope with last minute changes. Given these time restrictions, the study was delimited to 7 participants. I hoped therefore to achieve a balance between questions of practicality, anonymity and depth, by selecting sufficient numbers to protect the research design if one or two participants withdrew from participation, by scheduling multiple interviews to get thicker description in the interviews, and by achieving a manageable travel schedule which left room for data analysis and writing on my return.

Using the directory of the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada as the primary source, I identified women managers in the designated functional areas and charted their names against universities in the target provinces, identifying the total pool of potential participants using the criteria outlined above. From a selection of 27 institutions, I identified a total of 48 women managers for possible inclusion: 21 in the areas of registrarial/records/admissions, 16 in financial aid/awards, 20 in alumni/

advancement/development, and 6 in student counselling/student services. The student counselling/services area was excluded due to the low representation of women and the problems related to anonymity that would result. The limited numbers in the other areas have made it necessary to avoid identifying references to specific areas of responsibility and job titles in the final study, and I have referred instead to the generic function of "university manager."

Using an iterative process, taking into account time and travel planning, confidentiality concerns, participants' professional reputations where I was aware of them, and functional area representation, a first-choice list of women was selected for invitation to participate. In addition, several fallback candidates were identified for each functional area, to serve as substitutes if situations arose where women refused the invitation to participate, changed their minds, or were prevented through illness or other emergency from participating at the time that I was visiting their campus. Only one of the initially selected participants was replaced with an alternate, and as this occurred at the invitation-to-participate stage it did not present any difficulties.

Descriptions of the Participants

In order to prevent identification of the study participants, much of the information describing details about the study participants' personal and workplace demographics is consolidated below in a descriptive summary. Although this then becomes a more detached description, and lessens the understanding of the personalities and life context for each participant, this format allows me to include information about the participants that would otherwise have had to be left out to protect their identities. The information presented below is therefore a composite picture of the participants' demographic characteristics, education experience, philosophic positioning in relation to women's issues and feminism, and career experience including length of service, staff and budget levels, and reporting structure.

The participants range in age from the mid-forties to late-fifties. When I asked about their family backgrounds, five participants said they were either the eldest child (three) or an only child (two). I asked whether their mothers worked outside the home when they were young: one participant's mother had worked part-time in the summers, and two participants' mothers had been employed full-time. Of the latter, one participant said this had been a strong positive role model. All are homeowners. Most of the participants are married with adult children, and their references to spouses and families reflected satisfaction with the support they received from them. Two have a teenage child living at home. Three participants described working steadily through their careers on a full-time basis, without taking extended periods at home with young children. Three others had stayed home on a full-time basis with their children for a number of years, and one had worked in part-time positions while her children were young.

The participants' formal educational backgrounds varied widely. High school was the highest level of educational certification for two of the managers, one referring as well to additional undergraduate university courses. A third has a professional diploma, and four participants have university degrees to the Master's level, with three of these having done further work towards a doctors degree that they had decided not to complete. Four of the managers had education and/or work experience in the teaching profession at various levels from kindergarten through postsecondary. Three participants had extensive community volunteer experience preceding their career in university administration. Four participants made reference to combining education and work at earlier stages in their working lives, but none of them are currently engaged in activity as a student in their universities. One of the managers regularly participates in undergraduate teaching at her institution.

I asked each participant if she called herself "feminist," privately to herself and publicly in the workplace. The responses were varied. One participant said that she labelled herself a feminist both privately to herself and publicly on her campus, and indicated that her public stance as a feminist meant that at times she has lost some effectiveness, feeling that her opinions were dismissed based on this identification. A second participant questioned whether other feminists would think she had earned the title *feminist.* She did not object to the label but indicated reluctance to lay claim to the expertise in women's studies she thought the label defined. The other participants in the study showed various levels of comfort with the content of feminism and sensitivity to women's issues, but there was a uniform wariness of various social stereotypes that come with the term *feminism.* One participant was not inclined to see gender as a special, isolating characteristic in specific instances in her environment, saying rather that "every experience I have in some way is related to my gender." Two others were comfortable with a self-concept that included the label feminist internally, but had made deliberate choices not to use the term publicly. Two of the study participants rejected the label feminist for themselves entirely. In summary, the managers in the study generally perceived that feminism had brought changes to the workplace that were advantageous to them in their career participation. However, the women represented a spread in terms of their own feminist beliefs and positioning, all of them agreeing on the importance of equality for women in the workplace, at least as far as pay structures are concerned, but after that diverging. The majority of the participants chose pragmatic, rather than ideological, positions which did not involve overt support of women's issues on their campuses or public use of the term *feminist.*

The participants' length of experience working in a university environment in any salaried capacity ranged from 10 to 30 years. Their length of experience working in higher education management (defined as having both staff and budgetary authority) ranged from 4 to 14 years, with their age at the assumption of this level of responsibility having ranged from 35 to 47 years old. The length of time in their current position in higher education management ranged from less than a year to 14 years. In their current positions, the participants were accountable for university departments with operating budgets ranging from $350,000 to nearly $4 million. Four of the participants had directed operating budgets over $1 million. In addition, six of the managers were accountable for the stewardship of large capital or trust accounts on behalf of the university, ranging in value up to close to $100 million in several cases. The size of their permanent office staff ranged from 8 to 65 people; with only two participants having directed a permanent staff of more than 50. The participants' reporting structures in their universities were varied. Using the position of president/principal/rector to identify the top "rank" in higher education administrative structures, two of the managers in the study currently reported to this first rank, three reported to a second rank level, and two reported to a third rank level. In four instances, the participants' higher education work experience was limited to one university. When this analysis was restricted to work in managerial positions in higher education, the number whose experience was limited to one university increased to six of the seven participants. Of the seven participants, only two indicated any willingness to relocate in order to take advantage of additional career opportunities (both of these two were married).

Pseudonyms and Terminology

To make the text and discussion of the findings more readable, particularly when comparing and contrasting the stories of different participants, and to assist in maintaining confidentiality, I assigned each participant a pseudonym for the reporting of interview text in the study. The pseudonyms do not have any specific significance to the study analysis. Throughout the study, I have generally used the individual pseudonyms to identify the speaker when quoting from the texts of the interviews. However, in more sensitive areas of content in subsequent chapters, I have on occasion not matched the individual pseudonym names with specific text where I thought the participants might be concerned about the potential for voice recognition, or where the participants themselves requested this additional degree of confidentiality. This decision was made to reduce further the potential harm to the participants that might result from including these materials in this report of the study.

I have taken several other precautions to protect the identities of the participants. In referring to the participants in the study when not using the pseudonyms, I have used the terms *participant* and *manager.* Althuogh in fact the participants had a number of different job titles, I have usually not referred specifically to their job titles or functional areas in relation to the interview texts and the analysis. In the discussion of the participants' relationships with the person they report to within the hierarchy, I have used the term *supervisor* to identify that person in the discussion, although that term is not entirely appropriate in all its connotations, given the level of responsibility held by the participants in their institutions and the general independence and autonomy of managerial positions at this level. I chose the term *supervisor* as more reflective of this level than the term *boss* and more commonly known than the term *superordinate.*

Data Collection: Interviews

The interviews began with an exploration of the general question, "In your job, how do you go about successfully interacting with people at your institution?" This was a starting point to begin exploring interactions where the participants were satisfied with outcomes, and to create a context within which to discuss the themes of influence and power. In terms of the bureaucratic hierarchy, these discussions included consideration of the participants' interactions with staff members, supervisors, senior administrators at their institutions, faculty and administrative colleagues, clients and public contacts.

The initial question deliberately focused on the participant's sharing of stories of success rather than on negative experiences. I had several reasons for focusing initially on "success." By looking at successful stories, I hoped to encourage frankness in the participants and therefore increase the credibility of the data collected. I thought that there would be less inclination for participants to hide uncomfortable facts. By focusing on positive strategies and stories, I hoped as well that participants would have fewer concerns about their stories' eventual publication, than if the focus of the study were on barriers to their success. Existing feminist research has documented these barriers; this study looked at women's successful strategies in interactions—that is, in part, how they have dealt with such barriers. Finally, I hoped that participation in this study would be a positive experience in itself, so that the time spent on the project would provide rewards of increased self-knowledge, satisfaction, and/or motivation for the participants. To this end, participants were encouraged to share what they believe were effective, rather than ineffective, examples of their interactions and achievement. In the process of the actual study, and facilitated by a fairly unstructured interviewing technique, the participants did in fact talk about what was important to them in terms of their management role, and that included stories of all kinds rather than exclusively stories of happy success. There was unanimous accord from the participants that the process of the interviews was interesting, sometimes "therapeutic," sometimes entertaining and definitely a learning experience.

I relied primarily on interviews for data collection, with three interviews of one hour length as the norm. In our preliminary telephone conversation, I gave participants a brief summary of my interests in interaction and my focus on how they "influence" their organizational interactions. I encouraged them to think of related stories and incidents (feedback from the pilot participant indicated that it was helpful to have this in mind ahead of the actual interviews). The interviews were audiotape-recorded. The format of the interviews was open and exploratory, rather than a highly structured process. Although I had identified general topic areas, including career development, interactions, influence and power, and values, that I would be interested in exploring in each interview, I tried to be careful not to impose a structure on the interviews that would interfere with other ideas the participants had. Therefore these topics were in the back of my mind to raise only if they were not covered otherwise and if there was time. I identified some possible questions in each topic area that I used if it seemed appropriate (see Appendix D), but these specific questions were not used to structure the actual interviews. The amount of time and conversation devoted to specific topics was controlled mainly by the participants.

To increase participants' comfort in participating in the project, I was prepared to interview participants at a time and location of their choice; in their offices if they wished, or in their homes or in my residence in their city if they wanted a more private location. All but one of the participants chose to be interviewed in their offices on campus. In addition, I arranged to have a "cover story" for visiting each institution as well as four others in the research period. Therefore, my presence on various campuses was explained by my dual role as University of Alberta Director of Admissions, conducting a review of student records, admissions and financial aid/awards operations at other universities. By collecting admissions information at 11 institutions, although having only seven participants in the study, I hoped that my presence on campuses and in participants' offices would be less remarked on by participants' colleagues.

Collaboration and Openness

After the initial contact by letter and follow-up telephone conversation, and once a woman agreed to participate in the project, I sent a Participant Information form (Appendix C) to collect some basic personal and career data. This saved time in the actual interview and also provided a comfortable entry into conversation in the first interview with participants. The participant information form also asked them to attach an organizational chart, job description, and resume, if they had them readily available, to improve my understanding of their organizational context, the specific job responsibilities of the participant, and the participant's organizational history. Most managers did have a resume available and gave me a copy; if they did not, I did not press them for the materials. I received only one job description and one organizational chart. I also noted to the participants that I would like to keep in touch with them after the interviews regarding the progress of the study and to allow me to follow up or clarify as necessary. Each participant was invited to provide additional written materials over the summer, an invitation that was not met with enthusiasm and which none of the participants followed up on. Given the nature of these women's work, and the demands on their time, this was not unexpected.

Would the managerial women interviewed be comfortable with a vision of themselves as women of power? Related research (Adler, Laney, & Packer, 1993) suggested not. I did not want to be manipulative in my relationships with the participants, but at the same time I was worried that introducing the term *power* immediately would make women wary of participating, or would affect their conversation with me. Knowing that the term *power* had the potential to create barriers suggested that I might leave the explicit term out of my communications with the participants and look for this theme instead as a discovery in the data during analysis. However, my orientation towards collaboration and honesty made me feel this approach would be essentially unethical in my relationship with the participants. Instead, I felt that it was important that I be open about what I thought we were talking about, and what my interests were. Acknowledging, however, that the term *power* has problematic connotations, I decided on a compromise: In initial contact and early interview stages, I used the term *influence,* and I introduced the term *power* if the participants did not do so themselves by the second or third interview.

Early experience in the pilot study showed that this was a viable, practical approach, and in the study interviews this gradual approach to the discussion of power and influence was effective in providing a comfortable context for discussion with those participants who viewed their workplace, in some part at least, from a perspective of power relationships.

For that reason, I did not foreground the idea of power in the study title or initial description that was given to participants, using the term *influence* instead. This cautious approach provided a means of exploring what women actually do without overtly setting off alarm bells from women's cultural socialization. Ultimately, however, I introduced the word *power* into every set of interviews. This decision was necessary from my perspective to establish an honest and somewhat collaborative relationship between the participants and myself as researcher and managerial colleague.

In keeping with collaborative feminist research methods (Oakley, 1981; Stanley & Wise, 1993), I also hoped that the participants would participate in the analysis of the interview texts and findings. Participants were invited to review the verbatim transcripts of the interviews; none of them wanted to do this because of the time it would take in their schedules. Instead, I sent a first draft of my thematic analysis of the study data to each participant, highlighted for their convenience where ever I had quoted them or used materials from their interviews, and I asked them both to review the use of quotations and to comment on my interpretations. Where participants disagreed with my interpretation, their disagreement was incorporated into the final text. In some cases, this involved rewriting sections of the findings and negotiating with the participants on whether to include the amended text or to delete sections about which they were concerned. If a participant requested that quotations or interpretations not be used, I complied with her request; however, this happened in very few instances. Of the seven participants, one chose to write fairly extensive comments on my interpretations at this stage, one provided feedback focused on a specific story and requested extensive changes because she was worried that she could be identified and her remarks would be considered hurtful by her colleagues, and the remaining five participants did not provide extensive comments on the draft. For the most part, the participants' comments were limited to sections that pertained to their involvement and words, and they rarely commented on each others' stories. Most participants requested, and each participant will receive, a copy of the final document.

In addition to the data collected directly from the research participants, I collected data regarding my own experiences and observations during the interview process, and regarding my own thoughts and analysis of the information being shared, throughout the data collection period. This information was recorded in fieldwork notes, and I maintained a journal throughout the project period.

Pilot Project

The interviews were conducted in two phases. The interviews with the pilot participant were used to critique and evaluate the topic of the study, the functional areas selected, the interview process, and related areas such as my interviewing approach, disclosure forms, and interview guidelines. Information gathered during the pilot was used to reformulate and clarify the contents of the Informed Consent form and the Participant Information form, as well as the Interview Guidelines regarding potential topic areas and questions for discussion. The practise in interviewing in this research mode was a valuable learning experience. The data collected in the pilot were not used in the final study, because the pilot was designed primarily as a learning environment for me and because the participant was from my own university, creating ethical problems for me in the interpretation and use of the data. However, the pilot participant agreed to serve as a confidential reference to potential study participants, regarding her experiences with me as the researcher/interviewer in this project and as a professional colleague. This provided a mechanism for potential participants to consult a managerial colleague regarding my credentials, without endangering the confidentiality of their participation in the project. In fact, none of the participants chose to make use of this reference.

Timeframe and Analysis

The pilot project was conducted from late November 1994 to early January 1995. The interviews with study participants were conducted in two periods, with three participants interviewed in late January to mid-February, and four participants in April and May of 1995. The interviews with each participant were held in as close proximity as scheduling demands or the participants' time allowed, always within a period of one to two weeks, in order to maximize the effect of establishing rapport and conversational topic flow from one interview to the next.

My analysis of the interview transcripts occurred in several stages. First, in the period December to May while the interviews were in progress, I listened to the tapes several times after each interview and made field notes regarding both improvements to my interview technique and interview content. I noted particular stories of interest, emerging themes, and areas that I wanted to explore further in subsequent interviews. Second, after the interviews were completed, all the tapes were transcribed by a typist, and I analyzed the text for topics or key words. I reread the transcripts a number of times, noting possible topic areas in the margins and keeping a list of these key words/phrases separately. At the end of this stage, my key-word list contained 190 entries. At this point I asked a retired registrarial colleague to read 90 pages of the transcripts (excerpted from 3 participants' interviews) to check my analysis for bias or for topics that I was missing. This feedback gave me confidence that my textual analysis had been thorough. I then added page and participant identification to the margin entries, photocopied the annotated transcripts, and cut them apart for resorting.

Working from the key-word list, I regrouped the key words under 14 topic/theme areas and then resorted the transcript material accordingly. I then reviewed the wealth of material that was there to make selections of groups of textual data on which to concentrate. It became apparent that there were two very strong theme areas, one related to management style/ leadership (with subtopics related to staff, campus colleagues, supervisors, and image management/values) and one related to key words grouped under the theme of power and influence. The structure of the presentation of findings in the dissertation arose out of a combination of this arrangement of the textual data and reflections from my field notes. I wrote the first draft of the dissertation from June to August 1995, so that the first draft of the findings was completed by the time I returned to work full-time in September. Collaboration with study participants, further analysis, supervisory committee review, and revisions occurred in the period September 1995 to July 1996.

Trustworthiness and Authenticity

The rationalist, quantitative paradigms of research inquiry require that researchers address issues of internal validity, external validity, reliability and objectivity in their research designs. In interpretive research, the issue becomes, "What is an adequate warrant for a subjectively mediated account of intersubjective meaning?" (Schwandt, 1994, p. 130). Therefore, the conventional benchmarks of research design rigor in positivist research designs are replaced here with quality criteria related to trustworthiness and authenticity. In relation to trustworthiness, Lincoln and Guba (1982, 1985) have recommended four criteria: credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability. As Guba and Lincoln themselves acknowledge (1994), these substitute criteria have been well received; however, their parallelism to the criteria used to evaluate positivist research makes the specific terminology and criteria proposed for what they term *naturalistic inquiry* (or, interpretive research) somewhat suspect.

The overarching notion of trustworthiness, however, is a valuable principle. Specific procedures in this study were designed to increase trustworthiness. Analysis of the data began at the beginning of the study and informed my approach throughout. As the study progressed, I kept a continuous log that included descriptions of interview settings and procedure, my immediate reactions to the interviews, reminders and pointers for myself for subsequent interviews with the specific participant, and my thoughts regarding analysis of the data from the interviews. Records of the data collection process were maintained in field notes and transcriptions of all interviews. By asking the participants to review, analyze and add their comments to the draft of the study findings, I hoped that the study would be a trustworthy representation of their experience. Member checks and peer review were used to ensure credibility: an experienced female postsecondary manager did spot-checks on the interview transcripts and findings to look for potential sources of unrecognized interviewer bias or misapprehension.

The issue of authenticity is the second major area for assessing the quality of interpretivist research. A starting point here is the idea that "interpretive accounts (efforts to make clear what seems to be confused, unclear) are to be judged on the pragmatic grounds of whether they are useful, fitting, generative of further inquiry, and so forth" (Schwandt, 1994, p. 130). A major issue was dealing with the question of "voice" in this study. My voice, interpreting and analyzing the stories that the participants have shared, is a voice coming from a particular orientation toward management that values trust, consultation, and amicable relationships. It is a voice that also recognizes a difference between the managerial and academic cultures of higher education and the expectations that go with each culture—expectations in the managerial culture regarding such areas as performance, initiative, compliance with organizational norms, accountability for the actions of others, and implementing budget cutbacks. My voice is also the voice of a liberal feminist, sensitive to issues of gender as they relate to access, representation, promotion, opportunity and structure; but it is rarely the voice of a difference feminist advocating alternative feminist process as a replacement for hierarchical decision making.

The voices of the study participants all have their places in these same areas in terms of conceptualizing management and in terms of issues related to gender and feminist philosophies. I expected that some participants might have a highly technical or authoritative approach to their management role, and others might be very oriented toward team decision making and evolutionary planning. Chapter 3 of the findings addresses this area. I expected that some participants might react to a query about their feminism with absolute denial of the term, and others might be very radical in their feminism and feel themselves in conflict with organizational culture as a result (see previous section, Descriptions of the Participants). Therefore, the analysis and writing of the findings required attention to reporting of these different voices, including both how the participants interpret an interaction (the "fitting" according to the definition above) and how I have interpreted their account ("generative of further inquiry"). In assessing how "useful" the study is, I hope that the research participants and the readers of the final study agree with the judgement of the pilot participant: "This has been fun. And it's been therapeutic for me. And it's been one of the ways I've scrutinized my own behavior and actions and how I get things done."

Limitations and Delimitations

Delimitations of the study include the restrictions noted earlier regarding participant selection (women middle managers in "career positions"); functional area selection (registrarial/admissions/student records, financial aid/awards, and alumni/development with a minimum of two participants from each area included in the final study); institutional selection (colleges excluded, English-language universities from several Canadian provinces); and number of participants (seven plus pilot study participant).

This study describes and interprets the experiences of a group of women middle managers in higher education who are engaged in negotiating issues of power and influence to achieve desired results through the interactions they have with people in their work environment. The intention of the study is to increase our understanding about the specific experiences of these individual women managers. It would have been inappropriate to attempt to generalize from the data to draw conclusions about women managers or middle managers in higher education generally, and no such attempt was made. Participants in the study were selected based on their willingness to participate, on an effort to span a spectrum of positions and institutions. The participants do not constitute what is considered a representative sample in quantitative analysis methodologies. Because this is an interpretive analysis, I did not proceed from a pre-formulated hypothesis, but rather attempted to describe and explain in some detail the experiences of the study participants. As such, the results of this study cannot be assumed to be generalizable to other situations. This study is subject to the usual limitations of interview studies. The quality of the data is dependent on the ability of the researcher, on the memory recall of the study participants, on the honesty of the researcher and the participants, and on their abilities for self-reflection and analysis of their organizational environment. To protect the confidentiality of the participants, and in keeping with the study design to explore the issues from the participants' point of view, only the participants' stories and interpretations are represented in the study; there is no attempt to balance the resulting one-sidedness of that perspective with the perspectives of other members of their organizations.

Data Presentation and Discussion

The findings of the study are presented in the following three chapters. The overall presentation of the study findings is organized according to three basic sets of interactions that the participants described: staff, campus community, and supervisors. This presentation also reflects three basic components of the study interpretation, analysis, and discussion: authority, influence, and power.

Therefore Chapter 3 presents the findings about the participants' interactions with their staff and discusses their choices about and use of authority and connection in relation to their staff, including sections on both support staff and senior staff. Chapter 4 presents the findings related to the participants' interactions with others in their campus communities (including other administrators, faculty, senior administration, government offices, and other clients) and discusses the participants' decisions and strategies for extending their influence through connections with these colleagues in the campus community. Chapter 5 presents the findings related to the participants' interactions with their specific supervisors within the university hierarchy and discusses issues of power and powerlessness arising from those interactions.

CHAPTER 3

NOT TOUGH ENOUGH? BALANCING AUTHORITY AND CONNECTION

> *Alma: Several of them gave me very good advice, and certainly the advice that you need to be tougher, that really made me sit back and say, "Gee, if the staff themselves think I need to be tougher!" . . . And of course the ones who think you need to be tougher are the ones who are doing a damn good job and wish that you would insist the others pull up their socks.*

Introduction

In investigating the experiences of women university managers with issues of power and influence, it was not surprising that staff management was a key issue. Staff management was in fact a major subject of interest discussed by every participant in the study. The participants' roles as directors of administrative units on their campuses involved the direction of various staff activities to meet the production needs in university management, whether it be recruiting and admitting students, acknowledging charitable donations, giving statistical information to senior administration, organizing events, assessing academic records for student awards, scheduling examinations, producing alumni and university publications, and so on. Therefore it was to be expected that their decisions about staff leadership would include consideration of their views of authority and power in relation to the staff in their units.

Findings

Connection: Teamwork and Supportive Management

Teamwork. Most of the participants spoke very favorably about teamwork and team building as their preferred management style with staff—and then spoke about some of the challenges and tensions in this, in relation to their authority and responsibility as director. Two aspects should be noted in relation to those participants who described teamwork in their organizations. First, their perspective on team building and team membership appeared mainly as a concept internal to their own departments in their discussion. Of the seven participants, only one referred to her role as a member of a broader-based team within the university administrative context. (She expressed concern with what she perceived as the disparity between words and action in the management team of which she was a member, perceiving that the theory of teamwork being expressed by the team leader fell apart into autocratic and bureaucratic decision making in practise.) The remaining participants did not refer to their broader campus management role as being part of a team.

The second aspect to note is that the participants in the study were for the most part directing units of sufficient size and diversity of internal function that they were dealing with bureaucratic structures, hierarchy, and layered positions, internally within their own departments as well as externally in relation to the overall hierarchy of their universities. Thus, when the participants talk about staff management and describe the process of how they work with their staff, they are frequently referring to managerial and supervisory staff that report directly to them. At other times, they are referring to issues with regard to their staff as a whole. For example, Barb's discussion tends to focus mainly on her management team, whereas Ferdi's discussion about teams is occurring at two levels, one with respect to her management team, and one with respect to the entire office staff.

Six of the seven participants talked about teams and teamwork as a valuable work culture. The various participants mentioned advantages to the organization from a team-based approach, summarized here as: levelled structure ("in a very small office there were tremendous numbers of hierarchies"); streamlined workload; improved service through greater efficiency and a "service mentality" based in teams; a more supportive peer environment for their staff; and improved decision making through delegation, empowerment and multiple perspectives.

Alma, Vivian, Barb, and Ferdi all told extensive stories which positioned their concepts of teamwork in a developmental structure. Vivian and Ferdi had each been given a mandate from their senior administration to change and make improvements to the areas they were managing; Barb also saw change as part of her leadership role. Team process was one approach that they were taking to effect changes. Ferdi described the process of team leadership with her management/supervisory group:

> It functions really well now. I think the first year it was really awkward. . . . Our meetings are like talking circles. We don't have an agenda; each person just talks about what's on their mind, and I find most things tend to come out. And I encourage the people who are at that level *not* to talk to me privately . . . so that we can all participate in solving the problem, even if it's particular to a particular area. Which is how we've managed now to have staff moved, to have some flexibility.

Barb commented on her attempts to maintain equalized treatment of the individuals within her managerial group in terms of attention and participation in decision making. She found this difficult to do because some of her senior staff were more effective than others in their positions and therefore she found working with them easier and more pleasant:

> There were two people . . . with whom I had two or three times the sympathy and rapport . . . I really made a lot of effort to try and go for equal treatment, equal amounts of socialization, et cetera, and that probably restricted things somewhat.

Barb was pleased that the group cohesion stayed intact under the stresses of budget reversals and she attributed this to the team process:

> One of the things that I thought was good, that was a plus, was when we'd go through these travails and we'd be all so upset . . . we never seemed to fall apart. . . . I think it was partly to do with the temperament of the people involved, but also that they had absorbed some kind of group feeling.

The majority of the managers in the study were looking to various facets of teamwork and team management with the sense that "some kind of group feeling" was a major organizational benefit in terms of productivity as well as a personal benefit to themselves and each of their staff members.

Alma talked about the vision of where she wanted to go with her staff and the work she was doing with them to try and foster more independence and creativity. She described her goal for the team:

> What I really like is to work in an environment where people are relatively independent; they are performing their jobs at such a high level that they don't need any intervention. And when they get together collectively, the creative sparks just fly all over the place, and the team coalesces around some new ideas that can only occur when people feel completely open and free to say what they think, and feel that their contributions are so valued that they can take those risks.

Alma explained that she has previously experienced this kind of environment that she was striving to create with her current staff, and she attributed the success of that previous team as much to the "independent" characteristics of the team participants as to her own contribution in helping to create an environment where people feel open and secure.

Three of the participants expressed a degree of frustration over the distance between what they hoped to achieve in terms of teamwork and what they thought they had actually accomplished. Vivian described the essence of team leadership as giving responsibility *to* staff which is consistent with their position descriptions and commensurate with their abilities, rather than taking responsibility *for* them and their work. She wanted the supervisors in her department to absorb the same distinction in their dealings with the clerical staff who report to them. However, she was frustrated with her level of progress: "The patterns of behavior that I'm replacing and changing are so ingrained that, once we hit another change point, the old patterns come back and then we have to overcome them again."

This suggestion that support staff resist the implementation of teams because it requires them to assume more accountability for results appears in the stories of Alma and Ferdi as well. Alma talked about trying to take a team approach with a new staff:

> They just wanted somebody to finally tell them, "Do this; don't do this." . . . completely opposite to the way I like to work. . . . So we have now got to a place that's not ideal, but at least we have times when I listen, and times when I'm done listening and I do something about it.

The introduction of team concepts necessitates a change in the delineation of responsibilities as well as tasks between the staff team and the manager. This is also evident in Ferdi's description of how one group of support staff are dealing with the transition from traditional, authoritative leadership under a previous director to her own emphasis on team management:

> They're still working on it. They're much more comfortable if somebody says, "This is what you do. This is how you do it." Which isn't to belittle them at all; they've never had the opportunity to work together [as a team].

Ferdi commented as well on the impact on the office as a whole of this change in one area:

> What we found with this team-building thing . . . is, (a) people don't really want to be empowered; unless you can show them the advantages and what it means, they don't understand; and (b) what happened is that my other people who weren't in teams started to look like the little lost orphans because nobody was paying any attention to them, so we're now doing more team.

This statement shows an interesting dichotomy in staff reactions to team process, between the poles of resistance to change and their need for recognition. The participants felt that the staff involved in the team process feel threatened by the increased focus on their responsibilities and performance as a group, whereas the staff not involved in the team-based projects feel neglected because of the lack of focus on them. One of the ways most of the participants worked to increase staff comfort levels with organizational change and new team approaches was to use a deliberately flexible management style.

Flexibility and sharing. The participants all reported a high degree of flexibility in their supervision and direction of staff. There was a general willingness to move beyond the standard procedures and regulations in such areas as time worked in order to adapt the workplace to the particular circumstances in the lives of their staff. Edie's comments were representative: "For each person in my office I've probably got a little bit of a different working relationship. . . . You have to be flexible and adjust to their needs." The flexibility shown by the managers, although obviously a reflection of their personal beliefs about the nature of the workplace, was also portrayed in a number of the participants' comments as simply good business practise.

Julie and Vivian talked about deciding to ignore issues of dress and style with staff members (one male, one female), recognizing the individual's contributions in each case and not wanting to risk damage to the staff member's self-esteem (and Ferdi indicated in her review of the study that she has a similar point of view). Julie, Ferdi, and Alma all gave examples of making special arrangements regarding working hours with their staff, approving part-time appointments, job sharing, and individual flextime arrangements. Their comments identified the particular area of flexibility and then focused on the benefit to the *employer* that resulted. Alma described the results of an unusual flextime arrangement:

> It hasn't made the slightest bit of difference to the office that she's not there [one weekday], and on Saturdays she gets done about two days' work. She's happy doing it, and it has just been marvellous for the office.

Discussing job sharing agreements, Ferdi noted that "we got more than the equivalent of a hundred percent, because each of them was doing more than fifty percent," and Julie stated, "They put in more effort than a full-time person."

The managers in the study indicated varying concerns and amounts of interest in connecting personally or sharing personal information about themselves with their staff. Julie, who referred with pride to several instances where she was able to act as a mentor and provide opportunities for various staff, was also blunt about not having an emotional investment in her staff:

> Well, they can take me or leave me; I'm either liked or not liked. I'm not looking for pats on the back or anything like that, and it doesn't bother me if someone doesn't like me. But [they] are going to produce regardless.

Barb talked about the difficulty of getting to know people when directing a large department with "a layered nature" and expressed reservations about what degree of closeness should be attempted: "Too much insisting on personal 'pal-iness' I think would be almost an intrusion." Ferdi indicated her regret that it just didn't work for her to try and socialize with her staff, and mentioned that mutual interests in recreational reading provided "a natural place for conversations to happen" in order to create some sense of personal connection and warmth in her informal communications with staff.

Edie, however, talked about the importance of sharing information about what's happening in the workplace as well as emphasizing personal sharing to help your staff "understand where you're coming from." Alma discussed the need for integration between personal and work lives, and the beneficial aspects of this kind of integration in the workplace. She spoke at length on the subject:

> I have always thought that it is artificial and not possible to separate your personal life from your professional life. And I think that people who try to do that fail, and it is much better to be fairly open with your co-workers about whatever your personal life is . . . those issues, whatever they are, are bound to impact on you. And if your co-workers know what the source is . . . *they* can handle then whatever impact there is. And if they don't know where it's coming from, they're likely to look for things they understand and do know, and they'll misinterpret it. . . . But to the extent that as a manager I can make people feel comfortable with being honest when things in their lives aren't going perfectly. . . . then I feel good about the work environment. I think it's important that the work environment incorporate personal celebration . . . and that the work environment allow for personal sorrow and distress. . . . I just see them as being completely intermixed and that they react on each other; they interplay back and forth.

Ferdi indicated that she was by nature a very private person, and told a story about learning to share more with her staff:

> I guess I snapped at her, and I didn't even recognize I'd done it. But the next day she said to me, "I think you should know, you really hurt me." And I thought, that's not really fair. And then I started to realize, I was just reacting to all the stress I was under, that I had not let anyone see that, and that was not at all fair to her. So I've tried since then to talk more about—I mean, they need to have some confidence in my ability to be strong enough, but on the other hand, they don't need to think I'm superhuman. I'm not. So I think that's helped.

Ferdi also talked about the advantage of working for a long period for one institution, developing close relationships with some of the staff over the years as a result: "[They] realize I am human, I can joke around."

At the same time as several of the managers talked about their preference for openness in sharing business and personal information in the work environment, their remarks also showed a sense of distance inherent in the supervisory relationship. These participants distinguished between the actions they took to connect and share within a professional relationship, and what they saw as personal friendship. Alma, articulate as she was about the need to integrate the personal aspects of one's life with what is happening in the workplace, also maintained this distinction:

> There are aspects in your working life where it's better if you are not personal friends with people. It is certainly better if you are not personal friends with your boss. . . . And I think it's better if you do not have personal friends who work for you either. . . . So there have been times when there were people that in other circumstances I might have become quite good friends with, and I kept it purposely somewhat distant.

Ferdi talked with some regret about the necessity to maintain distance from staff social functions. Edie indicated that she has lots of campus friendships, but maintained her office friendship with her Associate Director as "a professional friendship and [we] don't do too much outside the office." At the same time, Edie talked about often sitting with staff at noon hour as they ate lunch. The distinction the participants are making is between friendliness (recommended) and friendship (seen as dangerous waters). This distinction between friendliness and friendship reveals a separation between position and person inherent to their management style and necessary to fulfil their responsibilities on the job. They recognize that the workplace will be more productive and pleasant if they are perceived as individuals as well as authoritative managers. At the same time, however, they balance this with a degree of distance maintained to protect their ability to make decisions that might differ from those that they would want to make in a solely personal capacity. That balance between connection to staff and distance from them appears in another guise in the participants' accounts of decision making.

<u>Decision making and accountability</u>. The discussions of these participants indicated that team processes involve them in a responsibility to

support the decisions that they have delegated to their staff teams, but that there is still an extra accountability on the part of the manager for the decisions. Edie described working to create a team environment, where her leadership is also key to the process:

> I would say I basically chart a lot of the direction we're going, but I do check it out with other people . . . particularly [the Associate Director who reports to me]. I have a great deal of faith in her opinions. And I also . . . meet with [my supervisor] usually about once a month and kind of bring [my supervisor] up to date on what's happening and where I think we should be going.

Ferdi talked about delegation of authority and decision making to the staff as an essential component of the team concept that she was promoting, and as one of the major changes to which her staff were adjusting. She talked about this change, which included delegation of credit for achievement as well as empowerment to make decisions, as a major force for establishing her own position with her new staff:

> I think it probably was enabling to be able to make some very visible changes that were really easy, didn't cost anything in human terms or in financial. To tell people that "*you* can put your name on that letter; it doesn't have to have my name on it"; "*you* can talk to that person; you don't need me to do it." And it did make a big difference to some people . . . the people who were climbing, who had done all of the work but had never had the authority or received whatever small credit you get in this work. . . . It's been fun to watch *some* people, anyway, develop under that, really kind of growing and actually taking new challenges. I like that.

Barb talked about her approach to management as one that relied very heavily on team decision making with the managerial staff, and emphasized the benefits to morale from the feelings of solidarity in the group. Barb also spoke very positively about being open to learning the advantages of teamwork (although she did not use that term) from her managerial staff and being impressed with the resulting decision making:

> I guess the power of meetings really showed up. . . . You got the whole cast together in one room and then said, "Well, here are the problems: one, two, three, four, what are we going to do about them? Who's going to do something about them?" And by the end of the meeting, the problems seemed to be going out the door. (laughter) *I* didn't have to come with a solution at all!

Barb commented about the value of multiple perspectives in her management team, and the value of feedback from staff. Referring to one of the senior managers she supervised she commented on the value of challenging voices:

> Very active, very thoughtful, lots of energy, asks lots of questions. There are days when you don't want to hear those questions! [laughter] But you've got to have people like that around; at least I do. That's very important.

She specifically noted that the senior managers with whom she worked were the experts in the functional areas, and she would not override their decisions in these areas. Although she was adamant that she could not "go into an 'I know better than you' mode of directing people," she also talked several times about the balance in deciding when group decisions are appropriate and when the individual manager should make a decision:

> It's got to be with a group, because I really depend on the group. It's not in my temperament to lay down the law—well, I guess I do in some ways; I certainly sometimes feel I'm being fairly opinionated. But on direction of where we want to go, I tend to see what everybody wants to do. There's some things where I'd limit it.

The sentence structure that Barb used, moving back and forward from the group to her own decision making, back to the group, and back to herself again, is probably reflective of the actual intellectual balancing process required of a manager in this kind of team environment. Ultimately, Barb indicated that wherever the decision finally rests, with the group or the individual, "once you've jumped off the cliff, you've jumped off the cliff together, and that's I think quite important." Barb strongly felt the necessity of supporting her managerial team in the decisions they make. At the same time she also described her own mistake in judgement at one point, when she made a decision without consulting her staff on a deadline date that created serious implementation problems for her staff:

> I felt I had to apologize to all of my staff, who were the most affected. There were [staff affected] in other offices, but I thought the Directors there could do their *own* apologizing. [laughter] I really had to go back and show that next year we would do this right and that I would try to pay more attention about implications.

Team processes mean that the managers feel obligated to support the decisions that they have delegated to their staff teams, but also feel an extra accountability for the decisions they make (including, presumably, the decision to support the decisions of their teams!).

Ferdi talked about the necessity of making individual decisions in special cases, and clearly defined her accountability, both for the decision, and in terms of staff relations. Indicating that her staff had experienced arbitrary, perhaps biased, decision making in individual cases under a previous manager, she explained:

> If and when I do [make an exception], I always make sure people understand why. And I've made it very clear that I'm answerable, that if I'm playing with the edges of somebody's policy, I'm the one that's got to explain why that's a reasonable thing to do.

The idea of accountability in teamwork was articulated by Ferdi as well in terms of her communications to her staff:

> One of the things I said . . . was, "Look, as long as you do your work, *your* work, and as long as you're performing effectively, if this whole thing is a disaster, it's nobody's fault but mine, because it's my idea. So if we find that this just doesn't work, you're not going to be responsible. But I am expecting each of you to work to your capacity and do the job you've got."

The importance of accountability within the team is clear. Although it is a team effort or organization overall, each member of the team has specific accountability for their particular work. As a member of the team, the most notable aspect of a manager's particular work is effective decision making.

Alma's version of accountable decision making was similar in her emphasis that organizational decisions and accountability ultimately rested with her. She described an evolution in her decision-making style towards a heavier reliance on her own decision making and less on group decisions. She spoke about this change in the context of a story about entertaining staff in her home:

> They all thought it was a command performance. . . . I was in the kitchen cooking, [and] . . . two of them got into a huge fight in my living room, and then they practically wouldn't speak to each other for months afterwards, . . . so that was the end of the buddy stage. Then I moved from buddy stage to consensus, with me trying to be somewhat more directive, but trying to get consensus. And that worked okay, except of course when there were wide differences of opinion. So now I'm into long lead time of tossing out an idea, getting a lot of feedback, and then making a decision, and taking the guff. . . . And, actually, people seem kind of relieved.

Within that perspective of the manager as a separate decision-maker are the responsibilities of the manager to evaluate process and service, to measure productivity, to plan new directions, and to be the catalyst for change. The manager's responsibilities for creating change within the team are reflected in relation to issues of staff development and performance assessment.

<u>Staff development</u>. A number of the participants told stories about shifting work and projects about among their staff to make the best use of people's time and talents. Vivian, Julie, and Ferdi all talked about identifying potential in a staff member who had been working in a secretarial or administrative assistant capacity, and then adding additional challenges to keep the person interested, help them grow in self-confidence and experience, and assist the department with an organizational or supervision problem at the same time:

> I started to recognize that she has an absolute gift for managing people, without necessarily knowing a whole lot about what they do in detail. But she's just very good at listening, with the result that she's now managing a whole lot of our operations—not in a hands-on way, but just in terms of making sure it's all working and that the people are communicating.

Julie gave several examples of identifying people's talents in the institution and working with them to give them opportunities to try new activities and develop new skills. She also talked about a controversial decision she made to bypass an internal candidate and hire staff from outside the university environment: "I knew that I did not want a talker, I needed a 'doer.' I needed, not a thinker, but a doer, someone to get the job done." Having focused on productivity over style in her hiring decision, at some cost in terms of campus relationships, Julie's next step was to enable the abilities of her new staff member by being flexible: "That's his style, and I live with his style. . . . Each person brings a different perspective to the job, and you know if you can relate to them, you can then pull out the best parts of what they can do."

Ferdi talked about upgrading the responsibilities of several positions in response to some inequities in job grid and salary structures:

> They were not performing at a level to justify the classification at all, and we all knew that. . . . So instead of declassifying them and alienating them, because they're wonderful people, and they're very able people, I thought, well, let's give them jobs that justify the classification. So in fact [they are] the people managing this whole new thing. . . . The real reason I wanted to do that, apart from making better use of their time, was [that these individuals] were always our own worst critics. They were over there very ready to say, "You didn't tell us this" or "Why did you do that?" or "Why can't you do X or Y?" And now they're all part of it. . . . That part of the reorganization has worked wonderfully.

Ferdi's comments again showed a distinction between how she felt about the individual people ("wonderful people," "very able") and her analysis of the effectiveness of the positions within the organization. Her analysis is interesting in its focus on identifying a solution to a staff development problem that simultaneously solves multiple problems and brings multiple benefits to both the staff members individually and the organization as a whole. In her example she has made improvements in overall staff morale, individual staff morale, group cohesion, conflict reduction, and productive use of staff, while working within the formal constraints of the bureaucracy; in this case, the need to bring specific job classifications into line with the overall organization's job evaluations.

Edie talked as well about her decision process in the area of staff development:

> Some people feel they're knowledgeable and ready to take on far more responsibility than you feel they're ready to. . . . But you've got to be cautious because the implications of an error have significant implications for the institution, and you find that you have to rein them in sometimes.
>
> As far as [the Associate Director] is concerned, I have all the confidence in her. If she tells me this is the way something has to be done, I almost don't even ask her why. Depending on how much time we've got, I may, just so that I have the understanding. But she also knows that it's just for my understanding; it's not for my questioning what she's wanting to do.

Edie's comments emphasized the balance she maintained between the needs and aspirations of her individual staff and the performance requirements of the institution, in determining the degree of extra responsibility and decision-making latitude that she extended to the person in the position. She talked about encouraging the Associate Director to attend conferences and be involved in professional association activities and leadership and revealed the sincerity of her commitment to staff development with an offhand comment in a different section of our interviews: "I try to get her to as many conferences as I can. Budgetwise we've had to make some changes, and this year it was her year to go." Edie's commitment to staff development in her high performing staff was sufficient that, under budget restrictions, she had restricted her own external involvement in order to provide opportunities for her staff.

Even in the area of staff development initiatives, several of the managers found that both sides of their management style, authority as well as connection, made an appearance. Barb commented on the value of external involvements for her senior staff, via professional association activities or site visits to other institutions, but said that she had trouble getting her senior staff to agree and organize this: "I've been really pushing, and they don't want the idea. Nobody does. It's very hard to call up and say, 'I'm going to come and visit your place. Entertain me.'" The idea of staff reluctance to move into new areas appeared in Edie's conversation when I asked her whether there were any places where she wished she had more influence, places where she was not able to do something, or not able not to do something. She responded with a comment about staff development frustrations:

> Actually, one of the things I would like to have that I don't have is with my own staff, in being able to help them to grow in the direction I want them to grow. But they have to want to grow in that direction . . . You have to accept that sometimes just their basic background and philosophy is a little different, and you're not going to go that same direction.

Edie has tempered her expectations of her staff with an acceptance of the limitations of individuals' capacity to perform or desire to improve; this was apparent in several of the participants' comments in this area.

Authority: Expectations and Discipline

The dynamic of authority and connection. With that understanding and acceptance, however, came a firm approach to the handling of serious staff performance problems. Several participants described their dual sense of connection and authority in the managerial role directly in their descriptions of their management styles. Barb's judgement was that "I'm not sure you can be a manager without having a little bit of hard-hearted there" but talked as well about her obligations to her staff:

> You've got to support people in what they do and support them if it fails. I think that's one of the more important things, that you can't expect to undertake new stuff if you don't support them when something doesn't go very well.

In another example, Barb talked about her approach in implementing new system development, again combining the themes of connection and support with the concept of authority: "Try not to harass people; try to provide lots of sympathy, support, and help; but *no choice*. . . . The 'I can't' is not acceptable."

At the same time Barb commented that "the minimum standard of work is rising" and discussed the budget and workload pressures that have increasingly demanded more of the support staff in universities, acknowledging that there is less leeway in the bureaucracy to carry lower-performing staff, and that this is creating a significant human fallout in terms of increased sick leave and long-term disability among staff. Previously, more generous financial support for university administration allowed some "slack" in the bureaucratic system to accommodate individuals with less capacity (in terms of their speed and volume of production, their ability to deal with multiple tasks and complexity, or their ability to work cooperatively with co-workers or clients).

When financing is not a significant issue, problems such as these are handled most easily in a bureaucracy by finding alternate accommodation for the problem employee, rather than terminating their employment. Faced with heavier demands for ongoing performance, marginally performing employees may develop stress and illness reactions they would not have had in a gentler environment. The generous benefit systems available in public bureaucracies are there to support them, but this results in increased pressure on the remaining functioning members of the system, and the circle goes on. For the managers involved, this constrained environment both increases the number of staff performance problems for which they must find a solution, and reduces the number of alternatives that they have for a solution in each case.

The job intensification, at both the managerial and support staff levels, was perceived as a significant managerial problem by several participants. After reading the above analysis, Edie commented further on the decision-making context for job intensification at her university:

> Since we first spoke . . . the pressures and responsibility of the job have increased dramatically. The restructuring of academic programs brought on by budget cuts has a great many implications for our department. I am not sure that in making these decisions (any) consideration was given to the ramifications these changes would have on the nonacademic offices. In addition, new programs are being developed that we will administer, and adequate computer programming does not appear to be forthcoming.

In addition to the extra workload and responsibility that comes with this job intensification, comes an additional level of stress and worry for the manager because the support structures (such as computing) necessary to enable handling the additional demands are not available within the university—those areas being subject to the same demands of job intensification, in a vicious circle that leaves the individual manager caught between expectations for increased productivity and unpleasant realities of limited resources and support.

Reviewing a first draft of the study, Vivian also added comments about her strategies for helping her staff, and therefore her office as a whole, deal with this issue of job intensification:

> One of my comments to all staff is that each of us needs to be aware how the organization is changing and how those changes affect the skill set we need. . . . This applies as equally to my position as it does to the Clerk 3. . . . I work from their interests, and focus on their marketability *within* the organization. . . . Another strategy, again working from a perspective of *their* personal interest, is to help them to understand the tendency toward isolation in academic environments. . . . It is critical for staff to be visible . . . for them to be known within the organization for their excellent performance. This one has been so successful I now have, on a small staff [6 staff involved in union or other activities outside the office]. . . . The staff are known, visible and developing new skills which benefit the office tremendously. . . . The third and last strategy is to change supervisory relationships. . . . In one case, a team approach, the improvement is visible.

Faced with the issue of job intensification for the overall office, Vivian has taken an approach with her staff that has had several benefits. First, it was a politically astute strategy in terms of campus politics, with an emphasis on visibility and involvement. Second, the essence of her strategy was an overt partnership with her staff, focused on consideration for their employability in the future, where she introduced changes that improved her employees' skill levels and value to the overall organization at the same time that she addressed specific productivity issues within her office. Third, her strategy accrued information benefits to her office and herself as manager: "Within a political environment (which universities are), the more sources of information we have about what is going on out there, the better able we are to be proactive, adaptable." Vivian combined her authority as a manager setting direction for her staff with a belief that "frustration and a sense of powerlessness" arise from controlling supervision, and instead had staff "buy in" to a cooperative approach to the workload issues by focusing on their personal concerns for skills training to improve their value in the job market.

The same concern for staff empowerment coupled with an insistence on authority in relation to the manager's basic responsibility to get the job done, appears in Ferdi's remarks. Ferdi frequently mentioned the positive response of her staff at being empowered to make final decisions in their communications with clients, but she is also aware of her role as intimidating authority:

> I really don't feel they're working very fast or very effectively, so we're trying to figure out why that is and what we can do to change it. They're going to meet with the team leaders this afternoon, and I think they are going to use me as kind of a "big stick." . . . One of the things I asked the managers to make sure people realized was that . . . it [is] possible to see who did how much on a given day and to start looking at productivity quantitatively. I don't want to scare them and I don't want to sound like a corporation that monitors people constantly, but on the other hand, we've got to get the work done. And I don't mind if they're a little apprehensive at this point.

Ferdi was perfectly prepared to use the threat of statistical workload monitoring from her position of authority to incur a sense of urgency in her staff to meet production deadlines. At the same time, she balanced this with an appreciation of the hard work of her staff and refuses to continue detailed supervision of staff hours in a flextime arrangement, insisting instead on individual responsibility within a framework of overall authority:

> People are lousy with time arithmetic. For a long time we had one person who had to check timesheets and check carry-forwards. I've got rid of that and said, "you're on your own, but we are going to audit." And we are auditing. I find generally people can be trusted. . . . Some of my staff are incredible. They take work home with them on weekends. They really are very capable.

Alma talked about being forced to come to terms with her own authority: "When I started out I wanted to have a real team where I was no more important than anybody else on the team, and I tried desperately to do that, and failed." She reflected that she has learned from the support staff themselves that her efforts for connection, understanding and teamwork must be balanced with use of and comfort in the authority that comes with her position. She described how her staff helped her recognize this dual managerial role of connection and authority:

> My style has been changing. I went through a stage of being too nice, too understanding. With the younger staff I was too mothering. And of course they loved it, but it's a trap. And then you sometimes are stuck not being able to deliver some bad news. . . . So now I'm tougher. . . . I did . . . interviews with every one of my staff, and several of them said that, said, "You're not tough enough."

<u>Authority as discipline: Support staff</u>. All of the participants talked to some degree about staff problems within their units. The problems that participants had to address occurred at all levels in their departments, with an equivalent number of stories about problems with senior managers and problems with support staff. As there were some interesting differences in how the managers felt about their success in dealing with the problems they had with these two groups of staff, the two areas have been separated for presentation here.

Several participants spoke of individual cases with regard to the support staff in their departments. In two of these situations, the staff members were fired. Three situations were resolved when a transfer to another department was negotiated. One participant discussed a staff problem in terms that again distinguished between the individual and the requirements of the position, and talked about her own obligations to support her senior staff as they struggled to cope with a difficult situation:

> Our most difficult task was having to fire somebody. And this was politically difficult because this person [had] invented a job for herself, and people for whom she was giving this wonderful service loved her dearly. It's just, that wasn't the job; . . . it ruined the morale in the whole office and so on. So then, I think you're there when the firing takes place. . . . She could go so far beyond the call of duty that she never got anything done, and she followed no internal office procedures, so that other people could never find out what had been done and pick things up. . . . The whole philosophy on which the unit was working was that you didn't have to have everybody there, that people could help someone regardless. Well, then, the effect was that, since this person had designed things so only she could tell, the other people looked bad. [This] was sort of reinforced with the customers saying, "Only so-and-so can help me, and all your other staff are incompetent," and that was causing terrible morale problems. She was supposed to help with some of the just dirty work . . . and she was poor at it. . . . This was extremely difficult in this case, because it was hard to get anything very measurable . . . . The poor person who was fired now does have another even better job, so we were certainly glad of that. And it made the most enormous difference in [the department]. You could tell by looking at [the supervisor]. Once that was through, I think partly staff knew that they pushed quite hard [to have their peer's actions disciplined], and they were really anxious to show how much they could do.

This story reveals the layers of complexity and pitfalls that lie within individual staff problems for the senior manager. In this case, the manager weighed issues of the individual's effort and commitment (obviously high), successful integration with team activities (very low, with high individual performance resulting in poor team performance), the individual's morale (high), current group morale (low), future group morale (high, strong commitment in response to managerial support in dealing with the problem they perceived), client satisfaction with current situation (high), client reaction to firing the staff member (swift, and very negative), and perceptions of other campus administrators (confusion and annoyance at not being informed of disciplinary action). Ultimately, the decision was made in terms of the long-term benefit to the university, by assessing the issue of team cohesion and performance as the highest priority, and deciding to suffer accordingly the short-term difficulties. A public relation problem with clients and colleagues and extra budget costs associated with a difficult termination were seen as temporary but resolvable problems arising out of the solution to a staff performance problem that threatened to escalate into a major long-term issue of team performance and service levels.

This importance given to the idea of coherence in the staff team that was significant in the above example was also an essential component of each of the other participants' stories about dealing with performance issues at the support staff level. Marie talked about a situation in her staff group, discussing a staff member who asked for a promotion, received it, and then was unable to handle the job:

> Initially, she was too proud to say, "I can't do it," and she got sick. . . . It was related to the stress that she was under in being unable to do the job, pressure from me because she had to make a decision; we couldn't go on. And as it turned out, she went to the union, and I went to [the Personnel Department], and among the four of us, we came to the solution that she would [transfer to another position on campus] and she's very happy there. But it was a rocky road to get there. And I don't know how we could have done it differently. You always look back and think, how did we get into this mess? Because she was hurt; it took a lot of time. It was hard on the rest of the office, because everyone knew and for a period of time covered, and then got to the point where they were saying, "I can't do this any more. There are mistakes. It's taking my time." And when [the staff] have someone in the office that has become a friend, it's difficult. But at the end of the day, it worked out very well.

The participant responded to the perceived threat to group cohesion and the impact that that was having on production, but she also recognized the personal, emotional factors involved—both the individual staff member's hurt and the mixed loyalties of the staff member's colleagues who want to support their friend but know that their own job performance will not meet their own expectations if they continue to do their colleague's work for her.

Those participants who talked about making decisions to begin the formal steps toward dismissal for support staff all indicated their appreciation for the support they received from their university Personnel Department. There was also a recognition that these situations had to be handled carefully, not only in terms of the feelings and impact on the individual and their work colleagues, but also in terms of the legal requirements of staff agreements and of the presence of strong staff associations/unions. Thus one participant purchased a way around union regulations with a negotiated buy-out as part of firing a staff member, another referred to the constraints of the union environment in terms of both staff development and dealing with performance problems as barriers that she has not been able to surmount, and the last participant and her staff member negotiated with assistance respectively from the Personnel Departments and the Staff Union to find an acceptable alternative. Edie talked about the expedience of avoiding the union altogether by making decisions about performance early: "I could see that it simply was not going to work, and I was concerned about her ethical values, and there were enough things that I let her go before probation was up so that I didn't get tied into anything with the union." Edie also talked about the more difficult process of addressing a performance problem with a longer term staff member. The difficulty was not with the union, however, but in the pain of their personal interaction as they worked through the process together:

> There's another one who was a very good worker but would have been better off in a room by herself somewhere and not having to deal with anybody else. And it was interesting, I learned from that experience a great deal. . . . I had picked up on this on her application, but because I knew the area she had been in before and that there were problems in that area, I had thought, oh, well, I just attributed it to the office she was in, not to her, and made a mistake there. But she did stay with us for about three years, and I know part of it was difficult for her. . . . I talked to [the

> Personnel Department] about what steps I should be taking and called her in and talked to her about my concerns, the changes I wanted to see happen and when I wanted them to happen and all the rest of it. And we went through that period, and she did make the required changes. She did eventually move on to another job, but during that period before she moved on, she came in and told me how much she respected me and appreciated what I had done for her. But it was heartbreaking for me, and for her. I find it very difficult to do things like that, so what I have to do is, I plan it all out.

This participant's story acknowledged her own part in creating the situation, in making an error of judgement in her initial hiring decision; the emotional difficulty on all sides in living through the process of evaluation and correction; and the rewards for all participants at a successful resolution, both in terms of personal, individual satisfaction and in terms of performance in the position. Edie also discussed the decisions she made for tackling individual staff problems, and using group process as the first step in her attempts to find solutions to supervisory problems:

> And so we're often primarily concerned about workload and about everybody pulling their weight. I feel very strongly that you don't ever want to embarrass anybody in front of others. . . . So examples would be . . . personal phone calls in the office, and it's interesting the way, once one person is doing it, then another one will do it. . . . Rather than singling anyone out that they were doing this, . . . we tried to handle it at a staff meeting, pointing out the effects on others.

In this case, performance problems were tackled first at the group level, then, if the desired effect was not reached, in individual meetings with the staff members who needed to change their behavior, then in formal performance appraisal assessments, and finally through dismissal or an appropriate transfer if no other solution to a serious problem could be found. This participant consistently emphasized the value of "saving face" for others by looking for nonconfrontational methods of addressing problems and found the team approach provided one such face-saving environment for positive change. At the same time, she was very aware that individual problems needed to be addressed in order to prevent the spread of inappropriate behavior throughout the team.

Authority as discipline: Senior staff. At the level of supervisory or managerial staff, handling a staff problem became a more complex issue for those participants who discussed difficulties with senior staff. A basic distinction in these participant's stories about support staff and senior staff was that the latter group were more likely to have more powerful connections. In these stories, the participants' willingness to rely on their formal authority to deal with the problem was modulated by an awareness of their senior staff member's network of connections. Three of the participants told stories in this area; in every case, outright dismissal was not viewed as an option. Two participants talked about reviewing alternative structural solutions to handle situations where a senior staff member was not performing well in the management or supervision of other staff. Those two participants indicated that they had considered taking over direct supervision of the area themselves, and then dismissed this as an inappropriate solution that did not address the key problem and misused their own time.

The assessment of individual performance in relation to the overall work group or team, already seen in relation to support staff problems, was also a critical issue in the problems the participants were faced with in their senior staff. One participant described the problem she had in terms of the teamwork skills of one manager who reported to her:

> I'm not sure that I coped wonderfully with it. I wouldn't claim that as 100% success. It took me quite a while to put my finger on what was the problem, because there's no point in saying to somebody, "People don't want to work with you," unless you can provide something more constructive. . . . We're all a member of a lot of teams, and this team seemed to some of us to be slightly down his list. . . . People would feel that he'd sort of blab to

> everybody. . . . He did not always listen. . . . He had his own answer ready, and he could not listen to other people and [probably] to his staff.

This participant talked about her inability to pinpoint concrete evidence of her concerns and about finally getting a clearer picture through her involvement in a major conflict between this manager and one of his staff. Unwilling to take on the task of trying to dismiss a long-term manager with good connections on the campus, she found that situations such as this required an uneasy compromise on her part. In this case, she felt uneasy about her solution of transferring the junior staff member to another area, rather than tackling the senior staff member: "He wasn't really thrilled with the support he got from me, and I don't know really how right I was on this. . . . It's worked out quite well for her. On the other hand, it probably hasn't reinforced his authority." This participant was uneasy that her solution to the specific conflict did not address the problems of communication and supervision that she had identified in the manager who reported to her. Although her action retained the considerable skills of the more junior employee elsewhere in the office, rather than having that person resign, she saw her responsibilities as director in a wider framework, relating to the entire work unit that this person supervised, and she felt that she had not helped the other staff (who also reported to him and were dealing with the same behaviors that created the conflict with the staff member she had moved). As well, she felt that she had not fulfilled her responsibilities to the manager; that she should have been able to do something to develop his skills and capacity for teamwork that would have addressed the root of the problem. She understands that within bureaucratic structures and hierarchy, one of her duties is to support the hierarchical power structure by supporting the managers who report to her in their relations with the staff. From this point of view, she felt guilty that her solution to this particular conflict, although ending the overt quarrel by removing one of the protagonists to another area, had in fact undermined the authority of the manager within the context of staff-supervisor relations in his area. Her inability to resolve the situation, because she felt limited to addressing the symptoms of the problem (the conflict), rather than the problem itself (the manager's behavior), left her with the worry that her lack of resolution may escalate the individuals' ineffectiveness in his current position.

Another participant, Julie, talked of her frustration in dealing with a senior staff member whose education and background should have made her a high-performing member of the work group, but whose individual approach was to spend a lot of time reviewing and criticizing the work of others, rather than spending that time on producing more herself, thereby both reducing her own efficiency and negatively affecting group morale. Reviewing this section, Julie noted that in the months subsequent to our interviews the problem was at least temporarily resolved: "Another job was found for the person. Time will tell how effective [she] will be in the new job." Rather than going through a process of performance appraisal leading to dismissal, with attendant risks that this strategy might not be successful within the bureaucracy, Julie tackled the problem in her unit by working diligently to find another position, but where the job content will make it easier to assess the staff member's ability to complete her own projects on schedule. Her approach reflected a concern for the individual by giving the staff member an opportunity for a fresh start, while at the same time reinforcing managerial power by improving the organization's position in terms of performance assessment if problems continued in the future with the individual staff member.

Ferdi described the strategy noted earlier where she successfully redesigned jobs to match the abilities of several senior staff, to the mutual benefit of both the staff and the institution, and then talked about an unsuccessful example of the same approach:

> This is still pretty fresh, so it's hard for me to talk about, because I've worked with him [for a long time]. I told him . . . that we were going to move his area, . . . partly because it made sense [functionally], . . . but also because I thought if he was ever going to develop as a manager, that was his best opportunity. . . . And he walked in the office one day and quit. . . . His way of coping with stress and all these things going on and all this challenge, was just to hide in his office and do more and more of it himself. . . . From a management point of view, I think we're better off. He was not into teamwork at all. If I had a job that would have enabled him to work on his own all by himself in a corner, it would have been fine, but we don't have jobs like that.

Again this participant recounted the story at both a personal level—her distress at having disrupted the relationship with a long-term work colleague—and a managerial level—her assessment that the work team had been strengthened by the decision she made and the outcomes of that decision. The same double perspective was evident in her view of the individual. Her story showed compassion and understanding of his capacities and reactions as a person caught unwillingly in an environment of high change. At the same time, however, she evaluated performance and organized structure on the basis of the needs of the position and the organization, requiring of the staff member the ability to learn new processes, acquire new skills, and interact cooperatively with the work group. Her story was imbued with a sense of relief in receiving a timely resignation that resolved her dilemma about his performance.

Overall, at the level of their more senior staff, these participants dealing with staff problems were extremely cautious in their approach and showed a high preference for face-saving solutions such as retirements, lateral transfers or voluntary resignations, rather than the more direct approach of evaluation and procedures for dismissal that they were comfortable using with more junior staff. In her review of the study results, Ferdi shared an additional insight that she had gained since our last meeting and used in a couple of instances of performance problems with senior staff:

> I somehow "grew up" as a manager believing that, when there was a problem, one should confront the individual face to face. . . . Recently, I have instead tried writing a very detailed letter describing the problem(s), expectations and setting a time to meet a day or so later. I think this has two advantages—it allows for a careful, thoughtful description, unaffected by emotion, and it enables the employee to [illegible] privately and consider how he/she wishes to respond. It wo[illegible] far. (Interestingly, I have to struggle with feeling that I have taken the easy way out, that talking directly to the person is harder, [and] therefore more appropriate.)

Ferdi's latest strategy addresses some of the problems raised by the closer, more collegial relationship with senior staff, by using a method that permits the employees to develop more face-saving strategies themselves, because it allows for privacy in both reaction and preparation of their responses.

Ferdi's relief at receiving a resignation in the example above is understandable. The resignation saved her and her senior staff member from a continuing conflictual interaction that was distressing for both of them, the organizational performance problem was solved, the resolution came in a face-saving manner which protected appearances and authority in terms of the hierarchical structure by eliminating the need for what would be understood as a demotion for a manager, and she did not have to worry about engaging in a power struggle with the manager in terms of the changes she had proposed. This example is representative of how the participants in the study, faced with a performance problem in their senior staff, looked and hoped for other alternatives to the direct approach and searched actively for ways to work around the problem rather than tackling it head-on.

Discussion

Connection and Control

In review, the participants' descriptions of staff management illustrated a continuing, ongoing dynamic between management styles based on teamwork and connection, and the responsibilities of authority and leadership inherent in managerial positions. Stories about teamwork, sharing, flexibility, and staff development support the idea that women have a distinctively female (and/or feminist) management style based on consideration, connection and community (Eisler, 1987; Helgesen, 1990; Shakeshaft, 1987) that has the potential to transform bureaucratic systems:

> Countervalues [that] add up to a countersystem of social order, one that opposes excessive hierarchy and exclusivity in the holding of authority, one that incorporates diversity, spreads authority through processes of cooperation, resists centrality . . . and protects individuality through the legitimizing of a personal component in professional life, a personal component to a professional voice. (Aisenberg & Harrington, 1988, p. 136)

However, coexisting with, and sometimes within, the participants' stories which reflected this style of management are a series of stories that reveal the participants' parallel use of their bureaucratic authority, the power of leadership and position, in relation to their staff. The discussion of these participants would support a more complex view of women's management styles which posits that women use both authority and consideration in their relationships with their staff (Harriman, 1985; Pringle, 1988; Young, Staszenski, McIntyre, & Joly, 1993). This dynamic between teamwork and authority is not perceived as a conflict; both aspects, connection and authority, exist simultaneously in their leadership, reflecting a dual approach to the use of authority-as-power that blends aspects of both constrictive theories of power-as-domination/control and generative theories of power-as-energy into a theory that

> must neither reduce power to domination, nor ignore systematic domination to stress only energy and community; . . . an understanding of power which stresses both its dimensions of competence, ability, and creativity and does not lose sight of the importance of effective action in the world. (Hartsock, 1983, pp. 255-256)

In the stories from participants who discussed teamwork extensively, the concept of teamwork was a deliberate management planning strategy for "effective action" in their work world, to assist their goals of introducing change of some kind into the workplace and improving productivity (reflecting authority). However, it was also clear in these participants' conversations that their emphasis on teamwork was also a deliberate personnel strategy for developing ability, autonomy and creativity in their staff (reflecting consideration/connection).

These participants' discussion of staff reactions to new team practises showed that the introduction of team concepts in management requires a redefinition of the locus of responsibility in a careful balance between the staff team and the manager. In part, the managers who focused on teamwork achieved this redefinition through a management style that recognized the need for flexibility and extended communication and sharing with their staff. At the same time as these participants acknowledged their inclination for sharing business and personal information with their colleagues and staff, their remarks showed that they feel some sense of distance inherent in the supervisory relationship. They consistently made distinctions between their attempts to connect and share information to cement the professional relationship and what they saw as personal friendship. This distinction between friendliness and friendship reveals a separation between position and person when these participants look at their own management style and responsibilities on the job. The discussion of a number of the participants in this area appears to reflect a balance between their perceived need for distance to maintain managerial perspective, the theme of authority, and their need for closeness to improve information and understanding, the theme of connection. Those participants who see the advantage of sharing in the workplace do so in large part from a motivation that is strategic, rather than personal. The choices they make about what kind of information and how much of it they will share with work colleagues appears to be a conscious choice about their personal management style, a choice that they make from a variety of alternatives that they weigh, rather than a "natural" consequence of their gendered natures.

Several participants' discussion of staff development reflected the dual reaction to person and position, connection and authority, that appeared in the discussion of teamwork and flexible management styles. The desire to create opportunities to bring out the best in people operated from this same dynamic, providing a motivator for personnel in terms of their satisfaction and benefitting the institution in terms of increased productivity. The focus on the needs of their staff, their satisfaction, is a genuine reflection of these managers' care and concern. It is also recognized as strategic, because a satisfied worker may be a more productive worker and may be easier to supervise from the manager's point of view.

In both staff development and performance appraisal areas, this dual strategy, maintaining the dynamic between connection with staff and authority over them and the functional tasks they perform, is a strategy that addresses both how these managers feel about the individual people and their reasoned analysis of the effectiveness of the people and positions within the organization. The managers discussing these areas described solutions that are both "caring and just" (Young et al., 1993, p. 1) and integrate the two aspects of personal feelings and professional judgement. Their solutions are elegant in the focus on identifying a solution to a staff problem that, whenever possible, simultaneously solves multiple problems and brings multiple benefits to both the staff members individually and the organization as a whole.

When they talked about staff problems at the level of support staff, a number of the participants told stories that showed their willingness to work through the problems and try to resolve them, and failing that, their firmness in addressing the problem by removing the individual staff member from the work team, either by transfer or dismissal. Although the decisions they made might have been unpopular in some cases, their authority to address the problem, even if it meant dismissal of an employee, was unquestioned by these participants and, within the context of their stories, unquestioned by their institutions or their staff. In several instances, these participants' decisions to take some action in relation to a perceived performance or discipline problem with staff member was motivated most strongly by the idea that action was required in relation to the individual in order to maintain overall team cohesiveness amongst the rest of their staff.

From this perspective, these managers were concerned on both a social and organizational level with maintaining a sense of community with shared work values (Shakeshaft, 1987). As manager, they perceived their obligation to the workplace community as the maintenance of community, in terms of the kinds of workplace relationships and power sharing related to job autonomy, but also in terms of arranging for or encouraging the removal of staff members who did not share in the overall sense of community. Thus they reinterpreted their recognized authority as manager and the obligations of that authority in relation to individual staff, into a concern for connection and community with the work group as a whole. From this perspective, the emphasis on the concept of team provides a mechanism for these managers to reconstruct their story of the interaction, by mediating their interpretation of their own authority (with its obligations to use bureaucratic power to reassign or fire staff members over their individual resistance in an effort to achieve a work group with solid performance) into a redefinition of authority as care and concern for the welfare of the group as a whole.

From the perspective of gender analysis, the concept of "team" allows the manager to wield authority from a framework of connection rather than control. However, ultimately the outcome for the individual viewed as problematic is the same, in that they are reassigned to other duties or required to leave the organization. Pringle (1988, 1989) points out three models for working relationships between bosses and secretaries that she suggests are visible in all workplace power relations: a master-slave framework, a mother/nanny-son model, and a reciprocity/equality model generally labelled *team*. Pringle notes in her discussion of male managers and female secretaries that although individual staff "can increasingly call on the language of 'team' to insist on certain rights and reciprocities. It is also in the boss's interests to talk the language of 'teams' and disguise the actual workings of power" (p. 55). The analysis in this study suggest that the relationship of teamwork and power is more complex for women managers as well.

From this perspective, the strategic use of teamwork can be linked to theories of ideology and power (Burbules, 1986; Mumby, 1988). A management strategy focused on teamwork, although personally comfortable to a number of the individual women managers, can also be seen as a means of introducing a new ideology into the power relations of the workplace:

> Ideology is not simply a means of rationalization of coercion, but also a way of generating positive enthusiasm for a particular course of action or state of affairs; it facilitates, and not only restricts, action. (Burbules, 1986, p. 106)

Introducing the concept of teamwork as the new bureaucratic "ideology" has numerous advantages for women managers within bureaucracies. First, as Pringle (1988, 1989) notes (in her discussion of male managers), it is in the interests of conflict-free group functioning to disguise managerial authority within the framework of 'team,' even though the managers consistently insist that the obligations of their managerial authority continue to exist and be exercised in a team environment. Second, the use of teamwork strategies, effectively implemented, can significantly reduce the daily fire-fighting workload of the senior manager by extending "adjunct control" (Tancred-Sheriff, 1989) for management responsibilities down through the hierarchy, thus freeing a manager's personal time available for other issues and new projects which have the potential to expand her power position outward in relation to the rest of the campus. Third, from a standpoint of gender analysis, teamwork strategies perhaps make the wielding of managerial authority by female managers more acceptable to their staff. Where stereotyped expectations of "management" and "feminine behavior" generally come into conflict in a no-win situation for female managers (Harriman, 1985; Kanter, 1977; Pringle, 1988), the use of teamwork strategies with their emphasis on cooperation, collaboration, and community within the work group blend the opposition between the two stereotypes and make the direction of the female manager easier to acknowledge as "natural." Fourth, by incorporating teamwork philosophies into their disciplinary framework, female managers may manipulate their own self-images in a way that blends the contradiction of "manager" and "female" in their self-concepts by transforming the most dramatic instances of managerial authority into issues of concern for the overall work community, rather than issues of control over individual workers. And finally, for all that teamwork strategies are advantageous to the manager, it must not be forgotten that these approaches have genuine benefits for the staff in terms of autonomy, independence, and competence-building (as Pringle notes in her chapter on female managers). Thus, the two "opposites" of connection and control become partners in the management strategies of those participants who emphasized the importance of teamwork in their relations with staff.

Authority and Resistance

At the level of their more senior staff, those participants dealing with staff problems were extremely cautious in their approach and showed a high preference for face-saving solutions such as retirements, lateral transfers or voluntary resignations, rather than the more direct approach of evaluation and procedures for improvement or dismissal that they were comfortable using with more junior staff. The essential difference would appear to reside in issues of authority and power. With support staff, their authority (i.e., their recognized, legitimate bureaucratic power) is for the most part unquestioned and heavily supported by the bureaucratic processes of the institution in terms of formal procedures with the central personnel office and with the staff associations or unions. The managers could therefore address the problems with junior staff with a combination of managerial attention to procedure and administrative justice (authority) and personal concern for the feelings and morale of both the staff member and the staff group (connection). With senior staff, however, the managers dealing with this issue in the study were less willing to put their authority to the test. Although the hierarchical difference between the two groups of staff generally consisted of only one or two levels in the reporting structure, the capacity for powerful action/resistance in the senior staff was significantly greater and a cause for caution in these managers' decision making.

On a personal level, these participants had worked closely with their senior staff in a relationship that was usually more collegial than supervisory in its tone; and several of them commented that they found that it was more difficult personally and professionally in these cases to switch into performance-appraisal mode with its heavy overtones of evaluation, judgement, and close supervision. Within that same perspective, they found that the actual interaction when they make the switch to performance appraisal and supervisory mode received stronger resistance from senior staff with performance problems. This stronger reaction may have arisen because these participants' senior staff had also been operating under that same assumption of collegiality and the relative autonomy and independence of their senior position, and so may have perceived the switch in the managers' attitude to them as a loss of power in their relationship (i.e., their power was in part derived from that autonomy and independence granted them by their supervisor). This, in addition to all the other factors involved when individuals are criticized or found wanting, has the potential to produce a stronger reaction, depending on the personalities and emotional state of the staff member with the problem. There was no sense, however, that any of the managers in the study were prepared to back away from a problem with a senior staff member simply because they had a closer relationship or because they were unwilling to experience the confrontation. Although these circumstances made the experience even more unpleasant and complicated for them, they were not detriments to action.

Another factor that might influence why this group of managers in the study were less willing to put their authority to the test in dealing with senior staff that had performance problems resides in their worry about undermining hierarchical authority structures within their organizations. Bureaucracies, modelled initially on military structures of command, depend on a cultural belief shared by all members that the authority implicit in hierarchical structure is an essential and unquestioned component of the continued smooth functioning of that bureaucracy. Part of bureaucratic mythology is that the boss is always right, and an essential component of bureaucracy is that continued maintenance of bureaucratic process and power structures becomes the primary purpose of the organization (Ferguson, 1984; Foucault, 1980). Therefore apparent disciplinary problems within the management structure are felt as somehow dangerous, in that they don't fit the bureaucratic paradigm and can provide inspirations to the "rank and file" for revolutionary thought and independent action lower in the hierarchy. Although the participants would smile with me at this hyperbole, nevertheless, the myth of the impervious supervisor is part of the management consciousness, as shown by one participant who worried that her actions had not reinforced her senior staff member's authority. At the same time, however, there are some practical reasons for adhering to and supporting the administrative hierarchy within their own unit. Unless a team approach with all consequent shifts of empowerment and accountability is in place, undermining the authority of an intermediate level of supervision opens up the manager to a potential significant increase in workload if staff in the area choose to act on the precedent by consistently "end running" requests for decisions around their supervisor and bringing them directly to the manager's attention. Ultimately, it could also undermine the manager's own authority and status, by making the whole hierarchical structure of authority seem less impervious to challenge.

Another consideration for a number of the managers in deciding whether to put their authority to the test in dealing with senior staff that had performance problems resides in their worries about the extent of their authority, influence and power, and whether it is sufficient to withstand resistance from the staff member within the bureaucracy. First, the extent of their authority over the hiring and firing of senior staff is a real and valid concern. In many universities, middle management staff are hired under different contractual arrangements than the support staff, and sometimes under the overall umbrella of the faculty contract. Within these arrangements, the formal authority to discipline or fire a managerial staff member often resides in another unit or university officer (at the University of Alberta, for example, that authority resides in the Office of the Vice-President Academic). Therefore, such measures are approached with a higher degree of caution by university officers who are wary of conflicts with faculty associations, and aware that professional and managerial staff are more likely to resort to successful legal recourse in cases of job dismissal. In this environment, the university manager has a bigger job with senior staff problems when it comes to convincing the university bureaucratic support structures that she has a valid complaint that cannot be handled internally, getting the agreement she needs to reinforce her authority in action and sometimes, getting the financial support for potential buy-outs or legal action.

Interacting with this concern are considerations regarding the practicalities of a power struggle in weighing the strength of the connections and alliances that the manager has (as opposed to those alliances that her problematic senior staff member has) within the political context of the university, and whether within this context her alliances are strong enough to carry the day. The senior manager in this situation must gauge the extent of the influence that her senior staff member has over the opinion of their mutual campus colleagues, in relation both to her current disciplinary action and also in relation to her future working relationship with other colleagues and units. If the staff member has strong alliances with individuals or units that hold a greater balance of power in the manager's relationship with them (such as her own supervisor), she may pragmatically decide not to risk "losing" in an overt power struggle if there is any chance that the influence of her staff's alliances could negate her decision. (Chapter 5 of this study contains several interesting examples of the reverse of this situation in action, when several study participants tell stories of the impact of their own alliances and influence in power struggles with their supervisors.) Similarly, if the manager suspects her action would shift that balance of power in her interactions to the other party (unit, colleague, or supervisor) in terms of their future interactions, even though it might not materially change the immediate decision, she might judge that the pragmatic solution is to live with the internal problem rather than, by acting on it, create greater external problems for herself in the future.

As the next two chapters will discuss in detail, managerial influence and power resides in large part in both connections and reputation. A reputation of managerial competence could be seriously damaged if a manager is perceived as not being able to hire/train/control appropriate behavior and support from her own senior staff. When the performance issues are nebulous and hard to measure, as is usually the case with senior positions, there is also the potential, in particularly nasty conflicts, for aspersions on a manager's integrity and character in terms of her personal and professional reputation. A prudent manager therefore may try to steer clear of such potentially dangerous waters. A complicating factor is gender mix. In the case of a female manager coping with performance problems from a male manager reporting to her, there is also the danger if the problem goes public that her professional reputation will be endangered by discriminatory generalizations that women can't supervise men effectively, or worse, by discriminatory evaluations that she specifically can't cope with managing male staff (Kanter, 1977; Pringle, 1988). The manager must consider her relationship with the senior administration, knowing that one of her primary responsibilities is to be seen exclusively as an agent of help and never, as one of the study participants bluntly put it, "a pain in the ass." From this perspective, the prospect of a public conflict that might require mediation from a higher level in the hierarchy is something to avoid.

Finally, the senior manager, looking at this long and complicating set of factors, has to face the basic practical issue of whether she has the time to undertake the struggle. Given this combination of factors related to power issues in organizational politics, factors that rarely come into play with support staff, it becomes obvious why a manager might choose to avoid confrontation over a continuing performance problem at the level of senior staff and continue to search for a face-saving, conflict-avoiding solution over a longer period. Reluctance to engage in what might escalate into a public power struggle with one of their senior staff is based in these cautions regarding the limitations of bureaucratic authority in relation to issues of influence, power and resistance.

Summary

The women's discussion of staff management portrayed an interesting dynamic between a management style based on teamwork and connection, and the responsibilities of authority and leadership inherent in their own positions. This dynamic between teamwork and authority is not perceived as a conflict by the participants. Both aspects, connection and authority, exist simultaneously in their leadership. Some of the participants were very self-aware about their own decisions in relation to the balance of these two aspects in their own style, whether it be Alma wryly describing the staff-assisted evolution out of her "buddy phase" or Edie talking about adjusting her management style to meet the individual needs and maturity levels of her various staff.

Throughout the discussions related to flexibility and sharing, teamwork, and staff development and discipline in this chapter, the words of several of the participants showed a constant balancing in their analysis and decision making. These participants balanced between recognizing the need to adjust the workplace to the needs of the individual through flexible work arrangements, and insisting on the basic requirements of the institution in terms of production and outcomes. Although they were strongly focused on the importance of group process and teamwork as effective workplace process, a number of the participants balanced this commitment with knowledge about their own accountability for leadership and decision making. For these participants, their genuine interest in developing their staff's abilities and connecting to them as one human being to another coexisted with their comfort with the authority that came with their positions and their own use of that authority.

At the same time, several participants described situations where they also balanced their awareness of their authority with an acute political sense of their environment. Thus, in using that authority in disciplinary issues in relation to their staff, they assessed with caution the power dynamic between their authority and their staff's alliances and potential for resistance to their authority. This assessment of the power relations with their staff was reflected in pragmatic decisions to handle junior staff problems with relatively straightforward bureaucratic procedures to protect community within the workforce, while handling senior staff problems in a more political fashion designed to protect the bureaucratic hierarchy and their own power position within that hierarchy. In the latter case, these managers were undoubtedly assisted in their own power position by their deliberate strategies to develop extensive connections within campus communities outside their own department. The next chapter addresses this aspect of the managers' work worlds by looking at their relationships with administrative and faculty colleagues across the campus.

CHAPTER 4

CAMPUS CONNECTIONS: INFLUENCE THROUGH REPUTATION

Barb: Power over resources is important. . . . The power of alliances and the power of your reputation are the others.

Edie: You can't separate power and influence from credibility. If you don't have credibility, you're not going to have any power and influence. And you have to earn that credibility; it doesn't just come.

Julie: It's reputation and it's trusting.

Introduction

In the participants' descriptions of their interactions with staff in the last chapter, there was a sense of separation and balance between personal viewpoints and professional judgements arising from their managerial positions. A similar separation and balance appeared in the participants' descriptions of the overall university environment and their interactions with others across campus.

Findings

The University Context

University culture. One of the questions that I asked each participant, as a lead-in to a discussion of power and influence, was to describe their university context or culture. The participants' understandings of the overall university context when asked to generalize about the culture at their institution ranged from very positive comments through to very despairing perspectives. At the same time, however, with only one exception, the participants indicated a high degree of satisfaction with their work at the university. Overall feelings of success or enjoyment mingled with the satisfactions of meeting and working with people in several of the responses from participants:

> *Ferdi:* It's not just achieving what I think is the right end; it's getting to it in what I think is an effective and appropriate way, . . . involving the people I want to, and everyone feeling that the outcome is what we have worked toward. And that to me really is success.
>
> *Alma:* It's really wonderful to be a part of a university because most people still, despite everything, admire universities, admire what universities are trying to do, regard them as one of the last places of true idealism in our society.
>
> *Edie:* I love my job. . . . I love the people I deal with; I love the type of work I do. . . . There are new things happening all the time, and there's so much you can get involved in.
>
> *Marie:* I love to come to work every day. I really love what I do, and I love the people I work with.

One participant out of the seven, however, was wondering whether to leave the university and change careers, describing frustrations with campus politics and the impact on her sense of self: "I have been adapting, . . . acting in a way to minimize . . . who and what I am and what I'm capable of, and I'm no longer prepared to do that," but she also indicated that "Intellectually, I love working here because the intellectual challenges are there."

At the other end of the spectrum, Edie presented an optimistic viewpoint of her campus:

> I feel that there is strong support for support staff. I feel I'm a very worthwhile part of this campus. The professors do not make me feel—other than one or two—that I'm not an academic. . . . I find there's a lot of support from the students, from the alumni, from professors, from deans; so I find it's a very supportive environment to work in.

The basic form of Edie's comments, however, also reiterated the divisions of category and resulting pressures between the faculty and the managerial and support staff on the campuses, which came up in several interviews. Julie reflected these status divisions, and the need for administrators to accommodate, as the lower status and less powerful players in the interaction, in her description of interactions with faculty: "[It] depends on how you treat them. Again, you have to learn their style, and sometimes they come down very arrogant, and they demand a lot of things." Ferdi talked about the stresses in campus relationships: "We had this minor disaster . . . which got one of the [academic units] very annoyed at us in the last few weeks—more annoyed than they frankly should have been. But people aren't very willing to be patient or to understand." Later she referred back to the same incident:

> [They] really got up on their high horse and really got nasty. . . . I wanted it to succeed. I don't like to be criticized. But it also hurt because some of those people are friends, and I thought, damn it all! Can't you see how hard this all is? It's not that we don't care, it's not that we're not working. It's that it's hard, and we're still trying to get it going.

Vivian compared the competition between academic units on her campus to "warring city states," and Julie's comments also hinted at an atmosphere of fault-finding and fear when she said, "Working in the university, you have to get consensus. Everything's done on consensus so no one's to blame." Ferdi described the campus context with a wry comparison:

> It reminds me a lot of my mom's stories of the blackout in England, . . . stories about when they heard the bomb fall a couple of blocks away, they felt better because they knew that there wouldn't be another that night, and then felt guilty. I see a lot of, "Oh, thank heavens the financial system's in trouble, because this means what we're doing, nobody will notice." . . . That's a sign of a place that's under a lot of stress financially. But also a place that really isn't healthy, I think; where people are regarded as expendable.

These varying pessimistic assessments of the university context from some of the participants, would seem to indicate disappointment with the work environment in which they have chosen to act out their professional lives.

However, at the same time, a number of the participants also conveyed strong positive impressions when they talked about their personal feelings about the university and their jobs. These positive reactions focused in part on the high amount of interdependence and interpersonal interactions in their jobs, and were reiterated in several examples about opportunities to meet and work with interesting and motivating people. One participant delighted in the opportunities for learning on her campus, from the singing violins of remarkable students, to her growth in self-confidence from the challenges in her position; a second welcomed the opportunity to earn the respect over a twenty year career of academic colleagues who were "like icons" to her; another talked about the rewards of working with volunteers; and a fourth talked with glowing admiration about the generosity of spirit that she has seen in donors who have given funds to support her university. Again, however, there were other understandings of their work lives. Imbedded in these participants' comments on the personal value of these opportunities for meeting and working with people, some of the participants indicated that they received a lot of support, although several commented about feeling professionally isolated.

Professional isolation. Only Edie and Marie talked about their university environments as being highly supportive. Marie focused her comments on support from her supervisor, but referred specifically to being excluded from the "old boys' network" of coffee meetings. Edie referred to extensive support from her supervisor and numerous campus colleagues. The other study participants did not complain about a lack of support from their university colleagues; the subject was not raised from that perspective. At the same time, however, with the exception of Edie, there was a noticeable lack of stories in their interviews reflecting support or recognition from managerial peers in their institutions.

However, although the lack of institutional support was not much discussed, the resulting isolation was a recurring theme in the interviews. One registrarial participant was troubled that her academic colleagues reacted to her position rather to her person: "A lot of people are afraid of me. I walk down the hall right now, and they say, 'I'm marking [my] exams!'" Julie emphasized the word *alone,* saying, "I almost think that you're *alone* in this whole thing, and that you're fighting this tremendous battle . . . for recognition all the time." Alma indicated, "Pretty much I'm on my own." Asked if she was comfortable with that, she replied, "No, I'm scared to death!" Ferdi mentioned wistfully, "I find being at this level pretty lonely, actually, because I would love to be closer to a lot of my staff, and I don't feel I can be [long pause], and that's hard sometimes." Barb referred to feeling isolated, "At periods, but probably not that long, . . . you could have spoken to me and I would have identified that as the biggest single problem." The isolation of some of the women managers was perceived by them mainly as a factor of their administrative positions, and several participants also referred to their gender as a factor in excluding them from some of the social support activities available to male colleagues, both findings reflective of other research on women in the workplace (Cooper, 1995; Kanter, 1977).

In talking about coping strategies to deal with their isolation, the participants did not look for an institutional solution. Instead, six of the participants referred to strategies to distance themselves from their work environment; signing up for activities that "ha[d] nothing to do with the university," increasing their social interaction outside the university context with friends or family, and even booking weekends out of town to ensure that they would not spend them working in the office. At the same time as these ideas of isolation came out, most of the managers in the study also described their high levels of activity in increasing contacts and connections across their campuses. However, they saw this mainly as a strategy for increasing influence and effectiveness, rather than an activity for countering their feelings of isolation.

Influence and Expertise

Expertise and ethics. A starting point for the interpersonal connections across campus cultivated by these participants was usually their functional area of expertise. The subject of expertise often arose in the interviews in relation to overt discussions of the concepts of power and influence. By the middle of the second interview with the participants, if the subject of power and influence had not come up yet in their discussion of interactions or their description of the university context, then I would ask them a question such as I asked Julie:

> *Bonnie:* In looking at that business, about influence and power, how would you position yourself? What kind of powers do you think you have and don't have?
>
> *Julie:* I have a tremendous amount of power, indirectly and directly. If you ever want anything done, you talk to Julie. . . . We do facilitate an awful lot; we do an awful lot on campus.

Asked directly about their images of themselves as managerial women with power, several of the study participants responded, as Julie did, in terms of their functional expertise. Julie lists "indirect" before "direct" power in her sentence structure; other participants expressed discomfort with the term *power* and preferred to think of *influence:*

Bonnie: When you think about power, you talked about having some discomfort with the concept.

Ferdi: Yes, I do. I don't know why I do, but it really makes me kind of, "Oh no, I don't like that," which is silly. It's squeamishness, and I suspect it's female, and it's silly. I'm much more comfortable with . . . the indirect influence of events rather than the overt use of power.

Bonnie: Is your squeamishness about acknowledging? You're not squeamish about the idea of the indirect use of power?

Ferdi: Not at all, not at all.

Although a careful negotiator and politician in her campus connections, Ferdi also felt perfectly comfortable in her role as the final authority in her functional area of expertise on the campus. She talked as well of the acknowledgement on her campus that she is in fact the final authority; that under pressure from the President or Vice-Presidents on specific cases, she will give her full personal attention to ensure full and proper procedures and consideration were taken on an issue, but she will not back down on the final decisions made in her office if she determines they were correct.

Several participants clearly saw that part of their role as experts was to ensure ethical decision making in the functional area of their responsibility. When Edie talked about issues of power she also made the connection between expertise and ethical issues. Edie talked about the development of her expertise: "I was working in an environment where most people had Ph.D.s, and I found that intimidating from the beginning. . . . [Now] I feel I know a great deal more about my area than anyone with a Ph.D. could possibly know." Edie was adamant that in her functional area, she was the final arbiter and authority, using the strongest language here that she used anywhere in our three meetings and over five hours of conversation:

Edie: If the President were to tell me he wanted something done and he wanted it done a certain way, I have no trouble accepting that, if I morally and ethically feel it's okay to do that. Now, if he

> told me to do something that I didn't ethically feel was right to do, then I'd have a great deal of difficulty, and I would probably tell him to take the job and shove it. But I have never run into that, and I don't anticipate I ever would.

When I asked Vivian about the word *power,* she responded:

> The authority of my position is extremely limited. . . . If, on the other hand, we look at influence and power, . . . my particular way of articulating and seeing the world creates for the people around me this "Oh right! I never thought of looking at it that way!" response. It's the conceptual part of it, in an environment in which that kind of ability is the currency. . . . There's influence, very definitely; and if there's a power, it is one that . . . derives from the intellect and the conceptualization.

Vivian's comments expanded the idea of expertise to a more inclusive definition of expertise plus intellectual capacity in her function as advisor on policy development in her area and on committee decisions; essentially she laid claim to personal power that came from both intelligence and knowledge of her field. Similarly, imbedded in Vivian's discussion of power, influence and expertise, was a story about her perceptions of her obligations for ethical decision making in her functional role. She talked about holding firm on a position in order to avoid what she considered "a breach of trust," refusing to agree with arguments from her supervisor about "the interests of . . . the university as a whole" and using the authority in her position to refuse participation in the proposed action.

In analyzing these three participants' comments, one aspect that the introduction of the concepts of influence and power appeared to raise in their minds was two linked ideas: that their authority in relation to the campus community was vested in their expertise, and that this came with obligations to exercise their authority in an ethical manner on behalf of the university. They perceived themselves as the final arbiter of any ethical positions in relation to their expert function, regardless of their place in the administrative hierarchy or who in the hierarchy might oppose their decision.

In reviewing this section of the study, Vivian commented further on the distinctions she clearly makes between authority, on the one hand, and power and influence:

> My authority is vested in the position description and is specified. I can be held directly accountable to exercise it and to not overstep the boundary. Power and influence derive from my ability to describe, to articulate, to conceptualize in unique ways. . . . The use of power and influence is within an ethical framework.

The sense received from the interviews was that the participants' insistence on the authority of their expertise in areas particularly with ethical sensitivity was respected on their campuses; that in fact, their authority was real in these areas.

<u>Good counsel and technology</u>. Where ethical questions were not at issue, however, some participants were not as adamant about enforcing their point of view or interpretation through their authority. They recognized another layer in relation to their expertise, a layer of consultation and good counsel, where they felt a professional obligation to offer advice and assistance but were quite prepared to accept other outcomes than the one they recommended. Marie highlighted the need for care and caution, and also acknowledged that her words might not always be heeded:

> I think with regard to [my functional area], almost everyone would listen to what I had to say. They wouldn't necessarily do it. People often take the easier road or the fastest road. . . . The President will ask and listen. Certainly [the Vice-President] will listen and take counsel, and he will do what you suggest with regard to that area of expertise. So I think that I'm very comfortable with the power—although I don't like that word—in that area. I guess when you have power you hope you're always right, and nobody's always right. So it you're giving counsel to people, you're always apprehensive that it's good counsel.

The issue of expertise and "good counsel" was seen from two perspectives, the first being the worry about giving good counsel voiced here by Marie. Several participants also worried about receiving good counsel.

Four participants expressed concerns about technological areas where they had to rely on the expertise and decision making of others, reflecting other research indicating that technological issues are an increasing workplace stressor for managerial women (Statham, 1993). Marie talked about the difficulties of getting sufficient support for computer applications development and her resignation to a continual degree of negotiation and conflict with the campus systems department. Julie talked about her decision to hire an unpopular candidate for a position, justifying her decision to disregard other concerns because she needed to hire someone with a degree of technological expertise to compensate for her own lack of expertise in automated systems. Ferdi talked about making the choice to become more expert in this area and her frustration with the politics involved in technological decisions; Barb outlined the problem of technology issues as an issue of trust as well as expertise:

> *Barb:* I don't have unbelievable expertise in the area, so that I think would undermine some of what I was saying. I mean, it would undermine it with me too.
>
> *Bonnie:* Do you think you need expertise in a particular area in order to . . . ?
>
> *Barb:* Oh, I don't think you need total expertise, but I think in these technical areas it's a little easy for them to—[pauses]—you know, we all believe in science. If they told me there were ghosts over there . . . and that's why they couldn't do it, I wouldn't believe them for a minute. But they can tell me some kind of long scientific term, and I don't know enough, so it's hard for me to judge what's possible and what isn't possible.

Barb talked about using her connections to provide a more rounded picture in areas where she lacked expertise and wanted to double-check the advice she was receiving. She concluded with a wry acknowledgement of her own potential to exercise intimidation and political use of expertise:

> It's simpler where you have expertise. The area where I have more expertise, I can play the opposite game if I feel I need to, which is kind of a below-the-belt use of expertise, and the other person is kind of frightened of asking too many questions. . . . I think expertise can be helpful, as long as it doesn't mean that you can't look at a variety of solutions. But I don't think I've ever been that expert!

Barb's last comments here showed her understanding that expertise by itself has limitations, that there are a "variety of solutions" for every problem situation and that decision making at the managerial level involves more than just functional expertise. Decisions are made in a context of multiple agendas, institutional politics, and conflicting but real needs from different players. Thus most of the participants did not restrict their comments to the level of functional expertise. Instead they talked about concepts such as "influence" and the need to make connections on many levels in order that their counsel and expertise would be more likely to be heard and acted upon.

Influencing priorities. One of the participants, responsible for fund-raising and development activities at her university, talked about the parameters of her influence:

> I have ultimate influence in the area of private funding when it comes to raising funds for an academic program. . . . I worked closely with them and really do make the final recommendation as to the viability and the priority—not the need; there's no question about need, but the priority. So in that sense, yes, I do have influence.

Asked how she determined priorities, another participant working in a similar area described the careful process she used in establishing priorities and dealing with faculty requests for funding support to which she clearly did not give priority:

> That is the toughest thing we do, and it is very, very difficult. We do it in a whole combination of ways. . . . The ones that are really bottom are the ones that might be a pet project of one academic not really supported by their chair or dean, they're off the limb, there are no obvious donors. . . . It's always pretty clear in

> situations like that they're our bottom priority. So we try and use it as an opportunity to help them understand what development is, which a lot of faculty don't understand.

The decision-making criteria were clearly outlined; the challenge for the participant was communicating her decision in a tactful and helpful manner that maintained a positive connection with the enthusiastic donor or faculty member. When this participant said "bottom priority," she meant "no." She described a series of polite meetings she had with an insistent faculty member requesting development support for a conference, when conferences were a low priority item for fund-raising and where she felt the financial difficulties in the particular case had been created by inappropriate decisions on the part of the conference planners. Her authority to say no was clearly understood by herself, but she used an "education process" to communicate the decision through a process of influence, bringing the client to an understanding of the context and, in most cases, an agreement with her reasons. The challenge for many managers in the university environment resides in this area of saying no, but doing so with courtesy and respect as essential strategy. Thus most of the managers in the study indicated that they do not hesitate to actually exercise their considerable power based in their authority of function and specialized knowledge; but paradoxically, at the same time they keep a wary eye on their relative powerlessness within the status systems of the institution and use significant impression management strategies to couch the power in those interactions in gentler guises.

I asked Barb about the question of power, and like several of the other participants, she also talked about influence and priorities:

> What do I actually have the power to do? Well, this job is more of a recommender; . . . it's a fairly limited realm. I guess in this job you have a big influence on priorities. Where I put my emphasis, the staff emphasis, could decide how fast certain things got done, how they were organized, and what the longer run influence was.

Barb added a new twist to the idea of expertise, by looking at it from the perspective of being coerced into consulting the expertise of others, or coercing others into consulting one's own expertise:

> There is another source of power I think . . . and that's what I call the power of guilt, . . . the big emphasis on the guilt and the sinner. . . . There are people who you have to consult because there is this aura of transgression and rule violation.

The "power of guilt" as described by Barb is a form of compulsory, negative connection forced by an individual's insistence on their expertise or their authority in a particular area. This is a process that works both ways: Barb knew that she could use her position and expertise to make others feel compelled to consult her opinion, solicit her recommendation or seek her approval; and she has worked with other managers where she felt compelled by the "power of guilt" to cooperate with their agenda, "people that end up making you do something, but it was all no fun." Most of the participants, including Barb, talked at some length about their strategies to create positive connections with others in order to receive the others' advice/expertise, or to make their own offerings of advice and expertise more easily accepted (that is, to downplay the negative "power of guilt" when they want to provide input or direction to someone else).

Influence, Connections, and Information

Strategies for multiplying contacts. These participants used a number of ways to increase their connections and contacts. They looked at the benefits of this in the immediate campus environment, as well as in environments external to the campus. Two of the participants talked about the strategic use of connection on initial appointment to their current managerial position. Edie described a "deliberate strategy" of using visibility through campus participation and connections when she took over a department with a poor reputation to help attain recognition for the changes she was making:

> What I recognized right off the bat was that the credibility and the visibility of this office were not very good, and decided that I was going to start working on both of those. And, really, the two go hand in hand because as you are seen more at events and on committees and taking part in meetings, then the visibility of the office increases. . . . It was a deliberate strategy.

Similarly, Alma talked about taking a position at a different university at one point in her career, and the deliberate efforts she made to cultivate connections with managerial and faculty colleagues there:

> I made appointments to go and see almost everybody I could think of. . . . Mostly I just listened to them. But I was also trying to figure out where have we got some commonality here, and who am I meeting where there's just an instant sense of rapport. . . . And then I would talk to them about the culture [of the university] and what they thought the university's key issues were that they were trying to grapple with, and in that discussion I began to also understand the lay of the land. [And the next stage was] just trying to have as much personal interaction as possible, so whenever there was any issue that I could, I'd send an e-mail note . . . if I saw them in the halls I would always try and stop and say something or another. . . . I would watch for opportunities where I could support somebody in something they wanted to do, see if I could accumulate a few small IOUs.

Edie framed her strategy of connection within her overall plan to establish a professional reputation based on competence and credibility, and saw multiple contacts as a way to create visibility for her personal and improved departmental reputation. Alma's comments outlined a strategy of connections not only in terms of her campus getting to know her (visibility), but also in terms of information, what she herself could learn, thus increasing her expert knowledge base about the university.

In her example, Barb also talked about the advantage of access to knowledge that came from connections across campus in order to offset the potential for disinformation from computing specialists:

> You get better at recognizing. . . . It's talking to a number of people, so perhaps someone at [another] university, some academic people on the campus who are very into computing, people in the faculty offices, some of whom have no allegiance, and so on.

Barb's comments illustrated the need for contacts who have "no allegiance" on the issue at hand, as a source of unbiased information to use as a benchmark to evaluate the advice she received. In essence, Barb was looking for contacts whose allegiance was to *her*, or at least not to someone else, so that she could be assured the content of the message she received was not corrupted.

Ferdi was also clear about the nature of her contacts. She was attempting to reach beyond the institutional nature of the relationship and establish a personal relationship, feeling that that level of connection provided a deeper allegiance and increased support for her area:

> One deliberate thing I did . . . was to get myself on the board of our Faculty Club. The Board's mainly faculty; it doesn't hurt to get to know them well. I find the more people I know on some kind of personal level, the easier it is to get things done. . . . I cultivate connections with key people . . . chairs of committees, people like that, on some level other than just [the functional area]. I try to find areas where we can relate.

Besides looking for multiple contacts, and looking for ways to connect on a personal rather than simply institutional level, Ferdi was also very careful to frame the nature of her purposeful contacts in a low-key manner:

> I find e-mail actually facilitates that because you can reduce the level of formality of the communication much more easily. . . . And I'm conscious that I do that . . . [to get] to a level where we're talking sort of easily and openly with one another and sharing concerns, all of which helps if I've got something I want to happen.

Marie also talked about the importance of using personal, informal connection rather than formal communications, but used the telephone as her preferred communication tool, especially with faculty, worrying that e-mail and other written forms limited the ability of voice communication to project empathy and understanding and diffuse conflict. Julie also talked about "listening to people and learning the listening skills needed" and about her comfortable relationships with faculty members, commenting at one point that "the closer you are to the faculty, [the] . . . more clout [you have] at the university."

In reviewing the commentary from the interviews, it appeared to me that two participants addressed the issue of status differentials and connections with the faculty in a different manner, by claiming academic credentials for themselves. One participant referred to her graduate research work and on several occasions talked about her analytic approach to her environment as a form of scholarship, thereby positioning herself within the academic traditions of her institution: "My focus of study has been postsecondary institutions, universities. I work in the institution that I study, and I'm studying it all the time. The issues are never very far from my thinking." I asked the participants for their comments on my observation. Reviewing this section and my query, this participant suggested a different interpretation of her intellectual approach to participation in the university community:

> I am not in a sense positioning myself within the academic traditions of the University. . . . I don't want the academic tradition of intellectual isolation or intellectualizing. I want constantly to look at the activity, the decisions, the interactions; to reflect; to *change*; to put thought into practice and practice into thought. This is not *academic* tradition as I observe it.

Instead of perceiving herself as one of the scholars in the community, this participant positioned herself apart, but perceived a need to understand the overall role of the university and her part within it in order to perform successfully in her role in university administration:

> To plan strategically for my unit, I must have a clear sense of how environmental demands will tug and pull at my mandate. If I am not grounded in a clear view of the university in society and my specific university in a province and nation, I have no effective way to resist the pulls from faculty or from government which would seriously distort the mandate of my unit.

Another manager in the study consistently thought of and labelled herself, not in terms of her administrative position, but rather in terms of her academic discipline (a male-dominated discipline). She maintained membership in the disciplinary associations, attended scholarly meetings, and taught an introductory course every year: "I've kept teaching. That's the one [activity] that gives me the credential and is probably worth it." Her status as part-time teaching faculty—in practice, a minor campus role compared to her administrative career—was the source of her primary professional self-image. She acknowledged the financial and information benefits of this dual role, but it seemed to me that the primary benefit she enjoyed was a freedom from ego investment in her managerial position. This participant, reviewing these remarks, commented:

> This was very interesting to think about. After some reflection, I feel I identify myself [with my academic discipline] primarily because it affects my way of thinking, like being a trained feminist or lawyer [would]. I feel I have to tell other people where I am coming from. . . . As well, I get a surprising amount of support from the Department, probably the greatest source of the feeling of being both liked and respected.

For this participant, it was her academic role, rather than her administrative role, that provided a feeling of community and addressed the issue of isolation and support discussed earlier. She commented that my suggestion that her identification with the academic discipline gave her freedom from ego investment in her managerial position "could be true" but that she thought I was closer to her situation when I suggested that by positioning herself with academic credentials she could deliberately align herself in general fashion with the academic mission of the university and distance herself from identification with a particular position, a protective strategy within the politics and status differentials of the institution.

Ferdi was careful about the negotiation of status differentials on campus and used the informality made possible by her personal connections to defuse this difficulty. She told a story about her attempts to build effective membership for an upcoming meeting with visiting officials. When she invited the faculty member who was chair of the committee, he left a message to say he was out of town that week and that he had asked a managerial colleague to attend, rather than a faculty administrator:

> And I thought to myself, Well, that's great, but it isn't what I want in terms of showing these people who really makes the decisions. Nor are they going to feel good about coming to this meeting, especially the guys from New York, only to be entertained by [managers]. So I was just talking to [my managerial colleague] to say, "Do you think you could get me some academics?" Only I didn't say, "Look, I need to have academic people"; I said, "Can you find me some tame academics that might be around next week and would like a free lunch?"

Rather than relying on the authority inherent in her position to define the appropriate people to attend the meeting, Ferdi used humor and her informal relationship with another manager to defuse the perceived insult to him as she requested attendance from influential faculty rather than a manager. By relying on the influence that derived from her informal connections, rather than her authority, she was able to achieve what she wanted and simultaneously save face for her colleague. She reduced the impact of the status differential between faculty and managers with a managerial-insider joke about "tame" academics, thereby aligning herself with her managerial colleague rather than her faculty colleagues. Given Ferdi's other positive comments about her faculty colleagues, this was a temporary conversational strategy of connection, not a reflection of any concern or feeling of difference she has generally about the faculty at her institution.

Visibility and committee involvement. The whole area of committees and meetings was a fruitful source of connection and increased influence for a number of the participants. Due to the nature of their positions, every manager in the study was involved with committee processes on her campus in her functional area. A number of the managers were also invited or appointed participants in committees with broader mandates, a factor that would increase their power in interactions as a result of the knowledge and participation resulting from boundary-spanning roles.

Marie commented on her invited involvement with several campus committees outside of her area, but concluded, "I guess I've really never thought about it. Influence I think is really related to [the functional area]." Marie's use of committees within her functional area, however, was extremely strategic and highly planned and structured. She outlined for me a multiple committee structure designed to engage commitment and produce concrete results with extensive participation from both campus participants and client groups.

Barb talked about a "formative experience" early in her career when she realized how much influence was available through leadership on committees, simply by providing the organization and facilitating the process. She described her involvement in a committee established by a group of academic women to address equity issues:

> When I was doing that, somebody said to me, "This is the best job of chairing I've ever seen," and I hadn't realized I was chairing it. . . . I was facilitating other people to do an agreed-upon goal. And partly you saw how much *making* people sit down together would accomplish.

Barb summed up her strategy for making connections across campus:

> You can't go to everything, but I make more effort than I might otherwise. . . . I did attend when we had this thing on race relations. I'm interested in the area anyway, but I was just there. And people came to make a big deal about it later. They said, "This is clearly the office that has the most understanding." . . . We got a very good reputation, and I guess it's partly on being at whatever there is, . . . turning up to student, faculty, staff events.

Edie also talked about her use of committee process in her functional area and her extensive involvement in committees across campus. She saw advantages that credibility and reputation bring in terms of potential participation on committees making significant decisions. Edie had participated, as a voting member, in several search committees for senior administrators, including the position to which she reports: "So that does give you a real advantage in knowing more about them, [and] they will also know a little more about you." In terms of Edie's focus on visibility and credibility for herself and her office, her participation in these activities was a strategic decision.

The participants pursuing this strategy of connection used it to extend their contacts outside the university as well. Barb's attendance at meetings on race relations on her campus opened up opportunities for public speaking at new forums: "I'll always go and say something on behalf of the university." One manager talked about getting involved in convocation events at her campus as a means of cementing connections with particular attendees. Another talked about her involvement in community business associations and her membership in a high-profile, invitation-only group of influential community business women. Edie talked about the value of contacts in professional associations, government and community as a source of information and as important relationships in her strategy of expanding influence through expanded connections:

> I will often get information that isn't always available to everyone else, and then I make sure I pass that information on to the appropriate people. You have to work at staying in touch, and, again, you have to establish your credibility so that people know that they can trust you, give you information, and you won't necessarily pass on your source.

Most of the participants saw benefits in visibility, just being there. Edie's comments here extended the ideas of connection and visibility further by introducing the concept of reciprocity and exchange of information and favors within the connection. This idea of benefit flowed both ways in every connection.

Connections and reciprocity. Alma's earlier reference to accumulating "a few small IOUs" as a strategy for making connections on her campus also contained this idea of reciprocity as part of the strategy of contacts and connections. The use of connection for reciprocity of influence appeared in the remarks of several other participants as well. Ferdi mentioned several examples where her informal connections with people provided access and opportunity to influence their decision making in ways that expanded her own role on the campus:

> She left in 19XX. The Director [of her unit] and I, who had become pretty good friends by then, had been talking a lot about whether to replace her. And I think the suggestion probably came from me that there really didn't need to be this split [into Ferdi's unit and the other]. . . . It made a lot more sense for there to be one amalgamation.

The vacancy in the supervisory position for a parallel unit presented an opportunity for improved service and coordination of functions that Ferdi identified to the Director in charge of both areas; when the Director heeded her advice and amalgamated the two units into one, Ferdi was placed in charge of both areas. This change was a significant step in her career progression toward subsequent promotions; and one that she initiated herself through the influence of her connections on campus.

Marie emphasized the mutual nature of the benefits deriving from maintaining good connections with another unit on campus. Where the pattern on many campuses is that "there can often be friction" between her area and another, she described the importance of maintaining a positive personal connection to overcome the functional disputes that arose naturally between the two areas because of their overlapping mandates:

> He and I were beyond colleagues; we became very good friends. I didn't know him until I came here, and we developed a wonderful relationship. . . . That's important, because you need each other. We especially need them; they don't need us as much. (laughter) So it's worth our while to make sure it is a good relationship.

Julie preferred to emphasize that the reciprocity arising out of these connections occurs with a certain subtlety: "It's not actually cajoling or doing favors for people or anything, but you remember people that do you a kindness or a goodness, and you go on that way." Whether overt or subtle, a number of the participants clearly saw the value of multiple contacts and close connections in their work environment as an important source of increased influence and support for them. They were also aware that the obligations of connection were mutual; that the relationships created obligations as well as rewards for them within the politics of their institutions.

<u>Connections and long service</u>. Barb indicated that the connections that she had cultivated would hold their value for some time. She told another story of reciprocity over time, describing how she had received influential support from a full professor when she was competing for a senior managerial position; this man, when he was a graduate student, had been

her employee two decades earlier. In a similar vein, Barb commented on how long service, extensive connections, and solid reputation saved enormous amounts of time, because her campus colleagues whom she had known for so many years were now inclined to simply accept her recommendations and decisions, rather than making her spend a lot of time in formal processes to present proposals and convince people of their worth.

Other participants also talked specifically about the strategic advantages of long service at one institution. Edie commented wryly: "If all else fails, you wait till that Dean leaves, and then you approach the next one." One of the key aspects of the administrative environment in higher education is that it is the managerial force that stays there for the long term, and that the senior administration connections change on a regular basis. This gives the power of continuity to the manager. Edie described a long-term project, and the many different ways she had tackled pieces of it to find a solution, so that eventually a whole new program was in place: "I made that commitment, so I kept on, and last year we got it in place, so it probably took me ten years from when I first recognized there was a problem." Edie also talked about the benefit of long-term connections from committee relationships: "I've developed a good relationship with all of them over the years. Even people that were chairmen fifteen years ago, I still have lunch with periodically. . . . So I've always had all these people I can call on to discuss issues."

Ferdi talked about expanding and developing contacts over the long term as well, first as an accident arising out of personal interests, and then as a deliberate strategy. She saw some of the same advantages as the other participants in the study:

> I guess I've always been very involved in things outside my own area of work. Some of that was completely accidental to start with, until I realized it was a useful thing, plus I enjoyed it. And some of it's been very conscious and very deliberate and calculating. . . . [Speaking of one such project early in her career] in retrospect, that's really been very influential. . . . I really enjoy it. If I ever left [my current functional] side of things, that's the area I could see me going into. But it's also given me loads of contacts, a lot of knowledge of what's going on, probably a little credibility with various people.

In this case Ferdi described benefits from her extended contacts, not only in terms of benefits to her current position, but also in terms of expanded career potential through acquisition of new knowledge and new contacts. Her story also reflected a pattern of long-term cultivation of contacts, with future benefits from connections unknown at the point of contact, so that an early associate from an involvement from 15 years ago was now an influential Vice-President on her campus. Ferdi found personal satisfaction as well as career advantage in her long-term connections on her campus, using the example of her friendship with two academic colleagues:

> [They] have over the years become *very*, very good friends and I think have grown to respect me, while I still have that sense of being in awe of them. That means a great deal to me. And I guess if one had a more normal career of changing places as well as jobs, that would not happen in the same way.

The managers in this study found advantages from their extended length of service in their institutions. As the participants discussed these related ideas of connection, reciprocity and long service, much of their strategic focus was on connections as a source of information, and through that information, increased influence for the participants. Maintaining their reputation of trustworthiness and credibility was seen as a major requirement in terms of establishing useful connections that provide information.

Access to information. A number of the participants discussed the two aspects of making connections and gaining information in concert. These participants' words earlier in this chapter have shown how they cultivate connections so that they can use their functional expertise, personal connections and visibility as important means to influence and more effectively inform or advise others. However, these participants also saw increased connections with others as vital sources of information and advice back to them for their own use and effectiveness. Information was seen as a powerful tool or even weapon in some relationships. The connections and networks that others also maintained were seen as a limitation on the information and influence available to the participants in some instances.

Most of the participants saw access to information as valuable within the context of their own particular functional expertise, broadening or filling in gaps in their own knowledge base. Several participants also saw access to information as a critical factor for survival in the power relationships of their institutions, providing them with important information for negotiating the wider political context. Barb's comments reflected the first case when she talked about how she had used information sources from her prior experience and connections in an academic department to offset her lack of specific functional expertise when she took on the management of a large central administrative department:

> Not knowing what that job entailed was not an insurmountable handicap. It meant you got off to a slow start, but the fact that you knew other things that you couldn't have learned on the job, well, then turned out to be an advantage. So, knowing how an academic department worked, who was likely to be doing what job, what sort of priorities they had, was quite handy for getting people to do things and structuring it so that messages went out in a useful way.

Edie described a negotiation in progress with a Dean over control of a particular budget area, and indicated "initially, I only found out about it through the networking that goes on." Vivian described a similar kind of negotiation with a Dean over control of a budget and functional area, and described using her campus connections to give information about the situation to a managerial colleague in another administrative department, identifying for him what might be a problem in the situation from his point of view. Thus she became the "network source" of information to the other department, creating at the same time an ally for her overall strategy in the negotiation.

Alma talked about her frustrations with her current secretary, who did not have the networking skills to cultivate connections with other executive secretaries on campus that would have yielded valuable information. Having had access to that type of information through a previous secretary, she was struggling to find alternative sources for the same insider information. Alma talked at length about the value of cultivating numerous connections as a source of information:

> I think the greatest source of power is having access to information that's difficult to get, and either it's difficult to get because it's protected and people don't want very many people to know, or it's difficult because people simply haven't seen the potential connections of something. And [there is power] if you have the ability to see connections where others don't and therefore create opportunities where others simply can't see them, and if you have access to the information that is only available when you have established widespread trusting relationships. And those trusting relationships can be at any level; they don't have to be tied to somebody's title, so it doesn't necessarily mean that you have a trusting relationship with the Vice-President. . . . So there are cases when there's a secretary who is a far more valuable ally in terms of information.
>
> But it's having your web spread widely enough that whenever an issue comes up, and you sense that there is a piece of the puzzle that's missing here, and you need to understand at least a little more about that missing piece to take a position. Because at this level you are constantly taking positions, and you have to

> decide, are you going to support this colleague in this argument, or are you going to not say anything? Are you going to support the President in this, or are you not going to say anything? Is this an issue where you want to argue vociferously *against*? And if you're going to do that, are you going to do that in a relatively public forum, or are you going to do it privately, one-on-one?
>
> And in order to make all those positioning decisions, you have to have as much information as you can get your hands on about what the real situation is, and that's available only by being perceptive enough to know who probably has the information and being in a position where they'll share it with you. That takes a lot of time. . . . Time to develop the trust, because sometimes the information people give you, if it were found out they had done that, it could jeopardize their own situations. And you have to be in a position yourself to deliver a quid pro quo; you have to be able when the time comes to give them something they need, so it's got to be a two-way street.

Alma's remarks clearly indicated that the information she retrieved from her "web" was absolutely essential in terms of campus politics and policy-setting for the strategic decisions she made as a manager. And her remarks also clearly indicated her awareness that the giving away of information could be a dangerous process for all concerned. This valuable sharing process could also be construed very differently by others in the organization. The person giving away the information risks being seen as "leaking" information, an act of disloyalty or indiscretion. The person asking for the information risks being seen as gossiping, spying or interfering in someone else's area. Therefore caution, discretion, trust and reputation are essential components of the process of connection.

Strategic use of information. At the same time that access to information through connections was seen as an valuable resource, several of the managers in the study explicitly talked about a darker side to the issue, describing examples where information was withheld from them, or about specific decisions they had made themselves to withhold information or to release information selectively. In each case, the participants with these stories viewed information as a power resource and saw the withholding of information as a definite strategic decision when involved in a power struggle with another individual.

Two participants related examples where they had been frustrated when information was withheld from them due to others' different loyalties and connections. One participant talked about being seriously impaired in her effectiveness at one stage of her career by her supervisor's secretary who withheld information deliberately:

> [My supervisor's] secretary was absolutely resistant to me and my staff role. She did things for which, if she were reporting to me, I would have fired her. I talked to [him] about it, and he viewed it as "a spat between women." . . . There was no way he was going to address this. She literally withheld information from me; . . . she would tell people that I wasn't in the office when I was there; she wouldn't take proper messages. . . . When [the participant's successor in the position] went up to the office, [he] was a man she could look after, and that was fine.

This example combined the idea of information as a strategic weapon in the power struggle between the manager and the secretary, with a dramatic example of how gender stereotypes can be used against a woman manager. The dismissal of a significant problem with support staff as "a spat between women" effectively undermined the manager's authority of position and relegated her to the same hierarchical level as the secretary, essentially supporting the secretary's resistance. The gender labelling dismissed the problem from existence, stripping the manager of the basic supervisory tools to address the problem. The supervisor's motivations were unclear: he may have felt threatened by the woman manager's competence and have been tacitly encouraging the conflict as a way to reduce her effectiveness, an actively aggressive use of gender stereotypes; or he may not have been courageous enough to address personnel problems and been hiding from acknowledging his responsibility by escaping into gender stereotypes. Or he may not have been thoughtful enough to recognize that a woman manager may experience different political problems in the institution from his own experience, genuinely not understanding the nature of the problem because it is unlikely he would ever have experienced a similar difficulty in a relationship with support staff. In this regard, he was right in identifying the gender of the two women as essential to the situation, because (in the participant's view) much of the secretary's resistance arose from her own gender stereotypes in which managers are supposed to be male, and women are supposed to do their own typing and telephone answering. But, having made a diagnosis of gender as core to the issue, the supervisor erred in dismissing his own responsibility in the situation as he dismissed the issue as "a spat" rather than addressing his secretary's gender stereotypes and ensuring that she was helpful to and respected the authority of managerial staff whether they were male or female. In any case, whatever his motivations, the institution suffered in terms of reduced productivity from the manager because he failed to take appropriate action, and therefore he failed in his own job.

The importance of secretaries as key connections for managers was revealed in the contrast between this story and the previous story from Alma. In Alma's case, she viewed secretaries as primary allies in her information network, and was frustrated when her own secretary could not play this role effectively through lack of skill. In the second participant's case, she indicated that her relationship with secretaries reporting directly to her followed Alma's example and was "one of [her] strongest links and supports." But in the situation described above, in her relationship with the secretary who reported to her supervisor, the very real power of the secretary was seen from the opposite perspective, when the connection became a negative relationship and the manager was powerless to access even basic operational information in the face of the secretary's opposition. The participant saw this story as an example of a concept she calls "domestic sociology of the workplace" where male supervisors and female subordinates act out patriarchal, domestic role interactions, such as husband to wife, or father to daughter/son. The participant viewed her relationship with her supervisor's secretary through the perspective of gendered family roles being played out in the workplace, and the fact that her role as a managerial woman did not fit into the traditional roles that women had played in support functions to senior administration at her university:

> The role is the "handmaiden" in this institution . . . look at the lives of the women who have been in those administrative-support roles to men, who basically have tried to provide the administrative continuity throughout the institution. . . . We haven't studied their contribution at all, and they have made an outstanding contribution to the institution. But in terms of what was expected of *me* in my role at that time; I couldn't be that. I couldn't be part of the "old boys' network," I couldn't be part of the handmaiden group, and so I was somewhere in between again, and unpredictable as a result of it. . . . The women didn't know where I was going to come down on any issue, and the men didn't know where I was going to come down on any issue either.

The traditional, Weberian perspective of the role of bureaucracy (and by extension, bureaucrats) is to institutionalize predictability and reduce uncertainty; from this perspective, this participant's position "in between . . . and unpredictable" puts her on the margins of organizational discourse and power relationships. Although the participant saw some benefits arising out of her "unpredictability" in the power structures of the organization, the marginalization of her managerial authority, tacitly supported by the supervisor's refusal to define her authority to his secretary, eventually was a factor in her decision to move to a different position.

Another manager in the study talked about the challenge of dealing with a manager who reported to her and whom she suspected was not doing a very effective job:

> I never even mentally decided the moral issue. His alliances were those of a long-time employee who did a lot of [athletic pursuits]. . . . So one of my problems really with that area was getting good information, and I didn't want to spy. Well, I guess I *did* want to spy; I just didn't want to feel guilty about it. (laughing) I wanted to spy in a *terribly ethical way* (laughing). . . . But this was the problem: I wanted more information; . . . I felt I had to have more because something was wrong, but I couldn't really identify what. And I would say it was the loyalty of [his] network [that] made it harder to identify. . . . People were not going to offer [information to] somebody outside. . . . [At the same time] they were not going to attack me and help him bring about my downfall; no way. But, I think I'd be the same. This was an old and valued friend who maybe caused them a little bit of extra work, but wasn't causing them that much, and so here's this new female coming along; why would you ruin your friendship?

This participant was aware that she was seeking information essentially as a weapon to use in a negative evaluation of her employee (to "get him, which is probably what I was looking for"), and was troubled by the moral and ethical dilemmas of attempting to use her connections for this purpose. Stymied by the lack of cooperation from a professional network on campus in which his ties were stronger than hers, she conceded defeat and looked to internal departmental alternatives.

In both these two stories from participants frustrated by the withholding of information, their stories place their gender as a factor. In the first instance, gender was seen to be a factor escalating the conflict between the two women in that the secretary was perceived to value a mothering, traditional support role for herself that the participant in the study judged inappropriate. Gender roles were also a factor preventing the diffusion of the conflict by the supervisor, who refused to recognize the organizational facets of the conflict and used female stereotypes to avoid involvement. In the second case, the manager's attempts to solicit information from the campus community were additionally frustrated by the fact that she was the "new female" trying to get information from a socially cohesive group of male managerial colleagues.

Thus, a number of the study participants were prepared to use information (defined broadly to include their knowledge, expertise, and analysis), or the withholding of it, on a very selective basis in order to make an effective decision. However, these participants also seemed to prefer to rely on the positive influence of alliances and campus connections to provide them with additional information and influence that made them more effective in their management role. Several of the participants viewed their reputation as being fundamental to this process.

Influence and Reputation

Personal integrity. In talking about what Barb labelled "the power of reputation," the participants used terminology such as *credibility, trust,* and *integrity.* The participants looked at this idea of reputation as a combination of perspectives, including both the idea of character based in personal integrity, honesty and trust, and the concept of professional credibility based on performance. The influence of good reputation was represented in the belief that access to resources (including staff cooperation, extra effort from colleagues, or budgetary consideration) could arise out of a reputation composed of elements of professional competence and good character.

Vivian spoke about the importance of issues of character in terms of both job performance and job satisfaction: "I have always felt that my personal autonomy and my independence were mine to own, that I defined them, and that I defined them in accordance with my own norms and my beliefs." This participant felt it very important that she maintained the distinction between her own voice and institutional norms that did not match her own value system, and indicated that her reputation with colleagues was based on their trust in her to give her honest opinion when required by a situation:

> Colleagues trust that I will take the freedom and exercise it. It's my choice to say, "This is how I use my voice." I'll continue to choose. And, yes, I do a risk analysis, and there are some times when I conclude, "Well, no, I don't think I'll say this right now or in this context. I'll save it for later."

Strength of character, founded on strong internal value systems rather than the opinions of others, were seen here as the bedrock for managerial decisions and actions. Edie also talked about this:

> I'm very open and honest with people; they know where I'm coming from, right from square one, and that I'm not trying to put anything over on them. I know there was one time I was having problems with my budget, and I had gone to one of the fellows who's in charge of budget. . . . "We'll look after if for you," he said, "and don't worry. We know you. Your credibility is rock solid out there as far as this office is concerned. If you tell us this is what it is, we believe you." So I think when you let your own personal value system lead you, you get into a lot less trouble in life.

The personalities of these two participants were dramatically different, and they had very different styles as managers, but in each there was a strong sense of self-esteem and personal security arising out of their considered and principled approach to maintaining values and character as the basis for their managerial influence.

<u>Professional credibility</u>. Several participants talked about reputation from the perspective of effectiveness in their functional positions. Barb described the usefulness of her good reputation as a manager and decision maker in saving time and making decisions which require collaboration:

> I guess the other kind of power is being able to get a group on-side; to have got to the place where maybe you don't have to explain everything in excruciating detail and lobby for months; that if you really recommend it, people will buy it. I has to come from trust or performance, or something like that. And it probably also comes from understanding enough of what the real goals in the place are, and that this does fit in, and that that's important.

The influence Barb described here was built on trust and reliance that the recommendations she made would fit with the overall goals of the institution rather than simply narrow departmental benefits; that type of integrity and trust was built on a history of past performance that gave others confidence in her future decisions. Marie talked about a conflict with another campus administrator that she had not been able to resolve: "She is very jealous of my position, and I know that if she could do anything to harm me, she would. But people know her and they know me, so I'm not too distressed." Marie was secure in the knowledge that her reputation was sufficient to protect her from backbiting or unjust accusations, and she therefore did not have to spend time on specific counter measures in dealing with this difficult colleague's actions. Ferdi reiterated the importance of past performance in building reputation:

> I've been very useful to them over and over again, and they all know me and they trust me. They know that some of our staff will really work hard. . . . We'll really do our utmost to make it all work out. So when you have to say, "Well, no," they do understand.

Asked about the "idea of power in the organization," Ferdi responded in terms of achievement and function:

> I have a lot. I'm not sure I've gained any great insights, though. It's always tempting to say, "Well, I don't have any power," but of course that isn't true. Where do you get it from? One thing I do know about myself is, I am not comfortable with the traditional assumption of power deriving from position and hierarchy. . . . It just happens to be where the institution's put me for a little while. So I think, really, power to me is being able to achieve things I

> want to achieve and figuring out the best way to do that. Which isn't usually saying to someone, "Do X." It's more looking at all the factors and figuring out the best way to get to the end.

This focus away from matters of individual prominence and status, and towards functional accomplishment, is also reflected in Alma's remarks about the issue of trust in others' motivations, and therefore trust in their decisions and actions: "It's really important to me that people are honest with each other and that nobody is playing any games, particularly games for their own personal benefit at other people's expense." Alma emphasized the importance of "widespread trusting relationships" as a critical component of the information network that she needed to help her make strategic and effective decisions in her interactions on policy and with other senior administrators.

Edie emphasized repeatedly the importance of credibility with campus, government and other colleagues and clients. She commented, "whenever you're trying to influence anybody or influence change, your credibility is the most important thing; and if you don't have credibility, they're not even going to listen to your ideas" and then went on to tell a story about her discovery of just how much persuasive influence her reputation made available to her. She described a situation where her department was desperately waiting for supplies from a government department in another city and she phoned to tell them the impact of the delay in the hopes that the items could be forwarded immediately. Her expectations from the discussion were that prompt action would get the materials to her by courier or mail in the next two days; in fact, her government colleague took her remarks so seriously that he put an employee on a plane that afternoon to deliver the materials:

> I had no idea that I had that kind of power. . . . I learned a great deal that day. First of all, I learned that my own credibility was being taken very seriously. Secondly, I learned that I had to make sure I didn't use that credibility where it wasn't needed; that you have to be careful you only ask for . . . favors when you really need them.

When asked later in the second interview about the ideas of power and influence, Edie responded again with a definition based on her persuasive influence that is grounded in professional performance and integrity:

> I probably have an incredible amount of power with [her area's major campus committee]. I could probably convince them to do almost anything I wanted them to do. But at the same time, I have come to that point because they can see the efficient, the thorough, and the effective way that we run this office and bring things forward to the committee, and the sharing, and they also appreciate there's a great deal of background knowledge. . . . You can't separate power and influence from credibility, and if you don't have credibility you're not going to have any power and influence. And you have to earn that credibility; it doesn't just come.

Discretion was part of those relationships of trust and credibility that Edie worked to achieve:

> You have to establish your credibility so that people know that they can trust you, give you information, and you won't necessarily pass on your source. . . . You have to think through your approach to people and how you pass on information.

Good reputation was a self-generating and ever widening circle of influence for these managers; based on a history of past performance that built confidence in their expertise and trust in their judgement and motivations, with every current success adding to their reputation and increasing their influence.

<u>Building reputation</u>. Just as a good reputation takes a long time to build; Ferdi talked about the difficulties of being a manager engaged in "turning around" the reputation and credibility of her department:

> It holds me back, because in a very large place people's level of information and knowledge takes a long time to catch up with reality. So we're still bound with stories of . . . things that

> happened five, ten years ago. I've worked very hard at re-establishing our reputation. . . . The advantage, though, is that for the people out there who did know and are close enough to the operation to see what's actually happening, they're aware that things have changed a lot, that we're doing a lot to try and make it better.

Good reputation requires care and integrity to build and effort to maintain; whereas success adds to reputation, problems subtract from it. Vivian talked about earning credibility, not just from the campus community, but also from her own staff:

> Initially, on the issue of "this is the way we've always done it." . . . I sort of backed off . . . and understood that part of the message I was getting is that, "You're going to have to earn your credibility," which is fair enough. We persisted through this. . . . I hear it very rarely now. . . . And part of the reason that I was here was to change the way that it had always been done.

Vivian's comments highlighted the additional difficulties of earning credibility and trust at the same time that many managers now have an important mandate to create change, a process often reacted to with distrust and disquiet as a normal human reaction. Barb talked about making a hasty decision that created great difficulties for her staff one year, and making amends through apologies and careful review of the process to fix the problems; and she reflected on the impact on her reputation when things go wrong: "You always lose some credibility; there are always people who are going to remember. Surely how you treat failures must be part of the paradigm of how you behave, too." Barb was very explicit that honesty and good character are essential in establishing reputation with staff and others:

> I think you have to keep your word. If you're going to do something, say you're going to do it. So you have to be quite careful what you say you're going to do, because you're in the soup if you can't do it. You've got to be careful about your promises, but if you make them, you've got to go through.

Trust and credibility arise from reputation; reputation arises from a continuing record of achievement, honesty, reliability, and consistency.

Overall, the participants relied on various blends of expertise, connections, access to information, and reputation to establish themselves as expert advisors on their campuses. They found that establishing a reputation as someone who could be trusted to provide reliable and credible advice increased their influence on decision making and enabled them to be more effective managers in their areas.

Discussion

Augmenting Authority With Influence

As the participants talked about their interactions with the larger campus community and the public, a number of their comments pointed to a common concern with managing campus interactions strategically in order to increase the participants' professional influence, rather than relying solely on the authority of their positions. Most of the participants described their functional expertise as an aspect of their authority, as mandated by the positions they held on campus. However, a number of the participants worked extensively to expand beyond the levels of their formal authority and expertise areas (the latter often covering wider turf than the former) by cultivating connections across campus and with government, professional or client contacts in order to increase their levels of influence.

That increase in influence applied in terms of their own functional area (a protective managerial strategy, focused on task), but in some cases also applied outward to other areas on campus to influence decisions not directly related to their functional area (a more aggressive managerial strategy, focused on image via influence) or to influence decisions impacting on structure and potential career openings (an assertive personal career strategy, focused on individual professional image). In negotiating these strategies, these participants talked variously about expertise, about expanding influence through expanding connections, about the strategic use of information and about the importance of reputation.

The participants viewed their expertise as an area of authority that would be undisputed within the political and power structures of their universities, reflecting Savage's (1992) finding in his study of British managerial women that "women's careers are usually based upon deepening their expertise, not on moving into positions of organizational power" (p. 125). Several participants in this higher education study, however, were very self-aware that their authority, expressed as expertise within the broader campus community, was by itself limited, and that decision making and power at the managerial level involved more than just functional expertise. Decisions are made in a context of multiple agendas, institutional politics, and conflicting but real needs from different players (Birnbaum, 1989). Thus most of the participants did not restrict their comments to the level of functional expertise, but also talked at length about their efforts to make connections on many levels in order that their counsel and expertise would be more influential. These participants had developed various strategies to create positive connections with others in order to receive a number of benefits that assisted them in their role as a campus manager.

Task, People, and Image Orientation

Encouraged social characteristics in males of independence and autonomy, and encouraged social characteristics in females of affiliation, consideration and nurture (Chodorow, 1978; Gilligan, 1982) are reflected in popular stereotypes about male and female work styles that portray men at work as task-oriented and women at work as people-oriented. The emphasis in several of the participants' conversations on building connections and creating personal connections with other managers, faculty and staff across their campuses appeared at first glance to support this stereotype. However, these participants consistently explained their rationale for making these connections in terms of their functional task responsibilities and the need to increase their influence, and only occasionally indicated that these connections also provided emotional or social support benefits.

This approach suggests an alternative theoretical model; a tendency in a number of the woman managers in the study towards management styles that are oriented simultaneously to both task and person orientation. Statham (1987a, 1987b) has suggested that women tend to use a management style she labels *task-engrossed/person-invested*, whereas male managers tend to use a management style she labels *image-engrossed/ autonomy-invested*. Thus female managers were seen to concentrate on both task accomplishment and interpersonal relationships, but the focus of male managers was on the salience of power positions through the importance of their jobs (image-engrossment) and emphasized independent action. A number of the participants in this study, as in Statham's earlier studies, did not see task and people orientation as mutually exclusive, but rather looked to their people-orientation as a tool to assist them in gaining influence to accomplish the functional/task responsibilities of their positions.

This study of higher education managers shows an extra level of complexity to the task-engrossed/person-invested strategy of female managers, however, that makes the distinction in Statham's model less clear. Those university managers in this study who talked about increasing connections in order to improve their task performance, clearly indicated that the means by which these two aspects link is the idea of influence. These managers increased their connections, gathering new information sources and establishing their credibility and reputation, partly in order to increase their influence, and it was this increase in influence that they perceived as often leading to increased effectiveness. From this perspective, these managers are also very *image-engrossed*, although their focus on image is on *character and reputation*, rather than on *importance* as reported by male managers in Statham's study.

This triple focus on task, people and reputation reinforces an interpretation that the image management strategies of a number of the women in this study, centered in their visions of themselves as managers of high personal integrity and credibility, focused deliberately on issues of subtle influence, rather than overt power. This strategy might in part be explained by their positions in the organizational hierarchies of their institutions, and by the real status and power divisions between the senior (academic) administration and the level of managerial public service to which the managers belonged, in that some forms of overt power strategies are probably simply not available to them. However, given their positions within the managerial culture of the institutions, the managers were positioned to take advantage of more aggressive strategies within that milieu if they had chosen to do so. Therefore, it seems apparent that the managers' choice to focus on reputation, connections and task competence was more than a strategy "put on" to meet the contingent needs of the political structures within which they found themselves. It was clear that the issue of good character and integrity was an integral part of the self-identity of these participants, and that the triple focus of their managerial strategy arose out of their efforts to retain authenticity as individuals who are also managers, rather than separating out their public and private roles.

Influence Through Information

On an ongoing basis a number of the participants purposely established relationships of positive connection with others in order to accrue a number of practical benefits in their role as a campus manager. The practical benefits mentioned as a result of these connections included obtaining others' advice and expertise, making their own offerings of advice and expertise more easily accepted, improving their information sources, getting the "lay of the land" in new positions, helping establish professional reputations of competence and credibility, creating trust to generate time savings, creating visibility for themselves personally and for their departments, increasing their expert knowledge base about the university, offsetting the potential for disinformation from other areas with trustworthy information sources, negotiating status differentials (managerial/academic) on campus, establishing reciprocal exchanges of assistance or information, gaining access to new areas of decision making to expand their own role on the campus, gaining notice and favor in terms of career progression and future promotions, and avoiding potential disputes that could arise between areas with overlapping mandates.

A common thread throughout these benefits was a focus on the benefit of increased influence to the manager in terms of the scope and efficacy of her own decision making, and in terms of her ability to wisely influence the decision making of others. Whether overt or subtle in their means, most of the participants talked about the value of multiple contacts and close connections in their work environment as an important source of increased influence and support for them. They were also aware that the obligations of connection were mutual; that the relationships created obligations as well as rewards for them within the politics of their institutions.

The issue of expertise and "good counsel" was seen both from the perspective of giving good counsel, and also of receiving good counsel. In the latter area, four participants expressed concerns about technological areas where they had to rely on the expertise, decision making, and implementation efforts of others, and were worried either because this support was not forthcoming or because they were unsure that they were receiving honest and reliable advice (i.e., they were worried in part about the ethics of others). In addition, the four participants talked about their responsibility to implement major technological innovations in their functional areas on behalf of the campus, and their concerns about availability of instrumental support (programming support, hardware for staff) and about implementation deadlines were significant priorities. These findings indicate a need for further investigation of the part that responsibility for implementation of new administrative technological applications plays in managerial stress loads, in addition to potential increased stress and workload intensification from learning and using new technologies (Brooks, 1994; Statham, 1993). These four study participants talked about how their connection network met their information needs regarding technological issues, in terms of both expert knowledge and political knowledge, but did not talk about their contacts as being useful in terms of gaining instrumental support for their unit's technology needs.

Greenglass (1993) suggests that interpersonal relationships provide three types of support, including emotional (acceptance, intimacy), informational (information, advice), and instrumental (provision of resources). Several of the participants in this study indicated that the connections they made on campus provided some aspect of emotional support in terms of friendships or feelings of belonging, but this was not a strong theme and these comments usually arose from a direct query about campus friendships in the interviews. Few of the participants talked about their campus connections (other than that with their direct supervisor) as sources of instrumental support. However, the idea of informational support was very strong in a number of the interviews.

Of significance, however, was that the participants' discussion in this area spent very little time on the idea of informational *content*, and focused instead on the *potential use* of the information within the political power structures of the institution. The strategic value of information gained through extensive campus connections was a prominent concept in a number of the interviews. The ideas of power, connection and information were closely connected in the stories of the study participants. These participants saw increased connections with others as vital sources of information and advice back to them for their own use and effectiveness. These participants in this study did not view this as a neutral provision of useful facts and guidance, but rather as a highly politically charged aspect of building influence and reinforcing power within the campus political structure. Thus in addition to the emotional, informational, and instrumental support types that Greenglass (1993) defines for interpersonal relationships, a separate fourth category of *strategic support*, based on the political rather than content-based values of information, is suggested by this study.

Information was seen as a source of influence and power, even as a weapon in some relationships. The participants saw access to information as valuable within the context of their own particular functional expertise, broadening or filling in gaps in their own knowledge base. Information was perceived as giving a strategic advantage; providing the means to identify and act on opportunities that only become visible when disparate sources of information are pieced together into a whole. Some of the participants also saw access to information as a critical factor for survival in the power relationships of their institutions, providing them with important information for negotiating the wider political context. Within that political context, the giving and sharing of information carried risks, and therefore caution, discretion, trust and reputation were essential components of the process of connection.

Influence Through Character

This focus on authenticity and good character was strongly argued by several participants in their discussion of ethical decisions related to their area of accountability in the university. *Integrity in organizational leadership* has been defined as "consistency of personal beliefs and values, daily working behavior, and organizational aims" (Badaracco & Ellsworth, 1989, p. 99). In initial discussion on the subject of power, several participants described their authority and influence in relation to the campus community as vested in their task area of accountability, and felt that the authority of expertise they had in this area carried with it obligations to exercise it in an ethical manner on behalf of the university. They perceived themselves, by virtue of both the authority of their position and their personal and managerial commitment to ethical behavior, as the final arbiter of any ethical positions in relation to their expert function, regardless of their place in the administrative hierarchy or who in the hierarchy might oppose their decision.

Beyond this, the authority of their position was felt largely to hold sway in terms of setting priorities in their functional area for the campus, and in terms of their professional obligation to offer advice and assistance related to their area of expertise. In their discussion of authority, expertise, and ethics, a number of the managers showed a clear preference for confrontation rather than compromise; for committing to the intangibles of morally right decisions rather than the expedient or profitable; or for a focus on substance, on implementation and getting things done, over process, the bureaucratic "show and tell" of fancy presentations and image building (Badaracco & Ellsworth, 1989). Their examples ranged from the registrarial relationship with intercollegiate athletics, to administration of awards funds, to refusals of additional staff positions if the financial arrangements for these were not perceived to be completely above-board. By consistent decision making the managers built a reputation for integrity. And by building connections to increase and reinforce their opportunities to influence decision making in their campuses, they positioned themselves to be able to consistently act on their need for managerial and personal integrity within the organization.

Several participants, however, suggested that they had little or no influence on their campuses outside their functional area of expertise. This was always despite other evidence to the contrary in our interviews (e.g., access and advisor to university senior administrators; invited participation or opportunities to volunteer on university task forces and committees). This perception of lack of influence may be a genuine modesty on the part of the participants. But it might also be seen as a reaction to a male-dominated managerial environment which is more likely to treat women managers objectively (i.e., gender neutral treatment) in their expertise areas where information about their competence is obvious (Gerdes & Garber, 1993). Thus confining influence claims to one's area of expertise could be a safe strategy in an environment that might react with hostility to evidence that a woman manager's influence is of greater scope than her functional authority.

These participants looked at the idea of reputation from two perspectives, including both the idea of personal credibility based in integrity, honesty and trust in their interactions with others, and the concept of professional credibility based on performance. The influence of good reputation was represented in the belief that access to resources (including staff cooperation, extra effort from colleagues, budgetary consideration, or time gained through efficient communications and decision making) could arise out of a reputation composed of elements of professional competence and good character. Strength of character, founded on strong internal value systems rather than the opinions of others, was the perceived basis for their managerial influence.

Professional competence and personal integrity were essential components of the personal self-image of a number of the managerial women in the study. In addition to their self-image, it is interesting to note the importance that several of the participants placed on these characteristics as part of their public image in their professional role on their campuses. The workplace has been shown to contain significant systemic bias in favor of male employees, operating within interpersonal relationships and decision making (Colwill, 1993). These participants' strategic emphasis on competence and integrity in their connections with people may be an unconscious strategy used to counter-balance their male colleagues' "edge." This suggestion fits in well with Colwill's (1993) analysis of personal, interpersonal and organizational power, where she argues that women and men managers show no differences in personal power (locus of control), that men show better results in the arena of interpersonal power as evidenced by organizational rewards, and that the literature on organizational effectiveness (i.e., getting things done, the ability to mobilize resources—rather than access to those organizational resources) shows women have the edge in what Colwill has labelled *organizational power.* Within that framework, it seems logical that women managers would strategically use their strengths to bolster the area where male colleagues present the most competition. That is, they might use their personal power and organizational power in Colwill's (1993) terms to increase their interpersonal power; or, in the terms of this study, they might use their personal reputation and professional competence to create strong connections and build influence with campus colleagues. If this analysis were framed within a scarcity model that assumes that there is a limit to the power, influence, and energy available in the organization (e.g., Kanter, 1977), these women managers' focus on sound character as the basis for building connections could be interpreted as a strategy to gain influence in competition with men in a system biased towards males. Within an abundance model of power and influence in organizations (e.g., Helgesen, 1990), the suggestion can still be made that the focus of several women managers in this study on enhancing interpersonal relationships and connections through integrity of process does not necessarily arise because this is a "natural" area of strength for women (without denying their competencies there). Rather, this mode of being and interaction within the organization as a manager may arise because strategically the area of connections and networking needs reinforcement within a bureaucratic system where gender bias in interpersonal interactions in a male-dominated system may otherwise weaken their organizational influence. At the very least, at the personal level, results reported by Long (1988) indicate that managerial women who rely on seeking information or advice from others (using their connections for problem-solving) cope more effectively with job stress.

Summary

In their *personal* views of the university context, and their interactions across their campuses, the participants' attitudes ranged from committed idealism to disillusion with the university culture (sometimes within the same individual) and they talked about feeling isolated in terms of support and recognition. As the study participants discussed their interactions outside their immediate offices in terms of their *professional* strategy, however, a very different picture emerged. Reacting to the environment in terms of their position, the participants' strategies with regard to issues of authority and influence were paramount, and focused on the creation of strong information and connection networks with other people in their broader work environment.

In their discussions of relations with staff, a number of the managers had presented an underlying assumption of the authority of position. From that perspective, they then made choices about sharing that authority with varying strategies of teamwork, shared decision making, or consultation. As the participants talked about their interactions with the larger campus community and the public, any assumption of position-based authority in these interactions was more muted. A more significant and frequent focus in the participants' comments pointed to a concern with managing campus interactions strategically in order to increase influence, rather than relying on the authority provided by their professional expertise.

The managers in the study all talked about the value of their informal connections and networks on their campuses as a strategy for increasing influence or gaining access to information. Several of the participants spoke about deliberate strategies to increase their circle of contacts both within the campus and external to it, and described the benefits of those contacts in both university and personal terms. A number of participants combined the notion of increased influence from expertise, connections, and access to information under a common umbrella related to reputation. They talked about reputation, integrity, credibility, and trust as the foundation on which they established their relationships and extended their influence with campus colleagues and clients. Essentially these participants asserted the view that a successful (and respected) higher education manager is, first and foremost, a person of good character.

Although most of the participants began their analysis of connections with colleagues and community within a context of authority (expertise), a number of them moved on to describe strategies for developing information and reputation as the means to establish and increase influence. An essential component of the process of extending influence via reputation in several of the participant's descriptions was that reputation had to be grounded firmly in their own personal integrity and good character, and that the influence they enjoyed on their campuses came from their colleagues' recognition of their good character. Influence was perceived as having several elements, including both the access to information about decision-making processes occurring elsewhere on campus to assist them in their own managerial decisions, and the ability to add information and opinions of their own to the context of decisions being made by others.

The next chapter discusses the participants' descriptions of their connections upwards in the hierarchy. In these discussions, the interactions described by a number of the participants tend to foreground issues of power and powerlessness, where issues of control and manipulation of events and decisions against the desires of the participants become the focus. Ideas of connection and good character that imbued some of the managers' strategies for influential interaction with the campus community become more complex in the context of their interactions with their supervisors.

CHAPTER 5

CONNECTING UPWARD: POWER AND RESISTANCE

Ferdi: The care and feeding of [my supervisor] is a big part of my job sometimes.

Barb: Discretionary money is power . . . to make your own decisions without having to wait around for everybody else.

Introduction

The previous two chapters in this study focused on the relationships and processes through which a number of the participants exerted their authority and influence. With staff this was accomplished in large part through a balance of authority and connection and support strategies. With the university community (colleagues and clients), a number of participants described this through their expertise, their professional reputation, their personal reputation/character or their strategies for forming connections and alliances focused on access to information. In the following discussion of their relationships with their supervisors, the emphasis shifts to how the participants negotiated the forms of power that are exerted on them in order to retain a balance of their own power within these relationships. Several participants described very positive relationships with their supervisors; several others told detailed personal stories about difficult interactions.

Findings

Gatekeeping

Control of access. One participant described her positive interaction with the senior administrator to whom she reported in terms of her role in providing access to information and providing a buffer between a powerful administrator and other campus colleagues; what I have labelled a *gatekeeping* function. This gatekeeping function was an expectation that she felt from both directions; both the senior administrator and her colleagues encouraged her in this approach. She talked about the confluence of connection, information and influence with the ideas of risk and caution from the perspective of being the information and strategic contact for others. She returned to this discussion of the nature of her relationship with her supervisor in the reporting structure several times in our interviews:

> I do tend to use my boss as a bit of a threat. I guess in some circles, I'm probably seen as more approachable, more accessible, maybe more trustworthy, but I don't know if that's fair.
>
> (*Bonnie:* More than your boss?)
>
> Yes. So people will come to me or will try things out on me. . . . I'm not comfortable with seeing myself exercising power that way. On the other hand, I know I do it. It doesn't fit my image of myself, which is more honest and open than that.
>
> I found they were coming to me, mainly to convince him of the need to do certain things, the urgency of certain issues. They seemed to have the impression that if I told him something should get done, it would get done; if they told him, he wouldn't listen or he wouldn't quite understand the importance of it. And that is still going on. . . . Sometimes I'll say, "Look, I really don't think that me talking to him is going to be particularly useful to you." It's sometimes very uncomfortable being in between.

By screening the issues that came to the senior administrator to whom she reported, and by deciding where she would place her own priorities and arguments in the cases she represented to him, this participant had acquired significant power as the gatekeeper. This manager affected, if not actual access to the senior administrator, then access to his attention and the ability to influence both the resources that he controlled and access further along the hierarchy through him:

> There are times when it's very valuable to have him as sort of the big gun. If we need something to happen, if we need to get the funding for something, or if we need the President to recognize that it's important, he's a good conduit for that.

However, the role in the middle can be uncomfortable. In my analysis, the discomfort with this role in the middle between the senior administrator and those wanting his attention arose from two directions.

The problem of nurture. The first problem with the gatekeeping functions that the participant has assumed, is that it was composed as much of providing nurture and support, as it was of control of access. Because he has isolated himself so extensively from fulfilling his supervisory obligations to the others who report to him, her supervisor has also isolated himself from a support network. The workload of support therefore all fell to this one manager, and the frequency of her commentary in our interview on this aspect highlighted her uneasiness and fatigue with this aspect of their relationship. The nurturing type of support that she provided her supervisor was a significant drain on her energies, although the closeness of the relationship provided compensating advantages of access and influence that her colleagues did not have and from which she readily admitted she had received significant career advantage. She maintained this strategy within a philosophic framework that was cynical about its actual impact on the senior administrators with whom she worked:

> Being good at your job I think matters for your own sense and the people who work directly with you. In terms of *the* university, *the* powers that be, I frankly don't know that it matters a whole lot, because I don't know if they recognize it. What matters is that you're not a pain in the ass. . . . What ought to count is a lot of what we've done here, if it's a success. . . . The boss, if you asked him how I was organized, could not tell you, or what's changed in the last year. Well, even less so the President. And that I do find disheartening.

Faced with a reporting arrangement to a senior administrator who was seen as aloof, this participant made strategic decisions to assume a gatekeeping role in the organization which was perceived as beneficial by her supervisor because it afforded him protection from details, by her colleagues because it reduced their stress and conflict and gave them support in their agendas, and by herself in terms of her own career path. The length and substance of her commentary, framed in her cynical evaluation of her environment, suggested that the decision to take on the nurturing aspects of this role was not simply an unconscious playing out of a traditional feminine support role. Rather it appeared to be a conscious decision to attempt to balance traditionally female support functions with an intellectual and managerial decision-making partnership that has both increased her influence and her functional scope as a manager on her campus. Her decision was practical and effective in terms of her job and career; but the gatekeeping function she performed may also have reinforced stereotyped expectations on her campus about how women managers should behave. The participant, reviewing this latter statement, commented, "Interesting. I don't like it, but you're right."

<u>The problem of dependency</u>. Besides the workload and fatigue involved in providing nurturing support to her supervisor, this participant encountered a second problem with her gatekeeping function. Her power as a gatekeeper was precarious, because it was at the discretion of her supervisor. Her power *as gatekeeper to him* depended on his listening and acting upon her recommendations and advice. Therefore, if she did too good a job in the nurturing role that has been cast for her, to protect him from the demands of people in the environment, he may not have wanted to heed her advice:

> The [academic departments] were not happy. Well, he continually . . . would say things like, "Well, I'm not hearing any complaints. It seems to be going fine." Meanwhile I was getting 20 calls a week. . . . So in that case it was a matter of being too good about it.

At the same time, her power as *gatekeeper with her colleagues* coming to her to gain her supervisor's support depended on his public decisions showing that she retained her advisory power with him. The participant told a story about an area that was creating a lot of campus concern; when she convinced her supervisor to address the issue, he in fact did not follow through on the planned action, and she handled the situation by herself. In my interpretation, the problem with the gatekeeper role is that, without the continued public support of the supervisor, the reliability of such borrowed power is uncertain. After reviewing this section of the study, the participant commented: "I think I actually handled the [situation] quite well, and people felt the issues were being dealt with. I was annoyed, which you correctly picked up. . . . I would describe the dangers of my gatekeeping role—and I don't deny they exist—as precarious and unpredictable, rather than powerless." The participant made the important point here that the powers of the gatekeeping role are substantive, even if they are not comfortably entrenched in the independent authority of her position description.

This participant also talked extensively about her strategies for increasing connections across her campus (as discussed by several participants in the last chapter). Thus she balanced the "precarious and unpredictable" aspects of gatekeeping power with increased influence derived from her personal reputation as a manager dedicated to achieving high levels of service and quality performance in herself and the unit she directed. At the same time, the very real power arising from her gatekeeping role, which she used to the benefit of institutional goals, enhanced her personal reputation and influence as a manager of good character who could be trusted to maintain her objectivity and act for the general institutional benefit in that powerful role of gatekeeper. Thus, through the integrity with which she defined and acted out her gatekeeping role, she enhanced her powers both within that role and in the influence she wielded amongst her campus connections.

Despite the challenges in the gatekeeping role (or, the participant commented, "enjoying" these challenges), she was very satisfied with the reporting relationship she had because it met her needs to grow and develop as a manager: "I think we get along. Support is the wrong word. . . . It's more, he'll give you all the opportunities you can stand and work them, which is great." The problem of negotiating and balancing issues of support to and autonomy from the layer above in the hierarchy is central to this story about one manager playing a gatekeeper role. The same balance reappeared in other guises in several participant's discussions.

Two Sides of a Coin: Servant or Sacrifice

The service ethic. One of the issues that several of the participants discussed was the need to be helpful and collaborative in their relations on their campuses, particularly with respect to the demands from their supervisors and/or senior administration. This was formulated in terms of both their personal professional image, and the reputation of their department on their campuses. However, several of the women expressed concern that this attitude of helpfulness, or service ethic, was subject to abuse when it resulted in more work for themselves and their staff without the instrumental support to absorb that workload. Thus, the participants dealing with this issue were struggling to determine an appropriate balance between providing good service and avoiding stressful job intensification that ate into their personal weekend and evening time.

Several of the participants expressed a concern for managing the image of their department in a positive way with their senior administration. Marie talked about the President of her institution: "I hold him in very high regard, and I think from what he's said, it's reciprocal. I've heard him brag about the department. . . . I think it's very important to all presidents that they can do that." Ferdi talked about how essential it was not to have complaints escalate to the senior administration: "They tend to take one such incident as indicative; . . . your whole public image is wrapped up in that one incident." One manager was adamant about using statistics as a public relations tool on her own campus:

> A lot of people have no idea what the . . . dollars are, and I think they need to be aware of that, so I usually have that figure easy and ready to drop. . . . I also make sure people know that in 1981 we [had] . . . a staff of four; in 1994 we [did eight times the work] . . . with a staff of seven and a half. . . . When you can use statistics like that to show what you have accomplished in an office and what the team has done, it doesn't hurt.

This participant was very aware that she had both a service mission and a public relations mission, not just with her clients (the students, donors, other departments), but also with the senior administration, so that her department's contributions would be recognized, and she would be treated well in the budget process so that the good performance could continue. Another manager talked about the importance of appearances with both student clients and campus colleagues, citing examples including updating equipment, "fuzzy printing, fuzzy minds; dated printing; dated place," to putting money into repainting, to insisting that office doors remain open: "It just makes such a difference: you walk by, the doors are open, and you can go right in; whereas the contrast is the Financial Department, which admits itself that it doesn't want to provide service to students."

Several participants went beyond the concern for the image of their individual department, and expressed a sense of responsibility that was institution wide. One manager talked about the idea of "damage control" at various levels: "personal, on behalf of a unit, on behalf of student services generally, and institutionally." Another manager, working in the institutional fund-raising/awards area, talked about seeing a role in terms of campus-wide morale after a survey showed that faculty were discouraged by negative government reports and media attention on faculty and tenure issues: "So we talked everywhere: in volunteer committees, in the [campus newspaper], about our staff being the best in Canada. And it was amazing how much better people felt; more pledges came in." This manager used the same larger perspective in dealing with conflict: "I don't get angry very often, but I do think that I wouldn't back away from someone if I felt strongly that it was inappropriate for the department and the university. Those are my two criteria." One participant talked about maintaining good relationships with other departments by helping students with complaints about those areas, and hoping they will do the same if students complain about her area, "keeping in mind the big picture, the university's reputation at the end."

Another participant, however, had a pragmatic caution about that issue of the university's reputation, indicating that in the complex environment of higher education, the rationally defined good of the university is sometimes not sufficient analysis for appropriate decisions and action:

> One of the big parts of our jobs as administrators is to know the political context. It's not enough to be right; it's not enough to have all our ducks in line; it's not enough to be fiscally responsible

> and everything else; you have got to know what the political winds are. . . . If you're naive, you lose. So sometimes there are things happening that shouldn't be happening, or things you were opposed to have happening, or things that are very damaging to the university, but there's nothing we can do about it. So you have to try to direct your energies in areas where you're in sync with the political will.

This participant gave an example where "the process had been absolutely impeccable," but a major initiative failed anyway, and "at the time I was so angry and I felt like we'd been betrayed, . . . but now I realize . . . [the President] should have known there was not support, . . . and that one way or another, that would derail it."

In describing their basic managerial approach on campus, several participants focused on an overt concern for managing their image and the public impression of the performance of the unit. Edie described her management philosophy:

> My basic way I operate with anybody is that you want to work things through in a nonconfrontational manner, you want to save face for anybody, and want to treat them as you would want to be treated. Well, when I'm looking at my bosses, I am going to be doing everything I can to make them look good; if I look good, they'll look good. And if I see that they're going a direction that I'm aware of in my area that might not make them look good, I'm going to let them know, and why. . . . It comes down the other way too: if they see you going in a direction that's not the right direction, it's not going to make them look good; but also, they don't want to see you suffer from it, so they're going to be giving you some guidance and support.

Edie sees her relationship with the senior administration in terms of impression management (looking good), but she also sees it as a form of mutual exchange, each level dependent on the other. Ferdi had a similar vision, believing that the wise political approach on her campus was to maintain a firm policy of agreeing to requests and creating the image that her department could handle whatever came its way:

> I have a real philosophy of trying not to say no to people. . . . Don't say no. If you can't say yes, say you want to think about it, think about what alternatives there are. But for God's sake, don't just say, "No, that can't happen; no, that's against the rules; no, we can't do it because it's too much work." Drives my staff nuts. But I do a lot of that [work] personally. I will almost invariably say yes even if I *know* it's going to cause me a hell of a lot of extra work. [laughs] . . . If they think something ought to happen, *unless* it's totally unthinkable in terms of policy, try and make it happen; but try and make it happen in a manageable way rather than chaos.

In reviewing the study, Ferdi further clarified her approach in this regard:

> What I was trying to say . . . is that I believe it is very important for an operation like mine to be seen as wanting to facilitate rather than obstruct. Facilitate ["saying yes"] may not mean doing precisely what is requested in the manner requested—it may not even mean agreeing at all. But it does mean trying to suggest an alternative means to the objective behind the request. Administrative departments in universities must be perceived to add some value to the academic enterprise, or their very existence could be threatened.

For Ferdi, with a wary eye on the political environment in a time of budget restraint and cutbacks, impression management on campus was a key management strategy.

Vivian, on the other hand, felt that current circumstances and the mandate for change she had been given with her appointment necessitated a different tactic, and she gave the workload concerns of her department a higher priority than worries about public image:

> [My predecessor] would go along to get along . . . even if it meant compromising in terms of his own unit. I don't, which was a real switch for a lot of staff and clients. There had always been this willingness to say, "Oh, well, yes, we'll do this." I've been cleaning up. . . . I think under other circumstances I might have been more willing to compromise, but within this institution, with the financial constraints and with the pressures at this point in time, you can't be accommodating; you have to say, "This is where my office mandate stops. This is where I draw my line as the person responsible for the unit."

Vivian indicated that with this approach, "the first year was hell on wheels," but she felt it was the only feasible approach in her institution's current environment of restraint. Thus the participant's impression management strategies included a balance, sometimes in conflict, between maintaining the impression of competence and efficiency on the one hand, and perceived helpfulness on the other.

Covering for others. Several participants talked about the problems of being asked to cover for the incompetence of other individuals or units, of being given increasing responsibility and tasks without sufficient institutional support, or of not being recognized for the accomplishment when they manage to do either successfully. One participant talked about being given her first big career opportunity by a supervisor who needed someone to cover for him: "Since he was really incompetent, he knew very well he needed somebody to help and thought I'd be a good patsy." The pattern continued when he was dismissed and replaced:

> [The new supervisor] was completely ethical and completely straight-up, and a nicer guy you'll never meet, but he knew almost nothing. . . . He was hired to be a good old boy. Now, I have to concede, he let me do whatever I wanted to do. He didn't interfere; he didn't even ask me to make myself accountable; he was really quite good to me. It's just that I resented the fact that his salary was twice my salary and I was doing all the work.

This participant felt that she had been used by her supervisors in these instances to cover up their own lack of competency and expertise; but at the same time she recognized that the situation presented enormous autonomy and learning potential for her, and she took advantage of that aspect of the situation to build the base of expertise for what ultimately developed into an extraordinarily successful career.

A second manager in the study talked about the evolution of her role in her department, from working for a senior manager, to working "side by side" while she actually directed the operations of the department, and eventually resolving the situation when her colleague retired:

> I don't think with two other people it would have worked. My closest colleague got just furious because we worked really hard, and he did nothing. . . . And, to be quite honest, it's been difficult for me to keep that perspective, because it's so obvious. . . . That made me angry sometimes. . . . There was only once that I mentioned it, and the response was, "Well, he's been here forever, he's put [us] on the map, and he was so poorly paid in the early years that this is sort of compensation." I thought, fine, if that's the attitude, I will never mention it again. . . . That may sound worse than if you knew the person, because his profile in the community was very high, and the university valued that a great deal, and so they should.

This participant's situation lasted for several years before it was finally resolved when the individual retired, and she was able to hire a new person who reported directly to her. In the interim, she coped with the discontinuity between the lack of public recognition and status for her contributions and the increased responsibility and authority, with the workload issues arising from an unproductive manager, and with morale issues as she rationalized the university's position for both herself and her other staff who complained to her about the situation. She understood the institution's position, both the functional requirement of maintaining good relations with this man's community connections and the loyalty of the institution in letting a long-term staff member ride out the period to full pension. But she was caught between this understanding, helped by her genuine liking for the individual in terms of personality, and her own sense of injustice that she was the one who paid a personal price in terms of workload stress because of the extra hours she had to work to compensate for his inactivity.

<u>The competency trap</u>. The same manager described organizational changes over the years in which functions that were not being properly handled elsewhere, resulting in a negative impact on her clientele, were gradually moved into her department. Initially a highly cooperative partner in

these changes, this participant moved to feeling taken for granted by the senior administration and extremely frustrated that the impact of this type of change was not recognized, particularly with regard to space considerations for the staff. Asked to take on another function from a department on campus, she asked to meet with her supervisor: "That was the first time I probably really blew up, and it was a Friday night, and I was really, *really* tired. . . . I think he was really surprised that I felt so put upon to be doing this." The participant's reaction is a compound of worries about how to literally make room for the extra function and staff, and frustration that the senior administration's answer to poor management in another department has been to ignore that problem and move it out of that area and into hers, where the work will be properly managed and organized:

> He sees me as someone who can manage just about anything and always be in control. And sure, that's not a problem to take on one more assignment. Someone here can do it, or I can do it, that type of thing. And that's probably not good in the long run. I don't know how you stop it once you start it, though.

Originally proud at the recognition of her competence with the first changes, she now felt "put upon," feeling that her competence and cooperation were taken for granted and that there was no recognition of the effort required on her part to accommodate the changes and supervise the additional operations.

Ferdi was beginning to reconsider the wisdom of some of her tactics as well. Having consistently maintained a policy of always saying yes and working to create the impression that she could handle whatever came her way with ease, she was reconsidering the wisdom of that latter half of the equation. She described a discussion she had had with a male colleague:

> Had a long talk with a friend of mine, who's male and technical, about what the problem had been, but also how I'd presented the whole thing.

> And he said, "You know, you've got this all wrong. . . . The way you present things to your clients is always, 'It will work. It will be fine. Don't worry about a thing. We'll make it work. It's easy. No problem."
>
> And I said, "Well, yes, you're right. I like us to be seen as the facilitators, the ones who make it happen."
>
> He said, "That's not what men do at all. You should be telling them how hard this all is, how they're lucky if they get one [success] . . . because the whole process is just so difficult. . . . that's the way it would be done in a technical environment." . . .
>
> I do want to make everything alright. I want people to think that we can cope with everything. . . . In the end, it's the male-female thing again, because I think we are so socialized to please, and we derive so much of our kind of security from knowing that we're pleasing people—and it's not always the best way.

Ferdi identified the different approaches as indicative of gender differences in managerial style: the female tendency to emphasize helpfulness ("pleasing people") and the male tendency to emphasize competence (ability to do the "hard" tasks). Recognizing the usefulness of competence-based impression management, there are still subtle gender differences. When Ferdi, as a female manager, strives to create an impression of competence, it is interpreted as doing an easy job. Her male colleague's attempts to create an impression of competence are interpreted as dealing with difficult, hard problems. When he says "the whole process is just so difficult," his definition of the environment is accepted and his competence in coping with it reinforced. The woman manager has a more difficult challenge in ensuring that the same type of statement from her is not viewed as evidence of incompetence. If her definition of her environment is not accepted, this will be the consequence. Ferdi described experimenting with this new approach with a faculty administrator who had been giving her unit a very hard time over a particular problem. She was very careful to spend a lot of time expanding her definition of the technological complexity of the environment in order to change her client's perception from incompetence to competence. She concluded that it was an effective way to gain appreciation rather than criticism:

> So I phoned [him] and said, "Well, I've got the explanation. It will be fixed by tomorrow, but, you know, it really is semi-miraculous we've even been able to identify the problem." And I did about a ten minute monologue on what the problem had been. He's not a technical person at all, and I could hear him getting more and more, "Oh, my God! Oh, that's awful!" . . . Well, hey, [my friend is] onto something, so I'm going to try that a little more often.

Ferdi had every intention of continuing to excel in her service orientation to the rest of the campus; what she was deciding to modify was the impression management strategies that she used in conjunction with that excellent performance. She still wanted her campus to know that she could cope successfully with anything that came her department's way; she just wanted to ensure that the campus knew that they could cope, not because it was easy to do, but rather because she and her staff were marvellous.

<u>Speaking the unspeakable</u>. Another manager in the study talked at length about her assessment that she was "used" by the senior administrators to whom she had reported over the years. This took a different form from the issue of the previous participants, however. In this case, the participant talked of being used to present unpopular viewpoints or represent controversial opinions, testing the waters on behalf of an issue before her supervisors took the risk of publicly supporting an issue:

> Everything that the institution was comfortable with went out with somebody else's name on it. The . . . study that I did at a point in time when the institution wasn't very comfortable about doing [that type of] study went out under my name. If there was any flak, it would stick to me; . . . that's my interpretation.

This participant told several stories to illustrate her interpretation of the role she was being given in institutional politics, in terms of her relations with her current supervisor, her past supervisor and other senior administrators. In the latter case, she suspected that it was her reputation for insisting on presenting a situation as she saw it, without adjustment for the political mood of the day, that resulted in one assignment—so that the administrator could publicly support one position while ensuring that the opposing viewpoint would be highlighted or recommended in the final outcome:

> As woman, as administrator, and as someone who will generally speak accurately and descriptively, you get used as an instrument by men who are incapable of confronting the issues themselves. . . . If I'm going to be used as instrument in a situation, I want to be very sure that I consent to this and do it openly. What it does is it puts you in a situation in which you're never at ease; you never relax.

This participant carried a heavy interpretive burden in her role, because she tried to analyze and understand the underlying political context and protect herself as far as possible within that context while also trying to complete the tasks given to her by the senior administration: "If you happen to be good at reading the political road signs, then you can reasonably deduce what's going on and govern the risks you take accordingly. . . . But if you can't read the road map, you're really in trouble."

Talking about a former supervisor, with whom she felt she had a very positive reporting relationship, this participant described their working relationship:

> Although he frequently would choose *not* to articulate explicitly his principles, you could deduce them, and you could rely on them absolutely, which for someone like me is absolutely critical. I basically was appointed to my current position. He benignly neglected me, which was wonderful in many ways, and he listened very carefully to what I said. . . . He could see the implications of it; . . . without ever saying, "Go for it," we would tacitly agree that we were both going to work at this, and eventually the approaches would converge. . . . Similarly he left me on my own with government and was aware that there were people within government who were not really pleased . . . but what I was saying was consistent with what the university wanted to achieve, and that was without any discussion. . . . It was hands off, with I think a level of mutual respect and some tensions around some specific issues.

In looking at this passage, it would appear that this connection, although perceived in a positive light by the participant, still involved a great deal of exposure and risk for her in terms of her concerns about being used as the public representative in controversial areas. Reviewing these comments, the participant indicated she agreed with the analysis and added "But I am often approached to take this type of position because I am willing: (1) to trust my intelligence to 'read' the ambiguities, and (2) to risk."

This participant constantly had to deduce and interpret what the supervisor wanted, because he chose not to articulate, not to discuss, and to agree tacitly (rather than explicitly). However, she generally had positive things to say about this relationship because of the autonomy she held in the relationship; for her, benign neglect and being left on her own were positive features in her relationship with her supervisor. She felt she was being used in the political environment in this relationship, but accepted this because she trusted her supervisor. Her trust and security in the arrangement arose, not from the continuing nature of the bureaucratic arrangement, but rather from the personal character of the particular supervisor at that particular time. The precariousness of this became evident when the individual to whom she reported changed.

In a different reporting relationship with a senior administrator who intervened in the daily operations of her area, the same participant was extremely unhappy. She again felt the dynamic of being used to present unpopular points of view was demanded of her as a significant part of her role in the relationship with her supervisor:

> The chair of this committee, who was my supervisor, knew that the issues that I raised . . . were absolutely essential to raise. But the chair sat with the majority of the committee . . . let me take the risk. . . . But what it did was, it opened up an area for further inquiry; we then had to go back and. . . . I think we came out

> with something that was far stronger than what we would have previously come out with. But, again, the impression created is one in which my supervisor's view seems to be, "When it suits my purposes, I'll let you march up and down on top of the bunker and let them shoot at you, not me."

In fact, she felt that this role had been expanded and was now being demanded of her, not just from the senior administration in terms of controversial issues, but also from the dynamic of her relationships with managerial colleagues in the group adjusting to a new senior manager with a more autocratic style. Having played out this role as critic and antagonist in management meetings, her supervisor criticized her about her "anger" in the context of performance evaluation:

> I looked at him quite directly and I said, "Did it ever occur to you that in the dynamics of the [managers'] group that everyone around that table relies on me to express intensely my anger and frustration when it is necessary to do so? . . . Everyone around that table relies on me to do that. Watch it." [He] hadn't even seen it.

Although this participant perceived this role of voicing the critical, analytical, sometimes angry, and sometimes unpopular viewpoint as one that was expected of her by the institution, she complied for both personal and organizational reasons. At issue for her was the surface and the subcontext of institutional politics: on the surface, her manager wanted her to be more compliant; but in the subtext that she interpreted, she saw a responsibility to the institution to represent alternative points of view. She saw her colleagues expecting her to play this role. She felt that her supervisor also expected her to accept this role in the particular situations where it was convenient to him. However, she based her choice of action, not solely on pragmatic or strategic planning in her role, but also in a moral plane of congruence with her own values and principles, which made it extremely difficult for her to consider changing her course of action to protect her employment security. Because she viewed this as a moral and ethical issue, she was not uncomfortable with speaking out, although she resented criticism of that role when others relied on her to enact it. The participant, reviewing this analysis, indicated her agreement and elaborated further:

> This is a tough one, and I think you've captured it reasonably well. However, there is a chicken-egg element to the dilemma faced. First, because I am known to speak directly, to speak my thoughts without artifice and not to fear conflict or confrontation, individuals with whom I interact come to rely on me to do this. The fact that I do it is a matter of self-definition, integrity, my way of being in the world. The content of what I speak may vary. That is, it may be organizational, intellectual, social or emotional in nature, but I will speak directly. In some sense, this is about *how* I am in the world, independent of content.
>
> Second, the fact that others rely on me is not in itself troublesome. It becomes troublesome only when (1) their reliance on me robs them of their own voice; (2) their reliance on me puts me at risk while they choose safety (I am instrument to their ends . . .); or (3) when [it is the latter case] and they then criticize and berate me for doing exactly what they needed me to do because they were too fearful to do it themselves.

This participant was agreeable to this situation when it was framed in terms of helpfulness to other individuals or to the institution; but her reaction changed in those instances where she perceived political manipulation designed to protect someone else while making her more vulnerable.

Autonomy and Independence

Operational interference. This participant was most concerned, however, about what she perceived as her supervisor's interference with, rather than consultation on, the daily operations of the department she managed. She gave several examples of what she obviously saw as unwarranted interference in her managerial function:

> I worked . . . with this committee for two years [on an issue] and we were reaching closure. . . . He showed up, having not attended any of the meetings for the two years preceding this meeting, and decided to open up the whole discussion all over again, without consultation, without awareness of what was at

> stake. I sat there for two hours and sweated. . . . I thought, "We could lose this one." It was the committee chair who brought it back around. He did something similar in a meeting in which there were issues that I had been working with for months. He did not consult, did not question; he just took the agenda item right off the rails.

For this participant, the issue of operational interference from her supervisor involved her in a serious power struggle. Her tactic in the power struggle was to withhold what she perceived as the major source of personal power that she brought to her employment, the value of her knowledge and analytic skills. She saw this strategy as an issue of personal identity and integrity, but felt that it was extremely dangerous:

> As a young woman I think I was prepared to be somewhat more quiet about the way that I wasn't propping the person up. I was prepared to go to the individual personally and say, "You know, I think if you do this you're going to make a really big mistake, and here's why I think that." I'm no longer prepared to do that, and I feel more vulnerable in the organization that I have ever felt before because I'm not willing to do that any more. . . . While I have respect for [him] as an individual, I can look at the areas . . . about which he knows nothing, and in relation to which he needs all the help he can get. He expects the help, demands it, but does not accept it in a context of mutual respect. There is no sharing as within a team; there is only demanding and taking. By contrast, if I go to my staff and say, "I don't know this. I need your help to learn," then you get a team . . . you are open to a learning and sharing experience in which all are risking. I can't share or learn with somebody who stands at the top of the pinnacle saying, "By virtue of my position, I must know it all." Until there is acknowledgement that all members of the team are learning, including the leader, I am not prepared to be used or to prop him up.

The participant was in a double bind, one which she clearly stated as "I can't do it personally any more, and I can't do it organizationally any more." At a personal level, she was no longer willing to accommodate to the unfairness in her perceived role of keeping her supervisor out of trouble, of doing the groundwork and having the credit and reputation reside elsewhere, without acknowledgement of the positive value of her contribution. On an organizational level, she perceived herself in a double-bind. If she did not provide the information-assistance required by her boss's lack of knowledge, she risked the consequences of bad decisions that would affect her unit and her effectiveness as a manager. However, because her supervisor did not acknowledge that he needed her expertise or knowledge, it was almost impossible for her to provide it if she decided she must. The act of "propping" him up made her vulnerable to his resentment and negative opinion, because it "implicitly and occasionally explicitly identifie[d]" to him (and anyone else who viewed the connection) his inadequate knowledge and devalued the basis on which he had established his authority.

This participant added further description of this relationship after reading the first draft of the study. In extensive notes, she described interactions with her supervisor on three different committees. In two cases, where he chaired the committees, she was concerned that he was operating outside the frames of reference for the committee. In the first committee, she commented that the issues will come around "but it will take me one-and-a-half years and accepting that the framework I devised . . . will be presented as [his]." In the second case, "the committee had authority only to recommend, . . . but [she] was being asked to implement on the basis of a committee decision made with two thirds of the faculty absent at the time the decision was made." In the third committee, a colleague told her that her supervisor's body language when she talked was "intended to discredit and belittle [her] contribution." Her analysis of the problems with her supervisor took the relationship beyond the idea of autonomy into an explicit description of patriarchal power operating in an abusive fashion within the bureaucratic hierarchy:

> [He] intellectually pontificates on subjects such as "teamwork," "continuous improvement," "learning organizations" and other current trends in management. However, he is totally incapable,

> so far as I can see, of "walking the talk." . . . He is both autocratic and bureaucratic, as well as dictatorial, in his approach to his managers, all of whom except one are female. All of us are effectively creating teams, re-engineering, creating learning environments/organizations, and concerned with continuous improvement. His approach to me, which is all I can speak about directly, is to start from an assumption that he knows what I should be doing and must tell me to do it. He does not listen, is judgmental and prejudiced. This concept of "team" is antithetical to any I have ever encountered or created. This is a male dictator with a female staff. Within this context, the operating strategy of the women is "to save him from himself." I find this unacceptable personally and professionally. When there is a climate of mutual respect, of civility, of consultation, of discussion, and of joint problem solving, I will work as hard and as effectively as I can to ensure that every member of the team, group, committee contributes from their basis of expertise such that we create the best solutions we can. However, when the "leader" of the team ignores the expertise, experience, and talent of the members of the team; berates and belittles them publicly; and creates a culture of intimidation to enhance his position; I have no willingness "to save him from himself"! His expectation, however, is that we will be deferential, supportive, and unquestioning in relation to his dictates. . . . The issue is not so much information-withholding as it is controlling access to the level of analysis which I generate vis-à-vis problems. . . . What I am withholding or controlling access to is my knowledge, my analysis, my perspective on a specific issue. I am doing this for two reasons: (1) when it solves problems he is unable to solve for himself, he uses the analysis without attribution and then later proceeds to lecture me about what I should do, using the analysis *I* originally provided; [and] (2) from a feminist perspective I find it abhorrent to play the "save him from himself" game when his behavior in relation to me borders on harassment, occasionally getting perilously close to what I would label psychological abuse.

This participant was prepared to work in a highly political environment, to cope with the impact on her self and her career of what she viewed as sometimes unsavory motivations underlying the political actions of her supervisor. What she found untenable was her perception of undue interference in her basic managerial prerogatives to direct her staff and influence policy and decisions in her area of responsibility within the university committee structure. Having evaluated her attempts to resolve this with the supervisor as unsuccessful, and feeling powerless to alter the situation in any other way, at the time of our interviews she was talking to an executive placement consultant about alternative careers.

Two other participants talked about issues of autonomy and independence and discussed their manipulation of information as a source of power in their struggle with their supervisor. In the first case, the participant talked about working with a senior administrator whom she perceived to be claiming unwarranted authority in her functional area and micromanaging functions and tasks in her area. Looking back on the situation after the individual left the institution, she concluded:

> If someone had told me what was happening, I probably couldn't have played it out better. At senior administrative meetings, the President and Vice-Presidents [would ask him] "What does this figure mean in the stats?" [He would reply] "I don't know. I'll have to go and talk to [the participant] about it." Like they were playing.

This manager was convinced that the university community had colluded to show that "he didn't know the answers" and to encourage his departure; as in the previous example, the senior administrator's stance of assumed knowledge-based authority put her in a position where she could not assist him with the education and information required, even if she had desired to do so.

Another manager talked about withholding information as a directly aggressive strategy. She describes her relationships with two different managers who relied on her to do the work in the unit, and her decisions about her own reactions and actions in each case:

> I learned a lot making my own mistakes and figuring things out. And he just kept getting himself into trouble, and I frankly admit, I didn't help him. Even when I saw he was getting himself into trouble, I didn't tell him that he might be.

> I suppose I'd been there six or eight months when I began to realize that the emperor had no clothes and he didn't know what he was doing, and on top of that, a lot of things he *was* doing

> were embarrassing. . . . I hunkered down and tried to separate myself as much as I could from him, and I began surreptitiously feeding whatever information I could to the person to whom he reported.

In the first case, the complaint is mainly about unfairness, with the study participant holding the expertise and handling the workload, while her supervisor takes the credit. Her response was to withhold assistance and information from him. In the second case, the participant evaluated her supervisor as a "guy [who] just didn't have any basic value;" "he got up at this conference and started telling obscene jokes. . . . The President of the organization had to get up and drag him off the stage because it was so far beyond the pale." In this case, the issue went beyond individual concerns about fairness or workload, and extended to the university's reputation; she decided to actively provide information to her senior administration connections to help effect his eventual dismissal.

The importance of the issue of autonomy was central as well to the reflections that other participants had on their reporting relationships, where they felt very positive about that relationship. Two participants described overall positive experiences with all the people to whom they had reported. One woman spoke of her supervisor as a significant role model; someone who was never "angry, detrimental," someone who never said "anything that was really negative:"

> He will deal with the situation if you have a performance issue, but he doesn't want to get into "He didn't do this" and "This didn't work well because she didn't do that." You have a problem, you have a solution, you work through it. And for me those were great role models. . . . He loves what he does, and I think, because he loves what he does, that's spread among his staff.

The other manager with a very positive relationship with her supervisor spoke first of her supervisor's support for the functions and budgets of her department: "She's done a good job. She's been a real advocate for all of us." Later she talked about the personal support from her supervisor in a successful attempt to upgrade her position and improve her salary, and showed me the glowing letter her supervisor had written in support of this reclassification. The participant was confident in the mutuality of this supportive relationship between herself and her supervisor: "I want to make [her] look good. And if this office looks good, then it looks good for her; and then she is more supportive of us." In both these cases, the participants felt their supervisors were a supportive presence and there was no suggestion that they became closely involved with budgetary or office operations concerns. These two participants seemed to feel a good deal of autonomy and independence of scope in the direction of their departments. Other participants, discussing issues of budgetary control, had a different experience.

Economic power and independence. The area of departmental finances revealed some interesting surprises for me. I expected that the focus of the managers in this area would be a discussion of budget cuts, and how they had gone about managing and implementing financial restraints with their staff. Instead, the discussion about finances centered around the issues of autonomy and independence and relationships upward in the reporting structure.

The participants were clear that financial issues were important to them, in so far as an adequate budget enabled them to ensure their department's performance. Ferdi asserted that she viewed her budget as task-facilitating, rather than in terms of status:

> If somebody walked in tomorrow and said, "Look, we're going to take this fraction because we feel it could better be done over here," and I could see reasons for that, I honestly would not feel any loss of status or self. My sense of self comes from a lot of other things: feeling that people value me, I guess as opposed to

> the empire, such as it is; feeling that I know what I'm doing. I don't know. I wanted [control of a functional area]; I sort of wanted to get my grubby little paws on it, but that was more because I kept seeing ways in which it could be more effective rather than because I wanted to enlarge my empire. (pause) The budget's nice, though, I must say. To be able to do things without whining a whole lot about, "How the heck are we going to afford that?" is very nice.

At the same time that Ferdi dismissed the ego gratification of controlling and directing a large resource, her comments about "empires" show that she was fully cognizant that the magnitude of her financial resources and task operations related directly to power and status as a manager in the hierarchy, and that the expansion of her operations over the past number of years could be construed as "empire-building." When talking about what was "nice" about budget issues, Ferdi referred to budgetary flexibility and reiterated the point:

> We've deliberately cut some slack. . . . We have now got a number of positions that have become vacant one way or another over the last three years that we haven't filled, partly because I could see the budget cuts coming, and partly because we were still figuring out, . . . where are we going to need staff?

Ferdi appreciated the enabling power of that economic base to facilitate the tasks and projects she wanted to accomplish.

Barb was very also clear about the idea of economic power from both a personal and managerial perspective. On a personal level, she commented that the second income in her household because of her marriage gave her a freedom and power in the work environment that others may not have:

> I suppose one thing about being married is at some point, I don't care. . . . I always have in the back of my mind—in fact, this is a regular saying every two or three months—"I'm quitting, I'm leaving, I'm not putting up with this for one more minute! It isn't worth it. It isn't worth the hassle." . . . That's a wonderful release, actually, to imagine I'm going to leave. . . . I haven't been exploited as much as some people, mentally, although I've been very upset. But I don't think I've had the total powerlessness feeling.

Barb delighted in hyperbolic, humorous self-irony throughout our interviews. But her words followed through to an analysis which recognized that her personal economic power, comprised of a second household income and a lifetime of conservative savings planning, lent her independence and autonomy in the workplace in terms of career decisions.

Barb indicated that "power over resources is important" and described the kinds of budgetary arrangements that are advantageous:

> Discretionary money is power. One of the things this office does, for instance, is manage . . . capital accounts . . . about eighty million dollars. There is zero power in that money, because you're working within rules and frameworks and so on. It's responsibility, but it's not power. So power is what you can round out, move around, do; where you actually have real choices. And, of course, new revenue involves those choices. . . . And that kind of flexible money I think gives you a lot of options, power in that sense, to make your own decisions without having to wait around for everybody else.

The distinction that Barb made between financial responsibility and power in bureaucratic organizations is significant. Each of the seven managers in the study had responsibilities for acting on behalf of the institution to collect or disperse large sums of money. These activities were described by the participants only in terms of workload for their units, and were generally given little mention at all. Because the money and budgets involved were nondiscretionary, the participants' power was essentially that of the bank teller: responsible for money-handling and accountable for the balance, but with no discretionary authority to change the ultimate use or dispersal of the funds. Instead, it was in the area of their own departmental operating budgets that the participants talked about situations of discretionary economic power.

<u>Department budgets and financial restraint</u>. Where they alluded to strategies for managing their departmental budgets in an era of financial

restraint, the managers in the study talked both about negotiation strategies and about creating flexibility through reorganization or through revenue generation. Marie talked about negotiating with academic units to pay for portions of the cost of new programs; Vivian described negotiating for staff positions as new work was added to her department; Edie talked about circulating statistics on workload in her unit and comparative budgets now and ten years ago, to make her point about efficiency. Julie talked about ways of "stretching your dollars" and looked to reorganization:

> Maybe we don't have the staff we need, . . . but with the staff we have, we can re-change, re-structure, and re-energize most of these people to do other things, and do it more efficiently. And that's what I'm aiming for: keeping what we have, plus maybe doing things more efficiently and moving people into areas that can work together.

Other participants talked about revenue generation in terms of administrative charges against incoming funds, or establishing new fees or charges for services provided.

Julie talked about her belief in the revenue generation principle of budget management, but found that it backfired in terms of her budget at her institution. Having defined a new process that saved money, proving its feasibility through cost-benefit analysis to convince her institution to support the change, she found that the savings from the process were immediately taken away as a budget cut in the following year. Thus, her extra efforts and those of her staff to plan and implement the change, did not acquire for them the budget flexibility that they hoped to attain with the change. This example elucidated the constraints of economic power in a bureaucracy in a time of financial restraint and reductions in government support. Experiences such as Julie described discourage managers and staff from identifying potential positive changes in administrative process because they become viewed as extra workload with no benefit to the work unit. The same disparity between the goal of balancing budgets and the power of individual managers to chart their own course towards this goal was central to several other examples reflecting budgetary interference from hierarchical reporting structures.

Budgetary interference. One participant, who otherwise had a fairly neutral relationship with the senior administrator to whom she reported, indicated that they had irresolvable differences over her budget on a continuing basis. She described addressing budget difficulties by attempting to raise revenues through the introduction of a student fee which, although new to her institution at the time, had been common and accepted practise at other universities and colleges. Although not objecting out of concern for the students who would have to pay this new fee, the senior administrator to whom she reported insisted that she should be cutting expenses instead of generating revenue:

> Certainly one of the fights was over money. I think he felt it was a copout. . . . We did cut costs too, but instead of doing it all by cost cutting, we reappeared with $250,000 in revenue. That made him angry; it didn't make him feel it was an accomplishment. . . . It really was the basic division between an incentives person and a legislative person.

I asked her if this was an issue of power:

> Well, it certainly had that effect; there's no doubt that was the effect; I wouldn't deny that for a minute. . . . I don't think all of it in any case was that by doing this, I achieved my own power and my own independence. . . . I think he had quite a firm, not to say rigid, administrative model in mind. . . . So if he asked you something and you came back with something that didn't seem to confirm the model—and I suppose that could be partly power, I don't know—then he sort of felt undermined in some way.

Although this continual conflict over a crucial area had been difficult to manage and had resulted in some compromises on the part of the participant, she had contained the damage to her unit's financial resources by using her other connections on campus and displaying the authority of her position, which was senior enough to have significant autonomy built into the position itself:

> If you're Registrar, you're reporting in one sense, but there are other people you're working for, so it's not a hundred percent.
>
> I guess it's a little unfair, but I knew he could only go so far because if he did get in too far. . . . I mean, I knew the attitudes of . . . [the financial] VP. . . . I knew he'd not be against revenues at all, and I knew the President wouldn't either. . . . So I guess, while I just hated the process, I didn't feel he had ultimate power because there were other sources.

This participant protected her financial position by relying on connections and alliances. She commented that "the fact that I knew the President complicated things" in her relationship with her supervisor; because he felt it gave her "unfair advantages," indicating that her supervisor was alert to the potential of her alliances, even if she had no intention of using that one. An interesting aspect is that she did not rely solely on personal connection to powerful others. Rather, she built on two other aspects of connection. First was the political aspect; her knowledge that as Registrar she could call on functional alliances with campus "clients," Faculty Deans and other Vice-Presidents, to balance the hierarchical power that was implicit in this reporting relationship. The second aspect was that she counted on a connection/alliance based on shared philosophy, rather than personal connection. She knew that the common ground of revenue-based budget philosophy gave her an immediate basis for creating the personal connection and alliance if she needed it. Again, however, this strategy was available to her only because of the seniority of her position, and because of the particular position she had—as Registrar, she was in a position to introduce strategies with the potential for hundreds of thousands of dollars in annual revenues, sufficient to garner the attention and support of other senior administrators against the one to whom she reported.

Some of the participants in Director positions with fewer resources and power than the latter manager, however, found interference in their budgets to be a significant factor in their discontent with their institutions and their supervisors. It is telling that the participants with the happiest relationships with their supervisors also had clear authority over their departmental budgets; whereas for those participants with the least satisfactory relationships, budgetary interference or financial scapegoating were significant factors in the participants' discontent.

One participant, unhappy about her supervisor's tendency to intervene in other functional and operational matters, was very upset by his autocratic behavior in relation to a specific program budget within her office. In one case, he ignored the figures she had prepared, revised the budget without consulting her, and submitted it: "I'm the one who has the responsibility to manage this budget, and it would have been [over a half million] short based on my predictions." In another case, she objected to his method of moving funds from one department to another:

> Just an out-of-the-blue directive, "I want this [amount] from you" and . . . not, "The [other unit] is going to have these kinds of problems next year, and your unit will benefit from their activity. I would like a further contribution; . . . how much can you spring loose out of your budget?"

The participant is not objecting as much to the possible fund transfer as she is objecting to the manner in which it happened. That this occurred without planning and "with no concern for the possible loss of other services in her area as a result of the transfer," through a command from the hierarchical authority, without consultation, highlighted her lack of power and autonomy in her position, and also the misuse of authority by her supervisor. The participant reported that she did not respond to the directive from her supervisor with compliance. Rather, she "calmed down," re-examined the budget, and returned with an alternate proposal based on what she knew she was able to contribute without compromising programs for which she was directly responsible. Reviewing this section, the participant pointed out that, although technically the legitimate authority vested in their respective positions would require compliance, she had exercised influence and personal expertise to effect a compromise.

A continued source of frustration for the participant was that she was never certain when or where another unexpected intervention would occur; she knew only that it was likely that it would occur again. This left her with the responsibility and accountability of her position without any assurance that she was in control of her department's ability to fulfil its responsibilities. Reviewing this section, the participant commented that it also required her on a continuous basis to address the errors and to manage the conflict when the effects of her supervisor's interventions had negative consequences:

> Essentially, I am forced into a situation in which I have to "save him from himself" (as one of my colleagues reports doing) in order to ensure that my own integrity and competence as a manager of my unit can be maintained.

The distinction that Barb identified, between discretionary money as power and nondiscretionary money as responsibility, becomes less distinct when applied to these last two examples. The discretionary money, and discretionary power that comes with it, was also constrained by bureaucratic hierarchy, because it carried with it the continuing possibility for interference and loss of power from the superordinate in the hierarchical structure. Thus, even the discretionary power inherent in their own department budgets was to some extent dependent on the managerial style and personal goodwill of the individual to whom the managers reported, rather than being truly imbedded in organizational structure. So, although no one would question their *authority* over their specific departmental accounts (there was no question about signing authority for expenditures, for example), the managers' actual *power* in this area was more constrained than it appeared on the surface. Given this circumstance in their environments, several of the managers looked for ways to counter or adapt to it.

Another participant talked about the notion of control from a similar kind of understanding when she was discussing her relationship with senior administrators:

> But I also appreciate, if somebody is trying to control me, that they make sure they take the time to explain why, because once you can understand where they're coming from, then there's not any resentment in doing something their way. . . . If you can understand why, then you can go about it and think, "Okay, this might not be the way I would do it, but it's the way they want it and these are the reasons why." And then I can deal with that.

This participant understood the authority of the administrative hierarchy; what she preferred was a relationship where she was given the opportunity to make a choice to react, rationalize and agree with the request that was being made of her, rather than having to simply follow orders in a chain of command.

Another participant talked at length about an extremely uncomfortable relationship she had with a former supervisor whom she felt was too intrusive into her functional area. She described feeling that he attacked her competence and expertise with only a superficial understanding of the functional area, feeling embarrassed at having to implement some programs he designed that she felt were naive, and feeling outraged when he pulled all discretionary travel funds out of her budget and also cut her budget by the amount of savings she had made in an area, without consulting on the alternative service she had planned to provide with those funds. Although the amount involved was only a few thousand dollars (the manager in question having been very conservative about professional travel expenditures), the symbolism of the act was as significant as if it had been ten times as much: "What he did was, he confiscated the travel budgets from all the budgets of the Directors, kept them in his hot little hand, and didn't give them out. But he went to . . . [a conference] down in the States somewhere, I think it was Dallas, Texas." This manager clearly saw this particular decision as an assertion of power and control on the part of her supervisor; not as an issue of distribution and allocation of a particular budget line item. She was also offended that her supervisor assumed an expertise in her functional area that she had spent her career developing:

> We're supposed to make this world go around, and if something ever fell, he would come in and say, "What the hell happened here? How come you didn't do your job?" . . . It was just as if there was nothing sinking in. I spent a whole year training and developing and organizing him into what this whole system was all about. . . . It was amazing. It was like a stone around my neck; it was pulling me down all the time. . . . I challenged him on many things, which he hated me for.

The controversy in this relationship widened and the participant worried that her supervisor was trying to eliminate her position, ostensibly as a cost-cutting measure, but actually to remove the influence of her opposition with the senior administrators at her university.

Job Peril and the Power of Connections

The first example: "A hard time." Caught up in what she perceived to be very direct and overt hostility from the individual to whom she reported, this participant found herself worrying that a long-term career at her university, where she felt she had been effective and influential, was in jeopardy. Her supervisor initiated plans for a structural reorganization of her functional area and other related offices, proposing a consolidation and integration that he would personally oversee and that he indicated would eliminate her job. The participant's concern was two-fold, both in her feelings that she was the best qualified person to direct a reorganized unit if the structural changes occurred, and in her worries about employment security. She was called to a private conference with her supervisor's boss, the Vice-President, to discuss alternative university positions that might be possible for her:

> It became very clear that I was the obstacle in any reorganization to take place. . . . But because they valued me so much, they wanted to find another position in the university. . . . I just went along with this whole thing. I mean, from a practical point of view, I can't lose a job. . . . And so anyway, then I started getting all these phone calls from all the faculty members. . . . Unbeknownst to me, the faculty took up this mission to get rid of [her supervisor]. . . . This one faculty member . . . said, "Should we fire [him]?" and I said, "Yes" and that was all he needed.

Eventually, the senior administrator in this situation accepted a position at another institution, and the status quo prevailed. Discussing this situation in our interview, the study participant concluded "there was a bigger battle going on—bigger than *I* ever thought," and suggested that her connections on campus had played a part in the outcome. She summarized her experience: "It was a very hard time. And I didn't know it was such a hard time, until the day that [her supervisor resigned]; my husband picked me up, and I was just radiant!"

<u>The second example: One against the university</u>. A second participant, asked at the beginning of our first interview to describe her career progress, recalled a series of senior administrators with whom she

had worked, talking in an amazingly detached and good-humored tone given the content of her words:

> Somebody who was totally ethical, who was totally honest, who was completely competent, who understood universities, knew [the functional area], but . . . as a boss he was a tyrant and moody and unpredictable and uncommunicative. He had an almost complete inability to see the larger picture; he couldn't think strategically; he couldn't distinguish information that was important from information that was trivial; he couldn't extricate himself from operating at a trivial operational level; and he couldn't trust anybody. And he turned out to be the worst of the bunch. It was better working for the guy who was unethical, unsavory as that was; and it was better working for the guy who was incompetent; than it was working for this guy who supposedly knew what he was doing, but who perverted it all so.

Trapped in the power structures of a bureaucracy, reporting to a "tyrant," the participant described what it was like to work in that environment and what she did to handle it:

> You become a different person. You become entirely focused on personal survival, instead of trying to do what you would really want to do. So you just hunker down, focus on the things you can do without having to get involved in the insanity. And the things you can do without getting involved in the insanity get narrower and narrower and narrower, and you just keep narrowing your own horizons as a kind of self-protective mechanism. But it becomes destructive of your health, destructive of your other relationships. You begin to make compromises that change yourself.

This powerful image of constraint builds a picture of loss for both the individual, in terms of health and self-esteem and creativity, and for the institution, in terms of lost potential and productivity. The participant moved on to talk about other interactions, moving from more general concerns about senior academic administrators who cannot see that "big picture" on to several examples of striking commitment and generosity that she had witnessed as part of her career at the university. Forty minutes later, talking about the importance of hiring the right kind of people in her field, she returned to the subject of this supervisor indirectly:

> . . . a guy whom I really wanted to hire for the university, and [my supervisor] wouldn't let me. It was the most incredible thing: he wouldn't let me hire him because he said he hadn't polished his shoes. . . . I would have gone ahead and hired him anyway, but right at that stage was when [the supervisor] decided to get rid of me, so I couldn't.

With prompting, this participant elaborated on the story of having a supervisor decide to "get rid of" her several years previously. She described a situation where, even though she had been in her position for only a short period, her supervisor had "decided [she] would become a scapegoat" for department financial performance difficulties:

> He wasn't going to take the rap for that, so he decided I would. And since I was still trusting him, I couldn't believe all of this. . . . Things began to deteriorate, but I was still too naive, and I wasn't picking up the signals. . . . I came back in Monday morning from the conference, from this absolutely wonderful week [of vacation], and he walked into my office and told me he was eliminating [my position] and that he was willing to consider that I might become [a staff member in the same office], but that was all sort of very up in the air. I was just flabbergasted; it just sort of came out of the blue. I didn't see it coming.
>
> So then it was a week from hell. I went to see [the union] and I went to see [the Personnel Manager, who] bless his heart, I appreciated was very honest. He said, "Look, he's the Vice-President; he can do whatever he wants. You can sue, but if you sue, it will be you against the University, it will not be you against him." And so I said, "Well, I can't do that," and so he said, "Well, then you'll either have to take his offer [of alternative employment] or you'll have to try and get a good settlement, and here are the terms of the settlement." I didn't think I wanted to take his offer, so I was trying to figure out what I'd do if I took his settlement and what I'd do after that. And again, I appreciated [her colleague in personnel] saying, "You have to understand, it's easier to get a job when you have a job. [If you] take his settlement and go, you probably are going to have a hard time getting another job." And so I was agonizing about it, and I didn't sleep, of course, all that week, and didn't know what to do.

This story emphasized in dramatic detail what happens when the power structures of the institution range themselves against the individual.

In this case, when the powerful individual used the hierarchical structure of the institution against the interests of a particular individual lower in the hierarchy, a number of other aspects of the institution as hierarchy ranged themselves in alliance with the more powerful individual. The institutional representatives controlled the agenda: issues of merit and competency are not on the table and not subject to discussion. In times of budget restraint and cutbacks, it is quite possible for powerful administrators to reorganize structures as part of ostensible cost-cutting measures and eliminate the positions of individuals that they target, without being subjected to many bureaucratic checks and balances. The participant's union representative could offer her no assistance because the staff contract for managerial positions was heavily skewed in favor of the institution's interests in such cases. Her discussion with her managerial colleague in the Personnel Department made the individual power relationships dramatically clear: "He's the Vice-President; he can do whatever he wants." The same person also made it clear that the institutional power structures were aligned with the hierarchical power relationship, so that if she sought legal redress she would have been fighting both the ideal of her much-loved university and the economic power of its extensive legal budget. More subtly in this latter discussion—and unrecognized by the participant—was that institutional power was also ranged against her when she turned to what seemed to her an obvious place for advice, her long-term colleague in charge of the personnel office. In my interpretation of this story, the colleague to whom she turned for advice had a vested interest in convincing her to take the alternative, although much lower paid and lower status, offer of employment, which would save the institutional expense of the payout necessitated by her employment contract. Therefore it appeared to be in the institution's interests that he volunteered "expert" advice on the difficulty of getting a job when unemployed, but did not balance this with any objective or supportive advice on alternative employment opportunities in her field of practise (where, in fact, opportunities abound). By emphasizing the constraints in her situation without the balancing view of the opportunities in the situation for her, her colleague acted more in the institution's interests than in the capacity of a friend. Having read this interpretation, the participant indicated that, although she had not thought of the interaction from this perspective previously, she agreed with my argument, saying ruefully, "He could have done that a little differently."

This participant reflected on how this experience altered her view of her career and the institution for which she worked:

> I suppose it was the beginning of the end for me in terms of a lot of things. . . . When [the personnel manager] said to me, "this is not you against him; this is *you* against the University," I suppose that was at one point when I started to say, "Whoa! all that loyalty and hard work to an institution, and like that, boom!" But it's just as good to be realistic about these things. . . .
>
> Did it change me? I'm sure it did, but I don't know how. I suppose I'm a little more cautious. I am certainly more sensitive to other people who have lost their jobs or have not done well in a certain situation, and I would no longer very readily say, "They must have done something wrong." . . . If you're in an environment where you're surrounded by people who support you and think the way you do, you can do very well; and if you're in an environment where people don't think the way you do and are not supporting you, you might be very good, but you might not do well.

Hearing this participant tell this story, I was very impressed with her tolerance and lack of anger, her pragmatic conclusion, "it's just as good to be realistic about these things." Echoing throughout the story are the institutional ramifications of the organizational loss when enthusiasm, commitment and loyalty are replaced with a manager's decision to order her priorities in the same way the institution has ordered its priorities: "It gave me the ability to distance myself, which I didn't have before, which is always good."

This participant did not in fact lose her job. Four days after her supervisor told her that he intended to eliminate her position, the participant received a direct phone call from the President who, unaware of her other difficulties, asked for her time and support on a significant institutional controversy, a request that they both knew would bring her clearly into opposition with her supervisor. The President's request was clearly framed as a request to a political ally within organizational politics, rather than as a request related to her specific position at the university, and was clearly optional. The participant agreed to help: "*I* had nothing to lose." Putting aside her own worries and not mentioning her current situation, she spent that day and the weekend intensively involved on this project, taking several high risk actions including a tense negotiation regarding the President's agenda with her own supervisor. In the following week her supervisor backed down: "[On] Wednesday [my supervisor] called and said, 'I don't think I'm going to do this.' Never explained it, never said anything, just, 'I don't think I'm going to do this.'" The power of her alliances and, more importantly, her aggressive actions to oppose her supervisor within this alliance at a critical period, thereby showing her willingness to respond in conflict with very aggressive tactics rather than compliance, undoubtedly were the factors that made her supervisor reconsider his decision.

Circumstances entirely beyond her control gave this participant an opportunity to display her close connection to the President in a very dramatic way at a point when her supervisor had announced his intentions to her, but had not yet taken any formal action to implement his decision. In turn, her personal situation at that moment enabled her to take a very decisive stand in that support, because she did not feel hampered by any constraints of loyalty or duty to her current supervisor given his actions, nor by any worries about future repercussions from him because she assumed that she no longer had a job there anyway. She repeated her description of her mental state in her story: "And I thought, Well shit! I've got nothing to lose."

The overriding factor, however, was that in fact it was an aspect of her personal character and integrity that strengthened her position—that she had the generosity of spirit and the self-discipline to put aside her own severe employment worries in order to assist the President of the institution that had just disowned all her work and loyalty. An interesting aspect of this participant's story as she told it was that after a very preliminary investigation of the alternatives for herself, she had been very despairing and had seen her choices only in terms of the two options, the payout or a lower level position, that the institution offered. However, on behalf of her presidential ally, she was prepared to be enormously assertive, take high risk actions, and do so without preliminary negotiations on her own behalf. The situation in which she then found herself as she acted on the President's behalf, however, could be perceived, and probably was, as a clear but unspoken demonstration of her powerful alliances on the campus and a subtle threat of the difficulties she could choose to make for her own supervisor if he continued in his decision to eliminate her position. Although this was the outcome, it appeared from the participant's telling that her aggression had been more of an emotional response to both situations (her own and that of the President) than a strategic decision on her own behalf.

The key change in the relationship with her supervisor throughout this interaction, whatever her motivations, was the change in her response, from powerlessness in the face of institutional hierarchy and power structures, to a display of powerful aggressive action within the political arena of the institution. She talked about her subsequent relationship with the supervisor with whom she had these difficulties, as she continued to report to him for some time:

> The good thing was, though, that I wasn't afraid of him any more. And after that happened, I'd just push for the things I wanted. I'd push, and if he come back at me with crazy stuff, I'd either just ignore it or say, "I don't know what you're talking about. I'm not interested in doing that."

At this point then, the participant made a long-term decision to assert herself within the power relationship with her supervisor and maintain her own direction, a significantly different place than her observation about their earlier relationship, where she had been "hunkered down," "entirely focused on personal survival, instead of trying to do what [I] . . . really want[ed] to do."

These last two stories illustrate the real anxiety and suffering to which high level, extremely competent, university managers can be subjected because of the power structures of the bureaucracy in which they work. In both cases, the participants survived the situation, not through reasonable argument or objective evaluation or legal recourse, but through manipulation of the political environment to establish the power of their connections and alliances. Their response to overt attack, viewed from this point of view, was a subtle, rather than overt, display of threat and power towards the aggressor, to achieve short-term solutions. In both cases, the supervisor eventually left the institution, providing the resolution to the relationship.

Discussion

Facilitative and Competitive Power

The participants' experiences with their supervisors in the university administrative hierarchy revealed a spectrum between the opposing extremes of competitive and facilitative power interactions. The stories of several participants showed a continual negotiation and redefinition of power processes in their interactions with their supervisors.

At one extreme of power interaction, some participants related striking examples where their supervisor's hierarchically based claims to power in relation to decision making, department budgets, or their personal job security had a significant negative affect on the quality of their work life. In these areas, where supervisors were perceived as attempting to exert "power over" in their interactions with the participants, the power relationship was one of competitive power. In the competitive power relationship, the interaction between the players is characterized by conflict, struggle, significant expenditures of time and emotional energy, and risk. The main sites of those negotiations were control of resources and information, decisions regarding resistance, and use of alliances and connections to offset differences in power in the formal hierarchy.

At the other extreme from competitive power, several participants talked about relationships with supervisors that were very positive. These relationships were based in interactions of facilitative power:

> Facilitative power reflects a process that, by creating or sustaining favourable conditions, allows subordinates to enhance their individual and collective performance. . . . Facilitative power is power manifested *through* someone. (Dunlap & Goldman, 1991, p. 13).

Facilitative power is characterized by negotiation, support, autonomy, and choice. Senior administrators engaged in facilitative power interactions with subordinates focus their interactions on the provision of support through arranging material resources, on hiring and training compatible individuals to work together collaboratively, on feedback and suggestions rather than control and monitoring, and on expanding public, personal, and group connections for their staff (Dunlap & Goldman, 1991). In this study, several participants described a facilitative relationship with a person to whom they had reported at some point, and most of the interactions with supervisors reported by the participants were somewhere in between the poles of competitive and facilitative power relationships. A number of the participants engaged in strategies aimed at moving the relationship further along this spectrum towards a facilitative relationship. These strategies occurred on several levels, including compensation, collaboration, and resistance activities.

Compensation and Meaning

Several participants recounted *compensation activities* in which they engaged in order to maintain positive relationships with their supervisors. This included covering for the incompetence of other individuals or units, taking on increased responsibility and tasks, and taking the political risk for their supervisors of voicing or vetting controversial concepts or problems. These compensation activities can be viewed from the perspective of social exchange theory where each person has something that the other wants (Homans, 1974; Lips, 1991). The participants have the ability to provide the compensating activity that solves their supervisors' problem, and the supervisors have general control over increases and decreases in the participants' budgets and staff allocations. As Lips points out, "in a relationship, the person who has the greater power is the one who needs the least out of the exchanges taken as a whole; that is, the person who needs the relationship least has the most power" (Lips, 1991, p. 58). Traditional assumptions about the power invested in hierarchy make it seem that the supervisor has the greater power and the participants the greater need because of budgetary and job dependency; that is, the supervisor has "power over" the resources the participant needs and "power over" the participant's continuing employment. However, the relationship was not this clear cut. In these incidents the supervisors could be viewed as having the greater need, because they were faced with an organizational problem that needed resolution and that could best be resolved through the private cooperation of their managers. These participants, in choosing to engage in the compensating activity that resolved the problem, gained significant goodwill in the relationship that improved their bargaining position in terms of resources. At the same time, although the various compensation activities undertaken by these participants might have carried political risks or the potential for work overload, they also often provided a basis for the participants to increase their own competencies and thereby create further advantage for themselves for future exchanges. Although the ultimate "power over" remains with the supervisor in any bureaucratic hierarchy, several of the participants related strong examples of their ability to counter this supervisory power in practice.

The essence of the negotiation in the social exchange in this set of participants' stories lies in the area of reaction and choice. The negotiation of the power relationship here was not so much about whether the participant would take on the actual activity in question as about the *meaning* that was attached to the choice. If the decision was perceived as solely the direction of the supervisor, with the participant having no choice, the immediate meaning results were an attribution of coercive power and helplessness respectively to each player in the interaction. However, reactance theory (Lips, 1991) suggests that individuals threatened with a loss of behavioral freedom and personal control will react strongly to reassert control in the threatened area. The participants' descriptions of their reactions in these situations can be categorized as either task/problem-focused or disengagement/emotion-focused (Compas & Orosan, 1993; Long & Kahn, 1993).

In problem-focused reactions, the participants used coping behaviors designed to alter some aspect of the task under negotiation. Several of the participants' examples regarding budget and new responsibilities showed that, in fact, the initial formulation of domination/helplessness by their supervisor did not ultimately define the interaction. The participants redefined the interaction from a threat to their personal power into a negotiation of alternative proposals, thus actively asserting their power of choice within the meaning of the interaction for their supervisor.

In other examples, however, some participants focused on their own internal meaning-making, using emotion-focused coping strategies to adjust themselves to the situations: "This includes changing ones' emotions, beliefs, goals, and commitments in an effort to reduce personal distress associated with the stressful encounter" (Compas & Orosan, 1993, pp. 222-223). Thus some participants were able to redefine the meaning of the interaction with their perception of understanding the motivations behind the controlling behavior, or as a choice based on their commitment to the needs of the university rather than compliance to their supervisor. One participant indicated that the process of the study itself became for her a vehicle for this kind of coping strategy:

> This analysis will be part of what makes it possible for me to survive, as I have had to use a long-buried framework to communicate with you, and in the process I have resurrected the very framework I needed to distance myself from events personally so they hurt less.

Emotion-focused reactions, unlike problem-focused reactions, tend to center only in the participant and therefore do not alter the nature of the power relationships towards more facilitative interactions in the same way that problem-focused reactions do. However, in situations that are perceived as unchangeable, emotion-focused reactions are more adaptive in retaining a sense of personal power (Compas & Orosan, 1993), and disengagement coping "may be as important as task accomplishment for managerial women coping with job stress" (Long & Kahn, 1993, p. 307). Emotion-focused reactions alter individual meaning for the participant, but leave the power interaction largely in the arena of competitive power. Situations invoking problem-focused responses are more likely to alter the shared meaning of the relationship for both participant and supervisor, leading the way to increased facilitative power interactions in the relationship.

Collaboration and Character

A number of the participants reported making deliberate choices to collaborate with their supervisors, through gate-keeping functions or choices about sharing personal power resources such as expertise and information, as a means to mediate their power relationship into facilitative interactions. Essential components to the meaning of these interactions were the interwoven ideas of autonomy, trust and character.

Researchers looking at issues of trust in supervisory relationships have found that trust is important from both perspectives, in that managers must be able to trust their staff in order to delegate work effectively and staff must be able to trust their supervisors (Freeman, 1990). In order to feel secure in taking the risks and making the initiatives that lead to optimal performance within a managerial environment, a university manager needs to know that her supervisor will support her decisions and actions. Persons reporting to someone of the opposite gender may have lower trust in their superiors than those who report to same-sex supervisors, and may believe there will be less conflict in a same-sex supervisory relationship (Collison, 1994; Scott, 1983). The university managers in this study, all female, related supervisory experiences that were almost exclusively opposite-sex relationships. Only two of the women talked about reporting to a woman at any point in their career (both of them described as supportive relationships); and only one of the women had a female supervisor at the time of our interviews. Opposite sex reporting relationships may therefore have been an additional challenge in the participants' work experiences, as they worked both to establish their abilities and win the trust of their supervisors, and to determine whether they could themselves feel trust in their supervisors' support.

Both of these aspects, the trust of their supervisors and their trust in their supervisors, were crucial to several participants' sense of autonomy and independence. The trust and support from their supervisors meant they were "left alone" to manage their areas without interference from the hierarchy, a state which most of the participants clearly preferred. Their own level of trust in the support of their supervisors determined the degree to which these participants were comfortable in utilizing their autonomy and independence, with new initiatives and risky decisions sitting more comfortably with those managers who felt they could trust in the full support of their supervisors, through failures as well as success.

In discussing the management styles of corporate women, Freeman (1990) defines *effective relationships* between manager and subordinate as "autonomy within a cooperative effort, . . . a reciprocity of trust" (pp. 92-93). Several of the university managers talked about positive partnerships with supervisors where they collaborated together to the benefit of the institution, the supervisors providing resources and encouragement and the participants responding with a high service ethic and increased dedication, time and effort. In some cases, the collaboration was more direct. For example, the participant who served as gatekeeper on behalf of her supervisor also collaborated directly with him on new responsibilities and organizational structures, creating a relationship of shared meaning and a deliberate decision-making partnership. Her power was substantial, due in part to that collaboration with the supervisor, but also due to the nature of the participant, because it was her personal reputation that gained the acceptance of her gatekeeping role with both her supervisor and her colleagues. Her personal reputation for good character, as someone who could be trusted to act for the general institutional benefit, and the integrity with which she defined and acted out her gatekeeping role, enhanced her position with both her supervisor and her other campus connections. At the same time, it is her basic trust in her supervisor's support that made her comfortable with the dependence and nurture involved in their collaborative relationship.

Issues of trust were important for other participants as well. Ferguson (1984) argues that the essence of personal evaluation and knowledge implicit in the notion of trust is replaced in bureaucratic systems with superficial conformity to technique, regulation and appearance:

> The skills of impression management allow subordinates to shape their images in such a way as to approximate their supervisors. Given the impersonality of the bureaucratic setting, outward manifestations of trustworthiness take the place of direct personal knowledge and managers fall back on social similarity as a basis for trust. (p. 106)

The awareness and use of deliberate impression management strategies by several of the participants to establish the trust of their supervisors would seem to reinforce this argument. However, these participants looked deeper before establishing their own trust levels, evaluating issues of basic character in making a decision about the levels of trust they feel. In a supervisory relationship where she trusted and respected the individual to whom she reported, one participant talked about accepting the risks of being used as a public sounding board in the political environment: "The aspect of his administration and character on which you could absolutely rely was that he would make principled decisions." The participant's trust derived, not from the continuing nature of the bureaucratic arrangement, but rather from her assessment of the personal character of the particular supervisor. Under a different reporting relationship where she did not trust or respect her supervisor's character, the participant redefined the meaning of what was essentially the same public sounding board role, from collaboration to manipulation. Several participants, talking about supervisory relationships where they did not trust their supervisor to be supportive, reported making political decisions regarding the use of information, the sharing of their knowledge or skills, or the building of protective alliances, that moved them further away from a collaborative mode into strategies of active resistance.

<u>Resistance and Connection</u>

The managers in this study were full and "successful" participants in the bureaucracies within which they worked. That is, they had risen to the directorship level, where they managed significant functions, staff, and budgetary resources on behalf of the institution with generally a fair degree of autonomy and independence. For the most part, the participants placed themselves within the culture and value systems of either their administrative-professional discipline or their institution. From this perspective, *resistance* is an unlikely term to use in relation to their self-perceptions or their actions. Nevertheless, when faced with threats to their autonomy and independence in their professional position via coercive power tactics from their supervisors in the hierarchy, *resistance* is an appropriate term for several of the participants' reactions. "The choice between resistance and conformity is usually a question of degree, and people often do some of each" (Ferguson, 1984, p. 58). Ferguson defines *bureaucratic behavior* as a series of learned character traits and strategies, including "impression management, need to please, conformity, identification with the organization, [and] dependency" that are learned as "a necessary precondition for economic and professional survival . . . to protect oneself from the exercise of power" (p. 116). Several of the participants were very aware of this aspect of their bureaucratic selves, as they reflected on their decisions regarding impression management in their organization.

To some degree, "gender management" (Sheppard, 1992) was part of their impression management strategies. Most of the participants made explicit references during our interviews to their choices of hairstyle and clothing as deliberate, strategic decisions to either downplay or (less frequently) deliberately accentuate the opposition of female appearance and managerial impression-making. One participant commented on issues of decor from the same perspective, speculating that the pink paint on the walls of an office might reinforce stereotyped reactions from clients requesting assistance from the women who worked there.

A much stronger theme of impression management, however, occurred in several participants' descriptions of their strategic decisions regarding their departments' service levels to their communities, as they coped with an environment of increasing job intensification. Essentially, these participants engaged in a decision-making process related to managerial impression management: whether to conform to an image of facilitative helpfulness or to risk that aspect of their professional image by resisting extra demands being made on their units and themselves when those demands were made without the provision of additional resources to accomplish the work. A number of the participants showed a spectrum of responses to this dilemma.

As budgets become tighter and more administrative units look for ways to reduce workload, at the same time that senior administration and senior managers are trying to increase services and improve community relations, the choice for managers may be increasingly difficult. Each choice, ranging from Ferdi's facilitative approach to Vivian's harder line approach, leaves the manager and her unit in a politically vulnerable position. Saying "yes" to all demands can turn a manager's department into an easy target for a greater share of incoming workload from senior administrators or from other areas with lesser competence, resulting in work overloads that are unmanageable and have a negative impact on core departmental performance, a dilemma confronting several of the participants. Resisting and/or prioritizing demands, as Vivian did overtly and several other participants did in more subtle ways, protects the manager and her staff from unmanageable job intensification and preserves their reputation for quality and competency, if not for helpfulness. At the same time, as budgetary constraints tighten the resources available to support administration in academic institutions and universities move to budgetary systems based more closely on performance than tradition, the administrative departments that maintain an image of helpfulness, productivity and creativity through difficult times may be the ones most likely to continue receiving higher budgetary support from the hierarchy, as the experiences of Ferdi and Edie show. The bureaucratic task for the manager then becomes one of reading the political decision-making environment for that particular woman, to see which approach carries the least risk in her particular institution. The process of choosing strategy here is in and of itself a form of resistance to the assumptions of compliance built into the administrative hierarchy of universities.

In times when resources are scarce, there is less tolerance in bureaucratic systems for such forms of resistance and more pressure for conformity to the "careerist pattern of deference to those above and detachment from those below" (Ferguson, 1984, p. 103). A number of the participants' examples of competitive power struggles with their supervisors centered around issues of financial control. For persons operating at the participants' level within a bureaucratic hierarchy, the most direct threats to a manager's independence and autonomy (and her ability to competently do her job) are threats to eliminate her position and threats to eliminate the financial resources that she utilizes to perform her job. The resistance responses of several participants to these two types of coercive, competitive power interactions with their supervisors varied according to the severity of the threat.

In the area of department finances, these participants relied on facilitative interactions, essentially complying with the hierarchical authority structure but working to renegotiate the issue into a compromise that was more acceptable from their point of view. This was the most frequent strategy used in relation to budget cutbacks or interference from a supervisor with a participant's department budget. In the personal arena, however, where their jobs were threatened, the participants who related stories in this area responded with competitive power strategies comprising the impression management of overt compliance combined with subtle displays of the power/threat of their connections in a competitive power struggle with their supervisors.

Looking at the first area, where the participants alluded to threats to their departmental budgets, several managers in the study described both negotiation strategies, where they countered with compromise proposals that were accepted, and revenue generation strategies. These participants' stories regarding revenue generation elucidate the constraints on economic power for managers in a publicly funded bureaucracy in a time of financial restraint and reductions in government support. One participant described the active resistance of her supervisor to revenue generation and her strategies for countering his objections with other senior administrators' support. A second participant described a successful new initiative to reduce expenditures in order to create funds for other activities, and talked of her discouragement when the funds were cut from her budget instead. The senior administrators of universities facing reduced financial resources must rely on the academic administrators and managers in the institution to make the decisions about where and how to reduce expenditures in order to balance the institutions' budgets. However, the bureaucratic system within which the managers are operating provides very little reward for actually doing this, even though it is ostensibly what those more senior in the organization are asking them to do. Thus managers are effectively discouraged and may actively resist identifying possible changes, if these translate into extra workload with no benefit to the work unit, eliminating the motivation for change.

Looking at the second level, where their jobs were threatened, the participants who related stories in this area described reactions that showed the personal cost in terms of stress and betrayal that these participants felt, but their reactions ultimately moved into engagements of competitive rather than facilitative power in these areas. Faced with threats to their personal employment, these participants responded with initial overt compliance in the direct interaction with the supervisor, but they also effectively engaged the threat of their own powerful connections (with faculty or other senior administrators) in a subtle competitive power struggle with their supervisors. It may be telling that the two participants who told these stories both maintained their positions at the end of this conflict, whereas the senior administrator who tried to lay them off in each case left their institution.

At this level in the hierarchy, a conflict of this type is mediated not only through hierarchical power structures, but also through the informal power structures of the organization created through personal reputation and networks of connections. In these situations, career managers may have some advantage over academic administrators in the informal power structures due to the influence they have build through long, successful careers in their institutions. The career manager with a permanent appointment may be seen as a longer term force to be reckoned with by any third party players in the interaction and therefore may be perceived as the more important person in the interaction to propitiate. Senior academic administrators, on the other hand, generally have shorter term appointments which have given them less time to develop powerful connections (especially if they were "external" appointments to their positions) and may be perceived as having loyalties divided between their administrative responsibilities and their academic research and as having a shorter time span to their influence because of the term nature of their appointments. Thus the actions of these participants in engaging the interests of their powerful connections at the critical time (whether deliberately or accidentally) is an effective and powerful counter-threat in a competitive power struggle with their supervisor over their continued employment.

Summary

In discussing their connections with the campus community, the participants talked about their relationships with the senior administrators to whom they currently or previously reported. Several participants portrayed elements of their relationship with supervisors as a power struggle. In some cases, the participants told stories about ongoing power issues in their relationships with their supervisors. In other cases, they told stories about the mediation of the hierarchical authority of a supervisor through the power of their own influential connections.

The participants talked about their relationships with both past and present supervisors. All the participants told stories of satisfactory relationships with a supervisor at some point, in terms of mentoring and promotion support, budget support, autonomy and noninterference, or personal and public recognition. These satisfactory relationships sometimes came with a personal cost, however. One participant talked very positively about the career support she received from her supervisor, but she also talked about how much work it was on her part to maintain their positive relationship, because that required acting as a buffer between him and the campus community. Some participants worried about the workload involved when their supervisor relied on them to solve organizational problems.

In some examples, the connection with the supervisor was not seen as a positive node in the participants' networks of connection and influence; and there were stories about difficult and constraining interactions with senior administrators. In several instances, the participants' descriptions of the relationships that they had with their supervisors in the reporting structure of the university were directly tied to a discussion of budgetary strategy. Two participants shared stories about being threatened with job loss from previous supervisors who used budgetary cutbacks as a strategy for eliminating their positions. In both examples, the participants clearly believed that their informal connections and networks had proven stronger than the power vested in their supervisor from the official hierarchy.

Overall, this discussion of budgetary and reporting relationships in higher education hierarchies paints a picture of a working environment with high political overtones for higher education managers. Only one participant in the study viewed the university environment with an unremittingly positive outlook, and she repeated frequently that her natural disposition was to "look on the bright side of things." The remaining participants struggled with a more ambivalent perspective on their institutions and the actions of the senior administrators who provide leadership to those institutions, finding varying degrees of satisfaction or dissatisfaction according to their own personalities, their perceptions of the environment, and their strategic responses to that environment. Where the participants felt a sense of control over the environment and their decisions and actions in that environment, particularly with regard to budgetary authority and functional direction, their satisfaction was greater.

CHAPTER 6

REFLECTIONS FOR PRACTICE: INFLUENCE AND INTEGRITY

> *Ferdi: Power to me is being able to achieve things I want to achieve, . . . looking at all the factors and figuring out the best way to get to the end.*

> *Edie: I'm very open and honest with people. They know where I'm coming from right from square one, and that I'm not trying to put anything over on them.*

> *Vivian: There's a freedom that nobody can touch. . . . That's where the trust comes in. It's that choice to say, "That's how I use my voice."*

Study Purpose and Design

Purpose

The purpose of this study was to explore how seven women higher education managers perceived influence and power in their workplace interactions. I began this study with a concept of management as a process centered in the development of effective relationships for decision making and action in the workplace, a concept in which gender was an important factor in those relationships. I also began with a personal concept of power as a process that occurs in workplace interactions when organizational members, through interaction with each other, achieve results in terms of organizational decision making. These personal views of management and power as process centered and interactive between people, helped me frame a context for the interviews with the study participants. I approached the subject of power obliquely, by asking each participant to talk about her interactions with others in her workplace.

In addition to my primary purpose, I had two subsidiary purposes. First, the selection of women as participants was designed to expand understanding of the perspectives and experiences of women in higher education. Second, the selection of middle managers, rather than senior academic administrators, was designed to investigate an unexplored area in higher education and add to our understanding of the middle management role in university organizations.

This study was not designed to investigate or compare gender differences between men and women managers. I have concentrated on describing the work environment and workplace interactions as experienced by managers who are women. It would be an interesting project for future study, however, to explore the same subject with a group of male managers in similar university positions.

Research Design

The study data were compiled from a series of three unstructured, audio-taped interviews with each individual study participant, my textual analysis of the interview transcripts, and the participants' review of and reaction to my thematic analysis. Study participants were selected on the basis of location, position, and reputation. They were all career administrators (rather than faculty administrators) from seven different Western and Central Canadian universities, employed in areas related to student/alumni relations. The participants' voices are reported in the study using pseudonyms. When speaking about sensitive topics (defined as sensitive by the participants in their review or by me), their voices are identified only as a "participant" or "manager."

The stories of the seven women in this study reflect *their* understandings of their experiences in the professional work environment of higher education management. How their staff, supervisors, and colleagues would describe that same environment and their interactions with the participants, or the degree to which those perceptions would match with or differ from the perceptions of the participants, is not something I endeavored to explore. However, given my belief in multiple meanings and realities, I would expect each of these individual's reactions to be unique.

My research interest, and my personal orientation as well, was to document what my colleagues perceived as significant in their interactions on their campuses, and to investigate how those perceptions related to the concepts of power and influence. Because I conceptualize power and influence as ever-changing process, rather than a static possession, I approached the subject with the participants via their stories of interaction. In the interviews I asked them to describe their interactions with staff, with their supervisors and with campus colleagues. Arising out of their stories, I introduced the terms *influence* and *power* into our conversations, so that participants could share their understandings of the words with examples within the interview setting. This exploration adds depth to our understanding of the intersection of issues of gender, power, and influence, particularly in middle management, in the literature on higher education.

Presentation of Findings

The findings of the study have been grouped according to three different sets of interactions. First, I described the participants' views of their interactions with their own staff, and then discussed how they balanced authority and connection in their relationships with those who reported to them within the administrative hierarchy. Second, I described the participants' strategies for interaction with others in their campus communities, and discussed how they increased their influence through a combined focus on building reputations for good character and increasing opportunities for connection with others. Third, I described the participants' perceptions of their own reporting relationships in the university hierarchies, and then discussed issues of connection, budgetary autonomy, power and resistance.

When I began the study, I thought I had a fairly clear idea of what I meant by *power.* Looking back in my journal and initial field notes, there was an expectation that the participants would talk about their power and success in terms of functional achievements: tasks accomplished, projects completed, conflicts resolved and people assisted. In fact, most of the participants seemed to take their functional accomplishments for granted and spent very little time discussing the many projects and tasks they directed. I had thought they might talk as well about powerlessness; about barriers and frustrations that prevented them from getting their jobs done or from being promoted (although my definition of them as *successful* may have muted any such inclination). In the interviews the participants rarely spoke from a perspective of powerlessness, and instead focused much of their discussion on those accomplishments where they had been faced with barriers and frustrations and had "managed" to resolve them successfully. From my personal experience, and from previous research (French, 1985; Gilligan, 1982; Helgesen, 1990; Miller, 1976) I was not surprised at the emphasis on connection in various guises that appeared in the women's stories. More surprising was the link that a number of the participants made between influence, connection and issues of professional and personal reputation.

Reflections on Power/Influence

Managers in Higher Education

The universities in which the participants worked were large, decentralized, multi-facetted institutions, that can be perceived from a multitude of perspectives (teaching, learning, research, discovery, collegial, political, managerial, bureaucratic, et cetera). Most of the participants expressed satisfaction with working in the university environment, noting aspects such as the beauty of their campus, the facilities and opportunities for recreation or learning available to them, or the intelligence of their colleagues or clients. Most of the participants did not, however, seem to see themselves primarily as participating in the teaching/learning culture of the organization. The majority of the participants described their work milieu in terms of a predominately bureaucratic-managerial culture, rather than as a culture focused on the knowledge missions of higher education. The bureaucratic cultural model that is reflected in the participants' stories has influenced this document in diverse ways, from the emphasis on organizational and social theory literature rather than educational administration research, to the organization of the discussion by interaction levels in the bureaucratic hierarchy rather than by conceptual topics, to an approach to the exploration of power that is more practice-oriented than theoretical in its tone.

This bureaucratic cultural model also appears in a dual self-perception of the participants as they describe themselves in their relations with others on their campus. In their descriptions of their interactions with staff and campus colleagues vis-à-vis their functional expertise, the majority of the participants spoke from a perspective as the architects of their offices and the leader of their staffs, expressing confidence in their power downward and outward in the bureaucratic structures of their institution. In their descriptions of their interactions with campus colleagues in areas of less clearly delineated responsibility and with academic administrators upward in the reporting structure, there was a sense of bureaucratic vulnerability; a number of the participants talked about their efforts to increase influence upwards and outwards in the structure. This duality in perspective is reflected as well in the main themes which emerged from my reading of the interviews.

Teamwork and Ideology

The women's stories about their interactions with their staff reflected a strong emphasis on teamwork, supportive management, flexibility, sharing of personal and professional information, and development opportunities for staff. These emphases support other findings in this area that posit a female management style based on consideration, connection, and community (Eisler, 1987; Helgesen, 1990; Shakeshaft, 1987). However, the participants who discussed sharing and flexibility presented this, not as a natural consequence of their gender, but rather as a conscious, strategic choice about their personal management style. At the same time, the women who discussed teamwork also balanced this view with a perception of their own responsibilities as managers, seeing themselves as accountable for decision making in their departments and having on occasion to exert authority and take action to resolve staff performance problems. These findings support a more complex view of women's management styles as a balance of consideration and authority in workplace relationships (Harriman, 1985; Pringle, 1988; Young, et al., 1993).

Several managers employed "teamwork" to create effective action, to introduce change, and to increase productivity, which reflected their concern for authority and managerial responsibility to the organization. However, the discussions of teamwork also emphasized their perception of teamwork as an effective way to develop ability, autonomy and creativity in their staff, which reflected their concern for consideration and connection. These participants' emphasis that teamwork was a matter of specific managerial choice, together with theoretical links between the concepts of ideology and power (Burbules, 1986; Foucault, 1980; Mumby, 1988; Pringle, 1988), gave rise to my suggestion that the concept of "teamwork" in the workplace serves as a form of bureaucratic ideology that maintains status quo power relations.

From the perspective of Foucault, the ideology of teamwork serves to maintain the discipline of existing power relationships within the organization, both by means of regulations for organizational members (formal teamwork assignments, and peer pressure) and by means of the self-discipline of organizational members. *Teamwork* is an interaction paradigm with real benefits for staff in terms of increased competence, autonomy and responsibility; but it leaves formal organizational structures in place. Teamwork as ideology provides a mechanism to disguise authority and reduce conflict between strata in the bureaucracy (Pringle, 1988). It is also an ideology specifically suited to the uses and needs of women managers within bureaucratic organizations. Teamwork strategies extend adjunct control for the manager (Tancred-Sheriff, 1989) thus freeing up managerial time for additional projects. In addition, the teamwork concept makes the managerial authority of female managers more acceptable to staff, by reducing the dissonance between dichotomized cultural expectations of the appropriate behavior for "women" and "managers" (Harriman, 1985; Kanter, 1977; Pringle, 1988). At the same time, teamwork ideologies also provide a means for individual female managers to resolve that same dissonance in themselves.

Thus the ideology of teamwork allows the manipulation of self-image by transforming perceptions of bureaucratic authority and discipline (power) over individuals into a perception of concern for the overall work community. In these ways, the opposing aspects of connection and control for women managers are integrated in an ideology of teamwork that facilitates bureaucratic functioning from both staff and managerial perspectives. However, Giddens' (1984) theory of structuration provides the basis for critique here. Giddens describes organizational structures where individual, optional behavior and decisions become accepted as routine, embedded as patterns, so that relationships become asymmetrical and bureaucratized. The notion of teams, which suggests a return to symmetry in relationships within the bureaucracy, is problematic. Although from one perspective every team would seem to be an act of resistance against existing power relationships and expectations, the legislation of teamwork from the managerial perspective creates an oxymoronic "coercive empowerment," a managerial ideology that overlays a patina of empowerment without fundamentally changing the power expectations of bureaucratic members, be they staff or managers.

Power and Character

With some exceptions, the study participants were positive about working in the university environment, although several of them talked about professional isolation in their workplace. In their interactions with the campus community, a number of the participants described strategies for increasing connections across their campuses through long service, participation in campus groups, committee involvement, issues-related visibility and information exchange. The participants who described these strategies for connection saw them as a means for increasing influence and effectiveness in order to support and expand their area of functional expertise, rather than as a means to reduce professional isolation. A number of these participants argued that good character and professional competence were central to their strategies for connection. Good reputation was seen as the force underpinning their influence and effectiveness.

The participants saw expertise as the starting point for their authority on their campuses (Savage, 1992), but a number of them also worked to reinforce that authority and expertise through expanded influence based in connection and character. That influence was a means to succeed in an organizational environment where expertise competes for dominance in the decision-making arena with organizational politics, multiple needs, and numerous alternatives (Birnbaum, 1989). Statham (1987a, 1987b) has proposed dichotomized gender-based management styles where women are "task-engrossed/person-invested" and men are "image-engrossed/autonomy-invested." A number of the participants in this study showed a *triple* focus on task, people and image. However, the focus on image for these participants in this study centered on character and reputation, rather than on status and importance as reported by male managers in Statham's (1987a, 1987b) study. I have suggested that these women managers' choice to focus on all three areas—reputation (image-engrossed), connections (person-invested) and expertise (task-engrossed)—arises, not just from the contingent needs of the organization's political structure, but out of their efforts to retain integrity in their self-identities as individuals who are both managers and females. Building on Colwill's (1993) description of personal, interpersonal and organizational power, I have also suggested that women managers may use their strengths, using their image-engrossed focus on reputation to build influence in interpersonal relationships, to bolster the area where male managers show a power advantage. That is, the women managers' focus on enhancing interpersonal connections through integrity of process and strength of character may arise, not because this is "natural" behavior for women, but rather as a strategy to reinforce their interpersonal power within a male-dominated system where gender bias may otherwise weaken their influence in those relationships.

A number of the managers in this study concentrated their efforts on building influence, rather than gaining power (their distinction in terminology). These study participants worked within their institutional environments to increase their influence with staff, with colleagues across campus, and with their own supervisors. Their strategies in this regard included creating connections, cultivating sources of information, and establishing professional and personal reputations of reliability, integrity and helpfulness. Their motivations were strategic, looking at these individual aspects as steps in the process of building influence, and seeing increased influence as a key aspect of improving their managerial effectiveness.

Image and impression management were therefore critical to their visions of managerial success. However, their strategies for impression management were firmly grounded in their understandings of their own good character and integrity, rather than in bureaucratic displays of overt power, importance or status. A number of the participants seemed to take a three-fold approach. First, these managers saw defining and prioritizing the functional tasks at hand as an important leadership responsibility. Second, they provided support to the community of people who worked with them, as staff or colleagues, to achieve those tasks. Third was their thoughtful self-analysis of their own ethics in interactions and decision making, a process that contributed to building and protecting their good character. This became the benchmark for making and evaluating decisions and actions in the first two areas.

Through their choices as reliable and ethical decision-makers, the participants established reputations of integrity on their campuses. Through their strategies of connection, they established opportunities to influence decision making, thus increasing their potential to change their environments in directions that supported and enhanced character-based leadership. For those participants experiencing environments of conflict and power struggles, a managerial self-identify based on good character and integrity became a significant coping mechanism.

Influence and Connection

In my initial definition of power at the start of this project, I saw interaction as the critical component of power and was comfortable with the idea that interactions of power could be labelled as either power through domination or facilitative power. Thus, I saw power-as-domination as the enforcing of one's own agenda or recommendation in an interaction regardless of whether there is agreement or disagreement, and regardless of who is doing the agreeing or disagreeing, often with constricting results for the organization. I saw generative or facilitative power, on the other hand, as expanding organizational potential and results through sharing, cooperative, supportive and connecting interaction. Viewed within the framework of this dichotomous definition, the majority of the managers in the study defined their strategies for interaction mainly within a generative power model. However, the participants telling these stories constructed them in ways that made an easy dichotomy questionable. They described some interactions with their staff in terms of managerial authority and responsibilities that could be interpreted as power-as-domination (but that the participants constructed as facilitative towards the work group). And they described some interactions with their supervisors that could be interpreted as resistance to dominating power directed at them (but that the participants constructed as negotiations or partnerships). As I reviewed the participants' stories, patterns emerged between their stories of interaction and the concepts of balance that I have come to see as defining power in action: authority and support, power and resistance, and influence and connection.

The *integration of authority with support* was a consistent concern in discussions of their leadership of staff, and also played a significant part in their strategies for interaction with campus colleagues. The participants' stories showed a combination of authority/discipline and connection/support in their interactions with staff. The first element recognizes the hierarchical responsibilities of dominant power in bureaucratic structure and the second element looks to the generative power of teamwork and mutual support in the workplace. Both elements are integrated in the participants' focus on the workplace as a community of individuals where a manager's leadership strategy must balance concern for individual needs with care for the community overall, without sacrificing one to the other. I have suggested that the concept of *teamwork* mediates the social roles of *woman* and *manager,* integrating the requirements of both authority/control and connection/support in these women's management strategies (i.e., their use of power in the hierarchy).

Stories of *using power and resisting power* emerged initially in the participants' discussions of their relationships with their staff, and were a strong theme as well in their descriptions of interactions with their own supervisors. In discussing their relationships with senior staff, several participants described evaluating the limits of their authority and the levels of potential resistance before deciding whether to test their influence in the campus community over a senior staff performance issue. These participants' stories showed an awareness of power and the political processes in their institutions, and each woman designed her strategies carefully with a wary eye on those political structures. Faced with a multitude of risk factors both from the sometimes powerful connections of their employees and from the perspective of impression management with the senior administration, the managers discussing this topic sought resolutions that would avoid public power struggles with their staff. When involved themselves in power struggles with their own supervisors, one strategy used by some of the managers was to rely on their alliances and connections for support and protection. This strategy was similar to what some of the managers had described as barriers in their own interactions with their own senior staff, although none of the participants noted the similarity. With their senior staff and their supervisors, most of the participants attempted to maintain the struggle in private rather than public arenas. They provided the other player the opportunity to back away in a face-saving manner and preserve an image of public accord for the rest of the community.

In situations with either their senior staff or their supervisors, the examples given by several of the participants indicated their perceptions that subtle influence through connections was a stronger force than the overt power vested in positions in the bureaucratic hierarchy. Thus the participants' preference for the terminology *influence* and their lack of interest in the term *power* when describing their leadership on their campuses can be interpreted, not as a gender-based diminution of their access to power, but rather as a sophisticated and effective understanding of political strategy within higher education bureaucracies. That is, the participants' preference for indirect influence rather than power-as-domination appears to be a conscious strategic choice. The choice was based on their evaluation of the effectiveness of each approach, rather than a circumstance arising from their own gendered nature or necessitated by the gender biases of the organizational culture.

The majority of the participants redefined their organizational power as *influence through connection*. Developing connections to increase and implement influence appeared as a major strategy in their interactions with all three groups: staff, supervisors, and campus colleagues/clients. In relation to their staff, participants discussed the importance of a leadership style that included flexibility, sharing and close communication to produce a community in the workplace of connected individuals working toward a common goal (from the perspective of Foucault, reinforcing the power of institutional discipline). With their supervisors, several participants developed compensating or collaborating strategies to increase their influence and autonomy. A number of participants told stories indicating that they were prepared to use other connections and alliances on campus to counter power imbalances in their interactions with their own supervisors in the administrative hierarchy (from the perspective of Foucault, resisting the power of institutional discipline).

At the same time, in all three areas, most of the participants differentiated between friendly close working relationships, and actual friendship, usually reserving the latter for relationships outside the workplace. There was no evidence that their choices to build relationships and connections and to maintain friendly and supportive interactions in the workplace occurred because this behavior came "naturally" to them as women. Instead, most of the participants chose this management style deliberately and strategically in order to achieve improved production, to increase their influence through information, and to form protective alliances within institutional politics.

Power and Choice

In their descriptions of relationships with their supervisors in the university administrative hierarchy, a number of the participants' experiences reflected a range between the opposing extremes of competitive, dominating power interactions and generative, facilitative power relationships (Burbules, 1986; Dunlap & Goldman, 1991; Eisler, 1987; French, 1985; Gilligan, 1982; Helgesen, 1990; Miller, 1976). However, this generalized interpretation reflects a top-down conception of power in these relationships and ignores the question of agency for the participant. Each of these participants described her part in a process of continual negotiation of the balance of power related to interactions with her supervisor. Essential to these participants' stories was their perception of the delicate balance between what was being required of them and their own choices about their actions.

A number of the participants in this study described activities which were directed at moving their relationships with their supervisors away from the dominating power of the supervisor and toward a facilitative relationship. The main sites of these unacknowledged negotiations were the control of resources and information (Hickson, et al., 1971; Hinings, et al., 1974), choices regarding resistance (Burbules, 1986; Mumby, 1980; Nyberg, 1981), and the use of connections to balance power differentials (Brass, 1984; Kanter, 1977; Pfeffer, 1981). These strategies occurred in three areas: negotiating compensation activities and meaning, building collaboration through trust and character, or resisting through alliances and connections.

The participants' perspectives on their relationships with their supervisors show different levels of awareness of the various dimensions of power in their interactions. Marshall (1993) has developed a four-stage developmental model to describe women's perspectives as they cope with male-dominated organizational cultures in their paid work. This model can also be used to describe the meaning ascribed to power interactions and choices by the women participants in this study. The analogy made here is founded in the feminist analysis of gender and power, where cultural gender bias that favors males is perceived as an issue of power (Davis, 1991; Eisler, 1987; Ferguson, 1984; French, 1985; Kanter, 1977; Lips, 1991). The power relationships described by the women participants in relation to their supervisors varied along a spectrum from very facilitative to very competitive types of interactions. At the same time, the reactions of the women participants to the idea of power in their interactions with their supervisors also varied along a spectrum. This has prompted me to suggest that there are stages of awareness and coping with power in hierarchical interaction that are parallel to the ones that Marshall identifies.

In Marshall's (1993) first stage, *muted,* the woman is unaware of the male-dominant context of her work environment and she adapts to and colludes with the existing culture, using strategies (often unconsciously) to avoid being stereotyped and to guard herself and others from awareness of the male bias in the culture. Defining this first level related to power interactions, I would suggest that muted individuals are unconcerned by or unaware of many aspects of power in their relationships with their supervisors, either perceiving the supervisory relationship(s) as completely facilitative or indicating their willing compliance with hierarchical control. Muted individuals in power relationships that are controlling rather than facilitative may suppress conflict or negative emotional reaction arising from the supervisory relationship, and be inclined to dependency and less independent decision making. They would use both compensatory and collaborative activities to try and create the perception of a facilitative rather than competitive relationship.

At the second level, the *embattled* woman is aware of the male context and feels angry, isolated, and tense about conforming. She looks for explanations in theory and judges environments as hostile or friendly to the presence of women (Marshall, 1993). I would suggest that embattled individuals feel the impact of power in their relationship in terms of outcomes, rather than perceiving the power struggle itself. Therefore, control and loss of autonomy from their supervisors is part of what defines the relationship, with resulting feelings of anger, frustration and loss of self-confidence. I would suggest that embattled individuals perceive the locus of control in the relationship as external to themselves and feel powerless, reacting with learned helplessness (Lips, 1991; Seligman, 1975) and feeling the environment cannot be changed. Women at this stage of reaction to a power relationship would again most likely use compensatory and collaborative activities, rather than resistance, in their interactions in the managerial hierarchy.

In Marshall's (1993) third stage, *rebellious,* the woman attacks perceived inequality and challenges what others take for granted, creating uneasiness or offence in others (including other women who perceive the context mainly in the first two levels). She finds herself stereotyped by others, and uses support networks to cope. The rebellious woman is also still mainly functioning in a reactive mode toward her environment. In relation to power, I would suggest that at the rebellious stage, individuals are explicitly aware of their relationships with their supervisors as a power struggle, and assert their own power in their environment by using both collaboration and resistance strategies.

Marshall (1993) posits a fourth stage, however. In the *meaning-making* stage, the woman is aware of gender in social contexts as a cultural/ social construction or process, and deliberately redefines organizational contexts by "combining aspects of the female and male principles and using contextual sensitivity to shape as well as adapt" (p. 105). The woman at this stage copes in "a continuous dance, seeking to maintain high-quality awareness of personal and environmental factors and connection to both" (p. 106). In terms of power, the meaning-making individual has developed an internal locus of control and therefore operates with the assumption that she has power to influence the context and to make choices about her own decisions and actions in her relationships. The meaning-making individual chooses her perspective and actions strategically, and may make use of compensation, collaboration or resistance strategies according to her own decisions regarding context, strategy, power and desired outcomes. Although this increase in perceived control may not reduce the stress of the interactions of power in the workplace for the individual woman (Heaney, 1993), the strategic abilities of the meaning-making woman manager enables a wider range of response and choice and therefore enables accomplishment by focusing the individual's efforts in areas where she decides they will have most effect. I would suggest that power relationships cease to be personalized struggles for the meaning-making individual, who would view them instead as environmental factors that form part of the background in the individual's decision making.

These four positions in relation to power interactions—muted, embattled, rebellious, and meaning-making—represent a range of responses available to managers to negotiate different organizational circumstances in which they find themselves. From this perspective, the four positions can be seen as well as a reflection of the equity of power interactions within the institution. Where the organizational culture favors "power with" interactions rather than "power over" interactions, both muted and meaning-making responses seem appropriate, because the environment facilitates individuals' work and does not require a more assertive power response from organizational members. In other words, in such favorable conditions, a muted response would be indicative of the manager's good fortune in her environment, rather than an evaluation of the complexity and maturity of her response to it. A manager who generally engages in meaning-making responses may find that a shift in the organization, arising from new players or new priorities, can thrust her into embattled or rebellious responses for a period. At the same time, a meaning-making individual is best positioned to influence the shape of organizational change around her, and thus diffuse the impact of organizational change in power relationships.

The complexity of management jobs suggests that a meaning-making manager might choose to take advantage of the full range of responses given the numerous interactions required in a large organization, and depending on the particular power relationship. A manager engaged in a meaning-making response might also choose to respond in any of the other modes according to her goals and how much effort she wants to expend within the interaction. Thus these four positions do not represent a permanent, irreversible progression; if the manager chooses differently in specific situations, or if the organizational circumstances change substantially, an individual can go back and forth within this continuum of responses in different interactions. However, awareness of these alternatives as active decision possibilities, rather than passive reactions, can be a powerful tool for individual managers.

Conclusion

I began this study by thinking of power as a quite specific process that occurs in organizational interactions in which organizational members, through interaction with each other, achieve desired results in terms of organizational decision making. It seemed to me that an acknowledgement of power and a better understanding of its workings as it affects middle managers in higher education would produce a valuable learning document for those of us performing these functions. Through the process of this research, my understandings of power have changed.

Most of the participants in this study did not dwell on the word *power.* The Machiavellian notion that power corrupts was not raised as an objection, however. Instead, when asked about power, these managers redefined the terminology of the project by talking about concepts such as *influence, connection,* and *integrity.* This is useful to understand the flux of influence/power in organizational relationships. Higher education managers who rely on traditional organizational conceptualizations of interpersonal and structural power—on the power inherent in authority and hierarchy—to achieve compliance from other organizational members, risk a diminishment of their ability to influence organizational process. On the other hand, thoughtful efforts to build good character, and increased connections based on integrity and concern, create the foundation for individual empowerment and organizational effectiveness by improving social relations in the workplace. This change in managerial philosophy from reason-based to values-based interaction can shift the focus of the management function from control in the workplace to a more humane and ultimately productive focus on mutuality, learning, connection and the pleasures of work. The challenge for universities, and for those of us who work in them, is to retain our concern for integrity and values in institutional decision making as we also address the institutional cultural challenges presented by current governments' prioritizing of accountability and performance measurement in higher education.

In conclusion, my final words are for the managers who participated in this study. As I met and interviewed the pilot participant and each of the seven managers in the study, I was overwhelmed by their generosity in sharing with me their time, their stories, and their thoughts and analyses of the issues, environment, interactions, and people that comprise their professional worlds. Working with the tapes and transcripts over a period of 18 months, I have been continually impressed with the richness of their descriptions and grateful for the trust that the participants gave me as they shared their private thoughts and histories. The experience of visiting their places of work, and the learning I have derived from their examples and stories, have given me a powerful resource in my own work as a manager.

I hope that the selections and analysis that I have documented in this study give due credit to the professionalism, dedication, and integrity of these managers. For each of them, I hope that life continues to provide all the excitement of new directions and explorations, learning from the failures and celebrating the achievements that result from our choices. And most of all, my best wishes go with each participant in the continuing project of building strength and independence through character and integrity. This is the project that gives each of us the power to enjoy our work and excel as managers, interaction to interaction, day by day, year in and year out.

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Appendix A

Invitation to Participate Letter

January 30, 1995

Ms xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx
The University of xxxxxxxxxxx
xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx
xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx

Dear xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx,

I am writing to ask if you would participate in a research project exploring managerial women's experiences in higher education. You would be one of seven women from across Canada participating in the study. This is the dissertation subject that I am pursuing on my year's study leave from Associate Registrarial duties at the University of Alberta. I am having a very productive leave so far, and am looking forward to the research project this spring.

In this study we would explore the question, "In your position, how do you go about successfully interacting with people at your institution?" That is, what do you do to move things forward, bring about change, influence the direction of your campus—and I thought we would have more fun if we talked about instances you feel were successful. I am interested in your stories of interactions with clients, staff, managerial colleagues, and senior administrators on campus . . . stories where you talk about how you reacted, planned, influenced, experienced, those interactions, with particular interest in the idea of influence. The study is interview-based, requiring three interviews of 1 hour each; with follow-up written commentary at your discretion. Each interview will be tape recorded. The identity of participants in the study will be confidential. I would like to use a collaborative research strategy, sending you a copy of the first analysis that I do next fall, so that you could add your comments if you wish, and also let me know if I've used any references with which you are not comfortable.

To ensure confidentiality of the participants, I am combining my visits to university campuses with another project, a "field placement practicum" requirement of my Ed.D. program. For the field placement, I am visiting Registrar's, Admissions, Recruitment and Awards Offices to look at their operations in relation to my own responsibilities in these areas at the U of A. Therefore I would also like to spend additional time with you or your staff touring your operations from the perspective of the field placement study during my time on your campus. I would also refer to our interaction solely in terms of the field placement.

I will be visiting xxxxxxxxxx in xxxxxx to do interviews for the study. I currently plan to be in xxxxxxxx from xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx. I know that this is asking for a lot of time from your schedule, but I do hope that you will be able to participate. I would be happy to interview you at alternate times (e.g., weekends, evenings) or at alternate locations to your office (e.g., your home, or the home of the friends that I am staying with) if that were more convenient to you.

My goal is to make this project a comfortable, interesting, informative and rewarding process for the research participants as well as myself.
If you would like a confidential reference regarding this project, please feel free to contact my thesis supervisor, Dr Beth Young, at (xxx) xxx-xxxx, or the woman who participated in my pilot project last month, Ms. xxxxxxxxx, at xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx.

I would very much like to include your perspectives in this study. I can be reached:
—by e-mail at bneuman@vm.ucs.ualberta.ca
—by telephone at xxxxxxxxxxxxxx (the machine answers if I'm not home)
—by mail at xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx, Edmonton, AB

I will phone you next week to discuss this project with you. I hope you will agree to participate, and I look forward to meeting you again.

Yours sincerely,

Bonnie G. Neuman

Appendix B

Informed Consent for a Study on

Experiences of Women Managers in Higher Education

The purpose of this study is to explore the work experience of women managers in academic support functions in Canadian universities. The interpretive research design uses interviews with and written submissions by the women participants. Bonnie Neuman is conducting the study. Bonnie is a doctoral candidate in Educational Administration at the University of Alberta, and is also employed as the Associate Registrar and Director of Admissions at the U of A.

Participation in research studies connected with the University requires your written consent. Your signature on this consent form indicates your agreement to participate in this study through interviews and/or written correspondence. Your participation is voluntary and you have the right to reconsider this commitment, change it, or withdraw from the study at any time.

Bonnie will treat the content of the interviews and any written submissions in confidence and will not discuss them with others so as to reveal their source. Each interview will be audiotaped and later transcribed by Bonnie or by a typist (who will also be committed to confidentiality). Bonnie will analyze the information from the interviews and written submissions and may quote specific portions. Bonnie will be sensitive to issues of confidentiality in the quotations used.

Any questions concerning the study may be directed to Bonnie Neuman at (403) xxx-xxxx or to her research supervisor Dr Beth Young at (403) 492-xxxx.

____________________________ ____________________________

Researcher—Bonnie Neuman Participant

____

Date

___ Please initial to indicate that you have received a copy for your records.

Appendix C

Participant Information for a Study on

Experiences of Women Managers in Higher Education

It would be helpful if you would complete the information below. It will be used to prepare for our interviews. Please remember that you need not answer all the questions if you are uncomfortable with providing the requested information.

Personal information:

Name:____________________________________Date:________________

Mailing
Address:____

E-mail: ____________________Telephone (off): __________ (res):__________

Age: ______ Marital status: __________Children (no/ages): ______________

Education: ____

Position in family (e.g., eldest child, only daughter with three brothers, etc.):
____

Did your mother work outside the home?
____

Position information:

Institution: ____

Your position: ____

Length of time in your current position: ________________ years

Your position reports to: _____________________________________

And that position reports to: __________________________________

Number of staff in your unit: __________________________________

Annual budget (salary & nonsalary): _____________________________

Career/Professional/Volunteer information:

Please attach your c.v. or indicate previous work history below (position/organization/location/length of time):

____

____

____

____

____

____

____

____

Additional information:

If you have the following information readily available, a copy would be helpful to me: a brief summary of functions or a job description for your current position, an organizational chart, and your resume or c.v.

____

Please keep my address and phone numbers for future reference:

Bonnie Neuman
xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx
Edmonton, Alberta
xxx xxx

If you have any questions, I can be reached by mail at the above address, or by telephone at (403) xxx-xxxx. I will be back in Edmonton on June 5th. I will be back in the office on September 1st; the phone number there is (403) 492-xxxx.

Thank you for your cooperation and time.

Appendix D

Interview Topics & Possible Questions

Note: The first interview will include discussion of confidentiality and signing of informed consent.

1. *Career development and support*
   How did you get into your current career?
   Have there been obstacles to your career development?
   Where do you go for career or work related support?
   Have you had sponsors, mentors or role models that helped?
   Do you have strategies for developing new mentoring relationships?

2. *Interactions*
   Please describe how you interact with your staff.
   How do members of your staff differ in their interactions with you?
   What kind of relationship do you have with your supervisor?
   Have you had different experiences with past supervisors?
   What are interactions like with your senior administration?
   Senior administrators come and go; how does this impact you?
   What campus interactions do you have outside of those mandated by your job?
   What other interactions are significant to you at work?

3. *Influence and power.*
   How would you describe your campus culture?
   What about the culture in your office?
   Has your job mandate changed?
   Do you feel you chart your department's course?
   How have you dealt with budget cutbacks?
   What roles do your staff and your boss play in budget planning?
   Do you have signing authority over all items in your budget?
   Have you funded any new projects in the last few years?
   Can you think of a situation where your influence made a real difference?
   Can you describe examples of power and influence in your experience?
   What kinds of power do you have? NOT have?

4. *Values.*
   What are the most important things you get from your work?
   Do you think your work has changed you?
   How do you feel about emotion in the workplace—friendships, relationships?
   Tell me about a pivotal experience that shaped your view of the workplace?
   Can you describe experiences where your gender has been significant?
   How would you describe a feminist? Do you consider yourself feminist?

   Do you think any of this relates to ideas about power?

Appendix E

Description of Project and Procedures

for Observing Ethical Guidelines

Short title: What Works: Managerial Women's Experiences in Higher Education ***Applicant:*** Bonnie Neuman

Purpose:
The study will explore with participants the general question, "In your job, how do you go about successfully interacting with people at your institution?" The study will explore the participants' stories, perceptions and interpretations of interactions with other members of the university community, with specific reference to issues of influence and power in the interactions. In exploring the experiences of women middle managers in universities, the study will add further description of middle management in higher education to existing organizational knowledge and will expand understanding of women's work experiences in higher education organizational cultures.

Methodology:
This research project will use an interpretive research methodology, with data collection primarily in the form of in-person interviews with the participants. Additional information may be obtained in follow-up contact with the participants via telephone or written communication. Multiple interviews will be conducted with each participant; in most cases this will be three interviews of approximately one hour in length. The interviews will be audiotaped, and transcribed later by a typist. The researcher will do a thematic analysis on the texts that result from the interviews.

Nature of Involvement of Human Participants:
The participants will complete a participant information form when they agree to be involved in the study, and will participate in in-person interviews with me. The participants may also provide written materials such as organizational charts, job descriptions, and resumes (optional to participants). The participants will be asked to participate in a further telephone call or written correspondence, if the need arises later in the study to ask them about another question or to clarify matters from the interview, or if they think of further comments that they would like to add. The participants will be provided with my thematic analysis in order to review and comment on the use of quotations and interpretations (optional to participants). The participants will be asked if they would like to receive copies of the transcripts of the interviews, and invited to forward any comments or corrections to these (optional to participants).

Are underage or "captive" participants involved? No.
Please describe clearly the specific procedures for observing the University of Alberta ethical guidelines for research involving human participants.

1. Explaining purpose and nature of research to participants:
Potential participants will be contacted by a letter which describes the purpose of the project, methodology, and confidentiality procedures. A follow-up phone call to the participants will clarify these aspects as well, and will clearly state to the participants that their participation is voluntary and can be withdrawn at any time. At the first interview, I will begin by again summarizing the purpose and methods, including those actions being taken to protect confidentiality, and noting to the participants that their participation is completely voluntary and under their control.

2. Obtaining informed consent of participants:
At the beginning of the first interview, after the purpose, methods, confidentiality, and voluntary participation/withdrawal issues have been discussed, each participant will be asked to sign an "Informed Consent Form" (see attachments to enclosed research proposal for copy). This form will be signed by me and by the participant, and we will each retain a copy.

3. Providing for exercising right to opt out:
During the discussion of these issues in the first interview, I will indicate to each participant that they can opt out of participation in the project simply by sending me written notification that they do not want to participate. The Informed Consent Form indicates, "Your participation is voluntary and you have the right to reconsider this commitment, change it, or withdraw from the study at any time."

4. Addressing anonymity and confidentiality issues:
The following measures are being taken to protect the confidentiality of the participants:
—the specific identity of the participants will be discussed by me with my supervisory committee only, and will not be disclosed in the final study.
—the participants will be chosen from at least three functional areas/types of positions in universities, and the participants will be chosen from multiple university sites in Western and Central Canada, in order to broaden the selection pool.
—specific identifying material in quotations will be excluded or modified to protect the identity of participants as necessary.
—the participants will be offered choice as to location of the interviews, so that they may choose to be interviewed in their own homes or an alternate site, rather than at their offices.
—I will be conducting my field placement project, reviewing the operations of registrarial, recruiting, and awards offices at other campuses, at the same time that I visit the other universities for this research project. The field placement project will therefore be my "cover story" to explain my presence at the participants' universities.

5. Avoiding threat or harm to participants or to others:
Any material obtained in interviews that I think might be harmful to the participants if it were quoted in the study, will not be used. The participants will be asked to review my draft of thematic analysis and use of quotations, to give them the opportunity to identify any worries about use of materials and ask me to exclude particular items if they have concerns about potential harm.

6. Other procedures relevant to observing ethical guidelines not described above (e.g., training assistants directly involved in data collection):
—The typist who transcribes the interview audiotapes will be instructed regarding confidentiality of both the interview participants' identities and the contents of the interviews.
—The woman manager who will assist me with "peer review" of my interpretations of transcript data (spot-checking for potential sources of bias in my interpretations) will also be instructed regarding confidentiality of both the interview participants' identities and the contents of the interviews.

Appendix F

Letter Regarding Study Draft Review

October 20, 1995

Dear Study Participants,

Here it is! I've enclosed the first draft of the study results for your review. I'm really looking forward to your comments and reactions. Just a reminder—at this stage, the document is still confidential. In the study, your pseudonym is ________________.

As I mentioned in my note in September, I've done a thematic analysis, with the quotations and stories from each of you interspersed with commentary from me. Without a doubt, the most difficult challenge for me was the decisions about what materials to use in the study and what to leave out; I finally decided, particularly in the chapter on "Connecting Upwards," that the dissertation was stronger if I focused a detailed analysis on a fewer number of examples and reluctantly put a lot of other wonderful material aside. So, some of you will find, if your story was one of the ones selected at that stage, that you will have a more visible voice in the study as a result. By the way, I'm currently thinking of calling the final product:

<u>Connecting Women: Power and Influence in Higher Education Management</u>.

What do you think?

I have also enclosed the first two chapters describing the purpose of the study and the methodology for your information. The final chapter 6, on reflections, hasn't been written yet. What I would like each of you to do for me at this stage is:

—review the quotations and stories from the interviews we did together. I have highlighted them in the text margin to make it easier for you to find them. If you have any concerns that I have used materials that could be identifying, please note to indicate whether you would like those sections changed to disguise identity better, generalized from your pseudonym in the study to the generic "one participant said" type of language, or removed from the study. This is an essential step for me to continue.

—review my commentary/interpretations of your quotations and stories, and write whatever reactions, further thoughts, clarifications, disagreements, etc that you would like to share with me. Just jot these in the margins, on the back of the facing page, or write them out separately if you like. I recognize your time constraints in terms of your busy work schedule, so do as much of this step as you want to—this is a voluntary step!

—review the overall commentary, structure, and stories, and give me any general comments or further thoughts you have on the subject of the study. This is also a voluntary step.

Besides the 5 chapters from the study, you will find another section at the end of this bundle which I would like you to review in the same manner. These materials were originally a whole other chapter that has been removed from the dissertation because the thesis was just getting too long, and this chapter diffused the focus somewhat. The materials here are very interesting, however, and might turn into future papers—for example, SWAAC (Senior Women Academic Administrators of Canada) have asked me to do a presentation at their conference next April, and I might want to use some of these materials then. So rather than bothering you again later, can you do the same review of this set, and then I will know that I'm OK to use these quotations. Some of these quotations (especially the last 3-4 pages) may work their way into my final chapter of the dissertation as well.

I am planning to take several weeks off work in December to work on the next stage of writing, incorporating your additional comments, and connecting the analysis in the study with the academic literature. Therefore, can you plan on popping this back in the mail to me again no later than November 28th? Just a reminder that my mailing address is xxxxxxxxxxxxxx, Edmonton, AB, T6A 0G2.

Thank you in advance for your time in reviewing this draft. It's been lots of fun writing it; I hope you find it an interesting and enjoyable read.

All best wishes,