

Developments in Business Simulation & Experiential Exercises, Volume 12, 1985

RAISING ELIZABETH: SOCIALIZING GIRLS TO ASPIRE TO CAREERS AS MANAGERS, SECRETARIES OR CORPORATE WIVES

Janet Lee Mills, University of Oklahoma

ABSTRACT

This paper describes an experiential exercise that enables participants to identify and describe in personal and concrete terms those sex role (and other) socialization factors believed to influence women's occupational choices, aspirations and successes. The development of this exercise was influenced by Rosabeth Moss Kanter's discussion of the roles of managers, secretaries and wives in large contemporary organizations in Men and Women of the Corporation and by Margaret Hennig and Anne Jardim's discussion of the socialization of female executives in The Managerial Woman.

Small groups of participants are charged with raising a baby girl named Elizabeth for 21 years, preparing her for success and fulfillment as (1) a manager, (2) a secretary or (3) a corporate wife in a large, multi-national organization. Participants are to determine the experiences Elizabeth should have during early childhood (0-5), childhood (6-11), early adolescence (12-15) and late adolescence (17-21). Participants are also to specify the essential knowledge, skills and attitudes these experiences should impart to Elizabeth.

The exercise might be useful in the following courses in business colleges: Organizational Behavior, Men and Women in Management, Personnel Management, Problems in Personnel Relations, or Career Planning. In addition, the exercise might be useful in courses which focus on sex roles in sociology, psychology, communications and human relations.

INTRODUCTION

The exercise requires 1½-2 hours to complete. Any number of people can participate, divided into groups of five to seven members. The exercise requires a room with adequate size and furnishing to accommodate all groups comfortably.

Each participant will need: paper and pencils and a copy of "Worksheet for Raising Elizabeth (Appendix A).

Envelopes containing the instructions Raise Elizabeth to be a "(manager, secretary, corporate wife) should be prepared in sufficient quantity so that each small group receives one. The roles should be divided as equally among groups as possible.

Prior to the session, participants should do reading in the area of sex role socialization and occupational choices and status. A brief lecture summarizing important points is desirable. Appendix B suggests readings specific to this

topic.

In addition, a review of sex role socialization in this culture might be desirable in some classes. The films Men's Lives and Growing Up Female serve as excellent resources for reviewing differences in the socialization of women and men. (Appendix B describes these films and provides a rental/purchase source.)

INSTRUCTIONS FOR FACILITATORS

1. Introduce the exercise by explaining that each small group will be presented with a baby girl named Elizabeth and that each group will be charged with Raising Elizabeth. Some groups will raise Elizabeth to be a successful manager, others will raise her to be a successful secretary, and still others will raise her to be a successful corporate wife.
2. Divide the large group into small groups of five to seven members in any way that is convenient.
3. Distribute Worksheet for Raising Elizabeth (Appendix A) to each person. Explain that the worksheet is to be used to guide discussion and summarize ideas.
4. Tell the entire group, Each group now has a baby girl and her name is Elizabeth. The charge of each small group is to raise Elizabeth for the next 21 years. Plan her life. Determine what her experiences will be, what skills, knowledge and attitudes she will need to fulfill her role successfully.
5. Then, distribute one envelope per group to assign the role into which the group is to socialize Elizabeth.
6. Announce that the groups have 45 minutes to plan Elizabeth's life and that at the end of that time, groups will report out their plans.
7. After 45 minutes, call the large group to order. Ask for reports from the groups which raised Elizabeth to be a secretary, working through family data for all groups, then proceeding through early childhood, childhood, early adolescence and late adolescence. Then differences of opinion arise, ask for individuals to explain their thinking.
8. Next, consider reports from the group that raised Elizabeth to be a corporate wife.
9. Finally, ask for reports from those who raised Elizabeth to be a manager. (It is likely that these groups will be least certain and most in conflict about suggested experiences and essential learnings.)

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10. If time allows, spend 10-15 minutes as a large group brainstorming Raising Robert, a baby boy, to be a manager. Work quickly to gather a maximum of ideas from the group, using the format from the worksheet to organize data. (Participants are likely to feel more certain about plans for Roberts experiences and essential learnings than they were about Elizabeth's, due to sex role socialization.)

11. Ask female participants to consider their own socialization and male participants to consider their sisters socialization in light of the data presented in this exercise. Ask for a show of hands in response to the following questions. How many were socialized to be secretaries? corporate wives? managers? teachers? nurses? engineers? physicians? what else?

12. Conclude the exercise by acknowledging the many popular books and articles of the past decade which provide advice to women in management. Such literature has arisen to meet the adult learning needs of women who have been socialized to assume sex-typed roles (secretary, corporate wife, teacher, nurse, etc.) but who find themselves in managerial/professional roles. (Appendix C provides a list of such books.)

APPENDIX A WORKSHEET FOR RAISING ELIZABETH

FAMILY DATA

Socio-economic class
Ethnic origins
Religious preference
Church membership
Father's occupation
Mother's occupation
Location of the home
Elizabeth's nickname
Elizabeth's birth order
Siblings
Elizabeth's role with siblings
Extended family
Power relation between parents
Fathers role with Elizabeth
Mothers role with Elizabeth
Other

APPENDIX A (continued) WORKSHEET FOR RAISING ELIZABETH

EARLY CHILDHOOD (0-5 years)

Equipment
Toys
Clothes
Pre-school education
Play activities encouraged
Peer relations
Important family activities
Other

APPENDIX A (continued) WORKSHEET FOR RAISING ELIZABETH CHILDHOOD (5-10 years)

Equipment
Toys
Clothes
Gifts
Room
School
Lessons outside school
Play activities encouraged
Peer relations
Important family activities
Responsibilities at home
Pets
Vacations, travel
Camp
Other

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APPENDIX A (continued) WORKSHEET FOR RAISING ELIZABETH EARLY ADOLESCENCE (12-16 years)

Equipment
Toys
Clothes
Gifts
Room
School
Lessons
Activities encouraged
Peers-girls
Peers -boys
Dating
Sex education
Important family activities
Responsibilities at home
Car
Vacations, Travel
Work experience
Other

APPENDIX A (continued) WORKSHEET FOR RAISING ELIZABETH LATE ADOLESCENCE (17-21 years)

Equipment
Toys
Clothes
Gifts
Room
Education
 College or Training Program
 Where?
 Major
 Activities

Lessons
Friendships with girls, boys
Dating
Romance
Marriage
Children
Work experience
Vacations, travel
Important family activities
Responsibilities to family
Car
Other

APPENDIX B RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

Readings

1. Hennig, Margaret and Jardim, Anne. *The Managerial Woman* (N.Y.: Pocket Books, 1976).
2. Kanter, Rosabeth Moss, *Men and Women of the Corporation*. (N.Y.: Basic Books, 1977 . See Chapters 3, 4 and 5.
3. Nieva, Veronica F. and Gutek, Barbara A., *Women and Work: A Psychological Perspective* (N.Y.: Praeger, 1981). See Chapters 1 and 2.

Films

1. Men's Lives: A Documentary Film About Masculinity in America. By Josh Hanig and Will Roberts. 16 mm color, 43 minutes. Available from New Day Films, Post Office Box 315, Franklin Lakes, New Jersey, 07417, (201) B91-824D.

The filmmakers journey back to their boyhood in the midwest to look at the demands and expectations on the American male. Filmed at a football game, an amusement park, a fraternity party, in a high school locker room, a barber shop and at suburban homes, the film listens to men of all ages evaluate their lives in terms of how they have dealt with the ideal American man as aggressive, emotionless, physically fit, sexually powerful, and financially successful.

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2. Growing Up Female: As Six Become One. By Julia Beichert and James Klein. 16 mm black and white, 50 minutes. Available from New Day Films, Post Office Box 315, Franklin Lakes, New Jersey, 07417, (201) 891-8240.

The film shows the socialization of the American female through a personal look into the lives of six females. Their ages range from 4-35, and their backgrounds vary from poor black to upper-middle class white. We see in action how many forces shape them: Their parents, teachers, guidance counselors, the media and advertising, popular music, and the institution of marriage. It is a compelling film.

APPENDIX C

POPULAR AND SCHOLARLY BOOKS ON WOMEN IN MANAGEMENT

1. Asassi, Judith B., Women on the Job. Lexington, MA: Lexington Books, 1979.
2. Barnett, R. C. and Baruch, G. K., The Competent Woman. NY: Halstead Press, 1978.
3. Basil, Douglas C., Women in Management. NY: Dunellen, 1972.
4. Blaxall, M. and Reagan, B. (Eds.), Women and the Workplace. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1976.
5. Burrow, Martha G., Developing Women Managers. NY: AMACOM, 1978.
6. Colwill, Nina L., The New Partnership. Palo Alto: Mayfield, 1982.
7. Cram, Sharie, Taking Stock: A Woman's Guide to Corporate Success. Chicago: Contemporary Books, 1977.
8. Farley, Jennie (Ed.), The Woman in Management. Ithica, NY: ILR Press, 1983.
9. Fenn, Margaret, In the Spotlight Women Executives in a Changing Environment. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1980.
10. Fenn, Margaret, Making it in Management: P Behavioral Approach for Women. NY: Prentice-Hall, 1978.
11. Fogarty, M., Rapoport, R. and Rapoport, RN., Sex, Career and Family. London: Allen & Unwin, 1971.
12. Frank, N.H., (Ed.), Women in the Organization. Philadelphia: University of PA Press, 1977.
13. Goldfein, Donna, Everywoman's Guide to Time Management. Millbrae, CA: Les Femmes, 1977.
14. Gordon, Francine E. and Strober, Myra H., Brining Women into Management. NY: McGraw Hill, 1975.
15. Greenwald, C. S. Women in Management. Scarsdale, NY: Work in America Institute, 1980.
16. Hall, F. S. and Hall, D. T., The Two Career Couple. Reading, MA: Addison- Wesley, 1979.
17. Harragan, Betty Lehan, Games Mother Never Taught You: Corporate Gamesmanship for Women. NY: Warner Books, 1977.
18. Hennig, Margaret and Jardim, Anne, The Managerial Woman. NY: Pocket Books, 1976.
19. Holcomb, R. Women Making It: Patterns and Profiles of Success. NY: Atheneum, 1979.
20. Jones, W. M. and Jones, R. A., Two Careers-One Marriage. NY: AMACOM, 1980.
21. Josefowitz, Natasha, Paths to Power: A Woman's Guide from First Job to Top Executive. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1980.
22. Kanter, Rosabeth Moss, Men and Women of the Corporation. NY: Basic Books, 1977.
23. Kill Ian, Ray A., The Working Woman: Male Manager's View. NY: AMACOM.
24. Larwood, Laurie and Wood, Marion, Women in Management. Lexington, MA: D.C. Heath, 1977.
25. Loring, Rosalind and Wells, Theodora, Breakthrough: Women into Management. NY: Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1972.
26. Loring, Rosalind and Loring, Otto, New Life Options: The Working Woman's Resource Book. NY: McGraw-Hill, 1976.
27. Lynch, Edith M., The Executive Suite Feminine Style. NY: AMACOM.
28. Molloy, John T., The Woman's Dress for Success Book. NY: Follet, 1978.
29. Nieva, V. F. and Gutek, B. A., Women and Work: A Psychological Perspective. NY: Praeger, 1981. -
30. Pilotta, Joseph J., Women in Organizations: Barriers and Breakthroughs. Prospect Heights, IL: Waveland Press, 1983.
31. Sargent, Alice G., The Androgynous Manager. NY: AMACOM, 1981.
32. Stead, Bette Ann, Women in Management. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1978.

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33. Stewart, Nathaniel, The Effective Woman Manager. NY: John Wiley and Sons, 1978.
34. Trahey, Jane, Jane Trahey on Women and Power. NY: Rawson, 1978.