

Writing Cases About Women Protagonists: Calling for Gender Awareness in Traditional Case Portraits



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INTRODUCTION

In his January 2011 address at Harvard Business School (HBS), the Dean, Nitin Nohria, identified *inclusion* as one of the school's five strategic priorities. He explained that inclusion involves building a culture where women and international students and faculty are able to flourish and feel a part of a community (Nohria, 2011). This priority was in part a response to the "persistent underrepresentation of women among M.B.A. students earning highest academic honors" (Rosenberg, 2015, para. 6).¹ In an update in January 2015 Nohria commented on the progress in the area of inclusion. He posed a rhetorical question, "Do the cases and courses we teach reflect the diversity of our students, the companies they will join, and the communities in which they will live?" (Nohria, 2015, p. 10). He reflected on his own case writing and concluded that fewer than 10% of his own teaching cases featured a woman in a leadership role. In response, he revealed HBS' goal of at least 20% of teaching cases in the MBA program profiling a woman leader in subsequent years.

With origins at HBS, teaching cases have become a popular pedagogical tool adopted in most business schools. The case method approach is associated with a number of positive learning outcomes including, enhanced problem-solving and decision-making skills, critical thinking, team building, and tolerance for ambiguity (Banning, 2003; Rippin et al., 2002; Roselle, 1996). Our purpose with this article is two-fold. First, we aim to draw attention to other unintended and, arguably less positive, learning outcomes that may result from a "gender blindness" (Wilson, 1996) inherent in many teaching cases, most notably marked by the absence of women protagonists. Second, we outline ways forward that foster gender awareness in case writing. Our intent is not to 'blame' anyone for such gender blindness, rather to constructively talk about these issues and identify ways forward. We are driven by our desire for consciousness-raising (our own and that of others) regarding who and what we write about in teaching cases and what we talk about when we teach with cases. Our call for gender awareness in case writing and teaching is an opportunity through which business schools can respond to the needs of its diverse students and challenge gender inequalities.

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In what follows we first explain what we mean by gender blindness, gender neutrality and gender awareness as it pertains to business studies and teaching cases. We highlight the significance of the absence of women decision-makers in teaching cases and the unintended consequences. We couch these concerns more broadly within the context of business and management education. We then outline two approaches that can foster gender awareness in writing and using cases. We conclude with tips for authors who write about women protagonists, whether from a gender lens or not.

EXPOSING GENDER BLINDNESS IN BUSINESS EDUCATION

Gender blindness is the failure to recognize there are taken-for-granted assumptions that underpin expected roles and responsibilities of women (and girls) and men (and boys) (United Nations Statistics Division, 2015). These expectations are a function of specific cultural, social, historical, economic and political considerations (United Nations Statistics Division, 2015). Gender blind practices, policies and attitudes neglect to take into account the different roles and diverse needs that *might be* informed by gender specificities (United Nations Statistics Division, 2015). In the context of business studies, gender blindness refers the failure to recognize that there *is* a relationship between management and gender (Mavin et al., 2004). It is a type of invisibility that masks how the structures, systems and practices of organizations are tied to gendered power dynamics that have been constructed over time. Wilson (1996, p. 825) refers to gender blindness as being “blind and deaf to gender” and the inequalities that it often produces. Gender blindness can involve a denial of gender specificities, in other words, there can be assumptions of gender neutrality. Our interest in exposing gender blindness in teaching cases is less about advocating for a recognition of ‘real’ or stereotypical differences between men and women leaders, and more about recognizing that the absence of women decision-makers and the portrayals of those women leaders who are featured in teaching cases, assume a gender neutrality. Such assumptions inform (restrict) what we perceive to be effective leadership and, in turn, limit opportunities for how women *and* men can enact leadership and management. Assumptions of gender neutrality do not take into account *possible* gender specificities and diversity in experiences. In this article we are calling for more gender-aware teaching cases, case writers and case instructors. This will require an intentional effort to write more teaching cases with women decision-makers, and to do so in a way that acknowledges sex-role stereotyping and occupational sex segregation in the portraits of women protagonists.

Where are the women in teaching cases?

Symons and Ibarra’s (2014) study of award-winning and best-selling teaching cases published by the Case Centre, a key distributor of teaching cases, vividly highlights the absence of women leaders in teaching cases. In their research of 53 cases over the five-year period 2009-2013, women are completely absent in 23 of the cases and profiled as protagonists in only seven. In two of those seven cases, men leaders are disguised as women protagonists. None of the instructor manuals (IM) which accompany the 53 cases, including the ones with women protagonists, raise gender as a focal part of the analysis or even as a point for discussion. In Symons’ (2016) follow-up research (2009-2015), only one additional case from

the 21 new award-winning and best-selling cases in 2014 and 2015 profiles a woman protagonist. Coupled with this, of the 222 characters introduced in those 21 cases, only 21 are women.

Our own analysis of the 30 best-selling cases published in *Case Research Journal* (CRJ) over the two-year period 2014-2015 revealed a similar trend, although somewhat less alarming (See Lawrence et al., 2016, for list of cases).² Seven of the 30 cases, or 23%, profiled a woman decision-maker. In one of those cases, however, the IM accompanying the case indicates that the woman protagonist was disguised and it is unclear if changing the sex of the protagonist was part of the disguise. Further, in another of those cases we suggest that it was a co-decision of sorts in that the woman protagonist was offering expert advice to the male owner of another firm on a decision he had to make.³ For that same co-decision case, there is no mention of interviewing the woman protagonist in the IM; only men employees are reported as being interviewed for the writing of the case, raising a question about if the woman protagonist is disguised as a man. In only one of those seven best-selling CRJ cases with women decision-makers was gender raised as a consideration in the IM (e.g., gender stereotypes).

Symons and Ibarra (2014) highlight the unintended and negative outcomes of having so few women profiled in teaching cases, the nature of industries profiled with women leaders, and authors' decisions on what is said (or isn't) about those women. First, they conclude women featured in most of the award-winning and best-selling cases (those published by Case Centre) lead in "pink" industries including beauty, food, dolls, and home furnishings. In this way, such teaching cases risk sustaining sex role stereotypes of women's expertise (e.g., interpersonal, food, family, furniture, fashion, women's health issues) (Symons & Ibarra, 2014), as well as the gender bias of what is perceived as "men's work" (e.g., task and production oriented) versus "women's work" (Hurst et al., 2016). From our analysis of the CRJ best-selling cases over the 2014-2015 period, again CRJ fared somewhat better. In six of the seven cases featuring women protagonists, the women were leading businesses in entertainment (two cases), transportation (one case on a courier services firm), engineering services (one case), health (one case on a retail pharmacy firm), and beverages (one case on a vineyard / winery). The seventh case featured a co-decision case whereby a woman market researcher in one firm was advising a man CEO leading a firm in the food industry. It is also worth noting that in three of those seven cases, however, the women decision-makers held positions that were HR-related, a field we argue is typically aligned with traditional notions of femininity (e.g., caring) and peripheral to the often privileged revenue-generating areas of an organization.

Symons and Ibarra (2014) also note that the descriptions of women protagonists in the teaching cases they studied, are generally limited in depth and length, and comparatively of less detail than those provided for men protagonists. "Without rich descriptions of women as leaders, we are left with stereotypically male models of how leaders 'walk and talk,' suggesting that there are limited – and gendered – ways to succeed" (p. 4). In profiling the diversity of leadership styles and approaches of women (and men) leaders, teaching cases can serve as an outlet through which students learn about and challenge the double bind which women leaders face.⁴ This in turn, opens space for women (and men) leaders to do leadership and gender differently.⁵

One might argue that the low number of cases featuring women is not surprising given the low number of women holding senior management positions.

In her review of Broadbridge and Fielden's (2016) *Handbook of Gendered Careers in Management*, the first author (Grandy, 2016) comments on the dismal progress we have witnessed in women's career advancement, despite reaching near parity in the total labor force.

Women now comprise approximately 47% of the total labour force in Canada, up from 37% in 1976 (Statistics Canada, 2013, 2016). These statistics, however, paint a misleading picture regarding the career "progress" of women. In Canada, men are still two to three times more likely than women to hold a senior management position (Conference Board of Canada, 2011). In 2014, only one woman held a CEO position in companies listed on the Canadian TSX (Catalyst, 2015c), and only 20.8% of board seats at Canadian stock index companies were held by women (Catalyst, 2015a). In the United States, women hold a mere 4% of CEO positions and 19.2% of board seats at S&P companies (Catalyst, 2015b). Globally, board seats held by women hover at 12% (Deloitte, 2015). We are a long way from parity and women continue to experience a "labyrinth" (Eagly & Carli, 2007) of challenges in their careers (Grandy, 2016, p. 257).

We suggest the lack of women in senior management positions is exactly why case writers need to profile more women leaders. Notwithstanding possible difficulties in identifying and accessing the small number of senior women leaders, we believe doing so will provide role models to the many women we see in the workforce and in our classrooms. Further, it serves to challenge the sex role leader stereotypes (read: leadership is masculine and carried out by men) that traditional teaching cases perpetuate (Symons & Ibarra, 2014; Symons, 2016). While somewhat dated, Turcotte's (2011) report on women and education in Canada, revealed that in 2008 women comprised 53% of university graduates in business, management and public administration. In 2015, women comprised 41% of the Harvard MBA class (Patel, 2014). A report by Forté Foundation (Moran, 2015) also concluded that of the 36 MBA programs they surveyed, women comprised 36% of enrollments in 2015. According to research conducted by the Graduate Management Admissions Council (GMAC) on 426 MBA programs, women make up the majority of applicants in graduate programs in Marketing and Communications (62%), Accounting (57%) and Management (55%) (Moran, 2015).

Symons and Ibarra (2014) conclude that the lack of women role models featured in teaching cases is a source of "second generation bias" (Ely et al., 2011). Ely et al. (2011) define this phenomenon as "the powerful yet often invisible barriers to women's advancement that arise from cultural beliefs about gender, as well as workplace structures, practices, and patterns of interaction that inadvertently favor men" (p. 475).⁶

By perpetuating the idea that men are at the center of business, case studies unintentionally depict strong leadership as almost uniformly masculine. Showing only one model of leadership implicitly signals to both men and women that women are not suited for leadership, and deprives both of alternative role models for different ways of leading and developing a leadership identity (Symons & Ibarra, 2014, p. 5).

Part of a Larger Problem.

The gender blindness talked about above is not restricted to teaching cases in business and management education. Dever and Mills (2015), Flynn et al. (2015a), Kilgour (2015) and Mavin et al. (2004) all conclude that gender blindness is a concern that extends throughout business schools and across business curriculum with far reaching negative implications. Kilgour (2015) notes, “in 2011, only 194 out of 5,816 Caseplace teaching resources (cases, syllabi and other documents) mentioned women (Caseplace, 2014)” (p.15). Flynn et al. (2015a) also express that business schools are experiencing declining enrolments by women. They imply this is in part due to business schools’ refusal to acknowledge gender as an issue.

Issues of gender are often invisible in business schools. Business students, both female and male, often lack exposure to professional and academic women in leadership positions, in teaching cases, and in the curriculum more generally... business school curricula continue to be designed almost exclusively around a male-dominated ethos and emphasize “hard” skills associated with masculinity (Hite and McDonald, 1995; Mavin, Bryans and Waring, 2004; Simpson, 2006) (Flynn et al., 2015a, pp. 26, 29).

We align with Haynes (2014) and contend that business schools must play a critical role in challenging gender inequalities. Our particular interest here is in advocating for teaching cases as one means through which to do this. Through cases business schools can provide portraits of women leader role models and educate “students to understand, challenge and overcome stereotypical gendered assumptions” (Flynn et al., 2015b, p. 2). In the next section we propose two ways forward that move us towards gender awareness in case writing and teaching.

WHAT’S NEEDED: A SILENT REVOLUTION AND A ‘CALLING OUT’ OF THE ELEPHANT IN THE ROOM

Tackling gender blindness in teaching cases will require a concerted and conscious effort on the part of case writers and case teachers. In what follows we outline two approaches through which gender awareness in teaching cases can be accomplished. The first, a *silent revolution approach*, outlines a subtle approach aimed to normalize women as leaders without calling out gender blindness directly. The second, a *calling out the elephant in the room approach*, is a more direct or what some might feel is a ‘in your face’ route intended to explicitly acknowledge gender inequalities. We see these approaches as complimentary.

A Silent Revolution Approach.

We acknowledge that introducing gender into business curriculum can be challenging for a number of reasons. Feelings of uneasiness for students and faculty, gendered resistance, and lack of knowledge and academic status of faculty, can all play a role in why we don’t ‘call out’ gender blindness in business education (Wahl, 2015). “The subject of gender, GE [*gender equality*] or feminism will evoke emotions in almost all kinds of groups. It is often interpreted as a political and provocative subject rather than an area of important knowledge and academic theorizing” (Wahl, 2015, p. 316). For these reasons, we suggest that one way forward is for case writers to adopt a subtle approach or what we refer to as a *silent revolution approach*.

Adopting a silent revolution approach involves increasing the number of cases written about women decision-makers without necessarily directly addressing gender considerations. It also means business instructors will be more alert to using more cases with women protagonists when selecting cases for their courses. Without a real commitment across a business school - from deans and associate deans, and across the curriculum, etc. - talking about gender issues explicitly may not be embraced by instructors. As a result, it is unlikely that cases and IMs with learning objectives intended to 'call out' gender blindness will get used. Having more cases with women leader protagonists serves as a subtle but critical way to expose instructors and students to women leaders. It begins to normalize women as leaders. At the same time, as we discuss in more detail later in this article, to do this effectively case writers need to be mindful of questioning sex-role stereotypes regarding the range of industries profiled and descriptions of women leaders (Symons & Ibarra, 2014).

A Calling Out of the Elephant in Room Approach.

Wahl (2015) suggests that when it comes to discussions about gender inequalities faculty members should acknowledge, rather than ignore their own feelings of uneasiness and allow students to do the same. She also notes, "it is important not to question the reactions of either men or women, as this will confirm the issue as an individual one" (p.317). Gender inequalities are a structural phenomenon in society and organizations (Wahl, 2015). We contend that we all hold a responsibility in moving forward to address these concerns; however, we also recognize that presenting gender inequalities as an individual issue will likely 'close down' conversations, rather than moving discussions forward in a constructive and meaningful way. At the same time, we propose there is another way to foster gender awareness in teaching cases and it responds to Flynn et al.'s (2015a) work. It involves case writers adopting, what we refer to as, a *calling out the elephant in the room approach*. Flynn et al. (2015a) argue that a direct approach is needed otherwise nothing will change. "Business schools need to acknowledge these gender issues as the 'elephant in the room', that is, an obvious situation that is being ignored to avoid embarrassment, controversy or debate... Courses and activities should be reviewed to determine the presence, or lack thereof, of women in textbooks, case studies, speaker programs and the like" (Flynn et al., 2015a, p. 43).

For teaching cases this means even when learning objectives are not about gender, gender needs to be acknowledged in IMs. Case writers can provide guidance to instructors and offer language to help instructors feel adequately equipped to talk about gender and women in leadership in their classes. This will allow instructors to become aware of their own and others' underlying assumptions (Symons and Ibarra, 2014). In adopting such an approach, instructors using cases will be "transparent about each case by simply noting the gender of the protagonist, the industries that women protagonists are found in, and how women are represented" (Symons, 2016, p. 4).

MOVING FORWARD: GUIDANCE FOR CASE WRITERS

We follow Mavin et al. (2004) and suggest we need to "first 'unlearn' and then to 'rethink', traditional approaches" (p.293) to case writing and teaching. Symons (2016) suggests that case clearing houses, business schools, faculty members, and

companies all have a role to play in fostering gender awareness through teaching cases (e.g., incentives and awards for cases featuring women protagonists). Our aim in this section is to offer case writers, and instructors using cases, constructive tips that begin to redress the gender blindness enveloping traditional teaching cases.

We hope that this article and the *CRJ*'s special issue on women's leadership (2016, 36:4) inspire more case writers to write cases that have intended learning outcomes related to gender and / or women's leadership. At the same time, we would be remiss if we didn't highlight that in some ways even the special issue of *CRJ* on women leaders risks perpetuating stereotypes on the industries in which women *can* lead. The seven cases featured in the special issue cover health care (two cases), health & beauty (one case), medical equipment (one case), feminine hygiene products (one case), education (one case), and nonprofits (one case).

For writers looking for additional inspiration and ideas on gender aware cases, there are a number of *CRJ* cases that can be consulted, some of which are featured in the special issue. Table 1 provides a sample of cases that either include learning objectives specific to gender and / or women's leadership or acknowledge gender considerations as part of other learning outcomes. Some of these cases outline teaching approaches that assist instructors in navigating through what can sometimes be challenging and sensitive conversations. Case writers might also garner inspiration from the work by Wahl (2015) on gender-related role plays in organization theory; Marshall (1999) on a gender awareness approach in MBA programs; and Ely et al. (2011) on gender considerations in women's leadership development.

Author & Publication Details	Case Title	Focus
Barrett and Moores (2013) Vol. 33, Issue 2	Succession at Buchanan Transport	Stakeholders and family business; Succession planning in family business; Gender, entrepreneurship and family business
Marti and Montalvo (2013) Vol. 33, Issue 3	Conflict at MRW: The new employee's pregnancy	Gender role stereotypes; Conflict management; Culture
Myrah and Sawatzky (2016), Vol. 36, Issue 4	Lunapads: Co-leadership in a social business	Women's leadership, Co-leadership, Values-based leadership, Social enterprise
O'Neill et al. (2016) Vol. 36, Issue 4	Leading change through unprecedented times: Nancy Sims and the Robert A. Toigo Foundation	Gender, Intersectionality, Women's Leadership

Sharen (2016) Vol. 36, Issue 4	The balancing act: Making tough decisions	Stereotyping, Implicit bias, Implicit leadership theories, Gender occupation role congruity
Srinivasa and Winn (2006) Vol. 26, Issue 2	Funding philanthropy: Creating a service NGO for mothers	Gender role stereotypes; women's entrepreneurship; Social entrepreneurship; Visioning

Writing & Using Cases with Women Protagonists.

We encourage case writers to write more cases that feature women protagonists. In doing this we also ask that case writers pay closer attention to what and how they write about these women protagonists. We need to be reflective case writers. Responding to Symons and Ibarra's (2014) and Symons' (2016) work, we suggest that case writers consider the amount of space devoted to women characters in cases, relative to men characters. Case writers can also consider how the content might, unintentionally, reinforce sex-role stereotypes as it pertains to:

1. the type of work and expertise of women (e.g., women can only lead in certain industries and occupations– see for example, Hurst et al., 2016);
2. the relationships between women, and between women and men (e.g., women do not support other women; women as inferior to men, such as women lack experience and expertise relative to men, and women rely on others to make decisions - see for example, Ibarra & Obodaru, 2009); and,
3. archetypes of (in)effective leadership (e.g., women leaders as emotion-driven, consensus-seeking, family-oriented - see for example, Eagly & Carli, 2007; Ely et al., 2014).

Nohria (2015) suggests that, “the most effective cases are not necessarily those where women protagonists are dealing with gendered issues like work-life balance, but rather leading change and other strategic initiatives within an organization” (p.11). However, we are not suggesting that no more cases on women leading in “pink” industries should be written. Nor are we suggesting, for example, that women shouldn't be portrayed as leaders whose family lives play a role in the decisions they make or how they make those decisions. We recognize that the experiences of women leaders are diverse and often complex. What we are suggesting is that as case writers we have an opportunity to expose students to how effective leadership and gender can be enacted in diverse ways. We also propose that even if what is written in a case study reflects the spoken words and felt experiences of the women and men who have re-told their experiences to the case writer, as case writers we bear a responsibility. We propose that responsibility entails acknowledging how such experiences might reflect and possibly reinforce sex-role stereotypes and limit possibilities for doing leadership and gender differently (e.g., Mavin & Grandy, 2012, 2016).

Writing Instructor Manuals that Account for Gender.

We encourage case writers to consider acknowledging gender considerations in their IMs, even when the learning outcomes for a case do not directly pertain to

gender and women's leadership. We recognize that case writers may feel uncomfortable in doing so because of a lack of expertise in gender and women's leadership. Business schools and case clearing houses might consider developing and delivering training on gender awareness to better prepare and equip case writers and instructors. **Appendix I** includes a sample script that could be inserted into IMs for cases that profile a woman leader.

We also appreciate that case writers may feel issues of gender are irrelevant to the case decision, issues and disciplinary focus. We too have felt this way. In our own reflections in preparing to write this article and editing the special issue for *CRJ* (2016, 36:4) on women's leadership, however, we now think that by not acknowledging gender explicitly in our own instructor manuals, we have overlooked an important learning opportunity, for us as case writers and instructors, but also for our students.

CONCLUSIONS

Recognizing the need for teaching cases about women protagonists is not new. As a result of the vision of Margaret Hennig and Anne Jardim, Stanton and Epstein (1976) published *Cases on Women in Management* in response to the lack of teaching cases in the HBS system. *Cases on Women in Management* profiled women leaders and the issues faced by women entering management at that time. Both Hennig and Jardim were HBS graduates and founders of a MBA program designed for women at Simmons College in Boston. We, like others, however, feel that not enough progress has been made to redress this absence of women decision-makers in cases. In this article we have offered case writers two ways forward: a silent revolution, and a calling out the elephant in the room. We think both approaches will make a positive impact by normalizing women as leaders and providing students with examples of successful women leader role models.

We remain cautiously optimistic that the percentage of cases written about women leaders will increase, the breadth and diversity of industries featured where women lead will widen, and how women leaders are talked about in those teaching cases and IMs will promote alternative ways of doing leadership for women *and* men. At the same time, we want to acknowledge that addressing gender blindness and fostering gender awareness is really only a starting point within a larger diversity agenda that should be on the radar of case writers and instructors. We suspect that other 'markers' of diversity (e.g., race, ethnicity, sexuality, disability, religion) are also neglected in portraits of decision-makers in teaching cases. In *CRJ's* (2016, 36:4) special issue on women leadership one case notes that the women decision-maker has a hearing impairment (e.g., disability) and two other cases profile the race of the women leaders. In regards to the latter, both Sharen (2016) and O'Neill et al. (2016) also pull on intersectionality theory in their IMs and acknowledge how race and gender intersect with other identity 'markers' and what this might mean for the woman leader's identity, leadership and management practices. We hope our article sparks more 'action' in case writers and instructors as it relates to these wider discussions of diversity as well.

NOTES

- ¹ Nohria expressed that one of the first initiatives in the area of inclusion would focus on understanding the challenges facing women at HBS (Nohria, 2011). Robin Ely, business professor at HBS, was appointed to lead this initiative. Ely set out to better understand the school's culture and if it negatively contributed to students' ability to succeed. For example, honors at HBS is based entirely on grades and participation in class discussions informs a significant part of grades. In exploring the culture, Ely examined students' willingness to speak in class, professors' patterns in calling on students, and group dynamics (Rosenberg, 2015).
- ² Lawrence et al.'s (2016) article identified the top 20 best-selling cases in *CRJ* in both 2014 and 2015. Ten of those cases were best sellers in 2014 and 2015. Their analysis of those cases did not include analysis of the distribution of men relative to women protagonists.
- ³ In four other best-selling *CRJ* cases featuring men protagonists the IMs indicate that case characters were disguised, however, it is unclear if only the names were changed or if sex was also changed for disguise purposes.
- ⁴ The double bind is a phenomenon whereby if women leaders are perceived to be highly communal and thus in alignment with traditional enactments of femininity (e.g., nurturing, collaborative decision-making), they risk being criticized for not being agentic enough or displaying behaviors associated with effective leadership (e.g., decisive, ambitious). At the same time, if women leaders are highly agentic (that which is associated with effective leadership), they can be seen as violating gender norms associated with femininity, and thus are still criticized (Debebe et al., 2016; Eagly & Carli, 2007; Mavin & Grandy, 2012).
- ⁵ See Mavin and Grandy (2012, 2013) for a discussion of doing gender well and differently.
- ⁶ Second generation bias (Ely et al., 2011) explains how practices viewed as 'gender neutral' can sometimes serve to disadvantage women. For example, social / sporting events held after regular working hours (e.g., golfing) that also serve as critical networking opportunities because senior leaders are present, sometimes end up disadvantaging women because they are either not invited or unable to participate because of other life commitments.

APPENDIX 1: SAMPLE SCRIPT FOR INCLUSION IN INSTRUCTOR MANUALS TO ACKNOWLEDGE CONSIDERATIONS OF GENDER / WOMEN & LEADERSHIP

Harvard Business School (HBS) has, as have various researchers, drawn attention to the lack of case studies featuring women protagonists and the need to redress this. For example, the Dean of HBS, Nitin Nohria (2015) commented that only 10% of his own cases featured a women protagonist, yet women comprised 41% of the Harvard MBA class in 2015 (Patel, 2014). He committed to an agenda to increase the number of women decision-makers profiled in teaching cases to 20% in subsequent years. With women representing a significant percentage of undergraduate and graduate students and nearly half of the work force, teaching cases' protagonists should at least mirror the classrooms in which case studies are taught.

While this case and instructor's manual do not deal directly with issues of gender / women in leadership, they do detail the experiences of a woman leader. We encourage instructors to acknowledge, towards the end of the class discussion, that the case study is written about a women leader and ask students to reflect on the implicit lessons that the case study portrays about women and leadership. If instructors are uncomfortable or unfamiliar with the literature on gender and leadership, we encourage instructors to acknowledge that to students. Instructors may also want to acknowledge that students may find the topic uncomfortable or that some may think that by talking about this directly it perpetuates women as different or requiring special attention in organizations. Highlighting the absence of women in case studies (as noted above) is one useful point here. Sharing the following quote from Symons and Ibarra (2014) might also be useful:

By perpetuating the idea that men are at the center of business, case studies unintentionally depict strong leadership as almost uniformly masculine. Showing only one model of leadership implicitly signals to both men and women that women are not suited for leadership, and deprives both of alternative role models for different ways of leading and developing a leadership identity (Symons & Ibarra, 2014, p. 5).

We also encourage instructors to acknowledge that not all women experience leadership in the same way or face the same challenges (Mavin & Grandy, 2016). Instructors can read the following passage to students to highlight the precarious situation that women leaders often face. Instructors should encourage students to consider whether or not the case study, or through their own interpretations of the case data or life experiences, particular sex role stereotypes of women leaders are created and sustained.

*While perceptions of effective leadership are evolving (Bosak & Sczesny, 2011), historically effective leadership has been associated with agentic characteristics such as assertiveness and decisiveness. These are also the same characteristics typically associated with masculinity (and in turn men). Note: By contrast communal characteristics include those such as relationship-oriented, collaborative, kind and helpful. Virginia Schein's research (1973, 1975) coined this phenomenon 'think manager - think male' whereby **implicitly** men are more likely to be viewed as effective*

leaders than women. Because of implicit bias and sex-role stereotypes, women face what Eagly and Carli (2007) refer to as a double bind. "If a woman leader is highly communal, she may be criticized for not being agentic enough, but if she is highly agentic, she may be criticized for not being communal enough (in the former meeting sex role stereotypes for a woman but not a leader, in the latter violating sex role norms and thus still not an effective leader)" (Eagly & Carli, 2007, p.66). This often leaves women leaders in the position of being negatively evaluated, regardless of the course of action taken (Debebe et al., 2016). Such implicit bias and sex-role stereotypes narrow the alternative leadership styles available to **both women and men**.

Instructors can recommend further readings to those students who express an interest. We recommend the work of Eagly and Carli (2007) and Symons and Ibarra (2014) as insightful and 'accessible' sources. The work by Mavin and Grandy (2012) on women in management doing gender well and doing gender differently also offers insights into the need to acknowledge that effective women leaders and entrepreneurs can enact alternative sex-role scripts. In addition, the work by Johnson et al. (2008) highlights how gender stereotypes influence the evaluation of men and women leaders (e.g., men leaders need to display strength to be viewed as effective while women leaders need to display both strength and sensitivity).

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