



Rezension

Wajcman, J. (1998) *Managing like a man: women and men in corporate management, Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania State University Press*)

This publication is an example of the increasing number of scientific studies of gender and management. The author proposes the analysis of an often asked and interesting question: why management as an occupation become accessible to women but remains gendered as male? While acknowledging that management is an occupation historically and culturally associated with men, she explores the experiences of men and women working at similar levels of management hierarchies.

Wajcman adapts Connells concept (1987) of gender regime and rephrases it as the gender regimes of management, meaning the control of material resources as well as the financial control over individuals and the historical process of maintaining hegemonic groups in powerful organisational positions. In her study, the analysis of representations of power between men and women managers in the workplace is emphasised.

Her research is not a study of European companies in general; it is empirically based on men and women managers working for British subsidiaries of an U.S.-owned high-technology multinational. She says that this is a study of senior managers, but the categorisation of senior managers maybe confusing. It managers in this study are working in British subsidiaries they may not be senior managers; i.e. from a global perspective, the people in the U.S. offices (general headquarters) where global strategic decision are taken, may be the senior managers.

Wajcman makes important theoretical claims about women in management. She suggests that most writing on management is being interpreted as locating women as the problem; this has the effect of reinforcing management as legitimately a mens world. In her perspective, the construction of women as different from men has been a way of maintaining male power in Institutions. Not surprisingly, the discussion of men and women working in organisations has come to be about the few exceptional women in senior management positions; are being subjected to scrutiny in their actual work in a way that men are not. I would re-phrase this argument by saying that female managers are treated differently from normal heterosexual male managers; or, better in a way that men in stable cohabitation/marriage with women are not (Reis 2002).

Wajcman examines how far women have advanced towards senior management positions, and analysis how women and men manage together in institutions by criticising the

assumption that there are different male and female management styles. She argues that management is itself gendered, and that there are no significant sex differences in management style. The important question is, In what ways are women disadvantaged by the fact that they are not men? (8). However, Wacjman fails to explain why some women regard their own female management styles as advantageous, and under which circumstances some women use distinctive and creative ways of managing business in order to survive in organisations.

Interestingly, she argues that current management literature is preoccupied with the dynamics of cultural change within organisations for the sake of the pursuit of organisational profit. At the same time, she recognises that there is a preoccupation in both feminist and organisation theory with questioning culture and subjectivity. To clarify these questions, Wacjman suggests that authors in management, feminist and organisational studies discuss similar topics and today they all seem to share a common language. But the discussion of the same issues does not necessarily mean there is a common understanding about gender and management. Even management writers who discuss gender issues, they continue to ignore the effects on people who are indirectly involved with the management world of organisations. Wacjman, for example, continues to support the argument that the existence of a female server, typically a wife, is important for the managers career, because it is expected from organisations and the managers point of view that a wife carries out a range of duties for her husband, freeing him to devote his time to work. But she does not question the conditions under which this invisible family labour continues to be necessary for the managers career.

Unspoken management work is produced mainly by wives (Reis 2002), but also by the children of managers as well as other members of the family under the control of the head of the household. This type of indirect labour is of major importance, and is necessary for the profit of organizations. Although Wacjman proposes an extensive examination of the interconnections between home and employment, she discusses women and men as managers independently of how they deal with their lives in the private sphere. This is a crucial limitation in her book. Most authors do not seem to be aware of the restrictions which this deficit creates in the understanding of management, and of the lives of people, particularly women, who are directly and indirectly involved in the world of management. However, Wacjman recognises these limitations, and regrets her inability to systematically integrate the private sphere in their research (138).

This interesting book shows that whatever women do to succeed in organisations, they seem to represent considerable threats to male homo-sociability. Therefore, the few women who work in management may need to manage like a man, in order to survive in Institutions. But fails to explain how managers continue to face ideological and material structures in the connection between employment and their families.

List of references Connell, R.W. (1987) *Gender and power: society, the person and sexual politics*; Cambridge: Polity Press
Reis, C. (2002) *Unspoken management strategies and practices of integration and commitment in transnational organisations*; Paper presented at Free University; Amsterdam, Netherlands
Reis, C. (2003) *The unspoken work of men managers careers*; Forthcoming
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