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INTRODUCTION: IS THE GLASS CEILING STILL RELEVANT IN THE 21ST CENTURY?

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The glass ceiling is arguably one of the most familiar and evocative metaphors to emerge from the 20th century. The publication of Rosabeth Moss Kanter's 1977 book, *Men and Women of the Corporation*, brought to the fore the notion that experiences within the workplace are clearly gendered. Indeed, since that time, explaining the existence of the glass ceiling and other forms of discrimination leading to the underrepresentation of women in the upper echelons of organizations has become a primary question for employers and researchers alike. The importance placed on diversity is, at least in part, a response to the growing number of women in the workplace and the need to make full use of a changing labor market. Organizations are also attempting to access the competitive advantage that is purportedly gained from having a diverse workforce (K. Y. Williams & O'Reilly, 1998).

However, despite continued political lobbying, legislative reform, and the almost 50 years that have passed since the second wave of the feminist social and political movement, the extent of women's advancement is unclear. Certainly the media's and the public's opinions are mixed. Newspapers, the popular press, and social commentators offer a different story each day about whether gender discrimination is a problem faced by women today. Whereas some report on the persistence of the glass ceiling (e.g., "Women Still Face

Glass Ceiling,” BBC, 2004), others herald the shattering of the glass ceiling (e.g., “Women Atop IT Ladder Say Glass Ceiling Not Apparent,” Ferris, 2005) and others offer suggestions on how it can be overcome (e.g., “Glass Ceiling? Get a Hammer,” Holstein, 2006). The nature of such claims is not dependent on time frame or in which country the claims are made. Indeed, in a single fortnight the U.K. newspaper the *Guardian* printed three stories on the glass ceiling: the first argued that it was “still firmly in place” (Parker, 2002), the second reported that “Britain leads glass ceiling breakers” (Macalister, 2002), and the third maintained that “women struggle to shatter glass ceiling” (Adams, 2002, n.p.).

Such uncertainty also resonates in the available statistics on women’s representation in the workplace. Indeed, as many of the chapters in this volume attest, the statistics may be interpreted as showing great gains or a frustrating status quo. On the one hand, there have been clear advances, with women progressively moving into spheres that had long been all-male preserves. For example, women’s participation in work outside of the home has risen dramatically in recent years. In the United States, it rose from 20% to 59% between 1900 and 2005 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2007), and in the United Kingdom, between 1971 and 2004, it rose from 42% to 70% (Women and Work Commission, 2005). Moreover, a growing number of women have achieved senior positions within organizations (Equal Opportunities Commission, 2006; U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2005). In particular, the proportion of women managers rose from only 18% in 1972 to 42% in 2005 (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2006), with such gains echoed in European and other Western nations.

On the other hand, women continue to be underrepresented in the most powerful positions of society. This is particularly the situation in the corporate world, in which women are a minority among those in power. For example, within the European Union, women make up, on average, just over 10% of the top executives in the top 50 publicly quoted companies (European Commission, 2005). In the United States, women make up less than 16% of corporate officers and less than 15% of members of boards of directors within Fortune 500 companies (Catalyst, 2007).

These raw statistics can give some indication of change over time, and they certainly make dramatic headlines, but their message is mixed and their interpretability is contestable. The purpose of this volume is to go beyond social commentary, anecdotal evidence, and raw statistics. We have gathered a group of experts on gender discrimination to set the record straight and provide scientific insight into the real situation of women in organizations. We move beyond the numbers and provide an in-depth examination of the experiences of women in the workplace. In this way we can get an idea of the current situation, in which advances have been made, and what the real barriers are at this point in time. The fundamental question that this volume

asks is “Is the glass ceiling still relevant in the 21st century?” By providing an answer to this question, this volume targets all who are interested in understanding the barriers women face in today’s organizations. This volume should thus be of interest to academics working in social psychology, women’s studies, or organizational psychology, but it should also be of use to practitioners whose practice is grounded in a deep understanding of how organizations function, as well as of what motivates individuals to function at their best in organizational contexts.

THE GLASS CEILING

Researchers, journalists, and the general public alike have for more than 20 years drawn on the metaphor of the glass ceiling to depict the experience of women in the workplace. It is most commonly used to refer to the phenomenon whereby men dominate the upper echelons of management. The word *ceiling* implies that women encounter an upper limit on how high they can climb on the organizational ladder, whereas *glass* refers to the relative subtlety and transparency of this barrier, which is not necessarily apparent to the observer. The barrier denoted as the glass ceiling can be distinguished from other, more formal or even some more legitimate obstacles to advancement, such as those based on education or past experience. Although the notion of the glass ceiling is metaphorical, for those women who encounter it, it is an all-too-real impenetrable barrier.

The first documented use of the phrase, by magazine editor Gay Bryant (Frenkiel, 1984), still resonates with the experience of women in the workplace today:

Women have reached a certain point—I call it the glass ceiling. They’re in the top of middle management and they’re stopping and getting stuck. There isn’t enough room for all those women at the top. Some are going into business for themselves. Others are going out and raising families. (n.p.)

The term became popularized and moved into more general usage after it was the focus of an article in the *Wall Street Journal* (Hymowitz & Schellhardt, 1986). The U.S. Department of Labor acknowledged the existence of the glass ceiling in 1991 when it defined it as “artificial barriers based on attitudinal or organizational bias that prevent qualified individuals from advancing upward in their organization into management-level positions” (U.S. Department of Labor, 1991, p. 1). In an effort to address these barriers and level the playing field, the U.S. Department of Labor established the Glass Ceiling Commission. The Commission extended the

notion of the glass ceiling to incorporate members of other marginalized groups. The Commission concluded that

Equally qualified and similarly situated citizens are being denied equal access to advancement into senior level management on the basis of gender, race, or ethnicity. At the highest levels of corporations the promise of reward for preparation and pursuit of excellence is not equally available to members of all groups. (U.S. Glass Ceiling Commission, 1995, pp. 10–11)

In the 2 decades since the phrase was coined, the status of women in the workplace has continually improved, with growing numbers of women obtaining senior positions (Equal Opportunities Commission, 2006; U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2005). However, it is clear that the notion of the glass ceiling is still reflected in the experiences of many women. Indeed, the power of the metaphor has resulted in an explosion of new research (and new metaphors) to explain the underrepresentation of women at the top. By means of *escalators* men are accelerated through the organizational ranks, especially in female-dominated professions (C. L. Williams, 1992); because of *glass walls* women are concentrated in certain sectors, such as human resources or marketing, that do not lead to senior positions (Miller, Kerr, & Reid, 1999); the *glass slipper* refers to women's reduced aspirations for power (Rudman & Heppen, 2003); and the *glass cliff* describes the precariousness of women's leadership positions (Ryan & Haslam, 2005).

One could mistakenly conclude that these metaphors have arisen because the notion of the glass ceiling is outdated and a corresponding need arose to characterize women's situation differently. However, in our view, the proliferation of metaphors is better viewed as a reflection of the need to provide a more specific analysis of the variety of barriers that women currently face. Indeed, this is precisely what we aim to do in this volume. In what follows, we provide a summary of the chapters included in the volume, while reflecting on how the different contributions inform us about the situation of women in the workplace.

STRUCTURE OF THE VOLUME

This volume includes contributions from scientists who examine the social psychological factors that shape women's position in the workplace. For the reader's convenience, these contributions are structured into four parts. The first provides an analysis of both positive and negative developments in women's workplace experiences since the term *glass ceiling* was first coined, with a special focus on the role of stereotypes. The second part offers an examination of some of the ways women respond to the subtle barriers with which they are confronted in the work domain. The third part addresses how gender

shapes the way in which people experience the workplace. The fourth and final part includes chapters that examine the feasibility and efficacy of some of the solutions that have been proposed to improve women's position at work. Although we believe that these parts are meaningful and provide structure, it is important to note that they are interconnected. Indeed, each chapter informs and speaks to the chapters that are included in other parts and chapters. The cross-referencing within these chapters can guide readers through their own personal structure, providing links between what remains at the surface in one chapter and what is analyzed in depth in other chapters.

OVERVIEW OF THE CHAPTERS IN THE VOLUME

This volume opens with an analysis of the developments in workplace gender equality over the past 20 years, since the term *glass ceiling* was first coined. This analysis leads fairly directly into a discussion of whether the glass ceiling is still relevant as a metaphor reflecting the existence of impenetrable but subtle barriers to women's advancement in the workplace. The first chapter to address this issue is the one authored by Alice H. Eagly and Sabine Sczesny, titled "Stereotypes About Women, Men, and Leaders: Have Times Changed?" This chapter focuses on one of the most important (and persistent) hurdles for women in organizations and in management: the close association between stereotypes of managers and stereotypes of men. The authors examine how the "think manager–think male" association has changed over time and how these stereotypes relate to a social role analysis of women in the workplace. Eagly and Sczesny observe that although concrete changes in women's position in the workplace are modest, several emerging tendencies offer a promise of further improvement. For example, the authors observe some decrease in the think manager–think male association, albeit only for some samples and only in some studies. Moreover, the authors suggest that the increasing representation of women in nontraditional roles and in leadership positions may provide a basis for change in stereotypes and reduce the incongruity between the stereotype of women and the stereotype of leaders. Moreover, perceptions of what it means to be a good leader have changed in a direction favorable to women, as they now tend to include more stereotypically female characteristics. However, Eagly and Sczesny also observe that the incongruity between what it means to be a woman and what it means to be a good leader still exists, and that the pace of change is slow and is unlikely to lead to the complete elimination of this incongruity in the near future.

The extent to which the situation of women has changed continues to be examined in the chapter authored by Michael T. Schmitt, Jennifer R. Spoor, Kelly Danaher, and Nyla R. Branscombe. However, in this chapter,

titled “Rose-Colored Glasses: How Tokenism and Comparisons With the Past Reduce the Visibility of Gender Inequality,” the authors examine the changes in women’s position in organizations from quite a different angle and at a different level of analysis. The authors are not so much concerned with the notion of stereotype change per se as with what changes in the representation of women in the workplace mean for women and men. Indeed, the modesty of these changes raises the question of whether they should be regarded as stimulating or as discouraging. Although the direction of these developments is clearly positive, the authors propose that considering improvement in women’s position across time has important consequences for gender relations. Indeed, the authors demonstrate that when people focus on the reduction of gender inequalities over time, or the advancement of even a small number of women to high-status positions, they come to see contemporary gender relations as more egalitarian. Furthermore, these perceptions of relatively fair and harmonious gender relations lower women’s collective identification while making them feel more satisfied with the treatment of women in general. The arguments put forth in this chapter and the evidence reviewed somewhat paradoxically suggest that the increased representation of women in leadership positions results in psychological consequences that can undermine perception of current inequalities and the motivation to work toward more substantial reductions in inequality. Thus, this chapter suggests that as long as this representation remains modest, its effects appear more negative than positive for women individually and as a whole.

The chapter by Mina Cikara and Susan T. Fiske provides yet another perspective on the issue of how stereotypes have developed. In the chapter titled “Warmth, Competence, and Ambivalent Sexism: Vertical Assault and Collateral Damage,” the authors examine how women’s gains in terms of vertical mobility within organizations are accompanied by important losses. This research demonstrates that to truly understand what has changed with regard to gender stereotypes, and what these changes mean for women, it is essential to look closely at different stereotypical dimensions and at how they relate to the various roles that women may endorse. Cikara and Fiske suggest that it makes little sense to talk about one general stereotype of women today. As women become more heterogeneous in their life choices, stereotypes of women do not weaken—they multiply. Working women, for example, are seen as competent but cold (except if, or when, they become mothers, in which case they lose competence and gain warmth, a pattern that is not revealed among working men who become fathers). The stereotypes associated with women in different roles in turn elicit different types of prejudice and discriminatory behavior that together promote power differences at work. The question each woman faces today is thus not whether she can escape stereotyping or prejudice, but on which side of the competence–warmth trade-off she will be.

Taken together, the chapters in this part acknowledge the progress in the representation of women in the workplace. However, the empirical data reviewed in these chapters also suggest that the increased but modest representation of women in the workforce does not come without costs—both for individually successful women (who trade perceived competence for perceived warmth; see chap. 4, this volume) and for women as a group (as it obscures gender inequality; see chap. 3, this volume). These costs are, however, a great deal more subtle than they used to be. Although working women may no longer simply be seen to be less competent than men, it would be a mistake to conclude that women no longer face barriers to entry in high positions within organizations. These chapters indicate that although women no longer face a glass ceiling in the narrowest sense of complete lack of access to leadership positions, it is clear that they still face important barriers to entry into these positions, which underlines the relevance of this metaphor in current times.

In the second part of this volume the chapter authors take the perspective of women themselves and examine how they experience subtle barriers within the workplace. They examine how beliefs about women and the way they are treated affect women's well-being, their behavior, and the choices they make. Moreover, the authors look at the barriers that have been designated as internal (e.g., resulting from women's own attitudes and behaviors) and as external (e.g., resulting from attitudes and behaviors of others), and in doing so demonstrate that this distinction is not necessarily clear-cut and that such barriers interact and affect one another. The chapter by Manuela Barreto, Naomi Ellemers, Sezgin Cihangir, and Katherine Stroebe demonstrates that subtle sexist beliefs held by others can lead the targets of those beliefs to behave in ways that unwittingly confirm them and thereby legitimize the targets' disadvantage. In their chapter, titled "The Self-Fulfilling Effects of Contemporary Sexism: How It Affects Well-Being and Behavior," the authors show that despite the assumption that women are motivated to exaggerate the extent to which they are targets of sexism, they often fail to detect when they are targets of sexism. Barreto and colleagues further demonstrate that this unawareness of prejudice, when it occurs in performance contexts or contexts dominated by individualistic or meritocratic beliefs, often elicits negative self-directed emotions in women and leads them to behave in ways that confirm the negative beliefs. These emotions and behaviors constitute clear barriers to women's advancement, barriers that may appear purely internal to the particular individual (e.g., poor ability), but that are best viewed as emerging from societal ideologies, such as sexism and meritocratic beliefs. The authors show that this cycle can be broken both by factors that help targets cope with the negative consequences of subtle discrimination (e.g., high personal self-esteem) and by factors that

help targets recognize the discrimination they face (e.g., increased awareness of the subtle forms discrimination can take). In fact, when targets are able to detect prejudice, they choose to confront these negative beliefs, such as by protesting against them.

The interconnection between internal and external barriers is also examined in the chapter by Shen Zhang, Toni Schmader, and Chad Forbes, titled “The Effects of Gender Stereotypes on Women’s Career Choice: Opening the Glass Door.” In this chapter Zhang and colleagues consider the social psychological effects of the mere suggestion that there are gender differences in ability and outline two ways in which gender stereotypes shape men’s and women’s career paths. The first path is a process of socialization, of continuous and chronic exposure to gender stereotypes that strongly influence interest in (and perception of) different activities, starting in early childhood. Here the external becomes internal as people develop their sense of self in relation to others and learn to differentiate between who they are and who they are not. The second path is encountered by women who have surpassed the initial career hurdles and have opted to enter male-dominated fields of employment. Here, the authors describe how cultural stereotypes affect the performance and motivations of women, creating gender differences in career aspirations and performance. Zhang and colleagues demonstrate how several individual and situational factors can alter this pattern and help women resist the powerful limits that gender stereotypes impose on who they are and who they can become.

Taken together, the chapters in this part demonstrate that although the barriers that women face may at first glance appear to be internal to the particular women themselves, these barriers can, in fact, be traced to existing stereotypes about women and their abilities. In turn, women’s choices and behavior (influenced by stereotypical expectations) can feed existing stereotypes and thereby place further obstacles to their career development. Although focusing on different settings and outcome variables, both chapters in this part highlight the importance of moderating factors, at the individual level as well as at the situational level, that may help to break the cycle of disadvantage in which women often find themselves.

The third part of this volume considers how—once women have shattered the glass ceiling and entered high positions in organizations—gendered experiences in the workplace persist. The aim is not only to illustrate the ways in which women and men experience the workplace differently but also to demonstrate how beliefs and attitudes about gender characterize much of people’s daily experiences. Michelle K. Ryan, S. Alexander Haslam, Mette D. Hersby, Clara Kulich, and M. Dana Wilson-Kovacs, authors of the chapter titled “The Stress of Working on the Edge: Implications of Glass Cliffs for Both Women and Organizations,” consider the consequences of a new and subtle form of discrimination—the glass cliff—which results in women being more likely than men to be recruited for leadership positions that are associated

with high risk of criticism and failure. Because of the precariousness of these positions, women tend to be exposed to more job stress than are their male counterparts, leading women to disidentify with and opt out of organizations. Arguing against the view that women leave organizations more often than do men because work is not a priority for women, Ryan and colleagues show that women who leave organizations tend to do so because their work conditions are uniquely stressful, relative to those of men, leading them to disidentify with the organization. The authors present evidence from both qualitative and quantitative studies in support of their gender–stress–disidentification model and in this way demonstrate how men and women often have fundamentally different experiences in the workplace.

The chapter authored by Margaret S. Stockdale and Gargi Bhattacharya, titled “Sexual Harassment and the Glass Ceiling,” addresses another factor that contributes to gendered experiences in the workplace: sexual harassment. The authors describe legal and psychological definitions of sexual harassment and argue that because legal definitions require targets to label harassing behaviors as such, they leave a range of harassing behaviors undetected. After examining existing data on sexual harassment in organizations, Stockdale and Bhattacharya conclude that sexual harassment is still “disturbingly prevalent” (p. 178). Although sexual harassment can also target men, it particularly targets young women who attempt to achieve in traditionally male-dominated domains, that is, women who try to break the glass ceiling and in doing so threaten men’s power position within organizations. The authors provide a thorough overview of recent insights into the consequences of sexual harassment, for both the individual and the organization. This review shows that sexual harassment leads to detrimental psychological and job-related outcomes, irrespective of whether the harassing behavior falls within legal definitions of sexual harassment, and of whether it is labeled as such by the target. Stockdale and Bhattacharya propose a range of measures that organizations can take to reduce or eliminate sexual harassment.

The final chapter in this part, authored by Laura Sabattini and Faye J. Crosby, focuses on the challenges people face when trying to combine work with care responsibilities outside work. Both men and women experience these challenges, but to different degrees and in different ways, as the workplace and family are still gendered contexts. The need to develop work–life balance programs stems in part from the raised awareness that what has long been regarded as women’s choice not to participate in the workforce can best be seen as a forced choice, constrained by structural conditions, stereotyping, and gender discrimination (see also chaps. 6 and 7, this volume). Motivated by the goal of guaranteeing greater participation by women in the workforce, several work–life policies and programs have been developed in the past decades, but although they appear promising in their goals, they have been largely ineffective. Important reasons for this limited success are the existence

of gender inequalities outside work, the stigmatizing effects of using these programs, and the suboptimal implementation of these programs by organizations. Sabattini and Crosby suggest that work–life policies that are aimed at both men and women have the best chance of reducing gender inequality because they have the potential of contributing to a more equal division of labor outside work. In addition, organizations must develop better implementation plans, which may include steps toward reducing the stigma associated with using these policies. However, the authors warn that changes are needed both with regard to work arrangements and with regard to the division of labor within the family, as changes in one without changes in the other are likely to meet only limited and short-term success.

Taken together, the chapters included in this part demonstrate that men and women have quite drastically different daily experiences at work. Women’s work experiences are stained by factors such as precariousness, greater vulnerability to sexual harassment, and unsatisfactory or unusable work–life policies. All of these factors have been shown to be associated with negative outcomes, both for individual women and for the organizations in which they work. The chapters in this part point to several factors that must be taken into account in developing solutions to the problems that women still face in organizations.

The chapters in the final part of the book focus on solutions more directly. These chapters examine possible solutions at the individual and interpersonal level, as well as the team and organizational level. The first chapter in this part is authored by Laurie Hunt, Gina LaRoche, Stacy Blake-Beard, Eleanor Chin, Marisol Arroyave, and Maureen Scully and is titled “Cross-Cultural Connections: Leveraging Social Networks for Women’s Advancement.” This chapter provides an analysis of how cross-cultural networking and mentoring can serve women’s advancement. Social and professional networks have been suggested as a key strategy to help women redress the disadvantages they face in the workplace. Social networks provide social capital, which has been identified as one of the resources that typically help men advance within organizations (i.e., the old boys’ networks or the glass escalator) and that tend to be less available to women. This chapter examines the barriers women face in establishing networks, paying special attention to the situation of women who are also members of ethnic minority groups (i.e., double minorities). Hunt and colleagues consider how women can use social networking and mentoring, particularly if they cross cultural boundaries, as strategies to overcome discrimination. Rather than simply reviewing existing research on the topic, the authors provide an unorthodox and highly personal analysis of their own experiences to reflect on how cross-cultural networking and mentoring have benefited their own careers. An important observation made by the authors is that social networking requires individual effort and intentionality, which can partly explain why many social networks are relatively unproductive.

However, the authors stress that the personal and professional benefits of this strategy are likely to outweigh the costs.

In the next chapter, titled “Increasing the Representation and Status of Women in Employment: The Effectiveness of Affirmative Action,” Aarti Iyer examines the effectiveness of affirmative action and looks at its implications both for women and for organizations. The author observes that affirmative action has had clearly positive effects with regard to increasing the representation of women in organizations while maintaining or even increasing organizational productivity and effectiveness. Although affirmative action is a procedure based on an analysis of objective factors, such as the numerical representation of women in organizations, more recently attention has turned to the more subjective implications of this procedure. This relatively new perspective has unveiled that a responsible use of this strategy needs to recognize that affirmative action can have both negative and positive effects that need to be anticipated and addressed. For example, recipients of affirmative action programs can feel stigmatized by their participation and express negative self-views, and those who are not direct beneficiaries of affirmative action can develop negative perceptions of beneficiaries. However, adequate implementation plans are also key in this context, as they can combat the potential negative effects of this strategy. The author argues for the need to take various levels of analysis into account (i.e., the individual, teams, and organizations) when examining the effectiveness of this strategy or planning its implementation.

In the final chapter, titled “Managing Diversity in Work Groups: How Identity Processes Affect Diverse Work Groups,” Floor Rink and Naomi Ellemers examine barriers to diversity from yet another perspective by focusing on the factors that can either make diversity work or thwart its potential benefits. The importance of this perspective lies in the fact that a key barrier to diversity is often the very belief that diversity hinders group functioning and makes working in teams generally more effortful. If one is able to identify the conditions under which the benefits of diversity can be revealed in the absence of its costs, then one is better equipped to argue in favor of the inclusion of women and other minority group members in the workplace. In this chapter, Rink and Ellemers do not merely review existing literature in this area but offer an in-depth analysis of this literature and their own integrative perspective on the issue. In doing so, Rink and Ellemers propose that social identity processes can at times hinder, but at other times promote, the functioning of diverse work groups. Rink and Ellemers posit that when diversity is in line with group norms and this is clearly communicated to group members, it can come to define the group and form the basis of a common group identity, resulting in positive outcomes for group functioning. As such, this chapter outlines an important path toward reducing barriers to diversity: by communicating a culture of diversity to all group members that can lead them to evaluate and use their differences in a positive and effective way.

INTEGRATION: WHAT HAS CHANGED?

Although each chapter in this volume offers a detailed analysis of a particular problem or process, each reflects different methodologies and perspectives. Some of the work examines how women are viewed by others, whereas other chapters focus more on women's own experiences. Moreover, the chapters include experimental research, correlational and archival data, and personal insights about authors' own experiences. This variety of material creates a complex and nuanced picture of women in the workplace, with each approach expanding and complementing the other. Despite these differences, the chapters in this volume address some common themes. They all describe some of the changes that have taken place surrounding women's position in the workplace. Noticeable advances are the development of supportive legislation (e.g., see chaps. 8, 9, and 11, this volume), the increased numerical representation of women in the workforce as well as in leadership positions (e.g., see chaps. 2 and 7, this volume), and the reduction of overt forms of gender-based prejudice and discrimination (e.g., see chap. 5, this volume). Relative to the past, it is also possible to observe today a greater awareness of the importance of diversity (e.g., see chap. 12, this volume), and more deliberate attempts to increase diversity and its benefits through strategies such as affirmative action (see chap. 11, this volume) and work-life policies (see chap. 9, this volume).

On a less positive note, the work presented in this volume calls attention to the dangers of considering women's progress in the absence of a clear description of the inequalities that remain to be addressed (e.g., see chap. 3, this volume). Moreover, the research reviewed in this book demonstrates that, despite the positive trends observed, stereotyping of women is still prevalent, although it tends to take more subtle forms (e.g., see chaps. 4, 5, and 7, this volume). The consequences of subtle stereotypes and discrimination are not just that they can directly lead to the preference for men over women, but also that they may lead women to make choices and display behaviors that increase and justify their exclusion (e.g., see chaps. 5, 6, and 7, this volume). It is, however, important to note that clear forms of exclusion such as sexual harassment can still be observed, especially toward competent women (e.g., see chap. 8, this volume), and exclusion from old boys' networks and mentoring can be exacerbated for double minorities (e.g., see chap. 10, this volume), both of which place women in a position of disadvantage compared with men.

The chapters included in this volume also clarify that the progress made is accompanied by new challenges. At the individual level, women whose competence is recognized trade their reputation for being warm for being seen as competent but cold (e.g., see chap. 4, this volume). Although warmth is being increasingly recognized as an important managerial characteristic (e.g., see

chap. 2, this volume), the finding that competent women are seen as cold raises some doubts that an increase in perceived competence will suffice to increase the extent to which women are perceived as good leaders. How to reduce the perceived trade-off between competence and warmth is a challenge for the future, and an advancement that would likely ease the acceptance and efficacy of women leaders. In addition, women may have gained greater access to higher positions, but this is more evident in domains that are traditionally associated with women, and less so in traditionally male-dominated domains. The increased representation of women in higher positions has led several authors in this volume to suggest that current barriers may no longer be vertical, as they were before, but that new barriers have emerged that can best be characterized as lateral (*glass walls* in chap. 4, this volume, and *glass doors* in chap. 6, this volume). At the group level, the cost of women's modest advancement is the suggestion that the glass ceiling has been shattered, even though this is the case for only a limited number of women. Indeed, although progress is modest, its effect on women as a group appears to be mainly negative, as it serves to obscure existing gender inequalities (e.g., see chap. 3, this volume).

Taken together, these observations clarify that to understand the progress made in resolving gender inequalities, as well as the challenges that lay ahead, one needs to examine the situation at different levels of analysis, as well as on various dimensions, and from different perspectives. It is important not only to examine statistical data or legal advances but also to study how individuals and organizations are affected by policies, particular characteristics of the social structure, and changes in any of these factors. Moreover, it is necessary to understand the day-to-day experiences of women in the workplace, their behaviors, their motivations, and their attitudes. Thus, a social psychological perspective appears particularly appropriate for examining this issue. An analysis that does not make such an effort is necessarily incomplete and will result either in an overly optimistic or in an overly pessimistic view of the existing barriers to women's advancement within organizations.

CONCLUSION: NUMBERS ARE NOT ENOUGH

The overall take-home message of this volume is that when one is examining the situation of women in organizations, numbers are simply not enough. This is true for various reasons. First, macrolevel statistics collected through large polls are often undifferentiated and open to interpretation. In addition, these statistics say little about the underlying processes driving stability or change, and therefore provide little information that can be of use to understand the real situation, let alone to change it.

Indeed, increasing the numerical representation of women in organizations, or in leadership positions, is not enough to reduce gender inequality. First,

if this increase is modest, then its effect on women themselves, as individuals and as a group, can be more negative than positive. Although rising slopes do provide a catchy and appealing image of the situation, they run the risk of obscuring existing, ever more subtle barriers and leave those women who wish to enter these contexts unprepared for what they might encounter. Such a picture may also send the message to senior women who are in a position to mentor and otherwise support a younger generation that the battle has already been won and their support is no longer necessary. At the same time, focusing on numbers alone, especially if they are not differentiated and appropriately interpreted, presents a picture that is too rosy for those who make the decisions and form policy that can contribute to the improvement of women's position in the workplace.

Promoting gender equality cannot be only about numbers also because increasing the representation of women in the workplace without providing them with conditions that enable them to succeed only contributes to further inequality. For example, in Scandinavian countries women constitute 40% of board managers, but evidence shows that they are still exposed to a number of the obstacles outlined in this volume, such as glass-cliff positions and sexual harassment. Women who achieve leadership positions but are placed in a glass-cliff situation are likely to fail, as are women who are systematically confronted with subtle stereotyping and discrimination once they have entered traditionally male-dominated domains or positions. If all one cares about is numbers then one may fail to understand why women opt out of many organizations and leadership positions; one may not notice that they are given particularly stressful tasks to perform, or that their reputation as being competent has made them especially vulnerable to sexual harassment. If the focus is on numbers alone one may fail to realize that affirmative action is not without costs and that it can be seen as a sustainable strategy to promote gender equality only if it is implemented with great sensitivity to the negative side effects it can entail. Finally, if the primary goal is to ensure a numerically diverse workforce that includes both men and women, then one fails to realize that diversity is not without problems, and that its benefits can be revealed only under particular conditions, such as when its value is ingrained and communicated through the team or through organizational culture.

The way forward is to focus on numbers only insofar as one can ensure that women are in positions in which they can be successful, in addition to clearly identifying the dangers and costs associated with this advancement as well as deliberately trying to manage and minimize these costs. This diversity management must include a regular analysis of the obstacles that persist and sensitivity to the new and subtle barriers that appear once women move from one position to another.

Because this volume is about the barriers women face at work, it necessarily focuses on the experiences of only a cross-section of women. Women as a

group experience discrimination across a wide range of domains, and particular groups of women—such as women from ethnic minorities and women in developing countries—face particular barriers that can be distinct from those outlined in this volume. However, it is not within the scope of this volume to address discrimination across all life domains, or for all groups of women. We feel that a careful analysis of the subtle barriers women face as they climb the career ladder, and an understanding of the psychological processes involved in creating and maintaining gender inequalities within the workplace, can improve our understanding of gender inequality more broadly.

Taken together, the chapters in this volume make clear that particular aspects of the metaphor of the glass ceiling are still relevant. For the most part, it is no longer the case that organizations and leadership positions are completely closed to all women, although it is clear that the ceiling is still a real barrier to career advancement for many women. It is therefore clear that women still face important obstacles to their career advancement and that—like glass—many of these are difficult to see. Thus, the main aim of this volume is to clarify to the reader how women experience the workplace and, in doing so, make visible the barriers that they face.

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