



Women and power: thinking through acceptance of women's narratives

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Women Leading Education: 2019 Conference
Ways of seeing women's leadership in education

Coleman stimuli

'Girls' [and women's] gendered agency is practiced within normative social, economic and political processes of creating and reproducing gendered identity. The constraints of gender and normative femininity are therefore always a factor in its production, expression and resistance'

(Gonik, M., Renold, E., Ringrose, J. and Weems, L. (2009) Rethinking Agency and Resistance, in *Girlhood Studies*, Vol.2 (2).

'Integrating leadership into one's core identity is particularly challenging for women, who must establish credibility in a culture that is deeply conflicted about whether, when, and how they should exercise authority. Practices that equate leadership with behaviors considered more common in men suggest that women are simply not cut out to be leaders.'

Ibarra, H., Ely, R., and Kolb, D. (2013). Women rising: The unseen barriers. *Harvard Business Review*, 91(9), 60-66.

Lumby stimuli

In a 2018 survey of nearly 3000 women in HE 40% felt they could not lead successfully because they had too little authority.

‘Narratives are subjective constructions that have objective impacts’
(Adler et al 2017: 520)

‘how individuals story their lives reflects both explicit efforts at meaning-making and implicit modes of being in the world’
(Adler et al 2017: 520)

- Coleman interested in what is done to women, learned through their narratives
- Lumby interested in what women do to themselves with complicit researchers through their narratives

What is a narrative? Why so dominant in the field's research?

The reality of oppression. The complicit in rendering women oppressed.

Perspectives brought about by considering diversity and intersectionality; women of different ethnicities, faiths, sexuality. Speaking for those that are othered.

Implications for research and researchers?

‘theory and method as integral to our politics’
(Rajan, 2003: 1)