

**Making Women Men:
What Female Superintendent Stories Tell Us About
the Gender Gap in the North Carolina School
Superintendency**
(Under the direction of Dr. Catherine Marshall)

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14 Interviews & 3,599 miles later...



"It is presumptuous to think that while those we study change, we ourselves—as researchers—remain untouched by the process" (Piotrkowski, 1979 p.288).

Chapter 4 - Women's Stories

The Women

- Access
- Demographics

Demographic	Total Participant Averages
Age	50
Level of Education	93% Doctorate
First Female Superintendent	50%
Years of Experience	27.35
Number of Years as Superintendent	2.68
Race/Ethnicity	21.43% Women of Color; 78.57% White
Marital Status	78.5% Married
Children	71.42% Have Children; 21.42% Have School-Aged Children

Chapter 4 - Women's Stories

Narrative Analysis

By giving each woman time and space to tell her leadership story, each woman's experiences were valued. While there were many recurring motifs across the 14 superintendent stories, the researcher focused data analysis first using a narrative analysis approach for each individual. Each superintendent story was analyzed for its unique narrative strategy illustrating how each woman understands and makes meaning of her leadership.

Chapter 4 - Women's Stories

Superintendent 1 – Tired of All the Good-Ole-Boy Crap

Superintendent 2 – Wow! I am a Woman in a Man's World!

Superintendent 3 – How Do You Break Through That? Is That a Female Thing?

Superintendent 4 – I'm Wearing My Green Thong

Superintendent 5 – The Eye on the Prize

Superintendent 6 – I Leverage My Humanity a Whole Lot

Superintendent 7 – I Really Try to be Who I Am All The Time

Superintendent 8 – I Had to Put on My Big Girl Panties

Superintendent 9 – Why Not Me?

Superintendent 10 – Women Are Promoted for Their Performance

Superintendent 11 – Because We Need an Insider

Superintendent 12 – You Have Got to Force Yourself at the Table

Superintendent 13 – You Don't Have to Hire Me. I Don't Need a Job

Superintendent 14 – Women Want to Be All In

Chapter 5 - Making Women Men

Making Women Men:

- Unequal Expectations for Women's Work
- Discriminatory Working Conditions
- Unachievable Work-Life Balance
- Inequitable Pay

Chapter 5 - Reframing the Superintendency

Instead of requiring women to become men to attain the superintendency, let's change the role of superintendent such that it does not require women to change their identities to get to the superintendent's desk.

Chapter 5 - Limitations & Future Study

Limitations:

- Participants have achieved the superintendency;
- Limited focus on various layers of identity, including: gender fluidity, race, sexual orientation.

Future Study:

- Study women ranked immediately below superintendent;
- Study Board of Education's positions towards women superintendents;
- Study discrimination of race and sexual orientation in superintendent advancement.