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2. Relaciones de poder
3. Medios de enseñanza

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## ***A Training Model to Facilitate Professional Effectiveness in Power- and Sex-Salient Situations***

*A brief, experiential training model was designed to help professional psychology students examine both internal and external constraints to flexible use of power and to increase their effectiveness in power-salient and sex-salient situations. Student evaluations indicate this model, which was offered as an elective course in a professional training setting, was successful in achieving its goals. The rationale for this model and the steps in its design are described. It is suggested that the model might be considered as a supplement to the socialization process of any professional training program. Methods for improvement of the design are discussed.*

Professional development is a continuing process shaped by preprofessional events that extend throughout the career span; however, it is during the formal training period that the professionalization process is often most intensive. One critical dimension in this period is power; for example, the power-related attitudes that are learned in graduate school affect further professional growth.

Students and other professional initiates are required to accomplish significant changes in their power concepts. Between the time of entry into professional training and completion of that training, students move from positions of relatively low power to positions of responsibility and authority. The behavioral changes required in this transition often involve significant revisions in self-concept, especially in perceptions of the relationship of one's own power to that of others in the working environment. Although for some the greatest difficulty comes at the entry into training when the low status of student must be accepted, for others the movement into full professional responsibility is the period of most ambivalence, stress, and inappropriate behavior. Supervisors become peers and are no longer obligated to offer guidance and direction. The novice is suddenly an authority, the person with whom the "buck" stops. Preparation for this professional independence can be facilitated by distinct, stepped training phases that call for gradual assumption of power. Also helpful are the instructors and supervisors who model positive leadership behaviors while teaching specialized professional and technical skills. For the more fortunate students, early learning from successful role models of childhood and adolescence paves the way for professionalization.

Preparation for and support during the professionalization process differ for women and men. Culturally determined expectancies and behaviors differentiate, often sharply, the career development and effectiveness of men and women (McClelland, 1975; Terborg, 1977). Role models available during childhood and adolescence do not usually include women of relatively high professional status. In our society, throughout the years, sex role stereotypes regarding positions of power are learned and are part of the formulation of personal and occupational development (McClelland, 1975). Consequently, some degree of role conflict is inevitable for females considering high-status careers (Epstein, 1970; Hennig & Jardim, 1977). This conflict may be

exacerbated in the professional training period through circumstances and practices that favor males' movement into high-power positions. Membership in informal social-professional support groups, for example, is frequently closed to women. Similarly, the availability of sponsors is greater for men than women (Kanter, 1977). As a consequence of these and other factors, females experience greater role conflict and assimilation difficulties during the professional training period (Newman, 1974). These sex differences persist after entry into professional work settings. The performance of females appears to be inhibited by pervasive sex role expectancies (Epstein, 1970, Note 1).

The loss of female leadership in terms of both organizational efficiency and human potentiality has been widely acknowledged in recent years. Although organizational barriers may, in some settings, be slowly disappearing, internally imposed constraints, which are antithetical to competent professional functioning, continue to prevent full realization of the leadership potential of females. In addition to increased access through more open organizational policies and practices, professional females often need help in confronting internal barriers to realistic acceptance and exercise of power. Professional males could play a more facilitative role with respect to the exercise of power by females as well as function more effectively themselves in organizational settings if they were aware of their own responses to women in leadership positions. The professionalization period, prior to career entry, appears to be an advantageous time for helping future professionals examine both internal and external constraints to flexible use of power and for increasing their effectiveness in power-salient situations.

### The Training Model

A training model was designed to help both female and male professional psychology

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**Table 1: Course Outline of Sex Role Change, Professional Development, and Organizational Functioning**

Week	Activity	Rationale
1	Diagnostic laboratory with 3 conditions, 12 students in each condition	To provide participants with a vivid, common experience in which sex roles and power are salient
2 and 3	Identification of general and individual issues and formulation of individual goals: Literature review and laboratory rationale Focused video playback for each laboratory group Viewing of videotapes of other laboratory groups Individual identification of specific problems and of behavioral objectives for the course	To increase the information base relevant to topic  To encourage individual responsibility for goal setting
4	Intervention laboratory, "Exchange Exercise"	To structure opportunities for participants to experiment with new behaviors and get immediate feedback
5	Review, summary, discussion	To help students generalize learnings to real-life situations

students explore the impact of sex role expectancies on power-related attitudes and behaviors and to increase their leadership effectiveness. A major goal was to evaluate the usefulness of this model within a professional training context. The training was offered on a voluntary basis as a one-semester-hour short course, *Sex Role Changes, Professional Development, and Organizational Functioning*, for doctoral students in the counseling and school psychology programs in a large, academically oriented department. The course was conducted by the first two authors, both of whom are faculty members in the department's professional programs and both of whom have particular expertise and training experience in the area of sex role beliefs and behavior. The 36 students who enrolled included 24 females and 12 males at various stages of their 4- to 5-year programs. Career aspirations included both academic and applied settings. Students' ages ranged from 22 to 47 years; the average age was 30.

### Overview

The course extended over a period of 5 weeks and involved 15 hours of laboratory work and classroom discussion (Table 1). A laboratory exercise in the first meeting dramatically heightened sex role and power issues (Table 2). Following this vivid experience, 2 weeks were spent identifying general concerns and individual problems, after which each student formulated specific behavioral objectives relative to the course. The final 2 weeks of the class offered opportunities to practice new behaviors and to get feedback from peers and instructors. Students were further encouraged to apply their learnings to real-life situations.

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**Table 2: Women in Power Laboratory Exercise**

Step	Typical laboratory process
1. Separation of men and women into two groups. Each group is directed: "For 5 minutes discuss what you are into professionally, e.g., the most significant aspects of your professional life."	Each group becomes cohesive, sharing personal concerns in regard to career plans, ambitions, and concerns.
2. Each group is asked to discuss: "What are the advantages and disadvantages for each of you personally of (women) moving into positions of power and influence?"	Sex role becomes salient; differences between the two groups appear. The discussions become more intimate; each group becomes more cohesive.
3. Directions: "Summarize within your small group and write on newsprint your lists of advantages and disadvantages. Post lists: men's list on one wall and women's list on another. Study posted lists silently."	Nonverbal communication indicates awareness of differences and intergroup tension is manifest.
4. Directions: "Return to your small group and discuss differences in men's and women's lists. How do you interpret the differences?"	Sex-related differences are discussed within the two groups. (Usually the lists are different; women's are often lengthier, more detailed, and more personal, reflecting their more acute sensitivity to issues. Both lists often include items that are provocative to the other sex.) Paranoia begins to be manifest.
5. Directions to men's group: "What did you discover in this for you personally?"	Discussion of men's group becomes more personal, and the cohesion of this group increases. (The group members generally move closer physically and voices are lowered.)
6. Directions to women: "Take the printed instructions which I am giving you and join the men's group. Direct the men in the discussion according to the printed instructions."	Without being allowed time to prepare, women are thrust into a leadership position with an all-male group.
7. Women join the men's group.	The women, now authorized to take "power," take their power-symbolic white papers and join the men's group. Varied responses by females to leadership responsibility appear. Usually, in this tense situation, bipolar reactions are observed; some women take an exaggerated, controlling stance, while others default the leadership task through a passive role. Similarly, men respond differently to female leadership; some follow comfortably, while others either overtly or covertly challenge female leaders.
8. After 30 minutes in which the women "lead" the men's group, the discussion is stopped and the entire group is asked to discuss the process of the preceding 30 minutes. Participants are asked: "What happened? How did you feel at the beginning? During the discussion? Where are you now? What kind of entry by the women would have been more constructive? What could you have done to improve the quality of the interaction?"	The focus of the discussion and the process change dramatically. Anger, frustration, and other emotions are described. Interaction is energetic. Besides sharing personal feelings, reactions to the behaviors of others (both other and same sex) are expressed. The relationship of the laboratory experiences to on-going life situations is discussed.

### WEEK 1: THE BASIC LABORATORY

The introductory laboratory exercise was based on a 2-hour workshop popularized by the National Training Laboratories. The basic laboratory format and typical

participant outcomes at each step are shown in Table 2. The moments of greatest impact come in Step 7 when women participants, empowered through a "white paper," assume leadership. The *content* of the ensuing discussion is of much less interest than the *processes* by which women cope with leadership responsibility and the reactions of males to female authority. Step 8 is a crucial debriefing period when feelings and thoughts are shared and the experiences of the laboratory are interpreted.

### *Enhancement of the Laboratory Exercise*

The course was initiated by a demonstration of the influences of sex role expectancies on power-related activities in the structured laboratory exercise presented in Table 2. However, it was decided to enhance this exercise by introducing it in three different laboratory conditions, thus providing a variety of experiences for class consideration.

The basic training model was altered as follows. Before the introductory meeting students were assigned at random, within gender, to one of three groups (see Table 3). Two important differences were built into the three laboratory conditions: (a) the sex composition of the work group and (b) the level of saliency of sex roles. The general outline presented in Table 2 was followed for each work group, with six females assigned to leadership positions in all three conditions. Specifically, Conditions A and B involved mixed-sex work groups of 6 men and women, and Condition C involved a same-sex work group of 12 women. In addition, one mixed-sex work group (Condition A, low sex saliency) was instructed to respond to the question, "What are the advantages and disadvantages for you, as a *professional*, of movement into positions of power and influence?" (Table 2, Step 2). Members of Conditions B and C were asked, "What are the advantages and disadvantages for you personally of *women* moving into positions of power and influence?" Thus, although sex role was salient to some degree in all conditions, it was not as strongly salient in Condition A as in Conditions B and C.

For each laboratory condition, a 1-hour videotape was made of the 30-minute "entry"

**Table 3: Women in Power Laboratory Exercise (Laboratory Conditions)**

Condition	Variable manipulated	Unique process
A	Sex composition (mixed sex) Power assignment (to all females) No specific sex role focus (see Table 2, Step 2)	Convert tension in response to task Low energy level Leadership assumed by one female Impersonal discussion
B	Sex composition (mixed sex) Power assignment (to all females) Sex role (focus of discussion: "women in power")	Overt tension in response to task Moderate energy level Conflict over leadership Fragmented discussion
C	Sex composition (all female) Power assignment (to half of the females) Sex role (focus of discussion: "women in power")	Little tension in response to task High energy level Leadership widely distributed Discussion of many personal and general topics

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experience (Table 2, Step 7) and the 30 minutes of group debriefing (Table 2, Step 8) that followed.

### *Immediate Reactions to the Laboratory*

The process and productivity of the three groups differed. In Condition A one woman assumed early leadership and facilitated an impersonal, hypothetical discussion. Members appeared subdued, serious, almost lethargic. Attempts to personalize and deepen issues were ignored. In debriefing, however, members confronted personal concerns and expressed personal reactions to members' behaviors. In Condition B, the entering women immediately "leveled" power by passing the symbolic white papers to the men. Overt leadership behavior was generally avoided; the desire to "level" power was repeatedly mentioned, but subtle, abortive attempts to direct the discussion appeared. Anger at the laboratory leaders' control was expressed. Group discussion was fragmented, and attempts to deepen and to coordinate the discussion failed. The leadership behaviors in Condition C, the same-sex group, were widely distributed between the appointed leader group and the remaining women. The energy level was high, and participants appeared to be comfortable in challenging or agreeing. Humor appeared frequently. This group generated a wide range of issues and personal reactions.

The varied behaviors observable on the videotapes made of the three laboratory conditions served as catalysts to student discussions for the duration of the course. The number of groups involved is too small to allow inferences to be drawn as to the relationship between group behaviors and the variables being manipulated, however.

### WEEKS 2 AND 3: INDIVIDUAL GOAL SETTING

In the 2nd week instructors presented the laboratory rationale and a brief review of relevant literature. Video playback was begun and continued through the 3rd week. Participants of each one of the three laboratory exercises had a 2-hour period of focused feedback and discussion with the two instructors. In these focused conferences each student was encouraged to identify her/his feelings, thoughts, and behavioral patterns in the laboratory experience. During the time when instructors worked with one group, the remaining 24 students had three tasks: (a) to observe the laboratory videotapes of the other two groups, (b) to identify individual problems in relation to power, and (c) to establish behavioral goals for the course. At the end of the third meeting, students' written behavioral objectives were collected to be used in planning subsequent meetings.

The behavioral objectives of females and males reflected similar concerns. Increased awareness of needs and patterns was frequently cited as a prerequisite to behavioral change. Many, for example, wanted to become more aware of personal needs that interfere with effective leadership, such as dependency needs (to defer, to yield power), counterdependency needs (to sabotage leadership of others, to compete in destructive ways for leadership and control), and seductive behavior and other sexualized forms of countercontrol. Both sexes wanted to become more comfortably independent in taking initiative, in challenging, and in questioning. Management of conflict was a common problem; students wanted to increase their competencies in openly confronting conflict. Some males expressed a desire to increase their skills in supporting leadership

of others, and some women wanted to become less anxious about being liked and to become comfortable in expressing assertive behavior.

#### WEEKS 4 AND 5: EXPERIMENTING WITH NEW BEHAVIOR

In the fourth class, following a review of students' behavioral objectives, a format, "Exchange Exercise," was provided for students to experiment with new behaviors. All returned to their original laboratory groups, and each of these three groups was asked to choose four members to be exchanged with the other two groups. After "delegates" were chosen, but before they departed, each group was asked to make explicit the criteria by which the four members were chosen. This exercise stimulated a great amount of feedback in regard to leadership behaviors. Subsequently, four persons left each group; two went to each of the other two groups. Each laboratory group then had four new members. The "blended" groups were directed to share their experiences and learnings in relation to the course. Students were encouraged to be observant of the processes of these meetings as a means of increasing awareness of power- and sex-salient variables and to discover opportunities to experiment with leadership behaviors. Finally, members debriefed and "processed" the work of the blended groups and gave feedback to individual members.

In the final class meeting, following a review of the work of the preceding 4 weeks, the instructors led a final, informal discussion of class experiences and implications for improving effectiveness in professional functioning.

#### Evaluation

A course evaluation survey was administered to students both at the end of the course and 2 months later. A 7-point scale ranging from "not at all" (1) to "to a great extent" (7) was used in responding to four objective questions. As can be seen from Table 4, all students agreed that the two course objectives had been satisfactorily met. Interestingly, ratings for the first objective, "increase awareness regarding influence of sex role expectations of professional performance," increased noticeably from posttest to follow-up for both men and women. In contrast, ratings of the second objective, "increase individual effectiveness in work situations which could be affected by sex

**Table 4:** Summary of Mean Values from the Course Evaluation

Criterion	Males		Females	
	Posttest	Follow-up	Posttest	Follow-up
Achievement of Objective 1: Increase awareness regarding influence of sex role expectations on professional performance	4.67	5.25	5.00	6.17 (4.62) <sup>a</sup>
Achievement of Objective 2: Increase individual effectiveness in work situations which could be affected by sex role expectations	5.56	5.58	5.06	5.17 (4.90) <sup>a</sup>
Achievement of personal behavioral objective	—	5.17	—	4.89 (4.86) <sup>a</sup>
Overall usefulness of course	5.89	5.17	5.72	6.22 (5.62) <sup>a</sup>

*Note.* All ratings were made on a 7-point scale with higher scores being associated with greater endorsement of each item.

<sup>a</sup> These means include the three subjects whose ratings for course usefulness were atypically low.

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role expectations," remained the same. The change in awareness may reflect a time lag that is essential to realization of the impact of a laboratory experience such as this. Participants need to compare the observations of the laboratory to their analogous real-life experiences in order to verify laboratory learnings. The lack of corresponding change in effectiveness might be attributed to lack of support from the students' academic and personal environment for the behaviors that were encouraged and reinforced in class or alternately to the limited number of experiences to which students are exposed. Certainly, it is easier to increase awareness of dysfunctional behaviors than to change them.

Ratings on the achievement of the personal objectives identified during the 4th week are consistent with this lag between awareness and behavior change. Although students viewed themselves as having made considerable progress in achieving the change(s) sought, not surprisingly, they did not report a high level of attainment.

Student responses to the question "Looking back over the experiences in this course, what is your overall evaluation of the usefulness of this course for you?" indicate that the course had indeed been useful. The follow-up ratings, moreover, show that the female participants found it to be significantly more useful than did the male participants ( $p < .05$ ). At the same time it should be noted that although nearly all female participants rated the course's usefulness as 5 or greater, three women assigned a rating of 2. Since the experiences of the latter group were clearly atypical, two sets of means were calculated, one including all the females and the other excluding these three atypical ratings. Both sets of means are presented in Table 4.

## Conclusions

Student evaluations indicate that a brief, experiential training model was successful in helping both male and female professional psychology students increase their awareness of issues related to power, and this model was particularly effective in increasing awareness of the effect of *sex role expectancies* on behavior in power-salient situations. This model might be considered as a useful supplement to the socialization process of any professional training program.

Several changes in this model might be explored. It might be advantageous to establish greater homogeneity by limiting course enrollment to students at the same level of training. The women who rated the course as low in usefulness indicated that they were either too "knowledgeable" or too "unsophisticated" in comparison to others in their group. This course would probably be of most value to students in the middle years of their training rather than to 1st- or 4th-year students.

Video playback was extremely valuable in achieving the course goals. Even more extensive use of videotaping could be profitable. For example, postlaboratory role play of leadership and "followship" tasks could be videotaped and then viewed with guided feedback.

Changes in leadership might also be considered. An important variable in this training design, as in the original laboratory, is the gender of the laboratory leaders. The directive stance taken by females in leading this highly structured design becomes a significant issue for most laboratory participants. However, the addition of male faculty in leading postlaboratory discussions and interventions could extend the usefulness of the course by adding to the varieties of observable role models and by providing students the opportunity to obtain feedback from male authorities. The fact



that female participants, in comparison to males, rated the course as more useful suggests that instructor gender is a potent variable. Moreover, written comments on the course evaluations from several male participants concerned the desirability of including a male instructor.

Leader qualifications are of prime concern in these laboratory exercises and discussions because of their potential impact on trainee attitudes and behaviors. It is important for laboratory leaders to be knowledgeable regarding the interaction of sex role and power in organizations and to have expertise in individual and group psychology and professional development processes.

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