nothing personal - management and gender in the newsroom

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ABSTRACT

This is a discourse study concerning newsrooms, exploring the concepts of management and gender when connected. When women managers are portrayed or female leadership discussed in media output gender is more often put forward as making a difference. Research on management and newsrooms respectively has also discussed gender and the possible difference it makes or not. When considered making a difference qualitative aspects are presented. Female-style leadership has been thought to be cooperative rather than competitive, dialogical rather than based on giving orders, seeing your co-workers as friends rather than colleagues. The latter style has been thought to be typically male. This rationale is produced at a number of discursive sites such as varying media platforms. In this study ten newsrooms managers are interviewed on management, gender and being yourself to cover the research questions (a) if concepts of gender and management style are, or are not, discursively coupled in the newsroom, (b) if there is support or refutation for the existence of typical genderised newsroom leadership styles, and (c) what discursive patterns of gender and management occur. Lastly, possible effects of discourses on gender and management qualities will be discussed. The theoretical backdrop is newsroom and management ethnography and gender theory. Methods used are semi structured interviews and Focauldian discourse analysis based on Barthesian and Saussurian theories. The material will also to some extent be discussed from the perspective of constructivist psychology. In its conclusion this study explores how, in a micro sample of media work environment, ideas on difference come into conflict with the concept of being yourself.

The findings of this study challenge any clean cut separation between what has been thought of as female and male leadership style. The characteristics of these styles are used alternately depending on situation and used alternately by the same individual. The findings contradict the supposition of there being specific female and male management styles. The most interesting finding is the usage of a tactic in which gender stereotypes are reversed, a counter posing of typical dichotomies while still staying within the dualistic form. This was most apparent when the respondents talked about their observations of others. When talking about themselves these managers’ accounts were more likely to shatter the dichotomist order. This exposed a tension between a should and an is. Paradoxes and difficulties between gender expectations and sense of self surfaced.

Keywords: Being oneself, Dichotomy, Discourse, Dualism, Editor, Female, Gender, Interview, Leadership, Newsroom, Male, Management, Men, Myth, Self, Sense, Women
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INTRODUCTION

The newsroom is one arena where agenda setting and serving up perspectives on all sorts of issues dealing with the individual, gender, culture and society takes place. Being on top of the game in knowing the twists and turns of culture, sensing in which direction the talk of the town is heading, being relevant to your readers and audience and being up to date on perspectives of all sorts is at the heart of news production. For these reasons newsrooms serves well in studying discursive production.

Concerning both media representations and work place issues there is in Europe on-going lobbying and work against gender stereotyping. The Nordic countries are considered to be the most developed in the area of gender equality. The Swedish media businesses score a fair average when it comes to equal representation of men and women in top positions when compared with other sectors. In a report from The Swedish Confederation for Professional Employees (TCO) media companies with more than 50 employees, together with consultancy firms, are ranked 4 out of 14 in comparing share of female managers when measured up to other business areas. That’s the head count. But how are gender and management spoken?

To look further into how gender and management are spoken I took a look at a selection of articles and did a rough search in the database Retriever for the word combination “female leadership” covering business press and broadsheets. I read through a selection of 38 articles in which the word combination turned up, looking for value judgements and qualitative aspects connected to gender. I found differentiating value markers such as “women follow rules [more than men]”, “a yes-sayer does what [he] wants behind your back”, “female leadership qualities are becoming more important”, “complementing the typical male leadership qualities”, “female managers are better at developing their staffs’ capacities”, “women...inspire...involves...are better role models”, “typical female leadership like inspiring and motivating”, “men don’t always see...”, “for a female entrepreneur to succeed she needs to encompass the concept of authentic leadership” and so on.

A later search in Retriever, now looking for number of articles and in big city press only, covering a period of three years, gave 89 articles for the word combination “female leadership”, 3 articles for

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1 The type of newsroom concerned in this study is that of publicist news production, such as broadcast news on television or radio, printed press news and web publishers’ news. It concerns a physical office in which every day interpersonal interaction occurs. Sometimes digital archives of news items are called newsrooms. Those are not referred to here. In this study it is the physical work place of journalists and reporters which is considered.
2 Draft report on eliminating gender stereotypes in the EU and Draft report amendments, 2012, see References.
3 The Global Gender Gap Report, see References.
6 Search in database Retriever for "kvinnligt ledarskap" during the period January 2011 through to October 2012, 38 articles in Computer Sweden, Dagens medicin, Passion for Business, Veckans affärer, Dagens industri, Resume, Svenska dagbladet, Chefstidningen, Sydsvenskan, Göteborgsposten, Dagens nyheter, and Svensk åkeritidning.
the word combination “male leadership”, 23 articles when searching for the combination “being yourself AND leadership” and 6248 articles when looking for the word leadership only\(^7\). This showed that when leadership was connected to gender the female gender was pointed out to a larger extent than the male gender.

Ideas on men and women being different in their leadership style also reached me via other sources, such as seminars, books on management and work place experiences\(^8\). Coming across these ideas and practices, which in different ways upheld ideas of essentialist gender differences, got me interested in further investigation. I decided to do a study on notions of gender and management in the newsroom.

Looking into how gender is conceptualised in the everyday world of work in the newsroom adds insights into one important field of discursive production. In such a fast paced setting as the newsroom you need to get the facts right, serve the public with relevant issues and be up to date on perspectives. You have less time to mask your immediate reactions to things. Gut feeling will come out and be used. It has been pointed out that journalism always is determined by its societal context\(^9\), which means that the values of the society in which the newsroom is active affect the newsroom. In addition to that, newsroom activities have effect on that same society via the published output.

This specific study is situated in the context of Sweden. The epitome of a typical Swedish style newsroom is depicted in Christina Jutterström’s account of the newsrooms of broadsheet Dagens Nyheter and tabloid Expressen\(^10\). She accounts for a situation which signals perceptions of a flat organisation, to the degree in which the staff don't hesitate in making it their agenda to fiercely criticise management, in a way that goes beyond ordinary participative discussions in the work place. Drawing on my own observations of newsrooms I would describe it as an order of *reversed power structure, imagined consensus* tied in with *competition between staff*, something I write more about below in the section on further research.

In relation to their professional roles, setting the agenda and serving up perspectives via the news, understandings of how newsroom managers experience and conceptualise issues of gender in their everyday world of work, is well worth investigating. Coming from the perspective above, I chose to interview managers about their experiences and notions on management and gender in the

\(^7\) Search in database Retriever in the category Swedish printed big city press during the period august 2010 through to august 2013.

\(^8\) for example seminar arranged by Svensk chefsforening August, 4th, 2011, Barbro Dahlbom Hall's books, see literature list, management course material such as "Ett kvinnligt ledarskap främjar livskvaliteten" and everyday observations.

\(^9\) Margareta Melin-Higgins referring to Renate Köcher in *Gender and Newsroom Cultures, Identities at work* eds. M. de Bruin and K Ross (Hampton Press Inc. New Jersey 2004).

newsroom milieu. This analysis is based on a back drop of essentialist and constructivist gender perspectives, theories of male and female leadership styles, together with newsroom studies. These will be explained further in the section on theoretical perspectives.

I have deliberately kept a fairly easy read type of stylistic in the thesis overall. It is a conscious choice as I am of the opinion that academic texts should not be inaccessible to an interested reader of the general public because of stylistic devises, even though lack of knowledge of the theories used might put up hindrance to the general reader.

**Aim**

This piece of research is a qualitative micro study of newsroom discourses on management and gender. The aim is to investigate accounts of experiences and notions on gender in relation to management. The concept of notion encompasses the full range of its synonyms such as ideas, beliefs, views, impressions, perceptions and opinions. It is the discursive placing of the concepts of gender and management which will be analysed, i.e. how gender and management are spoken and represented. A field such as the media which sometimes is thought to be young, modern and up to date with gender equality, at least in a relative sense to for example the manufacturing industries, serves well as an illuminating example when looking at what the discursive mechanisms are on the topic of gender and management. The news and its ancillary publications such as theme sections, weeklies and monthlies are indeed very important discursive sites. The contribution this piece of research will make is adding a study for other studies to be compared with and to be inspired by. It is an explorative study, posing hypotheses from a micro sample of media as an ethnographic field, to either develop in further research with a bigger sample or to compare with when looking at other angles.

**Questions**

This investigation’s research questions will shed some light on newsroom managers’ thinking and experiences on management and gender. In the analysis section the material will be arranged in two main parts, one discussing what is said and the other how it is spoken. I will first look at the content of what is being said in order to uncover (a) if concepts of gender and management style are, or are not, discursively coupled in the newsroom. That is, if they are intertwined, fitted together, being made a couple as a combined unit in communicating ideas. I will also look for (b) support or
refutation in the interview material for the existence of typical genderised newsroom leadership
styles. This is the what of the analysis. The what section arranges the material around a few topics.
Those are good management, work place specific role, people management and organisational
changes, difference, gender and style, knowing the stereotype, and gender influencing the product.
Secondly I will investigate some discursive expressions and formulas in (c) what discursive patterns
of gender and management emerge in the interview material. This is the how of the analysis. The
how section arranges the material around some chosen discursive formulas. Those are hey what do I
know, well it’s like this, there are no female and male ways, what’s in my gender what’s in me,
gender smart, and being gender or being you. Lastly I will discuss possible effects of discourses on
gender and management qualities.
THEORY AND LITERATURE: NEWSROOMS, MANAGEMENT AND GENDER

This investigation will make use of newsroom and management ethnography and gender theories. I will briefly outline viewpoints on representation, culture and power play in the newsroom, perspectives on male and female styles concerning management, and ideas of difference in relation to ideas of sameness concerning gender. I will also discuss concepts of the individual and a gendered individual, drawing on constructivist psychology and some sociology. Whether separate or in relation to each other these theoretical fields are vast. I will not do justice to all aspects of these fields, but will be content with delineating ideas by a few examples. Neither will I go into depth with theories on the individual, but use some aspects on fixity of identity, enough for posing relevant questions.

There are of course a number of researchers, theoreticians, theories and methods I could have used and referred to in this piece of analysis. Perhaps Fairclough’s terminology could have been used, and yes, the reasoning in this piece has some common ground with Queer theory. The well of inspiration and similarities is both deep and broad. For practical reasons though I have kept to the theories I considered needed for this particular piece of analysis, theories that, for me with my academic background, make up some basics. Someone else may state that the basics are to be found somewhere in Greece BC. I do not doubt that. My attitude is one of pick and mix, like in a candy store. I feel more at home with the humanities than the social sciences. When it comes to discourse studies I feel a bit more at home with Foucauldians’ writings. Some kind of selection had to be made. It could have been another one. But it can also be this one.

Newsrooms: representation, culture and power play

When discussing research on gender representation making a difference for the news McQuail reports that the results are contradictory. One theory puts forward that the socialisation process at work induces conformity, rather than picking up and using individuals' differing experiences. Another theory puts forward that the culture of news organisations works under different rationales, such as different value norms, news evaluations and competition at different levels, which results in a newsroom culture oriented towards conflict\textsuperscript{11}. McQuail also goes through a few “shoulds” when discussing the media organisation. Among other things he states that the media should reflect the structure of society\textsuperscript{12}. This idea can be found in for example television regulation and terms and

\textsuperscript{11} Denis McQuail \textit{Mass Communication Theory} (SAGE Publications inc London: 2010: 6\textsuperscript{th} ed.) pp 300-302.

\textsuperscript{12} Denis McQuail \textit{Mass Communication Theory} (SAGE Publications inc London: 2010: 6\textsuperscript{th} ed.) pp 198, 297.
conditions for obtaining permission to broadcast\textsuperscript{13}. This perspective on representation is also echoed in ideas on product relevance for readers, viewers and listeners, with the assumption that if you cover the widespread interests there are in society your output will be relevant to more people, who will want to take part of your output, or products if you so like. Interesting for the argument of this analysis is that the above described way of thinking does contain an underlying assumption about a significance in grouping, making units, in relation to supposed common interests of for example “what’s it like living in the big city” or “what’s it like living in rural areas” or indeed “what’s it like being a woman”.

Monica Löfgren Nilsson in her newsroom study of SVT News points at there being an idea of some women needing to “learn how to become like the boys”\textsuperscript{14} to fit the newsroom structure i.e. being on their toes always ready to grab assignments on the go. She also points at expectations on women making a difference, causing disappointments when they don’t. When comparing statistics Monika Djerf-Pierre found that gender order in society is linked with presence of women as subjects in the news, but not with women as reporters\textsuperscript{15}. Both Löfgren Nilsson and Djerf-Pierre point out the relative shortage of accounting for men’s experiences of gender in newsroom studies. The problematic formula of “being like a man” and male experiences are something I will get back to below.

Following Bourdieu, Ida Willig points out the usefulness of analysing newsrooms in terms of power play between different forms of habitus and capital, which stresses the relational mode of constructions of the social world\textsuperscript{16}. This perspective goes well with using Foucault’s thinking on discourses and the power/knowledge couplet\textsuperscript{17}.

Melin-Higgins writes about the doxa of British journalism in which there partly is pride in breaking the ethical codes in searching for truth\textsuperscript{18}. This calls forth considering the events leading to the closure of News of the World in 2011. In Sweden the principle of public access to official records is connected with the regulation on the freedom of the press in the 1700s. Even if modern day practice of the freedom of the press is a far cry from how it was practiced in the 1700s, the fact that this regulation is a couple of hundred years old instils, at least on the level of myth, an idea of it being a

\textsuperscript{13} SVT Sändningstillstånd (2009) §§ 7, 9, 10, 11.
\textsuperscript{15} Monika Djerf-Pierre “The Difference Engine, gender equality, journalism and the good society” in \textit{Feminist media Studies} Vol. 11, No. 1, 2011
\textsuperscript{16} Ida Willig “Newsroom ethnography in a field perspective” in \textit{Journalism} 14 (3) 2013 pp 372-387.
\textsuperscript{18} Margareta Melin-Higgins in \textit{Gender and Newsroom Cultures, Identities at work} eds. M. de Bruin and K Ross (Hampton Press Inc. New Jersey 2004).
given. This taken-for-grantedness also goes for neighbouring concepts and practices such as the principle of public access to official records. It is very much part of a common sense type of thinking and a major ingredient in the mind-set of Swedish newsrooms. Plausibly this mind-set hampers any development of idealising breaking ethical codes. The above is not meant to state any general and absolute truths about either British or Swedish typical newsroom cultures. It is meant to, by exemplification, just point out the kind of societal factors that may affect workplace cultures. Lisbet van Zoonen, exemplifying with Dutch television news, concludes that the market for journalism has made changes in the content and form of journalism towards human interest stories, emotional involvement and entertainment, in a way which gives more job openings for women. But she also raises a word of warning about this leading to even more demand for the stereotypical.

In addition to some kind of national cultural setting, newsrooms are also distinguished from other type of workplaces sector wise, such as for example the manufactural industries, the governmental bodies, the business of finance, the law firms, the IT entrepreneurial start-ups, just to name a few. These different types of work places create their own doxa, i.e. their matter-of-courseness, part and parcel of their own jargons and everyday practices, their own discourses. On top of this there are of course variations between individual publishers’ newsroom cultures.

**Management: male and female**

When describing leadership style as differing between women and men, female-style leadership is considered to be cooperative, dialogical, making space for emotions and building relations resembling friendships at work, whereas male-style leadership is considered to be characterised by qualities such as competitiveness, straightforwardness, giving weight to rational logic and regarding your co-workers as colleagues rather than friends. There are a number of different types of terminology to describe what is considered female versus male leadership styles, such as EQ versus IQ, transformational versus transactional, ethical negotiation versus unethical negotiation, cautious versus risk taking, democratic versus autocratic to name a few. These ideas are expressed both in media output and in research.

Research into transactional and transformational leadership often takes off from Burns analysis in 1978 and then makes a jump to the mid-nineties when interest in transformational leadership was

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19 Tryckfrihetsförordningen (1949:105).
gaining ground\textsuperscript{22}. To outline some of the ideas I will randomly exemplify with a few contributions in this field of research on gender and management. Barbara Mandell and Shirpa Pherwani found that emotional intelligence and transformational leadership are significantly connected\textsuperscript{23}. They also propose that there are gender differences concerning emotional intelligence, with women being more emotionally intelligent. They could not establish a relationship between gender and transformational leadership however. Kevin W Westbrook, C Steven Arendall and Walton M. Padelford investigated competitiveness and unethical negotiation strategies in relation to gender\textsuperscript{24}. They found men to be more competitive but men and women equally engaging in unethical bargaining behavior. Competitive behavior was found to go hand in hand with accepted bargaining behavior. Women however, were found to be more likely to engage in accepted bargaining behavior. Yang Xu affirms that gender directly influences complexity and centrality in mental models of firm strategies\textsuperscript{25}. Gender is said to influence social interaction on synergistic knowledge development. Xu does point out that any differences existing in the workplace are due to social hierarchies and not innate qualities.

This selection of pieces of research on management and gender shows there is a struggle with, and dependence on, concepts of difference.

\textbf{Gender: body, mind, difference, sameness, individuality}

Constructivist and essentialist lines of thought have been prominent when discussing gender. I use the word gender as referring to identity construction based on signifying practices connected to biological sex. Thus gender is a part of constructionist thought. I will not for the purpose of this investigation discuss transsexual experiences or transgender. By essentialist I refer to something perceived to be innate connected to biological sex, in this context when determined by biological sex organs\textsuperscript{26}. In the framework of this discussion essentialism refers to when physical males and females are thought to have innate qualities derived from differences based on their physical beings.

\textsuperscript{22} for example B. J. Aviolo and B. M. Bass \textit{The full range of leadership development: Manual}, (Redwood City, CA: Mind garden 1997).
\textsuperscript{23} L. E. Atwater and F. J. Yamarino “Personal attributes as predictors' and subordinates' perceptions of military leadership” \textit{Human Relations} 46 (1993) pp. 645-668.
\textsuperscript{26} Bass, B. M. \textit{From transactional to transformational leadership: Learning to share the vision. Organizational Dynamics}, (Winter: 1990).
Thus I do not include the linguistic, the psychological or the social and the cultural aspects of pinning women and men to a map as essentialism\(^\text{27}\). This type of placing specific sex into psychological, linguistic or social and cultural systems only becomes essentialist in its interpretation and usage. They are dependent on there being a connection to biological sex in the first place. The observable differences in biology, functions as a main prerequisite for categorization of men and women. At a second stage men and women may be envisaged as having specific psychological schemas, linguistic orders or natural places in the social and cultural spheres. Thus by essentialism I refer to ideas that attaches specific traits and qualities to biological sex, which in everyday colloquial kind of language is signified by the word woman and man.

**Gender: difference and essentialist ideas**

Modern essentialist ideas on gender seem in the public discussion most prominently to be advocated by relationship counsellors and writers, often called upon as experts or debaters for media output on television, radio and in the press. For example therapist John Gray and writer Robert Bly describe men and women as essentially different needing different types of solutions to their problems because they are different from the outset rather than having been ascribed different positions in society and culture\(^\text{28}\). Likewise doctor Rigmor Robert speaks of men's and women's brains being different to such a degree there is a female way of being and a male way of being given by biology\(^\text{29}\), and doctor and counsellor Louise Hallin, often featured in media as an expert on parenting, asserts ideas of proper early parenting, or rather mothering and fathering, predestined by biology\(^\text{30}\). Professor and researcher Annica Dahlström also put forward theories on there being a female type of brain and a male type of brain, albeit with variations\(^\text{31}\).

Essentialist thinking has also been expressed in seminars, union organisations’ publications and books on management with statements in line with “when women get management positions they start acting like men”\(^\text{32}\) and “women's cautiousness is in the genes”\(^\text{33}\) and “don’t castrate, i.e.

\(^{27}\) ibid. p. 3.
\(^{31}\) Rigmor Robert in ”Moderskapet väcker upprörda känslor” *Svenska Dagbladet* 2004-12-07.
\(^{32}\) "Därför är Lisbeth Salander inte en riktig kvinna” Newsmill.se (accessed 2013-05-01) see References.
\(^{33}\) "Louise Hallin fortsätter att staka ut sin egen våg” i *Dagens medicin* (accessed 2013-05-01) see References.
\(^{34}\) Annica Dahlström in ”Långt färre kvinnliga än manliga genier” i *Dagens Nyheter* (accessed 2013-07-30) see References.
\(^{35}\) For example seminar arranged by Svensk Chefsförening on August, 4th 2011 in which it was stated that some women become men when they get management jobs. This was not said in a metaphorical sense meaning that these women get the cultural power position traditionally offered men. The proposition was that women literally stepped out of natural femininity and started acting like men, something for them unnatural.
\(^{36}\) Ann Marie Bergström in ”Kvinnors försiktighet ligger i generna” *Jusek Tidningen* (accessed 2011-11-28) see References.
criticise, men in public! It’s lethal to women…”.

These are generalisations of the essences of men and women, their way of acting and reacting.

Typical of essentialist perspectives is to assert that women and men do, and need to do, things differently because they are of different sexes biologically. These ideas carry over to management issues when an innate maternity instinct is thought to extend into a social caring competence or an innate paternity instinct is thought to extend into cultural competences in acquiring resources.

**Gender: sameness and constructionist ideas**

The type of constructionist thinking which comes into this investigation is for example that explicated by Sherry B. Ortner in uncovering cultural structuring of opposites in symbolic trails connected to different sexes. She marks out connections made between on the one hand woman - giving birth - breast feeding - nurturing - nature, and on the other hand man - handicrafts - technology - cultivating - culture. Jana Evans Braziel explains some of the historic heritage of thinking in binaries, starting with the Pythagorean Table of Opposites and moving to influences in French postmodern écriture féminine. Helene Cixous explains it further when lining up qualities and phenomena to the sexes as binaries; man with activity, culture, head, intelligible, logos and form along one line, and woman with passive, nature, heart, sensitive, pathos and matter along another. These thought and speech patterns have been repeated and established as common sense acquiring the status of truths. Valerie Walkerdine and Lisa Blackman argue that "...’fictions that function in truth’ and the discursive relations structuring these discourses are productive, acting upon subjects such that they want or desire certain ways of being. We need to explore how these wishes, desires, and aspirations are re-enacted through the way in which the Other circulates within cultural representations".

In 1929 Joan Riviere in her classic essay *Womanliness as masquerade* described psychological, discursive and social dealings of gender and power. She described how a female lecturer switched from logical and knowledgeable to flirtatious and coquetting when male peers were in the audience. Riviere explained how the female lecturer displayed her "masculinity" as a game and a joke. Masculinity here meant performing intellectual work. Joan Riviere asked what the essential nature of fully developed femininity is. Her description questioned the essentialist

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36 Jana Evans Braziel *Dualism and French Feminist Thought* (accessed March 9th 2013) see References.
38 Valerie Walkerdine, Lisa Blackman *Mass hysteria critical psychology and media studies* (Palgrave, Basingstoke, 2201) p. 121.
perspective some eighty years ago. Her writing gives valuable perspective on contemporary writing and talking about gendered leadership style.

**Gender and the individual**

Struggles for freedom usually start with someone being disappointed with the state of affairs. That moment of misrecognition of identity positions on offer hints at there being a sense of self not totally constructed by the cultural system. Jacques Lacan describes it when discussing the mirror stage\(^{40}\). Both Pierre Bourdieu’s field theory and Anthony Giddens’ dialectic of control has been referred to when discussing fixating the fragmented self\(^{41}\). Talk on "being yourself" is often seen as a fixating process based in promoting essentialist perspectives\(^{42}\). Theories on identity often find themselves in this dilemma, either there seems to be a stable true self to find and bring fourth or our sense of self is constructed and re-constructed without there being any stable sense of self at all.

Arguments like "there ain't no such 'things' as 'I’s' or 'you's' ...not with anything more than a fleeting existence, changing moment by moment"\(^{43}\) are helpful when deconstructing stereotypes and revealing subtle psychological technologies of power play. But they run the risk of short-circuiting themselves if applied in a universalistic sense. Drawing attention to this problem does not necessarily mean to encompass objectivism in a simplified sense\(^{44}\). If there was no sense of self whatsoever but the constructed one it is difficult to see why there is a problem with misrecognition. Although, the fleeting “I” do importantly point out the non-fixity of identity\(^{45}\). It is significant to look at “how a person’s biography has created particular investments and desires that are related and mutually dependent upon those historical divisions through which they have been positioned”\(^{46}\).

Still, there seems to be some other complementary component necessary to account for that moment of misrecognition, the moment of "I am not what I am expected to be".

**Saussure, Barthes, signifiers and myths**

Saussure's discussion on binaries and Barthes' mapping out creation of signs and myths are the concrete tools I will use when uncovering the discourses in the interview material and then discussing them with inspiration from Foucauldian thinking\(^{47}\). By referring to different theorists I

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\(^{40}\) Jaques Lacan “The mirror stage as formative of the function of the I as revealed in psychoanalytic experience” (1949) see References.

\(^{41}\) Lisbeth van Zoonen “From identity to identification: fixating the fragmented self” *Media, Culture & Society* 35 (1) pp. 44-51.

\(^{42}\) Ibid pp. 44-51.


\(^{45}\) Jacques Lacan “The mirror stage as formative of the function of the I as revealed in psychoanalytic experience” (1949) see References.


\(^{47}\) Michel Foucault *The Archaeology of Knowledge & The Discourse on Language* (Tavistock Publications Limited,1982).
do not subscribe to everything they have ever put forward. To use their tools I do not need to buy
their theories wholesale as closed systems. Ferdinand de Saussure pointing out language as a system
of signs built on arbitrary connections is an essential contribution of a tool when studying
stereotyping practices\textsuperscript{48}. Particularly important is the relational aspects of creating meaning. Part of
understanding what something comes to mean is dependent on how we understand what it is not in
distinction to other meaning bearing-units\textsuperscript{49}. Let us, at its most basic level, exemplify with the
exchange of the letter b and c in word formation. Exchanging b for c gives different meanings of the
words bar and car as in for example "she is in the bar" or "she is in the car". The exchange of b and
c in this case not only gives us different locations but also, according to our cultural conventions,
implies different possibilities for actions. In the bar she might be drinking wine, in the car
presumably not. Yet another example is the meaning we assign to the difference between the xx sex
chromosomes and the xy sex chromosomes, where the signifiers x and y bear the potential of setting
off a large set of meanings attached to their signifieds of female and male. Important for Saussure
to point out was that both signifiers and signifieds are assigned meanings as
cultural and historical
systems, not grounded in any kind of essence\textsuperscript{50}. Thus, his contribution offers a method where
language is seen as a system of socially determined values\textsuperscript{51}. When discussing meaning making,
and especially stereotyping, it is important to remember these very essential building blocks. I
would propose that this system of distinction at its very basic level is "innocent", considering that it
might be necessary for any kind of orientation in the material and psychological world, as a means
to avoiding symbolic schizophrenia\textsuperscript{52}. The slanting into making cultural value laden judgments
comes in at a later stage. Roland Barthes has shown how the arbitrary signifiers and signifieds are
used, or held hostage as he also put it, in making myths. Meaning making systems produce myths
when acting as if the content of myths are essential natural givens instead of exposing, or being
lucid with, their constructions serving culturally and historically produced values. Let us exemplify
with the letter combination xy serving as signifier for the signified male sex chromosomes. The
combination of these two forms a sign for being male, which at second level order may be used as a
new signifier for the concept, the signified, of manly traits. The male in combination with manly
traits together bear the capacity for harbouring a myth of the essence of the xy chromosomes and its

\textsuperscript{48} Jonathan Culler \textit{Saussure} (USA; Fontana, 1976) p. 19.
\textsuperscript{49} ibid. p. 25.
\textsuperscript{50} ibid. p. 36.
\textsuperscript{51} ibid. p. 52.
\textsuperscript{52} My use of the concept of schizophrenia in this context is cultural and symbolic, not neuroclinical, inspired by Fredric Jameson "Postmodernism and Consumer Society" in \textit{Postmodern Culture}, ed. Hal Foster, (London: Pluto Press:1983) "... schizophrenia, emerges from the failure of the infant to accede fully into the realm of speech and language", "... grasping schizophrenia as the breakdown of the relationship between signifiers." pp. 118-119.
potential, when these traits are made not only to refer strictly to biological aspects but also loaded with cultural assumptive add-ons\textsuperscript{53}. Importantly Barthes pointed out that at the mythic level of signification a naturalization occurs where the spoken is dressed in a matter-of-courseness, a "this is just how things are". The matter-of-courseness of a specific mythic "fact" is achieved through repetition, telling the same statement over and over again. Barthes also pointed out that the factness is established through rhetorical forms, storytelling patterns, and exemplifies with for example inoculation, privation of history, tautology, neither-norism\textsuperscript{54}. Important in these rhetorical forms is also the use of metonymy - creating connection through proximity - and metaphor - creating connection via pointing out similarities\textsuperscript{55}.

\textbf{Foucault, discourses and power}

Barthes rhetorical forms bridges over to Michel Foucault's work on discourses. Foucauldian perspectives as a method of uncovering discourses are useful as they point in a direction rather than setting out a fixed method map, they serve up a way of thinking rather than a step-to-step guide\textsuperscript{56}. Discourses are born in the myth making process. Discourses are ways of talking about existence, phenomena, matter, relationships, cause and effect, and the state and order of things. We can for example choose to describe things in the terminology of the psychological, the financial, the legal, the religious, the physics, the medicinal, the behavioural, to name a few options. We can say "men don't like women disagreeing with them and at such times they feel castrated"\textsuperscript{57} or "men don't like women disagreeing with them and at such times feel loss of capital" or "men don't like women disagreeing with them and at such times feel they are being put on trial" or "men don't like women disagreeing with them and at such times feel dispirited" or "men don't like women disagreeing with them and at such times they feel drained" using psychoanalytical-sexual, financial, legal, religious-spiritual and construction work metaphors respectively. When specific perspectives on the state of things are continually repeated, if we for example on and on dress talk about society in financial metaphors, we give power to that specific outlook on what society is about. The supposition is how we talk affecting how we think affecting how we act, and the other way round, how we act affecting how we think affecting how we talk. This type of interaction creates the power/knowledge couplet. Power is for Foucault relations and practices in which power produces knowledge and knowledge makes power forces possible. Barbara Townley explains that “the focus of analysis becomes the


\textsuperscript{54} ibid. p. 150.


\textsuperscript{57} Interpretation of implication of statement in Barbro Dahlbom Hall \textit{Lär kvinnor chefa män} (Stockholm: Natur & Kultur, 1996) p.95.
"knowability" of the individual - the process by which the individual is rendered knowable, or the process by which the individual is constructed or produced". The idea of each society having its regime of truths with types of discourses, mechanisms, means, and people charged with saying what counts as true, which produce truths as a societal function, is useful in analysing micro levels of talk and power play in sub divisions of discourses. Theory is put forward as an instrument, a logic, to use on the basis of reflection on given situations.

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APPLICATIONS OF METHODS AND MATERIALS

The methods used in this study are interviews and discourse analysis based on ideas in semiotics, in order to find out what thinking the talking points at and what symbolic structures it contains. I started off with interviews and subsequently analysed the interview material, investigating its discourses mainly using the perspectives and tools of Saussurian language elements and Barthesian signifying practices making signs and myths. Using the formulas which came forth in the interview material I went on via Foucauldian discourse analysis to investigate which pillars of thinking that support the discursive in the interview material. In the analysis I go back and forth between small meaning-bearing language units to overarching thought structures uncovered via utterances in discourses. I use the concept of formula to represent figures of thought indicated by the text or the uttered. By formulas I mean patterns that produce outcomes, but not necessarily created with intent. They are similar to rhetorical forms. Formulas can be uncovered figures of thoughts and overarching principles as well as cultural phenomena indicated by the text or the uttered. They are pointed towards by utterances represented by text phrases in the interview material.

Choice of respondents

The interview sample, i.e. the managers interviewed in this study, work or have been working in all sorts of newsrooms: tabloid and broadsheet press, radio, and commercial and public service television. Their work experiences cover start-ups, old publishers with a long history, small local newsrooms as well as bigger national newsrooms belonging to larger publishers and major media groups. As mentioned above newsroom culture in Sweden is in general influenced by an idea of a flat organisational order. This corresponds well with my own observations of newsrooms. Ideas of a flat organisational order may produce for example expectations by staff to take part in all major and minor decisions, expectations of approving choice of managers, and expectations of discussing matters directly with top management instead of your own manager. This type of culture was also confirmed and reflected in the interview material of this study. As mentioned above I found accounts of what I call reversed power structure, imagined consensus tied in with competition between staff. Although not in focus for this study, to understand typical Swedish newsroom culture and the idea of the flat organisational order, it is important to note that the imagined ideal of consensus is tied in with competition. There is one effectual traditional vertical hierachal order alongside an imagined idea of the organisation being flat. This situation seems to create an organisational ego ideal of the consensual while the important decision making follows a hierachal
order. In this situation staff speak of and act on consensus seeking at one level at the same time as acting out power play and competition at another level. This does not mean that the consensual is all imagination. The ego ideal of the consensual has actual effect in situations where staff actually overthrows management. Examples of situations corresponding to this pattern are accounted for in Jutterström\textsuperscript{60}.

I have used snowball sampling, starting off with a few people and then rolling the ball into their network. The newsroom easiest to gain access to was one in which they have had a commitment to gender equality for years. Some interviewees in this study are younger with just a few years’ experience of management and others have a long work life in all sorts of different positions to gather their experience from. They are ten in total, five women and five men. All respondents are anonymous, coded only by the letters A-J. Even though I had a gender division in my sample by half of them being female and half of them male I had an ambition to treat them as individuals regardless of gender. This may seem paradoxical at the same time as it is at the very heart of the matter when researching gender. Explicitly pointing out whether one gender more than the other finds for example gender issues at work problematic has not been an objective of this piece of research. With this small a sample it doesn't make sense to look for statistics. In spite of this there is a section in which they are divided into gendered groups. This is done to exemplify variation within gender rather than between gender. It is also used in discussion of a specific concept. Presenting the interviewees as ten individuals rather than five men and five women is more a philosophical stylistic to the presentation, than a means to hide gender. Gender is not hidden. Initially, at the very start of this project, when it was just taking shape in my mind, I had thought I did not need to use anonymous sources since I thought the subject area not being all that hot and sensitive. I was wrong. The possibility of being anonymous was essential to some of the respondents. There was a de-identifying process of the material in which they all had the opportunity to erase or substitute matter that they thought would lead to identification of them in their work life. It was a bit difficult for me to grasp why the subject was so sensitive, why things could not be spelled out. It could of course be because recalling social interaction and retelling about events involve memory selection and perspectives of interpretation. Criticism of something that happens during a work day can always be countered with “Oh that’s how you experienced it, that’s not my view at all”. Stating one’s experience as a fact is sticking out. On the other hand maybe the possibility of retaliation when uncovering someone else’s subtle power tactics is real. The fact that this topic is difficult to

\textsuperscript{60} Christina Jutterström Uppfostrad av män (Natur & Kultur: Stockholm, 2010).
talk about in the open is telling in itself. On top of that there is of course the balance between work place loyalty and the right to speak freely on any subject.

For the purpose of this study I will leave out demographics such as socioeconomic background, level of education, sexual identity, ethnic identity, family situation and similar. With a sample of only ten these demographics would not account for much. Again, the section in the analysis in which I have grouped the interviewees into a group of females and a group of males is there for purposes of comparison and illumination of the variation of responses within gendered groups. Suffice it for this context to take an interest in the thoughts and experiences of ten individuals.

The selection of number of respondents was set to ten for reasons of time limit. It has been pointed out that you know you have enough respondents when yet another respondent doesn’t convey any new information\(^{61}\). This was not a policy I could use as it was important to finish the study within a set time limit. Thus the way of using this study is as a micro sample for other studies to compare with.

**Interviews**

The goal of the interviews was to get as honest a representation as possible of how gender issues come into, or does not come into, thinking on management and management practices in the newsroom. Joseph A. Maxwell warns about constructing questions looking for differences between variables since you then risk creating difference\(^{62}\). For this study though the concept of difference has a central position as it is a key concept in thinking about gender in society. The problematic of this was not hidden but highlighted in the interview situations.

At first I phrased the questions with an instrumentalist view in mind even if not following it rigorously\(^ {63}\) and tried to balance them in the structure of “have or have not”\(^ {64}\). I chose this style as a balancing weight in relation to my own background in management, to try to keep the questions as strict and uncoloured as possible. Still, there is a limit to when questions become so hard wired in their construction they may lead to alienating the conversation. After the first interview I realised this was really the case and I had to loosen up the interview style in a major way. In the first interview I found my choice of words way to academic. For the second interview I tried to keep to


\(^{62}\) ibid.


\(^{64}\) Daniel W. Turner, III “Qualitative interview design: a practical guide for novice investigators” in *The qualitative report* vol. 15 no. 3, may 2010, pp. 754-760.
themes and go with the flow. Along the way I had to loosen up my questions even more. Thus the interviews took on a style of conversation in which my reflections during the conversation fed into the interview even though the respondents’ replies were in focus. Three of the interviews were carried out over the phone due to geographical distance. See appendix 2 for type of questions. Even though the interviews did not strictly follow the same style and order, they all covered the same essential themes and core issues. Under the headings of thoughts and experiences I asked about details connected to theories of gender and theories of male and female leadership styles, such as showing emotions, ways of talking, ways of relating to staff, acting fast, acting slow, taking risks or being cautious. Part of the discussion was on typical newsroom environment issues such as every reporter being “your own person” and accompanying experiences of hierarchies and attitudes to work, and attitudes to change and competition.

The experience of the interviewing situation varied and I clearly felt different types of positioning taking place quite quickly. Meeting the novice manager was quite a different thing from meeting the experienced knowledgeable manager. In the former I struggled with finding better more everyday kind of words and to come across as harmless and friendly as possible. In the latter I got somewhat lost in abstraction as my interviewee had a much worked out idea of the problematic of the area. The interviewee kept coming back to arguments on structure often found in liberalist feminist thought. Quite a few of the respondents seemed eager in telling me how they thought things should be, what ought to be done and what methods they themselves used. They rather wanted to talk about what I perceived as opinions. And of course thought can be perceived as being about opinions as in “What’s your thinking on...”. It was far more difficult getting them to talk about personal thoughts, feelings, reactions and everyday experiences. I tried to get the conversation back to thoughts and experiences, a psychological area of meaning construction. Naturally, those who for some time had been reflecting on their own experiences of gender connected to management issues were the ones who provided detailed examples. Interestingly, I also noted that I instantly automatically started adding my own ideas about their lives when talking to them, some of those ideas very much in line with stereotypes, which most often led to being challenged as the conversation went on. Even though I gave critical attention to this instant typing on my part these types of vibes were difficult to close off, which of course reminded me of the problematic nature of categorisation per se. In some interviews I felt a certain degree of being scrutinized and watched, and in some other cases I picked up a sense of the interviewee being on guard wanting to protect her- or himself from my watching them. In some interviews the respondents sort of shied away looking down saying things like

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"maybe that is typically female, I don't know”. It came across to me that in their mind I may have an essentialist perspective and they wanted to refute that and at the same time be polite to my possible beliefs or knowledge on the matter. Some respondents sat back and had a chat leaving it totally up to me what I could possible do with this “load of words” whereas others came across as constantly searching for what I was after in their answer, as in “what is the gender take on this question”. This could be that they wanted to properly understand, getting it right, in order to reply, although it sometimes came across as concern about wanting to convey a message and in this way staying in control. Of course it is also a way of trying to prevent being misunderstood. I often used the phrasing “do I understand you right in that you’re saying...”.

Even though people sometimes tend to back off and change their minds when seeing their words in print I simply had to use respondent validation of full interview responses to build up trust. Their trust in me was more important than the risk of them backing off from sensitive or controversial topics and replies. Consequently some telling examples have gone lost in the rewriting process due to interviewees feeling uncomfortable at the possibility of exposure. I have also exchanged some words to make the replies more anonymous, for example changing the words paper or broadcast to product or output. Exchanged words are marked in blue colour in the notes giving the original interview replies in Swedish. All translations are mine. In the translating process I have prioritised the essence of the meaning of the uttered, and of course by limitation of the way I have understood that essence. All translations of interview material are accompanied by a note with the Swedish original text on the same page to enable easy comparison for the readers.

The transcription of the interviews was not made as detailed as in conversation analysis, although I tried to keep the talkative nature, adding the “em”, “eh”, repetitions and words and phrases such as “so to speak”, “like”. Some of the respondents seemed to react negatively to this, saying they sounded scatter-brained and whimsical and vague. I tried to explain I had kept it that way to keep the sense of talk and searching for thoughts. I also explained how consciously different that approach is from journalistic writing in which you most often pick out the “facts” and retell those. The talking stylistic which has been kept is there for aesthetic value and reading pleasure. I prefer reading texts which are “alive” and have thus tried to keep this text as readable and alive as it can get within the confines of academic normative doxa.

Quotes from the interview material have been used extensively as this is the very proof of the conclusions I draw. It is a strategy to explore and show the dynamics in the discursive material. The intention is to make it easy for any reader to see on what I build my analysis and argument, and
from what I draw conclusions. The interviews are the very substance carrying the analysis along, making it moving forward. The interview material is in one part organised in subject groups of for example general management, gendered management, knowledge of stereotypes and similar and in another part the material is organised around what I call formulas, which are akin to rhetorical forms. By formulas I mean patterns that produce outcomes, but not necessarily created with intent. Formulas can be uncovered figures of thoughts and overarching principles as well as cultural phenomena indicated by the text or the uttered. First I outline a “what did they say” to then go on to talk about “how it was said”.

**Concrete examples of steps in method**

In actual and concrete analysis I will look at specific choice of words in relation to other possible choices and the symbolic relation between chosen and not chosen type of expression. This is where the Saussurian and Barthesian theories become method, in looking for possible binaries, metaphors along the paradigmatic axis, and metonymy along the syntagmatic axis, making signs used in creating mythic discourses about the state of things. I will not first describe the denotative level and then the connotative level as I see that schema as a way of explaining Barthes, not as prescribed necessary route to use in actual analysis. The end method is discourse analysis, but to explain how discourses come into existence as fictions functioning as truth claims you need to be aware of the myth making process and the arbitrariness of language and its use of binaries. When looking at choice of words used in the interviews I go from the discursive utterances and structures looking at the details building that structure, to deconstruct what sign elements are repeated and used in keeping a specific symbolic order alive. That is, the semiotic awareness and its tools are used in deconstructing discourse. Neither will I go via an initial commutation test to identify interesting signifiers. The importance of the signifiers’ interchangeability becomes apparent when investigating its symbolic relation to other possible choices along the paradigmatic axis. That means I do not go from the detailed units to the overall structure, rather I go from structure and dip into details of units when necessary to prove a point. Let me exemplify. Take the utterance “In that meeting she said to me ‘I didn't think you were a crybaby’. It was a very strong signal I think. Actually I do think I can be a crybaby sometimes, it can be a good thing to be a crybaby”. The word crybaby stands out as choice on the paradigmatic axis. You could of course argue that to come to that conclusion, that it stands out, my mind did a very quick commutation test. That exact process will not be accounted for in this analysis. Suffice it to acknowledge the heritage of Saussure and Barthes to Foucauldian discourse analysis. Crybaby then becomes interesting for its connotative aspects and it’s placing
along the syntagmatic axis in signifying something "weak that should not be weak". Crybaby is a word not used for a crying child being assigned a social acceptance in crying. Rather it is a word used in a derogatory sense for a child, or adult, crying when expected not to, when the crying is not socially approved. When this choice of word is used in connection with management a dissonance is expressed, communicating an underlying message of "managers don't cry". Another example is the statement about first time job as a manager as "well it was a lot to like putting on a suit like, or a suit jacket, and get in there being the manager". Here the interesting signifying words are suit and suit jacket, already having earned their second order connotation moving into the mythic stage. A suit is of course not just cloth put together but a type of garment historically coded to connote men, middle class income and a job involving important decisions being made, and on top of that a type of garment sometimes called upon as etiquette for certain social situations when one wants to signal importance or respectfulness. Interesting then is that it comes to mind as a mental metaphor when this female manager describes what it was like starting her first management job ever. Thus in actual method utterances will be looked at, significant markers picked out, their usage analysed by looking at metonymic and metaphoric placing, and then to discuss discourses used and their creative possibilities.

Let me sum up methodology approach. Ten anonymous managers with newsroom experiences are interviewed. The interviews are organised around themes and core issues. The interviews were transcribed in such a way so as to keep the conversational style in order to uncover the searching for thoughts but also for keeping the aliveness of the conversations. Respondent validation of transcriptions was used. This led to some descriptions being erased from the material. This loss does not change the overall outcome though as many other examples were left untouched. In the translating process I prioritised the essence of the meaning of the uttered. Translations are accompanied by a note with the Swedish original text on the same page. The material is analysed by looking for binaries, metaphors, metonyms, paradigmatic and syntagmatic axes, signs, myths and discourses. The end method is discourse analysis, but to explain how discourses come into existence as fictions functioning as truth claims I use the tools of Saussurian language elements and Barthesian signifying practices. I go from the discursive utterances and structures looking at the details building that structure, to deconstruct what sign elements are repeated and used. I go back and forth between small meaning-bearing language units to overarching thought structures uncovered via utterances. I use the concept of formula to represent figures of thought indicated by the uttered. It is a method used to uncover meaning underlying the utterances. Quotes from the

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66 jo men det var ju mycket att ta på sig en kostym liksom en kavaj och gå in och vara chef då.
interview material have been used extensively as this is the very proof of the conclusions I draw. It is a strategy to explore and show the dynamics in the discursive material. In the analysis section the interview material is in one part organised in subject groups and in another part organised around formulas.

I have deliberately kept a fairly easy read type of stylistic in the thesis. This has always been my way of writing academic texts. It is a conscious choice as I am of the opinion that academic texts should not be inaccessible to an interested reader of the general public due to *stylistic devises*, even though lack of knowledge of the theories used might put up hindrance to the general reader.
ANALYSIS

I will first account for some “whats” in the interviews, i.e. what they said. This first part is organised around the topics: Good management, Work place specific role, People management and organisational changes, Difference, Gender and style, Knowing the stereotype, Managers being talked about, and Gender influencing the product. Secondly I will discuss some “hows”, i.e. how things were spoken. In this second part the material is organised around what I call formulas, i.e. uncovered figures of thought indicated by the text of the uttered pointing at underlying meanings or overarching principles. The uncovered formulas I discuss are: Hey what do I know, Well it’s like this, There are no female and male ways, What’s in my gender what’s in me, Gender smart, and Being gender or being you. A fair share of quotations will be referred to and used in analysing the talk and utterances as a strategy to explore and show the dynamics in the discursive material. Both the section on topics and the section on formulas are in response to issues in the theories of newsrooms, management and gender, for example representation, culture, power play, male and female leadership style, and ideas on difference, sameness and the individual. Analysis of the discursive will surface most clearly in the second part as this section deals with the formulas.

What did they say?

So what did the interview material convey about whether ideas on gender and management style are coupled in the newsroom? There was an oscillation between management as a general role, a work place specific role and a gendered role. On questions about good management the respondents brought forward communication qualities.

Topic: Good management

"one should be clear [...] you cannot expect to get things back if you have not been clear with what you wanted, so it was a lot about how you communicate [...] and it was a lot about this social bit too, how to get a group to work well together and how to be a sound, how to be this sound manager people respect"\textsuperscript{67} respondent A

\textsuperscript{67} my translation from Swedish, respondent telling about management course content
"What we are not so good at, and which we always have to work on, is participation, to make everybody feel that they are a part of the work process and have the possibility to have a say in their jobs, so there is a lot of buzz around that."\(^{68}\) respondent B

"I think that if you are true to yourself, people feel safe with you, people feeling safe perform extremely better than those not feeling safe, that’s what I think."\(^{69}\) respondent F

"Well the good manager was one who listened to the staff and knew the subject matter [...]a person who is knowledgeable, good, fair and often there like, on the floor, so that was the good management."\(^{70}\) resp. G

Indicators in the above pointing at communication qualities are for example clear, communicate, social, sound, true, listened, fair, on the floor. Both how you talk, like in how you engage in dialogue, and what you perform, like in showing respect, were qualities and ingredients mentioned as essential to good management. Aspects such as knowing every inch of the production process were also mentioned.

When talking about work place specific role, i.e. what type of management works well for their specific type of work places they were at first very sure of what worked well as exemplified below.

**Topic: Work place specific role**

"well, what is highly valued is, well to be effective, well you know, be a person who gets things done, em, so that you get results, that you, well it's a lot about knowing what is going on."\(^{71}\) respondent A

"The Sports section is a way in to later on managing the whole of the news operation, or running the whole product, and it is because you learn to be very fast when working with sports, to get results, to get things done during the night, working under constant time pressure, those qualities are refined at the sports section. [...] and they take those skills with them into the news and they fit very well there."\(^{72}\) respondent B

"You need to remember that newsrooms by definition are noisy. If you’re the top manager it’s like constantly being the object of a press conference, you have to get that, if not you shouldn’t have this job."\(^{73}\) resp. I

Indicators like effective, results and fast in the above were recurrent in many of the interviews. The noisy press conference type of situation also points at constantly being in the current of things prepared to both be questioned and have quick answers. Most respondents agreed on that you need

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\(^{68}\)respondent telling about response from survey
\(^{69}\)jag tror att om man är sann så gör man folk trygga, trygga människor presterar extremt mycket bättre än otrygga, så tror jag.
\(^{70}\)den bra chefen var ju en som lyssnade på medarbetarna och var kunnig i ämnet [...], kunnig, duktig, rättvis och ofta där och liksom, på golvet så att det var det goda ledarskapet.
\(^{71}\)nä men det som värderas högst är ju eh jamen att man ska vara effektiv, asså du vet, vara en sån som får saker gjort, eh, så att det blir resultat av det man gör, eh, att man eh, men mycket det här liksom att ha koll på läget att man eh.
\(^{72}\)Sporten är en inkörsport till att man sen blir chef för hela nyhetsverksamheten på, eller styr hela produkten, och em det beror ju på att man på sporten lär sig att vara väldigt snabb, att få resultat, att snabbt få saker gjort på natten, jobba under ständig tidspress, de egenskaperna trinnas på sporten. Sporten har nästan bara manliga medarbetare, de får en annan träning då än vad kvinnor får. Och de tar med sig de här egenskaperna in på nyhetsredaktionen och det passar väldigt bra där.
\(^{73}\)Sen ska man komma ihåg att redaktionella miljöer per definition är stöckiga. Är du högsta chef så är det som att konstant befinna dig på en presskonferens, det får man gilla, annars så ska man nog inte ha det jobbet.
to be fast on decisions, know what you want and get prompt results when working with news. When this style was put in relation to people management there was some hesitation.

**Topic: People management and organisational changes**

"When it comes to staff issues and the like, well that is a different thing”  
74 respondent A

"Well, in the role of leader to your group you should perhaps have other values which should be important in the leadership” 75 respondent B

"You can be an editor for example and you have staff but you have to make fast decisions […] when we were working with organisational changes and similar, then your gut feeling is something you often have to work against” 76 respondent D

"I listen to gut feeling a lot, more so the more experienced I get actually, it is a positive quality, news is a lot of gut feeling, it kick starts, it’s a turn-on. But then there are other occasions where it isn’t suitable. If it’s about reorganisation and cuts you can’t use your gut feeling.” 77 respondent E

Indicators above of the existence of values differing to those valued in the heat of the newsroom floor are a different thing, well, perhaps, other, work against, but then there are other. Above examples on work place specific role and people management hint at a tension between values and styles which may come into conflict with each other in different hands on situations. These differences correspond to ideals and qualities identified in transactional and transformational leadership respectively, as well as what has been considered to be female and male leadership styles, as outlined in the theory section. The respondents accounted for using different ways depending on the varying situations. In this way there was no either/or situation in which a specific manager always used typical transactional or transformational methods, or what’s been considered typical female or male styles. Many of them used a both/and approach.

When asked about gender differences all the respondents at some point expressed themselves in ways as to distance themselves from the concept of difference.

**Topic: Difference**

"I don’t think so, I am educated in feminism and I am usually good at spotting, well there is so much of fast action in this work environment so you wouldn’t get away with being a rowdy male manager, and you don’t get away with being a weak female manager. It is all what you open up for, who you are” 78 respondent I

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74 När det handlar om personalfrågor och så är det ju en annan sak.
75 Asså om man leder sin grupp så bör man ju kanske ha andra värden i ledarskapet som ska vara viktiga.
76 Du kan vara redaktör till exempel där du har ett arbetsledaransvar men du måste fatta snabba publicistiska beslut […] när vi jobbade med organisationsförändringar och sånt, då är ju ofta magkänslan något man fick jobba emot.
77 Inställningen till intuition i ledarskap?
78 Jag går mycket på mage, alltmer ju längre jag har jobbat faktiskt, det är en positiv egenskap, nyheter är mycket magkänsla, det väcker igång, tänder till. Men sen finns det ju andra sammanhang där det inte passar. Om det handlar om besparingar går det ju inte att käna med magen.
“now when we have a fairly ok level of equality in terms of numeral representation, pay and status, I think it’s quite unique at our workplaces in the media in general, and that is why it feels obsolete to start discussing pure gender stereotypes”79 respondent H

“Well, but a bit prejudiced I suppose I think of [...] it’s what comes to mind spontaneously, surely very prejudiced but that is what comes up”80 respondent A

“eh well, I really don’t like the words male style and female style, to put that kind of labels on it, it’s men and women who are managers, but it differs a lot in how people think [on these matters], there are different spaces for men and women in their leadership, because we have different expectations on men and women and you have different expectations on yourself as well, so I can’t say any other than that. I think men can be very different and women very different too.”81 respondent B

“You can find anything, all stereotypes, but they are not general, they don’t correspond to a common pattern. The stereotypes are exceptions; you have to really look for them. Well that is my experience that is.”82 respondent J

Indicators of distancing above are for example I don’t think so, I am educated in feminism in which the first part of the phrase is a refutation and the latter part a guarantor of authority on subject matter, knowing what one is talking about. The second quote works in much the same way by first authoritatively stating how things are with now when we have a fairly ok level of equality and later placing the distancing with it feels obsolete. The third quote repeats the word prejudice which functions to underline that the associations are culturally learned and not natural facts. The forth quote distances with I don’t really like and then leaves an explanation. The fifth quote starts with an interesting you can find anything which functions as a distancing mechanism. In the context of the interview situation I perceived the “you can find anything” functioning with double address i.e. both in the general sense of “one can find anything” and in the specific sense of “you, the researcher can find anything”. This is followed by statements on how things are and ends with the more cautious well that is my experience. So the fifth quote goes through distancing, stating facts and ends with a minor proviso. A proviso makes the uttered conditional, giving it a restriction. The interesting thing for this piece of research is that all respondents distanced themselves from essentialism, and some

79 respondent telling about possible differences in expectations on men and women
Jag tycker ju inte det, jag är skolad feminist, och brukar vara rätt bra på att se, asså det är så raka puckar i den här arbetsmiljön, du kommer inte undan som burdus manlig chef, och du kommer inte heller undan om du är en vek kvinnlig chef. Det där är ju helt vad du öppnar för, vem man är.

80 nu har vi ändå numerar och hyfsad löne- och statusjämställdhet, jag tror att den är ganska unik på våra arbetsplatser inom media generellt, eh och därför kännas det ännu mer obsolet att börja diskutera i rena könsstereotyper.

81 Ja men lite fördomsfullt så tänker jag nog på em, [...] det är vad som spontant kommer upp i huvuden, säkert väldigt fördomsfullt men det som kommer upp.

82 Det går att hitta allt, alla stereotyper, men de är inte generella, det stämmer inte med ett allmänt mönster. Stereotyperna är undantag, man får leta efter dem, det är utifrån mina erfarenheter alltså.
expressed themselves with a certain weariness indicating they were thinking I as a researcher might be essentialist in my outlook.

After further probing i.e. exploring the respondents’ thinking further in the interview situation, experiences connected to social gendered patterns emerged.

"No but, it’s not just here and this may be with my feminist glasses on, but, well in general I think women and women managers have a longer start-up period before you get accepted as a good manager or a smart person or, yes well a bit more to prove, I do think that”∗∗∗83 respondent A

"Yes my own experience is that in my first years of being a manager I thought I could be just like a man can be, because men and women are equal, but I noticed that, that there are different expectations related to whether you are a woman or a man, there are different possible spaces for action. Like, if you are very firm then you are an iron lady or something like that, or you are a hysteric. For a man, it is somehow ok if he is yelling at people. That is my experience. If a woman is too hesitant and wants to discuss decisions then she is indecisive, sort of”∗∗∗∗84 respondent B

“I know I was so damned naive at the start, until I got some kind of equality revision [...] and it showed that 75 % of the people I had hired during the years were women, which I hadn’t given a thought whatsoever, which was [the75 %] because the range of choice was better among newly graduated female reporters, there were more of them on the market. Eh well but then later on I have had to become aware of that it [equality issues] can be quite inflammatory and explosive. But it is probably a male luxury too, to be able to feel that ‘what does it matter’”.∗∗∗∗∗85 respondent H

Respondent A accounts for experiences of longer start-up period and a bit more to prove. Respondent B tells about personal expectations not being met because coming into conflict with expectations from others with I thought I could and but I noticed that. Likewise respondent H recalls a turn in understanding when personal expectations did not match with expectations from others with I was so damned naive, until I got, and I have had to become aware.

Below respondent D starts with a what if and how would that have worked discussing an imagined social interaction to then go on stating the myth is right. Respondent I below expresses a disjunction between personal expectations and what is perceived in the social world with sometimes I wonder why and that I have thought about, in that there are major differences. All discussing their own
experiences of social interaction creating certain spaces and routes of action rather than others based on gender.

"...I have played around with the thought that 'what if it had been a woman sitting in this meeting and been as uninformed, as distracted, sitting there looking in her phone as much and as uninvolved' how would that have worked like [...] but I have to say in that respect the myth is right, you can be, there is a bigger allowance for middle aged, well male managers middle aged and above, who you perhaps could call old men, for whom I think there is a bigger allowance for how they can behave if they have like some kind of documented, been around for a long time" 86 respondent D

"Susanne Osten once said that women are so damned smiling all the time, it was a while ago, but I have thought about that, sometimes I wonder why women walk around smiling all the time [...] it strikes me [...] that thing about smiling, it is something about to please, being nice, a bit to avoid difficulties in public space, hide behind a milder image. That I have thought about, in that there are major differences" 87 respondent I

Respondent F below accounts for observing differences with they probably have less of but adds a proviso with but I have come across all variations of men and women which functions as a safeguard in the event of anyone trying to extrapolate generalisations out of stated observations. Respondent E below expresses caution with I’d imagine and there I think to then end with a more assertive statement of there is more of that.

"Well if there is something I have been thinking about it is on consensus, there are male managers too who are, but if I were to say, they are probably less consensus seeking than women managers. But I have come across all variations of men and women." 88 respondent F

“At the level of top management I’d imagine it is different, there is a bit more of a gender game, when you get higher up in the media group. There I think those stereotypes can matter. Well I don’t play floor ball, I don’t have a sports team and like that, where you socialize in that way. There is more of that higher up [in the hierarchy]" 89 respondent E

Whereas the above ponder on possibilities, respondents C and G below described specific examples of actual social interaction they themselves had experienced, as did respondent H earlier. With those specific examples they expressed themselves in a more assertive way as these accounts functioned

86 det där har jag ju lekt ofta med tanken att tänk om det hade var en kvinna som suttit på det här mötet nu och varit chefen och varit lika opåläst, lika disträ, suttit och tittat i sin telefon lika mycket, och lika oengagerad hur hade det funkat liksom. [...] men det får jag ändå säga att den myten tycker jag ändå stämmer, du kan vara, det finns ett större överseende med medelålders, asså manliga chefen som är medelåldern och upptåt, som man kanske kan kalla gubbar, där tycker jag det finns ett större överseende med hur de kan bete sig om de har liksom nån slags dokumenterad, de har varit där länge.

87 Susanne Osten sa att kvinnor ler så förbannat hela tiden, det var länge sen, men det har jag tänkt på, ibland undrar jag varför tjejer går och ler hela tiden. [...] jag släser av att kvinnor ler. Men kommunikation, ansiktsuttryck och innehåll i det man förmedlar måste höra ihop. Det där med att le, det är något med att vara till lags, vara vänlig, lite att väja för det svåra i det offentliga, gömma sig bakom vänare framtoning. Det har jag tänkt på, där är det stora skillnad.

88 Asså är det nämnt jag tänkt så är det just kring konsensus, det finns ju manliga ledare också som, men om jag skulle säga de har nog en mindre grad av konsensus än kvinnliga ledare. Men annars har jag stött på alla varianter av manliga och kvinnliga.

89 På VD-nivå kan jag tänka dig att det blir annorlunda, där är det lite mer så att man spelar på kön, när man kommer högre upp i koncernen. Där kan det nog ha betydelse de här stereotyperna. Alltså jag spelar inte bandy, är inte med i nåt lag och så där man umgås på det sättet. Det finns mer av det högre upp.
as testimonies with for example I am not joking and that is really and it is of course a way of handling me and it became a tremendously awkward experience and I was totally at a loss.

”there are also people with a very high degree of gender-blindness and who would never have lunch with a woman, I am not joking, ‘you don’t eat with a woman’ and of course this has ramifications for, for women’s possibilities to move ahead,” respondent C

“This thing about hugging in work life [...] that is really an occasion when gender become significant [...] because who can I approach with a hug, so to speak? And who can a woman approach with a hug? That is interesting. She [a woman in top management] hugs people the first thing she does, the first time you meet her, in work life situations, and to me it is, well she does it in a way in which it becomes natural, you are invited into that hug, but could I have done that to a woman? That is the question. It is, well it is not dominance tactics, that is too strong an expression, but it is of course a way of handling me so to speak [...] I was in a situation once in which we were both being interviewed promoting our output, great thing I had thought, but it became a tremendously awkward experience because I, well she’s got these dominance tactics which really uses her femininity in a way, well she placed herself quite close to me and then at a moment when she thought she really needed the floor she put her hand on my leg in a way which I couldn’t handle, eh and that, well. It wasn’t by chance I think even if, eh well she just has an arsenal of things she uses of course and it wasn’t ’like she was thinking ’now I am going to silence him by like handling him’. But I was totally at a loss. 91 respondent G

Interesting to note in above account from respondent G is the turn of first stating well it is not dominance tactics, that is too strong an expression to later turn into well she’s got these dominance tactics which uncovers a reluctance in seeing the possibility of intent to dominate. This turn disclose psychological strategies manifesting themselves in the discursive. There is a psychological force of “no” getting expressed via utterances. This also happened in the distancing from essentialism as described above. First distancing was expressed. But later on in the discussions, the distancing was accompanied by accounts of actual observations which tentatively made gender generalisations. Note that this is a psychological “problem” surfacing via discursive formulas. It does not say anything about if women and men essentially are different as little as it says anything about if the top manager intently tried to dominate respondent G. There is an important difference in the account of the hand on the leg and the general distancing. The first is experience of a concrete physical action whereas the latter tries to deal with abstract causes of general behavioral patterns.

90 det finns i vår ledningsgrupp vissa personer, både män och kvinnor som inser att det är ett problem och som försöker jobba med det, men det finns också personer som har en väldigt hög grad av könsblindhet och som aldrig skulle äta lunch med en kvinna, och nu skojar jag inte, utan det finns såna personer som ‘man åter inte med kvinnor’ och det är klart att det får konsekvenser för, för kvinnors möjligheter att ta sig fram.

Gender blind = Not seeing how things are gendered. Not to be confused with unisex politics. See Gender Equality Glossary, European Commission.

Importantly, the distancing concerned essentialist claims whereas the observation of gender specific differences in behavior was explained by socializing processes in most cases. What I want to point out with the no/yes formula, which is a formula expressed over a longer section of talk, is that it discloses a struggle between the psychological and the discursive.

All but one of the ten respondents reported having experienced or observed gendered differences, either as expectations on the manager or actual behaviour. Concerning expectations it was pointed out women and men were given different arenas to act on. Actual behaviour was ascribed to something learnt through cultural conditioning. Hesitantly, a couple of respondents said maybe there were things typical for women and men respectively. In the actual interview situation this to me came across as diplomacy since some seemed to think I had an essentialist outlook. Yet, all ten respondents reported that in their experience women and men are not innately more different across gender than within gender in their leadership styles. No one asserted that men and women were of different natures. Respondents got into what seemed a blind alley when trying out the route of “using our differences”. More on that below when discussing the idea of being “gender smart”. Some respondents were firmly explaining their non-essentialist standpoint, though still coming back to their experiences of that you need to develop “gender smartness”, you need to learn to play the game. The paradox in this is the joining of the standpoint of men and women being more individual than gendered with the opinion that the smart thing to do is to use the social expectations on gender. On one level then there is the perception of “I am me, I am an individual” and at another level “I am expected to be a man or a woman”. It raises the question of whether the social stratum in this case is being composed of the individual with a constructivist outlook having to deal with the people with essentialist outlooks. But since there seems to be a majority of people in the interview material with a constructivist outlook the more interesting question to raise is whether the struggle goes on within the same person, i.e. at the same time as advocating sameness between genders there is an acting on difference between genders. This is an example of where ideas on how investments and desires being mutually dependent upon historical divisions through which they are positioned and the non-fixity of identity becomes pertinent as mentioned above in the theory section referring to Walkerdine, Blackman and Lacan.

Five of the respondents expressly said one should "be oneself" as a manager. Together with that standpoint some also said you have to adjust to culturally specific gendered expectations to last on your post. Some others did not agree with this and said they had experienced such a variety of leadership styles from both women and men and that the social environment around these managers
didn’t see a problem with this variety. Below respondent B is refuting the idea that you can be perceived as genderless, whereas respondent H is using expected stereotyping and personal experiences to counter any idea of essentialism. In their interviews they both put forward that there are no essential differences between genders, but they had different ideas on whether it worked or not to counter expected stereotypical behaviour.

“There are no genderless [managers] and there is no space for women to act like men so you have to find a different strategy”

“We have a woman in top management playing very male, so to speak if to use the stereotypes, and I also have a [female] colleague in the editorial management group also very much playing a male type of game, whereas I rarely raise my voice and the like”

“No it’s served them quite well, hasn’t it. Today there are hangmen of all genders”

When discussing gender qualities versus individual personality qualities differences were ascribed to personal traits by most respondents as exemplified below.

“no I don’t think ‘this is because I am a woman’, I think that I have certain qualities which are to do with my personality”

“It is a manger type rather […] everybody hasn’t got a personality suitable for it”

“I think it’s more to do with who the person is”

Differences along other axes, in which gender was not considered the most important one, was reported. Age was one, local versus national offices within the same group producing differing work cultures was another, and a third was different individuals, sections and professions being ascribed different roles to play, i.e. emotional big words from photographers and straight facts type of arguments from national news section journalists.

**Topic: Gender and style**

When dividing the interviews in gendered groups with all male respondents in one group and all female respondents in another group a correlation could not be established to fit descriptions of transactional leadership style as typically male and transformational leadership style as typically

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62 Det finns inga könlösa och det finns inget uttrycke för kvinnor att agera som män så man måste hitta en annan strategi
63 Vi har ju en ***kvinnlig chef*** som spelar väldigt manligt om man nu ska använda schablonerna, och eh jag har även en kollega i redaktionsledningen som också spelar väldigt manligt, medan jag själv väldigt sällan höjer rösten och så där/ [och det är inte så att de kvinnorna blir utnödbare snabbi] nå det har ju tänlat dem ganska bra, eller hur. Det finns böddlar av alla kön idag.
64 [Researcher: Om man tänker så här, kvalitativa aspekter av din kompetens, nu kanske du inte tänkt på det på det sättet, men tycker du att du har kvaliteter som hatt göra med att du är kvinna, sådär att den här kvaliteten hör ihop med det?] 
65 [Reader: Tycker du att det handlar mer om att ledarskapet innebär en personlighetstyp snarare än att kön ger en viss typ av ledarskap?] Det är en chefstyp snarare, alla kan inte vara chef, det funkar inte heller, alla har inte en personlighet som passar för det.
66 [on talking differently with men and women] jag skulle tro att de faktiskt har mer med person att göra.
female. Neither did the accounts fit with typical essentialist ideas on gender. Nor did they fit the female-style and male-style divide. All the five women in the sample are represented in the five quotes below.

“as a reporter I covered quite heavy subjects, a lot of crime reporting and was sent on quite a lot of dangerous jobs […] people who knows me here don’t think I am meek, like” 97 female

“maybe I let things get at me emotionally more than what is rational, when I should rather be explaining conflicts by rational causes, that I shouldn’t let them[the conflicts] get at me emotionally […] [treating staff as friends rather than colleagues] I don’t think that works for anyone neither men nor women” 98 female

“well we are expected to create something unexpected and then you need both intuition and, eh you need some crazy ideas, that is some kind of creativity I suppose, if you are too rational you will just come up with boring ideas and that is no good […] at the same time you have to be infallible in delivering the product, you have to make sure you get it done” 99 female

“I am not an administrator type. Sometimes I’ve been told ‘wait, can’t we finish this before going for the next thing’ […] sometimes I am told ‘hey slow down a bit’ […] I am brave but not stupid, I do involve people. At the beginning [of management career] I sometimes missed the mark, that thing where you move too fast in wanting making changes, instead of slowing down and checking how is the thinking here [in this workplace]” 100 female

“the moment you become a manager you cannot be friends, it doesn’t work, like, well you can have a great time together, but you cannot be one of the team, that is very clear I think” 101 female

Above statements which are all from women managers represents a variety which doesn’t easily fit them all into what has been thought to be a typical female leadership style of making space for emotions and building friendship-like relationships at work. There is both the maybe I let things get at me emotionally and you cannot be friends, it doesn’t work which are examples encompassing the emotional as a typical female characteristic and rejecting the being friends strategy as a typical male characteristic. The above sample also points in a different direction when it comes to valuing caution over risk, as exemplified by I sometimes missed the mark, that thing where you move too fast in wanting making changes and was sent on quite a lot of dangerous jobs. Also within the same person there is a both/and approach, you both need to be intuitive and rational as exemplified by if

97 On question about too much or not enough emotional engagement
98 som reporter skrev jag väldigt mycket tunga grejer, mycket krim och skickad på ganska mycket såna här farliga jobb, så jag har nog inte, folk som känner mig här tycker nog inte att jag är så mesig liksom.
99 jag kanske tar åt mig mer emotionellt än vad som är rationellt, att jag ska lägga konflikter liksom av rationella orsaker, att jag inte ska ta åt mig dem emotionellt. […] [Det var en av mina frågor, hur du vill välja att relatera till personalen om du vill skapa en miljö som känns som att vi är kompisar eller om du […] Det anser jag inte funkar för nån, varken män eller kvinnor.
100 asså vi ska ju också skapa nånting oväntat och då kan man ju behöva både intuition och eh det behövs ju lite galna idéer, det är väl nån slags kreativitet, om man är alltför rationell kommer man ju bara med tråkiga idéer och det blir ju inget bra […] samtidigt så måste du vara leveranssäker, asså du måste ju veta att du får hem din produkt och inom det.
101 ibland har jag fått höra att ”vánta, kan vi inte få göra färdigt innan vi går på nästa puck” […] Emellanåt kan jag få höra att ”Ta och lugna ner dig lite nu” […] jag är modig men inte dumdröstig, jag är ju involverande. Jag har gått på mina nitar i början, det där att man går in för fort med att vilja starta förändringar, istället för att ta det lite lugnare och kolla av ”hur tänker man här”.
102 men i en stund som du blir chef så kan du inte vara kompis, det går ju liksom inte, sen kan man ha jättetrovligt ihop då, men man kan inte vara en i gruppen, det är väldigt tydligt tycker jag.
you are too rational you will just come up with boring ideas and that is no good [...] at the same time you have to be infallible in delivering the product. The both/and approach was the most common answer when asked about any possible dichotomy between intuition and rational logic. Acting fast came first to all managers, male and female, before giving weight to thoughtfulness. So what about the male group?

"It could be 'well you decide, you're the boss' but I first want to know what there is to choose from, you should be able to reason about things, but many want readymade answers [...] I am much in favour of listening to the different sides, they can argue for each other’s arguments, I do that sometimes, let them speak for each other’s perspectives, we weigh pro and cons together [...] I’m not seen as a cautious person, but I do get to hear the opposite too, that I am sometimes too cautious "  

there is an expectation that I should get involved in things I find so very uninteresting [...] I mean you just have to 'ok, let's decide that' [...] you just have to make a decision, 'are we going to have staff development talks or not, yes we are’, good, then that’s settled. It doesn’t have to take more than a minute, but here it takes fifteen minutes [...] I can’t really say ‘do this and that’, I can only say ‘this doesn’t feel quite right’ but I don’t know what they should do, and that makes me a bit dependent "  

"they have said I am involved, present in the processes [...] some think I could be tougher, like in 'we could go further' or 'why can that person go on like that' they sometimes think I show too much consideration, but I have access to the full picture which they don’t "  

"I think it can be perceived as if I am not listening enough [...] it’s often about angles [...] and those you have been thinking over for quite some time, and then when there are objections which you of course already have been processing yourself then it can happen that I instead of explaining how my reasoning is I just say 'I have made up my mind, this is what we do’ and that can be perceived as non-listening [...] Sometimes I have gotten too angry in some situations [...] I get really angry at work perhaps two or three times a year, but when that happens I get so angry it all goes dark"  

"I think I am too emotionally involved but I wonder if anyone have told me [...] it has happened that I have become very sad like that so I started crying at some point, but I wonder if anyone commented on it, I think I got a hug or like that, but did anyone say anything, no I don’t think so"  

All five men in the sample are represented in the five quotes above. The male sample also show a vast variety which doesn’t easily describe them all as favouring what has been thought to be a

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102 Det kan ha varit "bestäm nåt nu, du är ändå chef ju" men jag vill först veta vad som finns att välja mellan, det borde gå att resonera, men många vill ha färdiga svar. [...] Där är jag mycket för att lyssna på de olika sidorna, de kan dra varandras bästa argument, så gör jag ibland, att de får tala för varandras perspektiv, att vi väger för och emot tillsammans. [...] Jag anses inte vara försiktig, men jag får höra motsatsen också, att jag är för försiktig ibland.

103 det finns en förväntan att jag ska engagera mig i saker som jag tycker är så extremt ointressanta [...] det är väl bara att "vi bestämmer att det är så", [...] det är ju bara att bestämma, ska vi ha PU-samtal eller ska vi inte ha PU-samtal, jo vi ska ha PU-samtal, bra, då var det klart. Det behöver inte ta mer än en minut, men när tar det en kvart. [...] Jag kan inte riktigt säga "gör så och så" jag kan bara säga att "det här käms inte riktigt rätt, men jag vet inte vad de ska göra" och det gör mig lite heroende.

104 De har nog sagt att jag har varit närvarande och engagerad [...] en del tycker att jag kunde vara tuffare, så där att ‘vi skulle väl kunna gå ännu längre’ eller ‘vårfor får den hålla på’ men jag sitter ju med en helhetsbild som de inte har.

105 jag tror att då och då kan det uppstås som att jag lyssnar lite för lite [...] oftast handlar det om vinklar [...] och den har ju du mått ganska länge i ditt huvud, och sen när det kommer in invändningar som man självklart har ställt sig själv då kan det bli så att istället för att ta tiden och berätta hur man själv har resonerat så säger man ‘men jag har bestämt mig, vi gör så’ och det kan ju uppfattas som icke-lyssnande. [...] Några gånger har jag blivit för arg i vissa situationer [...] jag kanske blir riktigt arg på jobbet två tre gånger per år, men då blir jag så arg så jag, då mörknar det.

106 eh jag tycker att jag är för mycket känslomässigt engagerad, men jag undrar om jag fått hörta det nån gång [...] det har hånt nån gång att jag blivit ledsen till exempel sådär så att jag började gråta vid nåt tillfälle, eh men jag undrar om någon kommenterade det, jag tror jag fick en kram eller så men sa nån nånting då, nå det tror jag inte.
typical male leadership style of being competitive, straightforward and rational as exemplified with

I am much in favour of listening to the different sides and some think I could be tougher. The opposite is expressed too as in you just have to ‘ok, let’s decide that’ and I just say ‘I have made up my mind, this is what we do.’ Also in the male group there are samples of a both/and experience, as in for example I’m not seen as a cautious person, but I do get to hear the opposite too. There is also an account of crying and another of screaming which goes against placing the crying with women and the screaming with men.

Both the female and the male sample show a great variety gender wise. Stereotypical behavioral dichotomies are not supported by the interview material. Some women made space for feelings and some were running ahead not monitoring the vibes from the group. Some men wanted to consider pros and cons collectively whereas others thought giving fifteen minutes to some issues was too much.

**Topic: Knowing the stereotype**

All were well aware of the stereotypes. Not one of them found it difficult to pinpoint them.

*“one example is about a group who isn’t here anymore, they had a female manager, and the prejudices seemed to fit, it was motherly, caring. That group of staff was playing that, they were comfortable with that they could do as they pleased, that someone looked after them […] And in some manager positions there are those real alpha male types […] those charming old men with weight, their authority is a matter of course. It’s a charming man, a bit frightening, one who takes up space, a natural centre, a kind of energy radiates from them.”* 109 respondent E

*“You wouldn’t get away with being a rowdy male manager, and you don’t get away with being a weak female manager. It is all what you open up for, who you are.”* 110 respondent I

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107 fram till för några år sen så hade vi charmerande slarvar på chefspositioner, killen som […] men de har av olika skäl slutat nu, de finns faktiskt inte, jag kan inte komma på en enda charmig slarver.

108 Om jag säger manligt ledarskap, vad tänker du på då? peka med hela handen stilen och eh lite tuffare och bättre på att kräva resultat kanske, det är vad som spontant kommer upp i huvudet. Och om jag säger kvinnligt, vad spontant kommer upp då?

109 Ett exempel handlar om en grupp som inte finns kvar, där var en kvinnlig chef, där det stände mer med fördömnarna, det var lite moderligt, ohmuldande. Den gruppen spelade på, de hade, de trivdes i att de fick göra lite som de ville, och att nän tog hand om dem[…] Och i vissa chefsroller finns fler sänna där riktiga alfahanmetyper, i vissa roller. […]Det är charmiga gubbar med pondus, de ingår en annan sorts trygghet, deras auktoritet är självklar. De är en man som är charmig, lite skrämmande, en som fyller upp rummet, är ett naturligt centrum, det utgör en slags energi från dem.

110 du kommer inte undan som burdus manlig chef, och du kommer inte heller undan om du är en vek kvinnlig chef. Det där är ju helt vad du öppnar för, vem man är.
In the above quotes stereotypes are identified with examples of charming but careless men getting away with it, firm men taking the lead, motherly caring women and rowdy men. Identifying stereotypes was also found in accounts of consciously working with switching social comments to counter the culturally expected and playing around with clichés as exemplified below.

“I strive for not falling into these prejudiced […] well because I don’t want to fall into that trap […]. eh so I really try to also give positive comments to men for a new haircut or a new jumper, I consciously give positive comments to women for sports performances […] I really watch out for, I think it would be really awkward if I got sort of laddish with my male editor and be like eh no because that would not be to be gender smart the way I see it, because that would only be stereotype and dowdy, and that is something I definitely don’t want to be”111 respondent G

[on ‘being like a man’] “Huh, well I can also say women are like this and that, I can accept that, that they are generalizing. I can quite enjoy being generalizing, and I know it’s not the best thing, but I think it’s fun, and then it becomes fun discussing each other’s prejudices”112 respondent F

Other examples given were pointing out men as the ones who take up space, and the behaviour of being assertive with baby boys and cuddly with baby girls.

“but what may be easier for a man is you might be a bit taller you might have a deeper tone of voice, it is to walk into a room and take up space, stand up and like ‘get through’ […]well to appeal to the audience. That I think is important […] And in that women may have, well if you are a bit thin and have a faint voice you will find it difficult maybe because of that to make yourself understood. I think I often sit in conferences and there are men and women who are going to talk, well it’s, it’s easier for men there to visually and verbally get through”113 respondent D

“I think sometimes that we have patterns, that these gender roles are planted so very early from when you’re born to daycare to, these patterns which are encouraged in little girls and boys, that there still is that, where a baby who is a few weeks old if it’s a boy it’s a bit ‘hey ho’ and if it’s a girl it’s ‘mmm’, and maybe even parents who are aware of things do that.”114 respondent B

An interesting strategy in pinpointing stereotypes is by drawing attention to existence of its opposites, as exemplified below by men crying and women screaming, meek men and firm women.

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111 jag bemödar mig om att inte falla in i den här fördomsfulla, […] jo just det för att jag inte vill falla i den fällan så att säga, eh och att jag anstränger mig ju till exempel för att även berömma manliga, för att de har klippt sig eller köpt en nu tröja. jag bemödar mig att berömma de kvinnliga för sina sportprestationer […]men jag själv medfött att bli grabbig med honom eller bli liksom eh nå för det, det skulle inte vara gender smart enligt min, för det skulle vara vara bara stereotyp och mossigt, och det är nåt som jag absolut inte vill vara.

112 ibid men jag kan ju också påstå att kvinnor är på ett visst sätt, jag kan köpa att de är generaliserande, jag kan tycka att det är rätt kul att vara generaliserande, och jag vet att det är dumt, men jag tycker att det är roligt, och då blir det roligt att diskutera varandras fördomar.


114 jag tänker ju ibland att vi har ju mönster, att de här könsrollerna sätts så väldigt tidigt från när man föds till dagis till. De här mönstrarna, vad som uppmuntras hos små flickor och pojkar, att det fortfarande finns det där att en babis som är några veckor så att det en kille så är det “hej hä” liksom och en tjejer sådär mmm, och det kanske även medvetna föräldrar gör.
"I have seen men cry and women scream [...] I think everybody is aware of the generalizations, that a female manager is more reasoning, perceptive, listening, closer to revise her decisions, em, but I am not at all certain it really is that way."\textsuperscript{115} respondent H

"difficult to say it would be specific to gender, I have been dealing with meek men and firm women. I can’t come to think of one meek woman manager"\textsuperscript{116} respondent J

The above statements show they’re all savvy in what the stereotypes are, one interviewee makes it into a joke and a game, and there are strategies of making reversal of typical stereotyping as to underline their constructedness. This reversal of stereotypical behavior was accounted for by one of the managers more at length.

"I have to say that except for these expectations that sometimes have become self-fulfilling prophecies, when people expect this or that, I really see leaders who, because we have so many leaders around the clock, we have a female and male evening editor, working most evenings, where it is exactly what we just talked about, totally reversed to what one expects, it’s the straight command and a loud voice from the woman and the other way round from the man and it’s like, I really do believe it’s about personality types who dare to take on the responsibilities, who like to lead, who can stand up to the punches and also stand for chosen leadership style, I refuse to think it’s to do with gender"[researcher: and it’s not like it’s always reversed as if to overcompensate in some direction...] "it feels like it’s a question of personality, there have been choleric of both genders and discrete beings of both genders" respondent H, continues below

The description of self-fulfilling prophecies is an interesting one which uncovers difficulties in feeling the stereotypes don’t go with your sense of self at the same time as you have to deal with cultural expectations. Considering the reversal of stereotypes one could pose that going against cultural stereotyping stands out in the crowd and therefore get more easily noticed. Either the reversal strategy is a tactic due to the social work environment, or the reversed behavior is not all that reversed but instead individual traits getting attention because not fitting with the expected. This respondent, as well as many of the others, pointed out having experienced all sorts of behaviours within gendered groups. When it gets even more interesting is when this respondent later on in the interview ponders further and accounts for behaviour that are "at pains with" proving the stereotypes being wrong.

" then it’s more along the lines you said before, that the new management culture is so aware of stereotypes and theories that men can get over-reasoning, over-anchoring to the limit of paralysis, and that actually there is most often women going straight to decisions. Then it doesn’t have to be stereotypes or clichés [...] it is so much easier to play, or rather it is ok to play a gender card on a male manager than on a female manager, there’s like the death penalty to use that on a female manager, more or less, which it perhaps needs to be for a while until we’ve reached some kind of genuine equality, but that’s a different story, but

\textsuperscript{115} jag har sett män gråta och jag har sett många kvinnor skrika [...] jag tror att alla är medvetna om schablonerna att en kvinnlig chef är mer resonerande, inkännande, lyssnande, närmare till att ompröva sitt beslut, em, men jag är inte alls säker på att det är så.

\textsuperscript{116} Svårt att säga att det skulle vara specifikt för kön, jag har haft att göra med mesiga män och bestämda kvinnor. Jag kan inte komma på att jag stött på någon mesig kvinna som chef.
there are many times where I have had, in negative bantering wordings, hints about that I do this or that because I’m a man […] I think if a female reporter don’t think the subject suitable or like that and wants to debate it then it’s very close at hand to play a gender card and say for example that a piece of crime news, that I chose that instead of a piece on health care because I am a man, and you would never say that to a woman manager that you chose health care because you’re a chick, you don’t do that […] then you have to, because I think it is quite a ridiculous accusation, then you have to make a news evaluation of each piece and look at why this one is better strictly from a news perspective, and maybe you don’t agree with each other but it’s, well it happens every now and then”

The experience above points at gender stereotyping being so very hard wired into our cultural conditioning they are difficult to ignore, but instead need to be consciously dealt with. This reversal of expected stereotyping will be discussed further below in the sections Conclusion and Discussion.

**Topic: Managers being talked about**

When asked about others’ comments on their leadership there was a lot of positive feedback on doing a terrific job, being clear, being involved and there on the floor. Some of the respondents recalled name calling but some of them did not want that transcribed in its specificities. It could be about using symbolic formulas that were circulating at a specific time, for example if an unpopular politician had got a negative nickname in the media output at large a couple up symbol could be used. For example if someone was called The Dark King then their own manager could be called The Dark Queen, or if Margaret Thatcher was called an Iron Lady their own manager could be called the Iron Lady. Respondent B accounted for experiences of whatever you do it is easy to get labeled as in the statement above about if being firm then you are called an iron lady or a hysterical and if hesitating its seen as being indecisive. None of the female managers reported having heard or being aware of negative stereotyping in words directly related to themselves as persons but accounted for occurrences in which they as a group had been referred to by comments in line with expressions such as “the cackling hen society”. With further probing in the interviews for negative comments

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117 jag måste säga att förutom de här förväntningarna som ibland har blivit självpuppfyllande profetior när folk förväntar sig ditten eller datten, så ser jag verkliga ledare som, eftersom vi har så många ledare under dygnet, vi har en kvinnlig och manlig kvällsredaktör som jobbar de flesta kvällarna, där är precis samma som vi pratade om nyss, totalt omvänt kring vad man förväntar sig, det är raka handen och höga rösten från kvinnan och tvärtom från mannan och det är liksom, jag tror att det verkliga handlar om en personlighetstyp som vägar axla ansvaret, som tycker om att leda, som kan ta smallarna och också stå upp för sitt ledarskap, jag vägrar tro att det är genuseroende och det är inte heller så att det alltid är omvänt för att de ska överkompensera åt något håll […] det känns som en personlighetsfråga, det har fattats kolenker av båda könen och diskreta varelser av båda könen […] så fall är det snarare det spåret du har varit inne på att den nya chefskulturen är så medveten om stereotyper och teorier så att man kan bli överperserande, överförankrade näst intill lamsagna, och att de faktiskt oftast är kvinnor som går rakt på beslut. Sen behöver det inte vara stereotyper eller klyschor […] det är väljligt mycket lättare att dra, eller rättare sagt det är ok att dra ett genuinskort mot en manlig chef än mot en kvinnlig, mot en kvinnlig är det ju dödsstraff, mer eller mindre, vilket kanske det måste vara ett tag till tills vi uppnått någon slags äkta jämställdhet, men det är en annan historia, men det är ju många gånger jag har fått, i raljanta ordalag, antydt att jag gö rör sig eller så för att jag är man […] jag tror att om en kvinnlig reporter tycker att ämnet inte passar eller liknande och ska debattera det då är det väljligt nära att dra ett genuuskort och säga exempelvis att en kriminalnhyt, det väljer jag ur det här istället för en vårdnhyt bara för att jag är man, och det skulle man aldrig kunna säga till en kvinnlig chef att du tar ju bara vård för att du är tjej, det gör man inte […] då är man ju tvingen, för det tycker jag är en ganska löjlig anklagelse, då får man ju gå in och värdera respektive nyhet och titta varför den hör är bättre ur ett rent journalistiskt perspektiv och så kanske man inte alltid når samsyn men det är, nå men det är faktiskt ganska vanligt.
Two other managers, respondent G and B, mentioned specifically well-known women in top management in which one got demeaning comments on her looks and the one in respondents Bs account got comments in the trade press for being too brutal. Specifically noteworthy in Bs account is and both female and male journalists help making that space more narrow for a woman.

"She was handled, well it is used as yet another device, or yet another way to get at a person, which is done either way, because that was the deviant gender in that environment [...] all managers before her had been men, thus she was deviant, and you can take any deviancy, had she been short like her successor [...] people would have used that as an explanation for a lot of things. People use what is the deviant characteristic I think [...] for example our former Chairperson you heard quite often this thing that ‘well, she puts more time on her dresses’ well that type of demeaning statements which she had to handle in some way, and I think she handled it by wearing yet more expensive dresses, well as a means of outshining it’ [...]researcher: very interesting because I get to hear some complaints about how poorly dressed male managers are, it’s a way for women [...] to diss men with power [...] ‘well she puts too much time on her dresses, she’s too beautiful and he’s ugly because he hasn’t got a clue’ 120

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"we do see how women can get ahead on their own account in the company group, as for example with [woman in top management] she is now in the absolute top management, and I guess she is an example of a woman who really do have major influence and who is part of a small group with power in the group”

[researcher: I remember they wrote quite viciously of her when she got to ***]

"yes"

[researcher: and when you study politicians the writing is more vicious about women than about men]

"yes, yes”

[researcher: but eh, do you think, do you believe, had a man in a similar, had he got that type of public criticism?]
“I think the criticism is worse, still, for a woman, the space is more narrow, and both female and male journalists help making that space more narrow for a woman, and those are things we need to learn [about] [...] she made it anyway.”

Respondent C accounted for what I call copycat tactics, a way of highlighting discursive formulas and rhetorical forms, drawing attention to them, a process which serves to deconstruct their part in a myth making process.

“Yes, one word, there is a word, ‘you’re a genius’, that’s a word more often used between men, that’s a thing we did like a year ago, we started calling each other geniuses, ‘you’re a genius Anna’, and well that is a symptom of that you have picked up on something, that you act on something.”

There was reluctance and also disinterest in discussing name calling. None of them defended that practice. But it was obvious this negative labelling was circulating both in product output and in the editorial room. When respondent B recalled both female and male reporters using negative denotations about a female top manager in the media businesses she pointed at a circular problem for the media businesses. On the one hand they struggle with imprisoning stereotype expectations on the newsroom floor and on the other hand their reporters, both female and male, underpin stereotyping to go on via their way of writing. Respondent C accounted for tactics which could be called ‘copycat tactics’ or ‘hijacking of jargon’ when copying affirmation behavior.

**Topic: Gender influencing the product?**

Some thought gender had an effect on the product, some did not. But they all had ideas on what made a better product and how to best use their staff’s capacities.

“I don’t think a producer’s or reporter’s gender matters for whether the audience take an interest in our output or not. The important thing is personality, it’s not to do with gender”

“Just the other day I thought it was so, it was so ‘titty’ I said [***] because it was about Graf’s silicone implants and there was something we called a porn scandal [***] you know too much about tits like, well I don’t know if you have to be a woman too see that there is too much right there and then”

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121 vi ser ju hur kvinnor kan ta sig fram på eget bevåg i koncernen, som t.ex. xx […] och sitter nu i koncernens ledningsgrupp och jag antar att hon är ett exempel på en kvinna som faktiskt har ett stort inflytande och som ingår i en liten grupp med makt i koncernen Researcher: jag minns att de skrev ganska elakt om henne när hon kom till ***

122 Ja, ett ord, ett ord finns det det ‘du är ett geni’ det är ett ord som oftare används män emellan, det var en grej vi hade för närmare än den att vi började kalla varandra för genier och sådär, du är ett geni Anna, och det är ju ett symptom på att man har sett nåt, att man agerar på nåt.

123 jag tror inte könet på producenten eller reportern avgör publikens intresse för vårt utbud. Det är personligheten som är det viktiga, det är inte könsbaseterat.

124 Häromdagen bara så tyckte jag att det var så, det var så tittligt sa jag [***], för det var Graf hade plockat ut silikoninläggen och det var nån vad vi kallade det porrskandal [***], du vet var för mycket tuttar liksom, ja och jag vet inte om man måste vara kvinna för att upptäcka att det är för mycket på sajten just där och då eller, men det är val.
In the above one thinks gender doesn’t matter whereas another one ponders on if it sometimes can matter with I don’t know if you have to be a woman too see that. Yet another put forward that awareness doesn’t have to be directly connected with personal experience in any direct sense.

“We actually talk quite a lot about how we portray men and women […]. We have a photographer who is very dedicated [to these issues] and who can tell the person being photographed that “Sharpen up, don’t put your head to the side and smile, you run the whole company group, think about that”, and many then react with “right, yes!” But that thing about how you act in front of a camera runs on routine, it just happens when there’s a camera, old expectations just happen. We’ve had discussions on that theme, there’s a man here very interested in gender, so we went through images we’ve published […] And you know that thing about looking straight at the camera, or put your head to the side, many women smile a bit or their mouth is half open and men more often close their mouth for example, so that is a living discussion here”

respondent E

There were also others putting forward the necessity of having representation of a wide variety of societal experiences in the newsroom.

“It’s not about fairness but that we profit on [it], men and women would benefit from men’s and women’s conditions being equal at all levels in a company, because then we get access to everybody’s talent, not just men’s”

respondent B

“yes, that it should be reflected among those working, yes when it comes to ethnicity, that’s that kind of thing, of course you’ll benefit from having a few persons […] who speaks Arabic for example, or who can get ahead in countries with Muslim cultures in a way you wouldn’t yourself, yes it’s, yes absolutely”

respondent A

Yet others explained trust, and feelings of being psychologically and socially safe, being important for performance useful for product output.

“You affect the content, what’s going to be the next attention grabber, the next number one page and like that. But apart from that […] I think that if you are true to yourself, people feel safe with you, people feeling safe perform extremely better than those not feeling safe, that’s what I think”

respondent F

“well a leadership which is based on trust and feedback makes a markedly better product, that’s obvious, because then people have the courage being personal, go outside the box, because it’s at that point their talent really shows, just making a straight by the book type of piece, anyone can do that”

respondent H

125 Här pratar vi faktiskt jättemycket om hur vi porträtterar män och kvinnor, vi pratar mycket om det. Vi har en fotgraf som är väldigt engagerad och som kan säga till de som fotas att ”skärp dig, lägg inte huvet på sned och le, du är ju ansvarig för hela koncernen, tänk på det” och så där. Och många reagerar ju då med ”ja just det”. men det där hur man är framför kameran. går på rutin, det händer bara det kommer till en kamera, då trillar det in med gamla förväntningar. Senaste hade vi temanöte om just det, vi har en man här som är mycket intresserad av genus, vi gick igenom bilder vi har haft […] Och du vet det är där med att se rakt in i kameran, eller lägga huvudet på sned, många kvinnor ler lite eller har halvöppen mun och män har oftare stängd mun till exempel, så det där är en levande diskussion här.

126 det handlar inte om rättvisa utan att vi tjänar på att mäns och kvinnors villkor är lika på alla nivåer i ett företag, för då får vi tillgång till allas begävningar istället för bara männens begävningar.

127 Ja, att det ska synas bland de som jobbar, ja när det gäller etnicitet så är det ju en sann sak, det är klart att man tjänar på att ha några på redaktionen som pratar arabiska till exempel, eller som tar sig fram i muslimska länder på ett annat sätt än vad man själv skulle göra, jo det är, jo absolut.

128 Du påverkar ju innehållet, vad som ska vara nästa säljs, nästa etta-omslag och så där. Men i övrigt […] jag tror att om man är sann så gör man folk trygga, trygga människor presterar extremit mycket bättre än ottrygga, så tror jag.

129 alltså ett ledarskap som ger mycket förtroende och feedback ger en avsevärda mycket bättre produkt, det är självklart, för då vägar folk vara personliga, ta ut svångarna, för det är först då deras begävning verkligen syns och hörs, att bara göra ett 1A-jobb det kan vem som helst göra.
In the above sample experiences, personality, using a greater stock of competence, and giving trust is pointed out as decisive for product outcome. Gendered experience was hinted at as a factor, but not stressed. Respondent E exemplified with a man interested in gender issues and stereotypes in portraying women. You cannot generalize from that one example, but I take the opportunity to point out that it was not stereotypes in portraying men that was chosen as main example but the problem of women in images. This could of course just be an example pulled by chance. As mentioned above the statement also serves the function of disconnecting direct personal experience from caring for and understanding others realities i.e. a man working for making women’s portrayal in images being more fair. It is a way of stating that your own directly personal experiences are not conditional for understanding and seeing issues important to other people’s experiences. Furthermore, the statement fits with the recurring examples of reversals in proving the stereotypes wrong as in to say “we do have men interested in gender issues” countering an assumption that gender issues are a “women’s thing”. As mentioned earlier formulas of reversal arguments such as talking about firm women and meek men were commonly used in the interviews.

The above accounts do not confirm the idea that the composition of the editorial staffs personal experiences are reflected in the media product, even though some respondents put forward the necessity of having access to a variety of competences in the production process as in the example of of course you’ll benefit from having a few persons […] who speaks Arabic for example, or who can get ahead in countries with Muslim cultures in a way you wouldn’t yourself. Others accounted for individual personality being more important than any gendered divisions as in the example the important thing is personality, it’s not to do with gender and we’ve had discussions on that theme, there’s a man here very interested in gender with the example of the portrayal of women.

The scope of these interviews is not fit to properly address the specific issue of any correlation between the composition of the editorial staff and product content and form. A longitudinal study together with analysis of media output and content is needed for that. Suffice it to note that the findings of Monika Djerf-Pierre above, concerning gender order in society being linked with presence of women as subjects in the news but not with women as reporters, was not contradicted.

In focusing on what rather than how the above shows the respondents awareness of stereotyping was on a high level but none supported ideas on men and women in general having different gender preferred leadership styles, neither in thought nor in experiences. They stressed that personality is more individual than gendered, although there are quite a few accounts of social expectations on the manager being gendered. Some reported having taken notice of general patterns in behavior
although this was done hesitantly. Examples were the usage of smiling, appearance in meetings and seeking consensus. Stressing that difference within gender was as common as across gender, and the importance of being oneself was common. Similarly being oneself was put forward more strongly than advocating either constructivist or essentialist perspectives. Constructivist perspectives were present but not stressed when accounting for that there are different spaces for action for women and men. Essentialist perspectives though were markedly denounced concerning gender as the section on the topic of difference shows. The either/or type of dichotomy was disproved of in favour of a both/and outlook concerning management style. This became evident in the section on the topic of Gender and style in which men's and women's experiences did not follow the dichotomies of firm/hesitant, emotional/rational, risk taking/cautious. Not only did these behaviours and styles vary within gendered groups, they also varied within the same person.

**How were things spoken?**

In the following I will focus on the way things were spoken, formulas used and possible implications of these formulas. As described above I use the concept of formula to represent figures of thought and overarching principles as well as cultural phenomena indicated by the uttered. It is a method used to uncover meaning underlying the utterances. They are similar to Barthes’ rhetorical forms. The way I use formulas, they stand for something closer to the metanarrative layer than to the obvious concrete text construction. They are indicated by utterances here represented by text phrases. They encompass relations between pieces of utterances sometimes far from each other in time but still connecting discursively in the interview material. For example the utterance "I am neither specifically emotional nor particularly rational" could be regarded as a typical Barthesian rhetorical form since neither/nor-ism is very clear in the actual wording. That same rhetorical pattern could be regarded as a formula called “neither/nor”, but it could also be called "avoidance" if that heading better served what thought structure or underlying psychology, social interaction or culture I wanted to illuminate. The formulas I have drawn from the research material are the ones that stood out in relation to the research topic of management and gender in the newsroom. The first two formulas though are more what I regard as formulas of tactics. They are called "Hey, what do I know" and "Well, it's like this". They are rhetorical means which can be used on any topic, but highlighted here because of a perceived reluctance to talk about gender. These formulas are examples of a way to overcome that reluctance. The formulas picked out for more direct relevance to subject matter are "There are no male and female ways" situated more in the social discursive
stratum, "What's in my gender, what's in me" and "Being gender or being you" situated more in the psychological discursive stratum, "Us and them" a common formula I perceive as balancing in the psycho-social discursive stratum, and finally "Gender smart" which I would place in the socio-cultural discursive stratum. When describing them as placed in different discursive strata I do not mean to put them in firmly separated spheres. This way of describing them is meant to serve as a help in understanding that they are weighted and coloured differently, invested with different relevance psychologically, socially and culturally. The formula "Us and them" is for example much heavier and more problematically hard wired into the psychological than the formula "Gender smart" which has a more specific place in time and space and in this way is more lightweight. “Gender smart” comes across as an alluring American catch phrase, and as such a phenomenon placed more specifically, demarcated, in history and culture. “Us and them” on the other hand persists throughout social and cultural history and reaches into the psychological. In this material though, the expression "gender smart" exposes something quite problematic in balancing between essentialist and constructivist perspectives.

**Formula: “Hey, what do I know”**

One way of phrasing things was in the formula of “but hey, what do I know”. Examples are:

“well I don’t know if you have to be a woman too see that there is too much right there and then”\(^\text{130}\) respondent A

“I don’t know if there is, maybe there is a difference between women and men”\(^\text{131}\) respondent B

“my very simple like not substantiated analysis of this is I think still that yes”\(^\text{132}\) respondent D

“It is just something I have reflected on but intuitively I’d say”\(^\text{133}\) respondent G

“it is possible I do that but I don’t think so”\(^\text{134}\) respondent G

“but it’s just a feeling, I can’t describe it concretely”\(^\text{135}\) respondent J

“maybe I am fortunate in being a man, but that is not my experience”\(^\text{136}\) respondent J

The above comments were made when asked about gendered preferred content, being emotional, differences in networking, management on the agenda, acting different with female or male staff, and acting in different ways in same gender interpersonal interaction. This formula which

\(^{130}\) ja och jag vet inte om man måste vara kvinna för att upptäcka att det är för mycket på sajten just där och då eller.

\(^{131}\) Jag vet inte om det är, det kanske är en skillnad mellan kvinnor och män.

\(^{132}\) min enkla väldigt liksom ogrundade analys av det här är nog ändå att ja.

\(^{133}\) Det är bara en reflektion men jag skulle ju intuitivt säga.

\(^{134}\) Det är möjligt att jag gör så, men tror ju inte det.

\(^{135}\) Men det är bara en känsla, jag kan inte beskriva det konkret.

\(^{136}\) Kanske har jag draghjälp av att vara man, men det är inte min erfarenhet.
manifests itself via utterances such as well I don’t know, maybe there is, my very simple like not substantiated analysis, It is just something I have reflected on, it is possible I do that but, but it’s just a feeling, maybe I am is quite obviously protecting the respondents from anyone telling them their accounts don’t reflect “the real”. It’s a safety net making it possible to state something without making absolute truth claims. It enables conversation.

**Formula: “Well, it’s like this”**

In contrast to the above, or perhaps being enabled by it, was another common formula of “Well, it’s like this” in which the respondents were eager to tell me their visions of good management and what they thought needed be done.

“If you are going to […] you have to work on…” respondent I

“and I have arguments for it too […] being fair is extremely important” respondent F

“one should know, you have to realize […] it takes a lot of education […] with the current system you lose […] here you need transparency” respondent B

“well, you mustn’t do that, the hierarchies don’t work then […] then of course it’s really important with” respondent D

“but it’s also important to[…] that would be the worst case scenario” respondent G

Typical utterances above marking off this formula are you have to, I have arguments for it, is extremely important, it takes, you need, you mustn’t, it's really important and it's important to. Some people used both formulas whereas others tended to use one. The formula "Well it's like this" is softened up when used together with the formula of "Hey, what do I know".

**Formula: “There are no female and male ways”**

The strongest most incessantly expressed view was to denounce ideas on men and women being innately different, that is essentialist thought. Quite a few of the respondents in some way questioned talking about differences as accounted for above. The devices used for this message was to metonymically place difference next to prejudice, labelling and obsolete on the syntagmatic axis as in “a bit prejudiced I suppose I think of” and “I really don't like […] to put that kind of labels on

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137 om man ska kunna […] måste man jobba på att…
138 och jag har argument för det också […] extremit viktigt med rättvisa.
139 man ska ha insikter, man måste ju inse […] det krävs jättemycket utbildning […] man förlorar på det rådande systemet […] här behövs det tydlighet.
140 så får man ju inte göra, och då fungerar ju inte hierarkierna. […] Sen är det naturligtvis skitviktigt med.
141 men det är viktigt också […] det är ju det värsta som skulle kunna hända.
it” and “it feels obsolete to start discussing pure gender stereotypes”. Thus, when asked about difference the replies form a continuation by creating a line of storytelling, a syntagm, in which the respondents place signifiers such as prejudice, labelling and obsolete. In this way a metonymic construction is made, i.e. creating a connection via contiguity, where the effect in this case is to state that gender difference is a prejudiced obsolete idea. This metonymic technique is used to say that there are no female and male ways. Other discursive techniques were to oppose a supposed underlying truth claim of essentialism by referring to one’s own expertise, as in “I am educated in feminism and I am usually good at spotting”, or to point out the falsity of generalising from exceptions, as in “The stereotypes are exceptions; you have to really look for them”. In the former the signifier education was used as a weight, metonymically placed next to the respondent’s observation, spotting, which adds significance to the conclusion of that observation. The latter uses the signifiers exception and really look for metonymically placed with stereotype which by implication safeguards against any examples fitting with essentialist thought being used to make essentialist truth claims. Noteworthy is the word stereotype, itself a signifier loaded with second order connotations bordering onto the mythic stage, used by the respondents but also used by me in this analysis. It is a short cut to describing traditional culturally designated expectations. The most common perspective from the respondents was that any correlation to existing stereotypes was by chance, exceptions or to do with others’ expectations. The respondents came across as fed up with being told they are their gender.

[researcher: there are those who assert that […] [biological] sex is the first determining factor of our identities […] that it comes first, but eh…] “I’d argue against that”142 conversation with male respondent

At a straight question the respondent refutes the idea of gender being the first determining factor of our sense of identity. This refutation seemed combined with a wish for “being oneself”. This idea of being oneself was recurrent in many of the interviews.

Sifting out what are individual traits and what may be load put on people’s shoulders is at the kernel of the problematic of individuals’ relation to gender. The concept of misrecognition keeps making itself valid, waving its hand for attention between inner psychological experience and experience from the social “outside” world, which arguably isn’t all that “outside” of the person, the subject. To put it in a somewhat philosophic-poetic wording one could pose that postmodern misrecognition keeps disturbing the modernist order. Although postmodern theories as tools describe fragmented experiences well, the experience of misrecognition is likely to historically have been around as far

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142 [Det finns ju de som menar att […] kön är den första bestämmaren av identiteten, alltså ”the first determining…” […] att det kommer först, men eh…] Det skulle jag argumentera emot.
back as anyone have had thoughts such as "I am not what I am expected to be" or “they’re expecting things of me I cannot deliver” or “I don’t fit in”. This will be discussed further in the discussion section.

**Formula: “What's in my gender, what's in me”**

When during the interviews probing for experiences fitting with stereotypes there was some discussion on what is to do with gender and what is due to individual personality traits.

“one of the women shared a room with one of the men [mid managers] and those in the staff who wasn’t all that happy, you know it was a young group, it could be broken hearts and the like, everybody who had something like that on their mind turned to the woman, and I saw well this doesn’t work. I said to the man he couldn’t just do the fun part, he had to get involved in the difficult talks as well. He meant he had no talent for it. Well you have to work on it then. But in that case it was more to do with their personalities, where one of them had more talent for counselling. [...] I have also experienced a situation in which the man was a bit sloppier and the woman very accurate and able, it could be for example to deliver the summer seasons schedule on time [...] but of course if you are extremely good at product development then you should be doing that and if you are extremely good at schedules then that’s what you should be working with [...] when it comes to smiling and dealing with criticism, in that I have experience differences between men and women. But for the most part I think it is much more based on personality than based on gender”.

143 respondent I

“I was working with a large group of news editors and [...] I can’t say that the men were like this and the women were like that, there were many, the women were very you know like experienced, taking command, get people going their way and [it was] men who maybe were the softer and more listening persons, so I have seen, yes there is both and in that”.

144 respondent D

The first statement above contains both observing occurrences fitting with the stereotypes and at the same time accounts for that it is not to do with gender. The second statement uses reversal rhetoric to make a point about non conformity with stereotypes. Semantically and conceptually they both relate to stereotypical dichotomies to make their point, one seeing an actual event as fitting with the stereotype but refuting any fixed connection to gender, opposing its possible truth claim of essentialism, and the other pointing out having observed reversal of the perhaps expected. The reversal formula was very common and used by several respondents when stating for example “I have seen men cry and women scream” or “I’ve been dealing with meek men and firm women”. This formula left the semantics and stepped into action as in H:s account on the “aware” newsroom

143 En av kvinnorna delade rum med mannen. Alla i personalgruppen som mådde dåligt, du vet det var en ung redaktion, det kunde vara brusten kärlek och sånt, alla som hade bekymmer vände sig till kvinnan, och då såg jag ju att det där går ju inte bara. Jag sa till mannen att han kunde ju inte bara ta de roliga, utan måste även ta de svårare samtal, han menade att det där var han ju inget bra på. Men då får du ju bli det, sa jag till honom. Men där handlade det mer om deras karaktärsdrag, där en hade mer kuratoriska talanger. [...] jag har haft så att t.ex. en man varit lite slarvigare och en kvinna väldigt korrekt och duklig, det kan gälla till exempel att få in sommarbemanningen i tid [...] men det är ju så att om du är galet dukigt på programutveckling då ska du jobba med det och om du är galet dukigt på schema då ska du förstås jobba med det. [...] När det gäller leenden och att ta kritik, där har jag upplevt skillnader mellan män och kvinnor. Men jag tror i huvudsak att mycket mer är individbaserat än baserat på kön.

144 jag jobbade ju mot en stor grupp nyhetschefer och [...] och där kan jag inte säga att männen var sänna och kvinnorna var sänna, där var det många, kvinnor var väldigt sådär du vet lite rutinerade kunna peka med hela handen, få med sig folk och män som kanske var den mjukare och mer inlyssnande personen, så jag har sett, ja det finns både och där.
which tended to reverse behavior as a new kind of newsroom order. This hints at a discord, in which escaping the dualistic or dichotomous order is difficult. The pendulum just swings.

Getting back to basics then recalling the Saussurian legacy of b is not p, or b is not c as accounted for in the example above, one could ask just how dependent our thinking is on defining matter and phenomena by the rule of it being what it is not, in order to orient ourselves in any type of terrain. A door is not a wall, the wall keeps the roof up and the door offers a way out, I am not you and you are not me, she is the one I spoke to earlier and is different from the others and the one I should turn to. At some level we seem to need distinctions to live. But at some point in the making sense process distinction seems to cease being a useful enabler and start being an obstacle.

**Formula: “Us and them”**

This categorization process was also seen in difficulties to escape the placing of men and women in groups. In some statements the thinking couldn’t escape the “us and them” formula.

“To feel equal in a group you need to be at least forty [percent] to feel you have influence […] because [otherwise] you become deviant and that is a very tricky situation […] you become a hostage and they keep the power, the majority keeps the power with themselves and then you are there as a hostage but have no voice […] well, it’s all about maths in the end”\(^ {145} \) respondent B

In the above paragraph the turnover of women in top management leadership groups was discussed. The idea of representation connected to voice in this case presumes there is a “group voice”. It’s highly problematic as it assumes the dominant group really has one voice promoting a common good for the group. Importantly respondent B also pointed out that all men are not equal.

“The major most important power resides with a few men, it’s not with all men in our top management, or what it could be, a board room, but it’s with a few men”\(^ {146} \) respondent B

As well as respondent C stating that the men were not accustomed to having lunch with the women, as accounted for in the section on the topic of Difference above, respondent D also accounted for there being a group interest along gender lines.

“because when you get to this thing with networking […] then I think male networks are harder for women to enter. Women also build networks but with those I don’t think it’s difficult for men to join, and women’s networks don’t work in that way as to stop others”\(^ {147} \) respondent D

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145 Ska man känna att man är lika i en grupp ska man vara minst fyrtio, för att känna att man har inflytande […] för att man [annars] blir en avvikare och det är en väldigt jobbig situation, […] man blir en gisslan och de behåller makten, majoriteten behåller makten hos sig så man är där som gisslan men har ingen röst […] alltså allting är matematik till sist.

146 Den stora makten ligger hos en liten grupp män, den ligger inte hos alla män I vår ledningsgrupp eller i vad det kan vara en styrelse, utan den ligger hos en liten grupp män.

147 för när man kommer till det här med nätverk […] då tror jag liksom att de manliga nätverken är svårare för kvinnor att komma igenom. Kvinnor bygger också nätverk men där tror jag inte det är lika svårt för män att komma igenom, och de kvinnliga nätverken är inte på det sättet att de stoppar upp andra.
The “us and them” formula was used along other social axes too, not connected with gender, but with the creatives versus the suits or rather the newshound versus the suits.

“Yes I believe so, a miss in communication [...] because even those managers were once journalists [...] but they have forgotten it, what it was like, sort of, and now they’re listening to the bean counters, or like the Chairman or whoever, somebody else who is the baddie so to speak.”

respondent G

Another example is talking back and forth. The respondent meant to refute essentialism, but it seemed language and well known formulas, metaphors and myth got in the way, such as men scratching each other’s backs and confident women running into the ditch.

“But I don’t really think that gender is what is important, or what leadership style they represent [...] I think it can be like that, to go back a bit to this heritable, that men have [...] there’s been a larger dominance of men, men have been looking to men and sort of scratched each other’s backs and like that [...] But of course, then I don’t know, I don’t really like this type of ‘womb feminism’ [essentialism] or so to speak to say that girls are like this and guys are like that [...] well sometimes women can fill the room so to speak and be brash but a bit shallow and not knowing much, there’s that type too like, very good confidence but like run straight into the ditch in two days”

respondent D

Categorisation then on the one hand makes conceptualisation possible. Without naming something it is difficult to grasp what you are talking about. On the other hand it seems to imprison and short circuit a thinking who strives for saying everybody in the group is not the same, i.e. all men are not the same. At the same time as there is a wish for avoiding filling men and women with essentialist group phenomena or culturally uniform shared experiences, the presumed shared voices, the presumed shared group belongings, keep coming back.

**Formula: “Gender smart”**

Gender Smart is the title of a book released 2002 by consultant Jane Sanders. The presentation of her book seems to follow essentialist rhetoric in explaining men and women have communication problems to do with gender, but this puzzle can be solved. This is very much in line with the conceptual traditions of Robert Bly and John Gray. A web search on the expression gender smart shows it is used in many varying ways on how to be smart gender wise. I have not been able to track its etymological origin further back than to Jane Sanders. This concept came into the

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148 Ja, jag tror det, en kommunikationsmiss [...] för även de cheferna har en gång varit journalister [...] men har glömt det, hur det var liksom, och nu lyssnar de på räknenissarna, eller liksom ordförande eller vem det nu är, nån annan person som är boven så att säga.

149 Men jag tror egentligen inte heller att det är könet som är det viktigt, eller vad det är för ledarstil som de representerar [...] jag tror att det kan vara så, att gå tillbaka lite grann till det här nedärvt att män har, [...] det har varit större dominans på män, man har tittat på män och liksom man har klat varandra på ryggen och så där [...] Det är klart, sen vet inte jag, jag tycker egentligen inte om den här livnederfeminismen eller så att säga att tjejer är så och killar är så [...] ibland kan ju kvinnor komma in och ta rummet och vara kaxiga men lite grunda och inte veta så mycket, det finns ju den typen också liksom, jättebra självförtroende men liksom kör i diket efter två dar.

150 Jane Sanders Gender Smart, solving the communications puzzle between men and women (California: Full Gallop Press 2002).
discussion. It caught on and spread. But it seemed elusive. Just the word combination itself led to thinking that there are gendered differences which can be used in a positive way, but we never got to grips with exactly what that was.

“... a better piece of advice is to study gender theory, to become gender smart, and both men and women should [...]”

[researcher: em, what should be done with this knowledge then, in practice, is there an example?]  
“em, well, if you use the knowledge on that the expectations a reporter, a group of reporters have on you are different because you are a woman than to if you were a man, then, then, well I don’t have a concrete example, but I think you have the strength to last longer as a manager, because you don’t, don’t put conflicts onto yourself, but instead you understand it is caused by expectations on gender, you can be helped by it”

[researcher: so it is more about understanding rather than some kind of action?]

“I think one should be oneself, very much oneself in one’s leadership”

From the interview with the above respondent the concept of gender smart was transferred into interviews with other respondents.

[researcher: And I heard someone else saying that one should be ‘gender smart’. Have you got any thoughts on that, if we try like in the everyday run of things concretely, what does it mean in the everyday world of work, in the everyday kind of situation?]  
“Well that was a really smart thing to say, to be gender smart, yes, and to me it means you should use what is positive about being of different genders, that we through culture and our biological beings are different, eh and that I therefore think that’s something one should, one shouldn’t try to erase that, because then you work in an uphill struggle I think. Then of course one should remember there is old heritage in this which you need to handle so that you don’t overuse it, but I think that this with gender smart was so good because it means you should use the positive and the good things about this, and how can we then take an example, get concrete”

[researcher: take for example, now that you say we are different, to use that, what are men good at?]  
[silence followed by laughter]

[researcher: how can they use their difference in a positive way?]  
“Well, now that was a good... now the whole concept of gender smart fell apart”

[researcher: well that wasn’t my intention, I’m sorry]

“What are men good at, why do we exist”

[researcher: I didn’t mean to break your chain of association, the thought was, if you say like this, we have different things to use]  
“No but, right, well I got this association which made me thinking that I may find it easier to talk about certain things with women, about some things, and with men about other things, eh easier to, it’s subtle I guess, ways to handle someone”

[researcher: But to get to the concrete, what is easier to talk about with women and what is easier to talk about with men?]
“yes, that is what I am trying to find out, do I speak, has it...well it’s really difficult, what is there in it really, it’s just a conception I have, I can’t come to think of a single example”

In the first conversation gender smart is defined as knowledge helping you to cope. Giving a concrete example of something to do was difficult. The sample also points out the tension, in language and in experience, between difference and being oneself. What I find interesting in the second conversation above is not the respondent’s confusion and my untimely interruption, but that it seems to point at the glamour of a catch phrase such as “gender smart” which at closer look seems quite empty, quite in line with Barthes idea on the empty sign filled with myth. Earlier on the conversation with the same respondent, as accounted for under the heading there are no female and male ways above, had disproved of the idea of biological sex as the predominant determining factor for our sense of identity. The above example seems to point at how social generalised historically inherited expectations ensnare the discursive possibilities, making new or different conceptualisations tremendously difficult to express.

Formula: “Being gender or being you”

These difficulties tied in with another rhetoric approach speaking of “being like a man” and “being yourself” which I have put under the discursive formula "being gender or being you".

“I think you should be yourself, very much yourself in your leadership, and as soon as you start pretending something else, or ad something yet, start wearing skirts or what they do in America [...] or, whatever you do, start acting like a man then it would seem very contrived. But I have experienced, I have been working with [woman manager in top management ***] and know how she was perceived. She was like any manager, strong opinions, followed her own route, listened to people but chose her way, and she was seen as this thing that she was an iron lady, and eh I don’t think you’d say that today, you said it then, you said it in the nineties. And it was about her having qualities which would have suited a man but which weren’t...
thought of as a helper in the team and then she got these, people couldn’t stand her then […] well she was herself, she was like that”\textsuperscript{153} respondent B

“no I don’t think ’this is because I am a woman’, I think that I have certain qualities which are to do with my personality”\textsuperscript{154} respondent A

“one should be oneself but you have to think about that you are a manager and as a manager you looked at in a different way and you can’t say just anything”\textsuperscript{155} respondent D

“It is a lot about getting into it with your own personality, be who you are. And all [management] courses say you shouldn’t, but I don’t care about that, because I know how I reacted to my managers and those who did what they were supposed to and followed protocol but ‘wasn’t there’, those you didn’t respect, it doesn’t work [...] you have to be true to yourself I think”\textsuperscript{156} respondent F

“Another thing I have noticed, it’s not to do with gender really, there’s a type who works on charm coupled with some kind of sexuality, and that’s both men and women […] and many of those considered being the best managers are sophisticated in this, it’s a personality […] I can talk about private things, about my family for example, I weave in the private in the public, I talk it in. But that’s not the same thing. The other thing is flirting, it’s to do with attraction […] No one wants managers who are like machines, those who starts a conversation asking if you’ve filled out your work report […] you have to be able to be yourself, at least that’s what I am. What I don’t do is invite to game playing. You should be yourself”

[researcher: some female managers say ‘you shouldn’t have to be like a man’ have you got any thoughts on that?]

“My closest colleague she ‘is like a man’ and we work well together. She works well in her position, she is a good person […] wasn’t there some Telia MD they wrote about in that way? […]Well, my colleague gets really pissed off about that [the writing]. One should be oneself, and she is herself.”\textsuperscript{157} respondent E

The mythic formula of “being like a man” doubtlessly harbour essentialist underpinnings. None of the respondents supported essentialist views on gender. Yet being like a man was a used phrase.

The first sample above interestingly contains rejection of wearing skirts or acting like a man as a method because you should be yourself. It also contains an example of a female manager being

\textsuperscript{153} jag tycker att man ska vara sig själv, väldigt mycket sig själv i sitt ledarskap, och så fort man låtsas nät annat eller lägger till nät ännu, börjar klä sig i kjol eller vad de gör i USA, […] eller, vad man än gör, börjar agera som en man så skulle det känna väldigt på klädstrikt. Men jag har ju erfarenhet, jag har ju också jobbat med [hög kvinnlig toppchef ***] och vet hur hon uppfattades som, hon var ju som vilken chef som helst, bestämda ärskiter, gick sin egen väg, lyssnade på folk men valde sin egen väg och hon ansågs ju just det här att hon var en Järnlady då och eh det skulle man nog inte säga idag, men man sa det på den tiden, man sa det på nittiotalet och det var ju att hon hade egenskaper som hade passat en man men som inte passade en kvinna och då fick hon dessa, då tålde man inte riktigt henne […] hon var ju sig själv, hon var ju sån.

\textsuperscript{154} [Researcher: Om man tänker så här, kvalitativa aspekter av din kompetens, nu kanske du inte tänkt på det på det sättet, men tycker du att du har kvaliteter som hatt göra med att du är kvinna, sådär att den här kvaliteten hör ihop med det?]

Nå jag tänker inte i första hand att det här är för att jag är kvinna utan jag tänker att jag har vissa egenskaper som har med min personlighet att göra. Man ska ju vara sig själv men ska ju tänka på att man är chef och att som chef blir man sedd på ett annat sätt och man kan inte säga vad som helst.

\textsuperscript{155} det handlar väldigt mycket om att gå in med sin personlighet, och vara den du är. Och alla utbildningar säger att du inte ska vara så men det skiter jag faktiskt i, för jag vet hur jag reagerade på mina chefer och de som gjorde som de skulle och följde formulär men inte var med, de hade man ingen respekt för, det går inte […] man måste vara trogen sig själv tror jag.

\textsuperscript{156} En annan spaning jag har, det har egentligen inte med kön att göra, det är en typ som jobbar med charm sammankopplat med någon sorts sexuelltitet, och det är också så att många av de som anses vara de bästa chefrerna är utstuderade i detta, det är en personlighet […] jag kan prata om privata saker, om familjen till exempel. Jag axlar in det privata i det offentliga, jag pratar in det. Men det är inte samma sak. Det andra är fört, det har med attraktionssäten att göra. Chefer som är som maskiner vill man inte ha, såna som börjar ett samtal med att fråga om man fyllt i sin tidrapport, det tror jag inte fungerar alls, man måste kunna vara sig själv, sän är jag i alla fall. Det jag inte gör är att jag bjuder inte in till ett spel. Man ska vara sig själv. […]Researcher: en del kvinnliga chefer säger ”man ska inte behöva vara som en man”, har du nån tanke om det?]

Min närmsta medarbetare hon ”är som en man” och hon och jag funkar bra ihop. Hon funkar bra i sin roll, en mycket duklig person […]Var det inte någon Telia-VD som det skrevs mycket om på det sättet? […]Min kollega hon blir förbannad på det, man ska vara sig själv, och hon är sig själv.
disliked for being like a man and at the same time stating she was herself. This tangle of combination in language and symbols expose the complex relation between conceptualisation and sensing. The cultural conceptualisation of gender is getting in the way of recognition of the subject as something Other than the expected, and at the same time individuals seem to sense that Other to be “the right thing”. In the above samples this is echoed also in the experiences of respondent A and E gender wise, and in the experiences of respondent D and F in relation to management role at large.

The mythic formula of “as a woman you shouldn’t have to be like a man” or “women become men when they get management jobs”\textsuperscript{158} or “some women needing to ‘learn how to become like the boys’”\textsuperscript{159}, or saying “the newsroom by definition is male”\textsuperscript{160} is sometimes used with the intention of liberating gender in the work place. What is often denounced or perhaps not thought through are its essentialist underpinnings. At the same time adherence to constructivist perspectives are stated. In this way essentialist thought is disguised as constructivist and start working its way into the discourses very much in line with Barthes idea of the inoculation form.

To conclude, let us consider the Foucauldian contribution of showing the interconnectedness between power and knowledge. If power relations and practices produce knowledge and knowledge makes power forces possible the above described thought structures and discursive formulas deserve attention. The softness in how we think each other may indeed produce hard realities. In Foucauldian thinking power is used both ways, in which dominance is not necessarily residual in its effect. In social micro dynamics the greater power holder is not fixed. A typical and clear micro tactic in this respect is the practice one of the respondents accounted for when using copycat techniques as means of an empowering affirmation practice, i.e. copying calling each other geniuses to make a “group” of individuals as visible as the already visible “one”. That type of tactic also has the function of elucidating the constructedness of those initial “geniuses”. By copying it the tactic is exposed as just that, a tactic. Another interesting dialectic is when the formulas “hey, what do I know” and “well, it’s like this” are used alternately. The first seems to pave the way for the latter, and the latter seems to be made more alluring if at some point being softened by the first. In this way power and knowledge are used via micro rhetorical techniques, the firm knowledge of “well, it’s like this” can be proposed in the form of a statement because the more subservient non-knowledge of “hey, what do I know” make the firm knowledge less threatening.

\textsuperscript{158} Stated in debate arranged by Svensk Chefsförening on August, 4th 2011.
\textsuperscript{159} Monika Djerf-Pierre, “The Difference Engine, gender equality, journalism and the good society” in Feminist media Studies Vol. 11, No. 1, 2011.
\textsuperscript{160} Ibid.
The formula “There are no female and male ways” is used to refute essentialist explanations of gender orders. Making metonymic connections was in this material the most common discursive method used for this refutation. The formula “What’s in my gender, what’s in me” was used to discuss the dynamics of expected gendered behavior and individual behavior, in explaining that of course there are sometimes behaviours that fit the stereotype because those behaviours fit that specific person as an individual. To further clarifying this, experiences of behavior in direct opposition to the expected stereotypical was described. This formula somewhat seemed to jar with the formula “Being gender or being you” in which the mythic figure of speech “being like a man” surfaced. Respondents who repeatedly rejected essentialist views on gender also didn’t question usage of the phrase “being like a man”. Alongside this, the idea that one should “be oneself” was common. These formulas when all used on the topic of management and gender exposed the practices of conceptualisation and sensing not being quite in sync. Similar difficulties were apparent in the formula “us and them” in which talk oscillated between persons having individual voices and there being gendered group voices. The same problematic surfaced with the formula “gender smart” in which there seemed to be a way of being smart concerning gender, but proved difficult when trying to fit the phrase into any kind of prescribed action. Thus breaking away from discursive heritage was difficult.

The formulas “There are no female and male ways” “Us and them” and the highly mythical and expressive formula “Gender smart” together with the puzzle of “What’s in my gender, what’s in me” and “Being gender or being you” all seem to struggle with the knowledge map of language and cultural concepts in contradiction with the power of inner experience, an inner sense of an unacknowledged individual reality claiming space. The knowability of the individual seems at odds with a sense of well-being when squeezed into groupings. What significance this has for management in the newsroom will be dealt with in the discussion section below.
CONCLUSION

This piece of research set out to investigate thoughts, experiences and notions on management and gender in the newsroom, manifested via discourses in speech. This involved analysing transcribed interviews with focus on what was said and how it was said in order to illuminate thinking and experiences on management and gender in the newsroom. This piece of analysis explored if a) gender and management style are, or are not, discursively coupled in the newsroom, b) what support or refutation there was for the existence of typical genderised newsroom leadership, and c) what discursive patterns of gender and management emerged in the interview material.

Research and ideas on male and female leadership style, essentialist and constructivist gender theories, and sociological and ethnographic research on newsrooms made up a background to this study. The method used to retrieve the discursive material was semi structured interviews with managers with a broad variety of newsroom experience. Saussurian linguistics, Barthesian semiotics and Foucauldian discourse analysis were used as both theoretical foundation and methodology in analysing the interview material.

The findings of this study challenge any clean cut separation between what has been thought of as female and male leadership style. The characteristics of these styles are used alternately depending on situation and used alternately by the same individual. The findings contradict the supposition of there being specific female and male management styles. None of the ten respondents confirmed an essentialist outlook. The interviews also showed difficulties in correspondence between language and a sense of something not quite conceptualised in language, i.e. dualism and dichotomous orders were obvious and clear obstacles but also clearly very difficult to circumvent. Important to note is the circular problem respondent B pointed out in “I think the criticism is worse, still, for a woman, the space is more narrow, and both female and male journalists help making that space more narrow” which shows what the newsrooms produce sometimes boomerang back.

In the analysed material, in what way are or are not concepts of gender and management style coupled in the newsroom?

Although there are observations of gender specific behaviour in the above accounts, the respondents said these were exceptions and to do with personality. The most interesting finding in the interviews was the reversal of gender stereotypes, the eagerness of counter posing the typical dichotomies, while still staying within the dualistic form. This was most apparent when the respondents talked about their observations of others. When talking about themselves these
managers’ accounts were more likely to shatter the dichotomist order. From what they said about themselves on being emotional, rational, firm, pondering, staking out the way and dialogically listening to other possible routes, they could not easily be placed with either what has been considered to be the typical male or female leadership style. In this way gender could not be coupled with a specific style in the real. The way concepts of gender and management style were coupled was mainly through reversal of stereotypes in the discursive even though also leading to being acted out as a more or less conscious tactic as in respondent H:s account above.

In the analysed material, what support or refutation is there for the existence of a typical female leadership style and a typical male leadership style in the newsroom?

In this sample of ten respondents typical female and typical male leadership styles could not be established. On the contrary even this small a sample pointed at a varied mix of styles within gendered groups and also within the same individual, sometimes relating to management situation. The interview material showed there was no neat division between characteristics such as firm/hesitant, emotional/rational, risk taking/cautious. These characteristics did not fall into ordered alignments, neither gender wise nor in relation to individuals. Social expectations on gendered management together with the sense of the importance of being oneself surfaced. Being oneself did not always go together with social expectations. The way being oneself was placed discursively in the interview material it did not seem to fit with either constructivist or essentialist perspectives. Concerning management there was a both/and outlook when presented with traits often used in relation to male and female management style.

In the analysed material what discursive patterns of gender and management emerge?

There were recurrent patterns in the interview material pointing at paradoxes and difficulties between gender expectations and sense of self. These were expressed in formulas grappling with “what’s in my gender, what’s in me” and “being gender, or being you” and expressions such as “being like a man” and “gender smart”. Formulas dealing with gender difference were expressed around thoughts on “us and them” and “there are no male and female ways”. The formulas and expressions belong in varying degree to different discursive strata, such as the social for “there are no male and female ways”, the psychological for “what's in my gender, what's in me” and “being gender, or being you”, the psycho-social for “us and them”, and the socio-cultural for “gender smart”. Placing these formulas in different discursive strata is meant to serve as a help in
understanding in which way they are weighted culturally, and invested with different relevance psychologically, socially and culturally. To recap from above, the formula "us and them" is much heavier and more problematically hard wired into the psychological than the formula “gender smart” which to a large degree comes across as an alluring American catch phrase which has a specific place in time and space as a cultural phenomenon and as such more light weight. In this material though, the formula “gender smart” exposed something quite problematic in what seemed its mythic production.

As accounted for above the most significant pattern in these speech representations, was that of the reversal of typical stereotypes. It was both used as a way of refuting expected essentialist research angle, and also used in reporting experiences of what can be considered to be compensation behaviour. Also, the discursive patterns show that there was quite some trouble trying to do away with a dichotomous order. The either/or stylistic was used to make statements of reversals of the stereotypes as in for example “I have seen men cry and women scream” or “I’ve been dealing with meek men and firm women”. These statements play on the familiarity with the cultural connection of women/crying/meek along one line and men/screaming/firm along another, the expectations that you are either a crier or a screamer. By playing on the familiarity of the either/or in relation to gender a disapproval of this order as given was made. As described above this formula left the semantics and stepped into action in the “aware” newsroom which tended to reverse behavior as a new kind of newsroom order. It exposes an imprisonment in the dualistic order since polarities are switched rather than dissolved. This same difficulty surfaced in talk on “not having to be like a man” in combination with constructivist perspectives, since there is an assumption that there is a way to be a man and a way not to. Likewise the expression gender smart proved alluring but empty of action to serve the constructivist perspectives of the interviewees.

Thus, as a discursive means difference was used in conceptualising phenomena along well known cultural constructs of stereotypes, often in reverse, but in accounts on actual behaviour in the real this type of difference was not to be found. There was a dissonance between social expectations on gendered management and the sense of the importance of being oneself. This sense of self did not sit easy with the expectations. So again, the way our thinking is dependent on defining matter and phenomena by the rule of it being what it is not needs addressing. Distinctions which at a basic psychological level function as necessary enablers become obstacles at the social level. Giving focus to this psycho-social obstacle would possibly open up for freeing individual resources, knowledge and cultural capital.
DISCUSSION

So what are the possible effects of discourses on gender and management qualities on the use of cultural and knowledge capital in the newsroom, discussed in this study?

The study of these ten respondents’ accounts shows that there is a conscious resistance to ideas of innate gender difference. These managers in these newsrooms are aware of what in their eyes are stereotype ideas that may be loaded onto them, clichés they may find difficult to ignore and may need finding tactics to counter pose. What is gained with the current state of affairs in this discursive matter is perhaps at its most basic level that there is awareness. To further consider is what happens with the use of individual talent if the energy goes to fighting off clichéd expectations.

The usage of discursive reversal tactics and reporting experiences of compensation behaviour in which stereotypical expectations were reversed, i.e. women working on being tougher and men working on being softer, expose a tension between a "should" and an "is", and quite some problematic around "being yourself" and "being gender smart". In the hope of breaking with imprisoning expectations using tools for being what could be called gender smart is alluring. It could be as simple as thinking “when talking to men I will not use as many words since they will tire quite soon”. But while trotting that path, men are already placed in a generalised group, and treated on the basis of essentialism. Let’s make comparison with a schoolyard example, the gender aware classroom, in which group activities are planned with expectations on gender such as “let the boys, presumably rowdy, play football on their own to liberate the girls, presumably shy, to dare also to play football”. In this type of exercise one should consider: what happens with shy Peter, John and Mark when placed with the extrovert Thomas, Nicolas and Max. In what way are they liberated in daring to try a game of football? Worse still, what happens when just by the sheer division of boys in one group and girls in another is signalling “thou art thy gender”. These are indeed practices based on essentialist perspectives. The same type of thinking displays in phrases such as “women become men when getting management jobs” or saying “you should not have to be like a man”. They are speech practices anchoring certain type of behaviour and certain characteristics within specific genders. What happens with Lisa who’s always been straightforward, action oriented, fast on decision, not so much for hugging and complimenting new haircuts if told “you don’t have to be like a man, be yourself”? Well, she already is. And is that type of thinking and practice using Lisa’s talent in the most productive way? Well, no. Thus if one doesn’t mean to embrace essentialist outlooks on gender one should be very wary of any practices claiming
constructivism while really working in the service of essentialism. Advocating “playing the game” may well serve essentialist ends even when thought to be claiming a constructivist perspective. In practice, in the management situation, this means being careful with acting up to gendered expectations as a short cut to “being understood”.

With all the good intentions, still it seems hard for social interaction to allow for freedom of the individual. We seem automatically wanting to place people in groups, sorting out one phenomena from the other, saying this is not that and that is not this. Even though, as mentioned above, we may need a certain degree of mapping the terrain in order not to experience symbolic schizophrenia, i.e. if you want to make your way through the woods you have to make a difference between the path and the rough, this type of sorting and mapping lose its usefulness when applied to people.

Getting back to the newsroom, the above accounts show we might have quite some cultural and knowledge capital to bring forth and use if treating each other as individuals. Some critics would perhaps say this is to erase a gender perspective altogether in “now you leave it all up the guys to again define themselves as a norm”. Well, then consider the example of shy Peter or respondent B:s account of that “The major most important power resides with a few men, it’s not with all men in our top management”. Looking purely to gender aspects will not solve this power issue, if that is what one wants to solve. Instead identity studies, and how they may benefit the newsroom, needs to open up to more facetted perspectives on the individual. It will not do to just add a few variables such as for example ethnicity and age. A much more free floating outlook on an individual is needed to free more cultural and knowledge capital to be used in for example newsroom work. The above findings support discarding the either/or type of dichotomy in favour of embracing a both/and outlook.
FURTHER RESEARCH

This analysis is a study of concepts, thoughts and recalled experiences. It accounts for feelings, thoughts and interpretations of experiences. To develop this work further, studies could be made with longitudinal recurring interviewing since ability to see, analyse and understand is bound up with having given something a thought. Once an issue is awakened patterns which perhaps earlier were passed over may become lucid. Comparisons can be made by 1) doing content and discourse analysis of the studied newsrooms media output to look for possible correlations between everyday experiences and content, and also by 2) doing participant observations in the newsrooms to analyse the interaction from outside of the managers’ own thinking.

Ida Willig’s idea on analysing newsrooms in terms of power play between different forms of habitus and capital which stresses the relational mode of constructions of the social world is yet another interesting route. It connects well with the above observation of different individuals, sections and professions being ascribed different roles to play, i.e. emotional big words from photographers and straight facts type of arguments from national news section journalists.

Other interesting possibilities for newsroom studies, not specifically connected to gender, also came out of the interview material. These topics I put under the umbrella concept of the newsroom experience which preferably would be compared to some other work place area as for example the university department experience, the government body experience, the manufacturing industry experience and the like. I suggest the following topics.

Reversed power structure

This formula is sometimes referred to as assistant power or at its more extreme management by the martyrs. It means that the real and effective decision making is in the hands of a) the staff not the managers, b) the assistants, or c) someone playing the card “we have to do it my way because I am too frail to cope with any other alternative”. Several of the respondents hinted at having come across this type of culture in the first sense of the version – when the staff, not the managers, is running the agenda. One manager explained that no one wants to be a manager as it’s not seen as an attractive position, in part due to the fact that groups of staff to a large extent have ruled the managers, leaving little room for actual influential management to be carried out. This manager also explained that the identity of the editorial milieu was based on being sceptical to life, sceptical to managers, and sceptical when you do journalistic interviews, resulting in the belief that if you can’t
be critical of your work place you can’t apply a critical perspective as a journalist either. This rationale was then used as an explanation for not accepting hierarchal management. Another manager called it *reporter run operations* and exemplified with if the manager put forward ideas on things to write about and all the reporters would reply “I can’t, my agenda is full” the manager’s ideas were pushed off the agenda. Since the reporters were able to choose what they wanted to do there wasn’t much room for a manager to carry out any thematic leadership. Another manager described this as an ego ideal of what it means to be a good reporter, the ideal being “as a good reporter you are stubborn, you by default ‘go against’, you don’t take any bull, you are bothered with the power, you are for different reasons angry”. This manager cautioned for affirming that ego ideal since, as a manager “you get a sheer hell”, as it was expressed. Yet another manager explained that the tactics used in this type of environment are that as a manager you have to crisscross between different wants, letting everybody in some respect have their way, by doing a bit of this and a bit of that, crisscrossing between strong informal groups among the editorial staff as a way of handling the situation. The manager put forward that this type of socio-cultural setting made way for incapacitating the hierarchies since it invited a behavior in which staff when getting a no from the one they are directly reporting to take the matter further to the next manager above. If that manager then in his or her crisscrossing, as it was described, opens the door, put his or her head to the side, expresses sympathy and understanding, he or she symbolically give a go ahead to the first line manager be skipped. In this way any solid framework in place to facilitate everyday practices as well as company strategic change was made to collapse. Another manager simply called the flat organisation type of work place democracy a chimera.

Interesting questions to ask in relation to reversed power structures are: Is a reporter’s journalistic sharpness dependent on being against management at work? What is at stake if the case is managers are afraid of managing rowdy reporters? How does fairness, in the sense that everybody should have a go at the most attractive assignments, balance with meritocracy for product outcome and staff wellbeing?

**The psycho social use of the idea of consensus as a work place fantasy**

This would be a study on the practice of consensus seeking, its effects and its underlying psychological workings. One manager elaborated on the problem with consensus as a management ideal. In this manager’s experience the trouble with the idea of consensus is that the managers practicing a consensus seeking style do not really want to know what others think. Rather they want
to be helped with their own bad confidence. They are interested in getting support for a decision they do not dare to make on their own. In that way the concept of consensus was misused. Those managers who were constantly seeking consensus appeared very insecure in their decisions. Thus this practice came across as cowardice. Although not coming across as genuinely interested in consensus those managers exposed themselves to more contacts throughout the organization, they were seen and heard, which in some cases facilitated their careers. According to this manager’s account this way of practicing some kind of consensus seeking management style was not productive for the work place, even though it advanced the individual managers’ personal careers.

This very important account is something common in work life and it deserves attention research wise.

**Competition between editorial staff**

How a manager handles competitive behaviour between staff also came into the interview material. One of the managers accounted for that letting staff fight over assignments or over getting to cover the most interesting area is a good thing. The rules need to be clear though, how the fight is carried out and by whom. This manager explained that, for this type of fighting to be productive, you need to be very clear over who is mainly responsible for covering a specific area, but that it is okay for others to come up with ideas and carry out work in that area if a fight over a topic is won. If there was a fight over from what angle, and thus under which section a topic was to be covered, this manager tried to have for example two area specific editors argue with each other in order to on their own come to terms with who should be in charge of that assignment. Only when the editors in this example could not solve their issues this manager would step in to make the decision.

This idea of leaving to the staff to “fight something off” is interesting to investigate in relation to how well it works for both staff and product outcome. The method the manager above describes is not uncommon. Questions to ask could be: How long should competition over a specific work area be left to the staff? What method in handling competition between staff creates best product outcome in the long run? What method in handling competition between staff creates best staff wellbeing?
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APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – letter to potential interviewees

Hej!


Hör av dig så snart som möjligt till mig

(Kravet på att vara mellanchef släpptes när jag stötte på problem med att få folk att ställa upp på intervju. Istället blev den gemensamma nämnaren att de alla var eller hade varit mellanchefer. Fokus för intervjuerna var dock erfarenheter från den redaktionella miljön.)

Same as above in English

Hi!

Are you a mid-manager and can spare some time to being interviewed? I am doing a research study on leadership styles, focusing on what sometimes is called male style and female style leadership. I am looking for mid-managers in editorial settings to interview on experiences, receptions, expectations and your own thoughts on leadership and gender. It doesn’t matter if you are a man or a woman, but I need an hour of your time. You can choose to be anonymous. The study is within the framework of a Master’s degree in Media and Communications at Stockholm University.

Please get in touch as soon as possible.

(I let go of the criteria of being mid-managers when encountering problems with getting people to take part. The common denominator was changed to that they all had been mid-managers. The focus of the interviews though was experiences of the editorial work environment.)
Appendix 2 – interview guide

Interview ten editorial managers with experience from newsrooms.

Length of interview, 1 hour.

Explain confidentiality, anonymity, identity marked with a letter.

Initial questions about project.

Start with a few questions on: Management career, Number of years, Transition to first management job, Career development, Management philosophy/beliefs

Research questions:

- In what way are, or are not, concepts of gender and management style discursively coupled in the newsroom?
- What support or refutation is there in the interview material for the existence of typical genderised newsroom leadership styles?
- What discursive patterns of gender and management emerge in the interview material?

Thematic guide for the questions:

ON MANAGEMENT

How is leadership talked about in your work place?
Hur pratar ni om ledarskap på din arbetsplats?
Comments you have received on your leadership style?
Kommentarer på ditt ledarskap?
What management qualities are highly valued here? And low rank?
Vilka chefsegenskaper värderas högt här? Och lågt?
Too much or not enough emotional engagement?
För mycket eller för lite emotionellt engagemang?
Too fast or too slow on decisions?
För snabb eller för långsam till beslut?
Intuition in management?
Intuition i samband med ledarskap?
Rational thinking in management?
Det rationella tänkandet i ledarskapet?
Cautiousness? Risk taking?
Försiktighet? Risktagande?
Too firm/rigid or not firm enough?
För bestämd eller inte tillräckligt bestämd?
Hierarchies, are they a help or a hindrance?
Hierarkier, är de till hjälp eller är de ett hinder?
What is the give and take in your organization? Patterns?
Hur ger man och tar man här? Mönster?

ON GENDER

What comes to mind if I say female/male leadership style?
Om jag säger kvinnligt/manligt ledarskap, vad tänker du på då?
Leadership styles with men and women, differences?
Ledarskapsstil hos män och kvinnor, skillnad?
Qualitative competence, related to your gender?
Kvalitativ kompetens, relaterat till dig som man eller kvinna?
Comments you have come across connecting gender and management?
Kommentarer du hört som kopplar ihop kön och ledarskap?
Expectations on male or female managers?
Förväntningar på manliga respektive kvinnliga chefer?
Innate and acquired qualities?
Medfödda och förvärvade egenskaper?
Been met differently, gender? Other type of groupings?
Annorlunda bemött, genus? Andra typer av grupperingar?

ON BEING ONESELF

Can you tell me about a situation in which expectations on your management was not in sync with your way of doing things?
Kan du beskriva något tillfälle då du upplevt att det funnits förväntningar på ditt sätt att leda som inte stämmer med hur du vill göra saker på?
Act according to expectations?
Agera efter andras förväntningar?