

**Leading the Future of the Public Sector: The Third Transatlantic Dialogue
University of Delaware, Newark, Delaware, USA**

May 31–June 2, 2007

Workshop 2: Diverse Leaders and Leading a Diverse Workforce

**Reflections On Studying Public Leadership
So As To Take Gender and Race Seriously:
Person, Position, Political Location and
Perception In the Gendered and Raced
Leadership Of Wisconsin's Major Agencies**

By

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This essay ponders the study of gender, race, and leadership in the public sector. It develops a framework for the study of diversity leadership based upon ideas drawn from feminist theory and critical legal and race theories. To do so I first briefly consider impediments within political science and public administration in terms of leadership studies, and then turn to disciplinary treatments of gender and race. Finally, and at greater length, I explore the emerging intersectionality paradigm in terms of the study of leadership in the public sector. I argue that diversity leadership should prove to be an outstanding venue to apply intersectionality methodologies within political science and public administration, both because of correspondence between general approaches to leadership and intersectionality and because exploring diversity leadership inevitably highlights the hegemonic elements holding “nondiverse” leadership in place.

This research draws upon critical gender and race theory and the observation that leadership is a process that can only be adequately understood as a “lived experience” that occurs in a particular body (Young 2005; Moi 1999; Jaggar and Bordo 1989). It introduces a framework for understanding diversity leadership based upon “person, position, and political location.” Both leaders and followers bring their lived experiences and their bodies—their person—into the leadership process. Despite individual differences within any subgroup, an array of diverse experiences often are shared by subgroups because they are based upon bodies and the political meaning attached to different bodies. Perception, by leaders of followers and the converse, reflects that lived experience. Perception is also shaped by the constructed organizational position in which a particular person attempts to lead. Further, the political location of the persons—leaders and followers—and the positions they hold shape the leadership context and process in both time and space. Aspects may include elements such as how close or far from political power the individual leader and/or follower resides; when in an election cycle or news cycle some relevant issue occurs; how long followers have experienced diverse leaders; and the nature of the position in relation to the body and lived experience (e.g., black woman or white male imposing welfare reform); and so on.

The theoretical framework of the leadership process based upon the lived experience of person, position, and political location will be introduced using data drawn from 62 two-hour structured interviews of top appointed and classified leaders of five major state agencies conducted from October 2006 through February 2007. The research also analyzes one agency for a key component of the intersectionality paradigm: power. The paradigm demands that no political analysis involving humans should be undertaken absent consideration of power, especially power other than that generated through individual agency. This essay is theoretical in orientation, but practitioners may glean applied lessons for diversity leadership as well.

On Public Sector Leadership Studies

What research on public sector leadership takes gender and/or race seriously?ⁱ Actually, this question is difficult to answer due to disciplinary conventions and its parsing of “political” and “public.” Also, political science has tended to shy away from leadership studies, especially since highly quantitative work became the norm. Its now nearly separate subfield, public administration, does study leadership, usually by conflating public management with public leadership. As a result, leadership as a concept is itself not often pursued in political science.

A casual look at the discipline’s scholarship suggests that political science simply assumes public and/or political leadership exists when someone who holds appointive or elective office acts in a formal capacity. Hence it tends to study leadership as the behavior and outcomes of those holding formal positions, although topics can include “power versus politics” views of leadership, personality, recruitment, socialization, integration into institutions, style, linkages with followers, and impacts (e.g., Mughan and Patterson 1992). James McGregor Burns and Barbara Kellerman notwithstanding, it is not too far a stretch to suggest that political science mostly approaches leadership as implicit. Further, very little of this leadership research takes gender seriously, despite many works on “the man” who is president. Even less of it considers race, arguably because whiteness is assumed as the norm and not a race.

Disappointingly, one edited volume that approaches political leadership through diversity and national identity mischaracterizes and then dismisses postmodern analysis, by claiming that it concludes “no social form has much intrinsic or functional value, except those they advocate”

(Renshon 2001: 241) and “that all identities carry equal weight” (242). It further considers diverse identities to be a threat that “spawned division,” and the civil rights and feminists communities to be detrimentally concerned with “narrow self-interest” (Kahlenberg in Renshon 2001: 340). As a result, the book’s useful concept of “leadership capital,” a spin off concept from social capital that has been intelligently applied to gender and race analysis (O’Neill and Gidengil 2006; Hero 2007), is similarly misdirected and is said to reside solely in the exclusive purview of individual leaders. In essence, leadership capital then ignores power differences among individuals and opts for analysis that assumes all leadership behavior is within an individual leader’s control. This mistake lies at the heart of the intersectionality critique of standard political science methodology, a point taken up later.

Within political science, most study of political leadership focuses on presidents, and these studies particularly assume anything a president does can be considered part of leadership because, inherently, the position is all about leadership. Studies of presidential “leadership” can involve character (Barber 1985; Hargrove 1998), an ability to persuade (Neustadt 1991), their styles in approaching their jobs as individuals in an institution (Blakesley 1995; Hargrove 1998; Greenstein 2004), as influencers inside the system (Kellerman 1984a), psychological motivators (Post 2005), persuading the public and hence congress on particular policies (Canes-Wrone 2005), and more. Presidential leadership can also draw upon more conventional aspects of leadership studies and recognize that leadership involves earning followership and attending to and changing the political environment through a leader’s vision and goals, which s/he persuades others willingly pursue (Genovese (2007: 33-5).

Sometimes in political science extends its study to formal leaders of other institutions, especially Congress (Strathan 2007; Davidson, Hammond, Smock 1998; Kura 2003), or maybe even leadership in a small town (Wildavsky and Polsby 2004). Yet, because feminists and non-feminists alike in the discipline tend to use gender interchangeably with women, gender accordingly is not about men and masculinity. This practice of naturalizing men and masculinity as universal and normal, while marking women as gendered, occurs despite obvious ways masculinity abounds in the presidency and other institutions (Duerst-Lahti 1997). By extension, studies of gender cannot have much to do with presidential leadership or other institutional leadership because most political leaders have thus far been men.

Of course, women have been vying for presidential leadership for over 100 years and have been considered presidential possibilities at least since Pat Schroeder tested the water in 1988 (Duerst-Lahti 2005). Hillary Clinton has catalyzed attention to gender and presidential leadership through her candidacy for the 2008 presidential election, culminating a process in which women’s possibilities for leading the functions of the presidency have slowly opened in the public mind. Nancy Pelosi’s ascendancy to Speaker of the House also should provoke close consideration of gender and House leadership. African Americans have run for the president since Shirley Chisholm in 1972, with Jessie Jackson, Colin Powell, and Al Sharpton also in the public mind for presidential leadership. In 2008, Barack Obama has emerged as an early frontrunner candidate. In addition Bill Richardson, vies for the office in 2008, the first Latino to do so. Clearly, gender and/or race diversity in presidential leadership is being considered now, although in journalistic analysis much more than in serious scholarship (Duerst-Lahti 2006). Leadership and diversity in other elective offices such as mayor also are beginning to receive attention (Hajnal 2007). In short, while the discipline’s tradition continues to equate political

leadership with elective office, it has slowly begun to move beyond the presidency and to add race and gender when someone other than a white male attains high public office.

Public leadership, both similarly and in contrast to political leadership, is most likely to be understood as occurring within the domain of public administration and public service. Its best treatments reflect general leadership scholarship more so than studies of political leadership. In an excellent compilation of public leadership studies through his “leadership action cycle,” Van Wort (2005) focuses upon elements in the context (organizational demands, constraints, and leader priorities) and aspects of leaders themselves (traits, skills, styles, and behaviors), along with evaluation, followers, and development. He includes a section on gender and leadership, much as is done in other major texts on leadership drawn from more general organizational leadership coverage (eg., Antonakis, Cianciolo, Sternberg 2004). In other words, although particular orientation differ somewhat, many similar topics are covered in general studies of leadership and those of public leadership. Gender is considered much more than in (the rest of) political science, but is not always integrated into leadership studies, and race receives even less attention.

Beyond the relatively few works focused fully on public leadership, most studies of diversity public leadership are concerned with particular topics such as representative bureaucracy and gender and race equity, the latter of which especially relates closely to equal opportunity. This extensive research is concerned with the consequences of having—or not—a diverse public workforce for the substantive outcomes of bureaucracy. It searches for links between the descriptive representation that follows from having certain types of people in office and the policies that follow substantively. It also considers the obstacles to achieving representative bureaucracy, such as glass ceiling and walls (e.g., see issue of PAR No. 6, 2006). Such studies take up important preconditions for studies of diversity and public sector leadership, but seldom directly take up leadership (but see Saidel and Loscosso 2005). Such direct study is more often accomplished in public management research, which generally is treated as interchangeable with public leadership. Interestingly, public management relates closely and conceptually with political leadership and the new and historic institutions research of political science, although seldom do these field touch in disciplinary practice. Both could be joined by organizational theory, which often takes up questions of leadership, but political science too seldom employs it, with the grand exception of March and Olsen (1984; 1989). Institutional research could learn from public management, but the split between public administration and political science impedes (Meier 2007). Gendered institutions research is another area in which political science could learn from public administration although neither has fully incorporated the vibrant gendered institutions literature that grew strong in sociology (e.g., Acker 1990, 1992; Savage and Witz 1992; Alvesson and Billings 1997; Hearn, Sheppard, Tancred-Sherfiff, and Burrell 1989), and has been developed by feminist scholars in political science (e.g., Ferguson 1984; Kathlene 1994; Duerst-Lahti and Kelly 1995; Thomas 1994; Kenny 1996; Kann 1998; Rosenthal 2002). Neither has yet theorized race and leadership well despite taking it up in particular cases (eg., Williams and Kellough 2006), although Hawkesworth (2003, 2006) has begun.

In short, political science has not been particularly good at studying leadership in the public sector (Duerst-Lahti 2007). Studies tend to conflate leadership with office holding, representation, power and authority, and several other key concepts, so never really probe leadership itself. Perhaps in general the lack of boundaries on the concept contributes to a

relatively small body of research: Leadership is everything and hence nothing. As Barbara Kellerman and Scott Webster (2001) detail, studying public leadership is not straightforward. The critical question often becomes what part of leadership is the focus of any particular study. While the same can be said of any topic, conversations with leading political scientists suggest that the mutability of the subject drives them toward more confined topics.ⁱⁱ

The discipline also muddles sound analysis because of these adjectives for leadership, with public usually meaning administrative leadership, but potentially meaning all leadership in the public sector. In contrast the term political leadership is often reserved for elected leaders, although a case can readily be made that all public sector leadership has political dimensions, whether bureaucratic politics, electoral politics, or some other kind of politics. Too often, political leadership—and political science more generally—simply ignores leadership of and by administrative political appointees or bureaucratic politics more generally (Meier 2007). This narrow definition of “political” additionally obfuscates or simply marginalizes the personal politics first articulated by feminists but which also has become central to all identity politics. Moving to a concept of public sector leadership resolves the first set of confusions, but more is required to fix the neglect of the latter. For this reason, the notion of diversity leadership is particularly important.

Diversity and Leadership: The segregation of gender and race studies

Diversity leadership of the public sector is a relatively new area of study. Why has so little attention been given to it? Arguably this shortcoming arose in the U.S. case because too little diversity has existed in public sector leadership. With very few people of color and white women in positions of public sector leadership, the best that could be done was anecdotal treatments; given this methodological simplicity, few scholars took up the topic. Such a stance begs the question of why we lack diversity in leadership, which itself should inspire considerable study. Alternatively, the paucity of research may have more to do with reified disciplinary divisions alluded to above. Again, why disciplines ignore gender and race in public sector leadership should inspire careful analysis of methodology at least, as well as the processes erecting disciplinary foci that exclude or contain diversity. This neglect of diversity leadership in the public sector spawns questions of power and hegemonic domination of who—what types of persons—attain leadership posts, what is considered important in carving out disciplinary space, methodological practices, and other disciplinary forces, as well as why such has come to be.

Diversity leadership points directly to the fact that political science has generally channeled identity politics into the subfields that deal with women or gender, class, race and/or ethnicity, sexual orientation, and the like, and treated these as content specialties that are of little concern to the rest of politics. Of course such treatment suggests that somehow people—who inevitably differ—are not part of all politics when only people can and do construct things political. U.S. political science has neither adequately integrated identity politics into the study of the rest of politics nor has it cultivated widely methodologies suited to the nuance and complexity of human diversity. This problem is true especially in large N studies from the behavioral tradition or through rational choice or other formal approaches that require interchangeable and unvarying individuals.

Although feminist analysis has been applied across the discipline, and some political science approaches—marxist, material, and/or social justice especially—do integrate identity

politics into collateral topics, a paltry few scholars outside these subfields (read and) cite these works. As a result, political science does not study the diversity of people well, and its methodologies produce blindness to ways these categories structure institutions and social and political power. It also leaves scholars blind and ignorant of ways politics, power, and institutions interactively constitute the categories of diversity that matter politically. This “evidence blindness,” and “inability to perceive” in Nietzsche’s phrase, can only be sustained through “an active process of forgetting, social amnesia as protective camouflage” (Hawkesworth 2006, 135). Such blindness has definite consequences for knowledge. “To advance an account of political life that omits these raced and gendered dynamics...accredit[s] and perpetuates[s] distorted accounts of the political world” (Hawkesworth 2005, 151). For the study of public sector leadership, these same processes shape critical aspects of real world diversity leadership—human perception, social construction, and political reification.

Insufficient modes of analysis foster other consequences including public policies that fail to solve problems of inequality (Wing 1997; Hancock 2007), public management practices that undermine the diversity of leaders and the empowerment of followers, and political institutions incapable producing equal representation or of being “guarantors of democracy” (March and Olsen 1989; Williams 1998). Inadequate or misguided policies and practices are held in place by the overarching problem of maldistribution of public power and authority that, in turn, naturalizes male authority and white dominance and obscures the reality of those who fall between salient political categories (Hawkesworth 2005; Junn 2007). Current events suggest, however, that this naturalization is starting to erode, albeit slowly. White women and women and men of color have advanced in the ranks of U.S. public sector leadership in state-level legislatures and administrations, in congress and the executive branch, and elsewhere in the public sector. Over the last presidential cycles, Colin Powell, Condoleezza Rice, and Barack Obama have become serious prospective presidential candidates as well as holding posts of high authority in the national government. Since Shirley Chisholm ran for president in 1972, women have slowly moved into acceptance as viable presidential candidates. Hillary Clinton indisputably ranks as a top presidential candidate for 2008. Such suggests that the time is ripe to study diversity leadership in the public sector, including ways public sector leadership is opening to a more diverse set of people. Presumably such study should also be expected to help policy makers and the citizenry do something useful with this knowledge.

I turn now to reflect upon the study of diversity leadership in the public sector, drawing upon familiar approaches to the study of public sector leadership and methodological advances of the intersectionality paradigm (Hancock 2007). I argue use of intersectionality approaches will improve political science, and public sector leadership provides an exceptionally good means to this end. Such work also provides a good opportunity to broaden awareness of the intersectionality paradigm within the discipline and to encourage greater integration of this type of politics into “normal” politics. I endeavor to make the case that the methodologies of the intersectionality paradigm are indispensable for political science as it moves beyond its weakness of having become “aseptic, even serene, sometimes lacking urgency or purpose” (Katznelson 2007, 3-15). Better public sector leadership and ameliorated inequality serve as compelling purposes.

Intersectionality and the Trouble with Conventional Methodologies

Although other disciplines such as sociology and history have developed a robust appreciation of the intersectionality paradigm and methodologies associated with it, within political science only feminist theory and critical race theory have grappled with it. Within these subfields scholarship continues to grow empirically, with a spate of strong contributions beginning in recent years. Leading scholars of gender, race/ethnic, and class politics have articulated a clear challenge to conventional methodologies in political science and other disciplines. Accepted and standard methodologies, quite simply, do not produce knowledge that accurately or meaningfully explains or interprets political phenomena, or adequately address critical differences within groups (Hancock 2007).

The troubles with conventional methodologies are multiple, although they exist to differing degrees across studies. An overarching problem is that reliance upon epistemologies that we “know,” such as the effects of education on political participation or the norms of congress (Junn 2007; Hawkesworth 2006). As a result we neglect to investigate the specificity of that knowledge or the presuppositions underlying the assumptions. Implicitly, most studies infer from these assumptions rather than explore and investigate them. Such practices lead to a mobilization of bias, willing or otherwise (Bachrach and Baratz 1963). In a closely related problem, scholars often replicate the same data using the same methodologies and then use it to answer new or different questions. The problem is that the data were not designed to answers to which it is applied.

Arguably, the root of these problems resides in a belief in the neutrality of U.S. political institutions and their political system, which couples with a normative and methodological imperative that individuals be treated as though they possess exactly equal political agency (Junn 2007). These beliefs mask an unwillingness to acknowledge that men—not only women—have gender (Kann 1998, 1999; Kimmel, 1996a, 1996b), whiteness has political importance beyond fringe supremacy groups, class (perhaps now human and social capital) is more than a surrogate for education and/or income, and so on (Duerst-Lahti and Kelly 1995; Hurtado 1996; Chapell 2006; Junn 2007).

Further, common methodologies generally construct diversity categories as distinct, thereby obscuring the realities of both lived experience in bodies that cross political categories and the ways meaning emerges from a particular relationship to political power and the resulting political consequences. To study diversity requires more than the “same old data...collected in the same old unitary way” (Hancock 2007, 66). To think clearly about diversity leadership in the public sector therefore requires reflection and a reorientation offered by the intersectionality paradigm.

Intersectionality is concerned about the *relationships* and *interactions* among categories that organize and structure the social and political world. These categories can only be accurately understood within the context of social and political structures and power relations in which they are embedded. These power arrangements constitute and also are constituted by politically meaningful categories such as race, sex, class, and sexuality, among others. Intersectionality emerged out of critical theory, especially critical legal theory that was itself heavily influenced by critical race and feminist theories (Moraga and Anzaldúa 1981; Krenshaw 1987; Williams 1988; McCall 2005; Wing 1997). All critical theories are “joined by the goal of sweeping social change; the rejection of existing patterns of authority, power, and privilege; and a desire to include within the realms of recognition and respect the previously marginalized and oppressed”

(Gould 1999, ix). At its root, critical theory is concerned about the practical and policy change that eradicates inequality (Hancock 2007 71). This fact alone should make intersectionality attractive to scholars of public administration who seek improvements in diverse leadership and leading diverse workforces in the public sector.

Intersectionality research has been evolving since the beginning of the race power movements and Second Wave Feminism starting in the 1960s, more often than not following disparate paths rooted in critical theory that occasionally overlapped and critiqued one another. These paths have always had both normative and empirical components, which also overlap and critique one another. To oversimplify, intersectionality evolved from critical legal theory, critical race theory, feminist theory, and the empirical concomitants of each. Again to oversimplify, theorizing intersectionality seems to have proven less “tricky” (Junn 2007: 125) than developing adequate methodologies, although interpretive approaches have generally been more conducive for empirical study than explanatory methodologies.

Within the last year, many scholars have offered insights into intersectionality research in ways that can contribute directly to the empirical study of diversity leadership in the public sector. These contributions are *Feminist Inquiry* by Mary Hawkesworth (2006); a critical perspective in *Politics & Gender*, “The Structure of Intersectionality: A Comparative Politics of Gender,” by S. Laurel Weldon; an article in *Perspectives On Politics*, “When Multiplication Doesn’t Equal Quick Addition” by Ange-Marie Hancock (March 2007); and a critical dialog in *Politics & Gender* (March 2007) featuring “Gender in the Aggregate, Gender in the Individual, Gender and Political Action” by Nancy Burns and “Square Pegs and Round Holes: Challenges of Fitting Individual-Level Analysis to a Theory of Politicized Context of Gender” by Jane Junn. From these works, a panoply of interrelated problems found in much of political science methodology that employs gender or race in its analysis can be distilled. These problems are not discrete; they interact and often are mutually constitutive, much as the claims about shortcomings in analysis and knowledge produced from standard methodologies.

I now attempt to illustrate some shortcomings of conventional approaches and opportunities for improvement in knowledge by drawing upon methodological approaches distilled from the above articles and applying them to the study of public sector leadership. I synthesize the emerging scholarship on intersectionality and illustrate its use in leadership studies in order to foreshadow a framework for the study of diversity leadership. Particularly, I will illustrate the alternative knowledge garnered in moving from single categories to intersecting ones, point toward research design ideas for treating categories as provisional and contingent, as well as consider the need to attend to multiple levels of analysis, the embeddedness of a person in larger organizing and power structures, and ways to explore power, especially institutional power.ⁱⁱⁱ

Embedded and Embodied Categories

Although diversity is always operating in politics, to recognize the politics of diversity is particularly important for understanding leadership in the public sector. Much as public management cannot be understood without taking a number of factors into account (Meier 2007), public leadership also must attend to elements that bear upon the essential aspects of any leadership relationship between leaders and followers, the processes of leadership tasks, and the particular context within which leadership occurs. In essence, the power (dis)advantages of persons in particular bodies (white men, Native American women) play out precisely because

every person embodies political categories and is embedded in power structures and (Young 2002). In short, power relations play out through individuals and their bodies, which are located within social and political institutional arrangements and meaning. In the realm of public sector leadership, diversity matters for the relationships between the leaders and followers, as well as through relationships and interactions with persons who also embody categories and the power structures in which categories have meaning and leadership is exercised.

Figure 1 suggests a way to conceptualize the nested location of a public sector leader. It locates the person centrally in a public office, which is part of an institution. In that post, the leader must deal with other persons of similar elite status. As Mary Hawkesworth details in her riveting account of Black congresswomen's marginalization as "equals" during welfare reform, the categories one embodies matter greatly for the leadership possible within an institution (2006, 2003). Much the same is true with leadership interactions across political institutions—a cabinet secretary with state legislators, for example—and with other gatekeepers and intermediaries that regulate entrance into leadership ranks. The leadership environment extends to the mass level as well. The citizenry and voters, themselves are persons who embody political categories and have experiences (or not) that shape perception of leaders, bring what they "know" to the relationship. It may be based upon categorical knowledge (stereotypes) about types of people, or upon knowledge about the particular leader.

For example, the 62 interviews with top level state administrators are peppered with comments about ways experience with several white women as cabinet secretaries has resulted in moving past stereotypes and realizing that individual differences matter for leadership success, even though many also realized gender power structures operate. In contrast, none of those interviewed had yet experienced a Hispanic male leading as cabinet secretary. As a result, it would be hard to "know" what that would be like and ideology tended then to guide answers. Although some refused to answer related questions without evidence based upon experience, a sizable minority of (mostly white) respondents steadfastly maintained that it would make no difference because the individual determined all, while others believed both individual and structural power would shape outcomes. White males were the least likely to mention structural power. In part, categorical similarities or differences between the leader and any given citizen or voter become particularly important in shaping relationships, at least initially. Similarity (homosociability) breeds comfort and trust under conditions of uncertainty, such as with a new leader. Familiarity through experience seems to make followers draw upon interactional experience rather than upon prior belief systems and stereotypes. Nonetheless, implicit or unconscious bias can enter and shape the leadership relationship.

This bias derives from ideology and belief systems that are embedded in national and global cultures and which can filter perception. These ideas reify and become interpreted as concrete reality, a fact of the material world, which can become self-filling as individuals act upon these ideas, beliefs, and realities. Of course, the ideational slate is not a tabula rasa devoid of power structures. Persons who embody categories shape the ideas with power and political meaning. The ideologies, beliefs systems, cultural norms themselves are products of hegemonic power relations, and experiences of persons interacting with them. For example, the question, "Do any top-level positions seem to be reserved for white people?" elicited an affirmative answer from 90 percent of people of color interviewed compared with 37.5 percent of white respondents ($p=.003$). People of color often quipped, "All (or most) of them," whereas whites were likely to focus on the meaning of "reserved" and/or point to the simple empirical fact of

overwhelming numbers of whites being reflected in white's overwhelming presence in top offices. Clearly, the ideas of people of color and whites have been shaped by categories each embodies and the power and political meaning attached to those bodies.

Figure 1 about here.

It is within this embedded environment that an individual leader attempts to lead. In order to produce accurate and complete knowledge about diversity public sector leadership, the categories themselves must be examined and the consequences of various layers of embeddedness must be considered. Several levels of analysis are needed. And always, power structures, dynamics, and relationships must be central to interpretation and explanation. At no place has the intersectionality critique been stronger than at the level of categories.

From Single and Static to Dynamic and Provisional Categories

The “problems of categories” and the differential knowledge produced from various epistemic starting points may be the easiest aspect of the intersectionality critique to grasp. It may also be the easiest to address methodologically and to call into question normatively as Dvora Yanow (2003) has done so magnificently in her exploration of “category making.”

Perhaps the most prevalent problem with categories is that gender, race, and other categories important to intersectionality usually are treated as static. As a result, research presupposes knowledge about the category itself, which often mobilizes bias, stereotypes and unconscious bias, and results in evidence blindness (Hawkesworth 2006). Women and men become discrete categories for sex, which we “know” because we have learned about males and females as socially constructed men and women who live their lives in relationship to social prescriptions for gender. In terms of evidence, we can know little about how each person *actually* practices gender from the box she or he checked on a job application, survey, or by “eyeballing” an interview subject (Yanow 2003). Race is affixed by “blood” (Stevens 1999), phenotype, or by “telling an identity” (Yanow 2003), and so on. Static approaches fix persons into single simple constructed fictions (Junn 2007), often found in unitary research (Hancock 2007), which takes analysis one category at a time. Static approaches also importantly assume unity within the category (all women are the same, all Blacks are the same), regardless of cultural experience or complex identity. And through fixedness, static approaches often turn a category into causality, thereby undermining the possibility of transformation (Hawkesworth 2006, 174). Gender roles, for example, are ascribed and hence solidify the reification.

Dynamic categories in contrast recognize that the meaning of gender and race categories change continuously, through situation and experience, as well as according to whom acts and interprets. Dynamic approaches recognize tensions within categories (race and ethnicity for example, or Latinas with different racial and national origin backgrounds), as well as among those presumably of the same category; (e.g., individual white women occupy very different political locations). Gender is not lived as an “average,” so should not be studied as such (Burns 2007, 140). Methodologies that assume dynamic categories search for differences within categories and changes over time and space. These methodologies pursue when, why, and how categories rise or fade in prominence, along with how meaning surrounding the category changes. They may employ static categories in initial analysis, but treat them provisionally and contingently (McCall 2001; Junn 2007). Instead of simple and static categories, research must recognize fluidity and complexity, even if it starts with singular and static categories for certain well-defined and finite purposes. Having staked a strong claim on dynamic categories, the

research question and process may recommend exploring categories in search of additive (gender plus race) effects, multiplicative effects in which race, gender, class, etc. magnify effects in separable but mutually reinforcing ways, as well as an interactive effect in which the combination of elements is qualitatively different than those produced either by addition or by a magnifying effect. To leave the entire toolbox open to probe in all of these ways can be thought of as a “intersectionality-plus” version, which often proves useful in comparative research (Weldon 2006: 242-4).

Good research then examines the specifics and the interrelatedness. It examines how particular morsels of each add up, because a single snapshot misses inequalities (Burns 2007: 105). It is designed to discover ways categories magnify problems and take on qualitatively different forms, to sort out which is operating, when and why, how original assumptions missed the mark, and how the same phenomena can produce multiple interpretations—even within a categorical group—given one’s body, experience, and relationship and interaction with the situation in question.

Three additional cautions figure prominently in using categories. I start with the problem of *mutual constitution*. To focus on a single category is to overlook ways categories produce and constitute each other. First, certain categories have more power, so white constructs black, men construct women, and so on. While the weak can resist, and do have some agency within power constraints, to a great extent embodied power means certain categories construct other categories. Second, one cannot know men without women, black without white, rich without poor, and more complexly white men without Black men. It is not possible to know one category without the others, because the very construction depends upon opposites or at least “others.” So while it is wholly possible for one human to be white, Black, Hispanic, female and lesbian, to understand any one of these categories generally requires its opposite referent. Politically and empirically, we tend to categorize in binaries. Yet, the dynamic interrelationships confound simple categories.

Barack Obama, for example, African and Caucasian “by blood.” This fact has caused consternation about whether he is African American and what it means to be African American. It further has highlighted the contingent nature of these categories as the public debate has sorted epistemic distinctions among genetic, cultural, experience, and identity aspects of race. Importantly, this debate has helped highlight the relative willingness of both the white and African American communities to place him in these categories, to claim him as one of their own, or not. While less prominent in the mainstream (i.e., white dominated and targeted press), it also underscores a simmering dilemma among Americans of African decent about the relative social capital of those whose history is that of the slave experience compared with voluntary immigrants who often come from elite classes. The debate has revealed schisms within communities based upon ideology and beliefs. Not all whites recognize Obama’s whiteness, given racist beliefs in white superiority and the tradition of the “one-drop” of blood rule. It also has surfaced the power location and capacities of whites to catapult him to the forefront of Democratic candidates in contrast to the much weaker position of African Americans to shape and curtail his celebrity status.

This example highlights the second problem of *assumed equal political agency*. When using static categories, especially in quantitative and rational choice analysis, individuals must be assumed to possess equal, and hence interchangeable, political agency (Junn 2007, 129). Without this assumption of an abstract and interchangeable individual, most such research is not

possible. Yet, this very assumption negates the social context of power relations, which shapes the capacity and lived experience of these individuals (Junn 2007, 130). It also obscures the way preexisting organizations and institutions shape political action (Burns 2007: 116), due to institutional gendering and racing, as well as what makes sense to individual actors in terms of actually using the political system for their own ends (Burns 2007: 119). If individuals' lived experience makes the political system irrelevant or even dangerous, then these individuals' political agency cannot be treated as interchangeable with, say, political elites and gatekeepers. Good research must make sense of these individual differences and must do so in ways that recognizes differences over time and space. These features of agency, system salience, and power relations figure prominently for understanding diversity public sector leadership.

The third problem follows from treating categories such as gender, race, class, or sexuality as *parallel*. Especially in policy, parallel treatment often sets up competition among categories, which thereby limits the policy design often to the detriment of both categories (Hancock 2007, 66). Because this approach usually looks for the independent effect of each category, one may overshadow others and negate their importance (Junn 2007, 129). No *one* category accounts for everything, and because categories are mutually constitutive, parallel treatment masks potentially important qualitatively distinct intersectionality effects (Wolden 2006). Perhaps more fundamentally, parallel treatment tends to encourage these categories to be thought of as quite similar, whereas processes of race and gender are specific yet interacting (Hawkesworth 2006, 214). Gender distribution is ubiquitous in U.S. society, for example, while racial groups tend to be clustered into enclaves. This divergence in political location creates very different dynamics. Further, race has always been recognized as a prominent issue in U.S. politics, while gender inequities have been largely invisible (Burns 2007: 105). At a minimum, any parallel treatment must be undertaken within a larger research design of intersectionality-plus or it risks asking the wrong questions and creating the wrong solution.

Keeping Power In View

While intersectionality categories may all result in disadvantages in political leadership, given white, male, (professional class) hegemony, they manifest quite differently in terms of scope, history, visibility, etc. (i.e., time and space). Importantly, hegemonic processes set the norms of normal, the standards of merit, the accepted practices and ingrained assumption. As a result, to even recognize that whites, males, and high-status classes are themselves part of intersectionality paradigm is difficult precisely because power advantages. The category of gender is assumed to be about women and not men; race about Blacks (and maybe all people of color) and not whites; sexuality about homosexuals and not about heterosexuals; class about the poor and not the rich; and so on. In terms of studying diversity leadership, to keep power relationships in sight at all times is essential. While any one of these categories of analysis might prove more important in some circumstances than others, related power will be in play, even if it is in watching power shift over space and time.

So, how might these insights be applied to the study of public leadership?

Illustrating the Intersectionality Paradigm in Diversity Leadership Studies

Attaining the right evidence for the right questions is essential for the intersectionality paradigm, because conventional political science methodologies too often result in the wrong questions, either for understanding diversity or crafting policies to end inequality. They may

also not illustrate diversity public sector leadership well. However, good research could be a matter of employing the right conventional methodologies, but in a way that addresses the question at hand, and especially to the right starting point. If we are to approach topics that involve more than a homogeneous group of individuals, then we also need a starting point which recognizes diversity leadership is marked from the conventional study of leadership by the adjective *diversity*. That such marking is needed reveals a great deal about conventional leadership studies by highlighting what it is not about. A primary task of diversity leadership in the public sector is to embed the study into its institutional arrangements and to keep power in view. I begin with the simple illustration of the problem of single categories with Figure 2.

This descriptive representation was calculated from 11 editions of the biennial and comprehensive state sourcebook, *The Wisconsin Bluebook*. Positions for full leadership include the top-three singular political appointees—the cabinet secretary, deputy secretary, executive assistant—as well as the lowest patronage posts—the division administrators—and the senior executives from the classified civil service positions, including deputy or assistant division administrators and bureau directors. Unless vacant, each position was counted once in every *Bluebook*, with the sex and race of the incumbent recorded. Given the fluidity and contingent nature of these categories, it is important to note that state administrative rules forbid human resource staff from releasing the sex-race data of individuals; therefore, these categories come from long-term agency employees who “knew people.” If the key informant did not know the sex and/or race of an individual, I would follow up with others in the agency who might know. In other words, the sex-race category of individual was determined by “known” identities of each person (i.e., eyeballing and told identities) rather than official categories and records. Important also to note about the provisional nature of these categories, if any a person claimed one or more race/ethnicity beside Caucasian, they are designated only by their primary nonwhite race in the first analysis. Their whiteness disappears. As part of the interviews, I encouraged respondents to choose as many racial categories as they wanted. Several chose more than one. These data do not reflect that option.

Using very simple and conventional descriptive data, figure 2 illustrates the orientation toward this agency, the Wisconsin Department of Revenue, that emerges from a 20+ year measure of sex and a similar measure of race. Quite simply: over 20+ years of a single (and incomplete) measure, 30 percent of full leadership has been women and 70 percent has been men. In terms of race, 86 percent have been white and 14 percent various people of color. Given the 86 percent whiteness of Wisconsin according to the U.S. Census (2005), 14 percent people of color is exactly representative, although 30 percent of women falls substantially short of women’s proportion of the state citizenry, the state workforce, the state employees. Note that my reporting sex here masks what the race pie chart shows in more nuanced terms, because the latter does not operate simply as a binary, such as people of color. African Americans have held the lion’s share of these posts, followed by Asian Americans, with Latino/as, Native Americans having only 1 percent representation. In terms of diversity and public sector leadership, looking from the vantage point of anyone but whites suggest limited representation overall, and close to none in two categories.

Figure 2 about here.

Figure 3 uses the same data again, but this time works with additive categories of sex and race. From these data it is not possible to discern the nature of the challenges faced by individual leaders here. However, at least by this measure, we can now see that no Native-American

women, Asian-American men or Hispanic men have been part of this agency's full leadership over these 20+ years, which can be expected to have some effect on potential followers from these categories lower in the organization or in the citizenry. We also can anticipate that the first leaders from these categories will encounter particular experiences from followers because they are the first. While not possible to know from these data, the cabinet secretary was a Black man, the first to hold this post. Interviews elicited comments about his "first" status from all of the 12 agency members who were interviewed.

Figure 3 also assesses these same data for positional power. It uses a simple calculation of multiplying the number of times a person of a particular sex-race category held a position by the hierarchical rank of that position. Cabinet secretaries receive six positional power points and bureau directors receive one point, with others distributed by rank in between. Table 1 reports these data in numeric form, which makes seeing the changes easier. Over this time span, in the particular space of the Wisconsin Department of Revenue, Caucasian men have lost the most power, seven percentage points, and Caucasian women have gained the most, four points. African American men have also gained twice as much as African American women, but at two percentage points to one, these differences may not seem worth reporting because they are so small. However, given the "morselization" of disadvantage that accumulates in an additive manner and which magnify the inequalities faced by women of color, this small difference may have larger ramifications in the intersectional lived experience of these women leaders (Burns 2007). On the positive side, Latinas gained a morsel also. Other sex-race categories either stay the same or are nonexistent.

In a comment on common methodologies and meaning, the changes among positional power and people of color are so small as to not be suited for tests of statistical significance, but the meaning of these changes was seen as very significant for many respondents. The fact an African American headed a "money" agency broke with stereotypes, according to many in DOR and across state agencies. Respondents across state agencies attributed great meaning to a Black man leading a functional area that is both critically important to the state (revenue) and not commonly associated with African Americans. People of color interviewed especially commented upon its importance. Additionally, one Black man who had recently entered DOR believed that he would "have a fair shot at moving up" because of the embodied categories of the secretary. For many white respondents, who were nearly apologetic about how "white" the agency has been, the relatively large proportion of people of color in leadership represented progress. Interestingly, during a follow up conversation, an agency respondent offered an extended and unsolicited comment about ways she was particularly happy with the new cabinet secretary, who also happened to be a Black man. The conversation focused on style differences, and not at all about race, which suggests that four years' experience with a Black man at the helm had normalized this leadership option, at least for this classified (job protected) administrator. Much meaning can exist in public sector leadership despite small morsels of change.

Figure 3 and Table 1 about here.

Figures 1 and 2 considered diversity and the cumulative proportion of agency leadership and positional power, visually presenting the size of the pie each subgroup has held, along with a simple measure of hierarchical authority. This piece-of-the-pie-image suggests the meaning a member of subgroups may ascribe. Based upon a belief that demographics relate to substance, citizens could use these visible leaders to assess their chances for adequate substantive

representation. As suggested above, agency employees may use top leadership characteristics to gauge the likelihood they can move up into leadership posts themselves. For example, the interviews indicate that, after a period of little upward mobility, white males again seem to feel that posts will not automatically go to persons in categories other than theirs, because “enough” people of color now hold top offices. This cumulative approach captures the experience of long-term employees and the attentive public with diverse leaders in the agency. Such experience is important theoretically because experience leads to first-hand knowledge, which tends to override stereotypes. In fact, interview respondents frequently cited experience with women leaders (most of whom have been white in Wisconsin state government generally) as a reason for changes in a variety of aspects of public leadership for women. These include amounts of power women are seen as holding, trust in them by followers, how hard they must work to be taken serious, and the like. A cumulative measure speaks to meaning by individuals involved and processes of gender (and race) transformation public sector leaders.

The way data are displayed also should be considered in the study of leadership. Figure 4 illustrates how different approaches to organizing and presenting data can matter in several ways for what knowledge can be conveyed and gleaned. It captures the full sex-race leadership of DOR at two distinct time periods, rather than cumulatively as did prior figures. Triangles represent males, circles represent women; a letter indicates their racial category and marks people of color. Several changes are obvious between the two time periods. First, women constituted 19 percent of top leadership in 1985 compare to 57.7 percent in 2005, nearly a 39-percentage point increase. Proportionally, women moved from minority to majority conditions in DOR’s full leadership at the 2005 time period. Second, people of color move from one person, an Asian American woman, to 26.7 percent of the top leadership, including the secretary. Four of five official race categories are now represented and the 25 percent benchmark for a critical mass has been exceeded. In other words, the full leadership has become much more diverse over time and the difference is stark when presented in two time points.

The image, of course, provides a sense of these numbers but does not make them readily known as a table would do. Instead, the figure has been designed to make the minority individuals stand out, consistent with Rosabeth Moss Kanter’s classic article on tokens, “A tale of ‘O’: On being different in an organization” (1977). The triangle and circles shapes were deliberately selected in order to convey the potential and expectation of gendered styles in public sector leadership, akin to the “triangles” of Frederick Taylor and “webs” of Mary Parker Follette in gendered leadership approaches (Newman and Guy 1998). Circles are rare in the near-homogeneous conditions of 1985, whereas a viewer—citizen or employee—sees a full gender mix in 2005, with perhaps a single cluster of males. The token person of color in 1985 stands alone, obviously. In 2005, people of color distribute across leadership, although some bare spots and clustering are also obvious. Quite intentionally to suggest the feelings people of color report, Caucasians are left as the “white space” norm while people of color are marked to stand out from the norm. Further, the representational image offers an option for a person to claim more than one racial category. In this case, the image denotes the one person who claimed both white and Asian racial categories during her interview by using a small “a” rather than the “A,” which designates Asian American. This way of presenting data also employs different size triangles and circles on an organization chart arrangement in order to indicate ordinary bureaucratic hierarchy and positional power differences. Finally, comparing the two time points shows the growing complexity of the organization, with more divisions and another layer of

hierarchy. In short, this way of presenting data conveys a great deal of information; especially about the organizational space and changes in the way diversity occupies that space.

Figure 4 about here.

In a provisional start to analysis, Figure 5 provides one more glimpse of intersectionality using official categories. It considers the top three office holders in the agency, the secretary, deputy secretary, and executive assistant as measured by the number of months each held the position. These three positions are exceptionally important symbolically and in their formal authority. Further, they are commonly referred to as “the top three,” which suggests all in the agency confer a particularly high status upon them, a meaning that is shared across Wisconsin state government generally and confirmed by quantitative measures in the interviews. Finally, these data are more complete than that of the full-leadership measure, because they include every body that officially held the office; all official categories are known and come from an authoritative and official source; and the data count the categories by each month, thereby assuring all incumbents have been included. Therefore, the accumulation of embodied categories in these high offices is quite precise. The time period begins in January 1985 and extends to April 2007, 268 months. It is interesting to compare these data to that of Figure 2 & 3 also.

As is quickly apparent, women and men in top leadership positions are approaching parity over time. In the first pie chart of these top, gubernatorial-appointed posts, women have occupied 40 percent of the top leadership space over the 268 months included here. In other words, as measured by a single fixed category, women are doing quite well, better even than the 30 percent of the full leadership found in Figure 2. This suggests governors’ appointments have been important to changing the gender power structure of public sector leadership.

The second pie chart compares to the full leadership in Figure 3, measuring positional power using the same hierarchical positional power score, according to the time each race-sex category has held it. In this representation of the data, I have decided to not “clutter” the chart with sex-race categories that have had no members in these top posts, largely because there are too many of them. Of the 10 possible combinations of the five official categories, with one for each sex, only three combined categories have held these top posts: white men, white women, and Black men. In other words, no women of color have held any of the top-three posts in the last 22+ years (or ever), and for men of color only Black men have had access to top positional power. White men have garnered 52 percent of positional power, or a bit less than of the full leadership, but still a majority during this time period. Of course, it was higher in earlier times. Black men take a somewhat larger portion of the positional power pie than African American’s six percent of the state’s population might suggest (U.S. Census, 2005 data). Yet in terms of power, all this Black positional power has occurred since 2002, and despite many of months in office, only two men have served, although they have done so as cabinet secretary. While their numbers are very small, they have held the top post with the most positional power.

This sex-race-positional power arrangement has existed for over five years. What this means to individuals involved in leader-follower dynamics, for interactions among persons’ experience in embodied categories, changes in the agency and in power cannot be discerned from these data alone. Interview questions—both forced-choice attitudinal measures and open-ended questions—suggest little sex or race (singular categories) problem in the level of trust of this secretary because he is a Black man. People of color in the agency especially, nonetheless, observe that he has been subject to high levels of scrutiny and a need to prove his competence.

Still, these findings bode well for diversity and perceptions of leadership potential regardless of race. For gender, because culturally top leadership has been greatly gendered toward the masculine, with the data from the study we cannot gauge followers' perceptions of the leadership potential of Black (or other nonwhite categories) women in this powerful post. We can still use this information as a starting point to investigate more fully and carefully. Figure 5 about here.

To Study Diversity Leadership: Person, Position, and Political Location

Like intersectionality research, leadership is about relationships and interactions, between leaders and followers, and among all of the power elements at play in a given context. Therefore, much as Nancy Burns (2007) calls for a "theory of political context" derived from analysis that incorporates individuals, institutions, and context, leadership requires both leaders and followers (individuals), and it always takes place in a context. In fact, the dictate to consider individuals, the institution, and context has long been part of leadership studies and the gendered institutions literature. (Usually both assume leaders' organizational or institutional conditions are an important part of context that must be considered.) The full circumstances of a leadership situation, including importantly the type of positional authority and the nature of the task, matter a great deal for a leader's capacity and success. So do the types of persons involved, because trust, credibility, and comfort are key ingredients of leadership dynamics, and followers with limited information rely heavily upon "likeness" or homosociability in developing trust and comfort or granting credibility. As detailed above, the salient categories of individuals involved must be considered in intersectional research such as that demanded by the study of diversity leadership. So too must the gendering and racing of the institutional arrangements be considered. But for leadership, situations and contingencies are grist for study, because leadership itself inevitably reflects and attempts to shape that context.

Toward the end of better research, I suggest a framework suited for generating less partial, more accurate knowledge about diversity leadership in the public sector. It accords with public administration's insistent that public management attend to the environment, although this approach attends far more, and gives much greater agency and credence, to leaders and followers than its most parsimonious and prominent current rendition of public management (Meier 2007). It includes attention to **persons** involved as leaders and followers, the **position** and elements of its institutional domain, and the **political location** of the leadership context as it is situated in space and time. These three domains correspond roughly with the call for multiple levels of analysis by Burns (2007) of individual, institution, and context. It also accords well with the multi-method and interpretive approach of a well-chosen organizational case that enables investigation of the complexity of oppression (Hawkesworth 2006). Its very complexity flies in the face of the political science norm of Newtonian science in search of parsimony and arguably fits much better with the emerging field of complexity science (Ma 2007), which itself is more akin to historical institutional traditions of political science than behaviorism. The intersectionality(-plus) approach to diversity leadership fits readily with some aspects of historical institutionalism, including the gendered and raced institutions approach, and the demand that research call into question the neutrality of institutions, interrogate the norms of public institutions that have been rooted in masculinism (Duerst-Lahti 2002; Chappell 2006), and explore the gender and race structures that operate along with the power relations in play (Weldon 2006; Junn 2007). Ideally such research will be useful in endeavors to make public

institutions better “guarantors of democracy” (March and Olsen 1989; Duerst-Lahti 2002a), by establishing rules and practices for themselves that promote diversity leadership and public policies that diminish inequality (Hancock 2007). While doubtful that any one study can attend to all of these features fully, certainly more than one element can be explored simultaneously and all studies can remain vigilant about its own assumptions. Because these domains are mutually constitutive, accurate knowledge demands all domains receive at least some attention (Junn 2007). Certainly also, such research can be undertaken with sufficient authenticity, fittingness, auditability, objective confirmability and applicability so as to satisfy the evaluative criteria of epistemic communities for high quality empirical research (Schwartz-Shea 2006, 94-96). Figure 6 provides a heuristic to explore aspects of diversity leaders study. Figure 6 about here.

Although the domains person, position, and political location proposed in figure 6 accord generally with the common political science units of analysis—individual, institution, and context—the epistemic roots make them quite distinct in orientation. The former derives from critical theory, feminist theory, and critical race theory while the latter draws from positivism and behavioralism. As a result, although the object of the gaze—the unit of analysis—may be the same human being(s), part of government, and situational aspects surrounding them, assumptions differ greatly. As detailed in the critique above, most behavioral and large N research requires individuals to be interchangeable in terms of political agency. While it disaggregates these individuals by categories, in general to explore race variables, it holds other categories constant and assumes all within the race category is the same, to explore gender it makes gender static and holds race constant, and so on. Individuals do not stay as one person but rather become a set of characteristics each of which can be studied separately. Institutions are similarly assumed to be neutral, and context to be quite fuzzy and difficult to study systematically and scientifically because it is too difficult to reduce to meaningful variables.

Within the proposed framework, person(s) remain whole and must be studied in relation to other domains because these domains shape the person. It is assumed that a person inhabits a body and the characteristics of that body matter for what each person knows and how they relate to other aspects of public sector leadership (Jaggar and Bordo 1989; Butler 1993). It also assumes that despite overlaps in bodily characteristics that those characteristics cannot guarantee either the same experiences or the same interpretation of them. Instead the “lived body” and “lived experience” of life in that body become critically important (Moi 1999; Young 2005). This vantage point provides a means to understand the subjectivity of going through life in a particular society. While Toril Moi supplants gender with the concept of lived body, Iris Marion Young retains gender as an important concept for “theorizing social structures and their implications” (Young 2005, 19). Of course an individual’s beliefs shape what is perceived as perceptual filtering processes pass bits of perceptual data through cognitive stores of the mind to produce meaning. In general, only unusual circumstances jar the mind out of ordinary filtering processes. As a result, the adage “seeing is believing” turns on its head and instead, because of ideological perceptual filtering, “believing is seeing” usually sets meaning (Lorber 1987). This perceptual slight of hand is particularly true in establishing meaning in politically charged areas such as gender, race, class, and sexuality.

In terms of diversity and public sector leadership, stereotypes and expectations have been found to shape perceptions of events according to what is believed about a leaders’ attributes, including a combination of race and partisanship of both the leaders and the perceivers (Nelson,

Sanbonmatsu, McClerking (2007, 416). To understand diversity leadership through an intersectionality paradigm, the persons' lived bodies, lived experience, and the beliefs they hold, matter and must be considered. Each mutually constitutes other aspects of persons. Through persons' perceptual processes meaning forms. That meaning becomes central to interpretations of public sector leadership.

Position is a comfortable concept in political science and public administration. We all grasp formal positions and formal authority derived from institutions. Through methodologies such as organization culture studies and 'soak and poke,' we even are quite willing to acknowledge informal organizational power, structures, and practices. The discipline has been less willing to acknowledge that U.S. institutions are not neutral for gender, race, class, and other salient categories. Elsewhere I have developed a means for determining the gender ethos or gendering of an organization based upon its function, history, social demography, formal and informal structures, rules and practices (Duerst-Lahti 1987, 2002, 2002a). Critical to all of these elements is power and ways gender power operates inside public sector organizations (Duerst-Lahti and Kelly 1995). In short, because is socially constructed and not "natural" to a body, gender need not be tied to bodies. As a result, the military can be readily understood as a highly masculine institution whereas elementary schools tilt strongly toward that which is associated with females, and hence can be thought of as imbued with feminality. Institutions are gendered (Acker 1990, 1992). Public institutions also, as Mary Hawkesworth (2006) has so well documented, can be studied for their racing-gendering. This racing-gendering affects leadership.

Above I discussed ways in which interview respondents reacted to the fact a Black man held the top post in the Department of Revenue because unlike, say welfare or urban planning, tax collection is not a functional area associated with African Americans. It has been "raced" toward whiteness, although culturally we probably would believe Asian American could also collect and dispense revenue well. However, of the agencies I studied (Workforce Development; Health and Family Services, Natural Resources; Administration; in addition to Revenue), Natural Resources had the fewest people of color in the full leadership of any agency. Interview respondents offered two main explanations: the agency's functional areas of hunting, fishing, and environmental protection were not of interest to them and racism among white hunters in the state discouraged people of color from wanting to work for this agency. The Department of Administration also proved exceptionally limited to nonwhite persons in top leadership (one in 22 years, the current cabinet secretary). Interview respondents quite plainly stated that the dearth was due to the fact it is considered the most powerful agency in the state (commonly known as "the department of all"). The more frequent explanation from whites, however, is that too few people of color pursue the advanced training required by most professional jobs in the agency, and those who do can take better jobs in the private sector where they earn more money and suffer less derision from the public. Good research on public sector leadership must be able to undertake systematic analysis of institutional gendering and racing and consider ways that gendering-racing enhances and impedes diversity leadership.

The final domain of figure 6, political location, insists that contextual elements be incorporated into studies and that leaders be situated in time and space with attention to both. Political location is not meant to identify a concrete place, although it could, such as propinquity in office space near a governor. Instead it suggests a metaphorical spot in place and time, a positioning vis-à-vis historical circumstances (e.g., slavery), or a more immediate political place such as an election cycle, or a breaking news story. Hillary Clinton's location as the first

woman to be deemed a frontrunner candidate for president interacts with her location as a former first lady, seat in the Senate, and stance on the war. The political location of all presidential candidates, for example, will shift if U.S. troops withdraw from Iraq before the election. Certainly their tasks as leaders would change with such a withdrawal and the voter-followers in the presidential election will take such a changed situation into account. In other words, political location suggests circumstances that take on prominence (salience) or evoke strong emotion (valience) through processes of reification. These circumstances can be exceptionally volatile, waxing and waning quickly. Yet, leaders must respond to these reified elements and their political location constrains how they do so because followers react accordingly. For example, the interviews suggested that connections to the governor provided a particularly strong political location from which to operate. All managers in the agency knew which top leaders had a strong and deep relationship with the governor and when they did not. Because such elements shape leadership, they always need to be considered. (Please note that unlike the other domains, the exact elements of political location may vary by situation.) Although the concepts political location and political context overlap considerably in meaning, context tends to incorporate everything to which it is related, including especially institutional arrangements, which is important to separate in leadership studies. Arguably, the concept of political location better evokes the reified meaning that seemingly fleeting and ephemeral political circumstances take on.

Diversity Public Sector Leadership, Intersectionality, and Political Science

In his 2006 presidential address, Ira Katznelson focused on “political science in age of fear” (2007, 3). Due to his emphasis on a need for study with adequate scope, historical context, links among institutions, rulers, and citizenry, specificity, and most of all, power, I suggest that the critique he makes of fear could apply as readily to inequality. If so, his call to shift the discipline’s understanding of its purpose become commensurate with the intersectionality paradigm. By applying intersectionality approaches to public sector leadership, the discipline could improve in many important regards. While public administration already takes seriously a need to have its knowledge be useful in the world of policy and governance, it could advance equality better and work to improve governing institutions through diversity leadership.

Katznelson observed imperatives of leading scholars during post WWII political science, stating

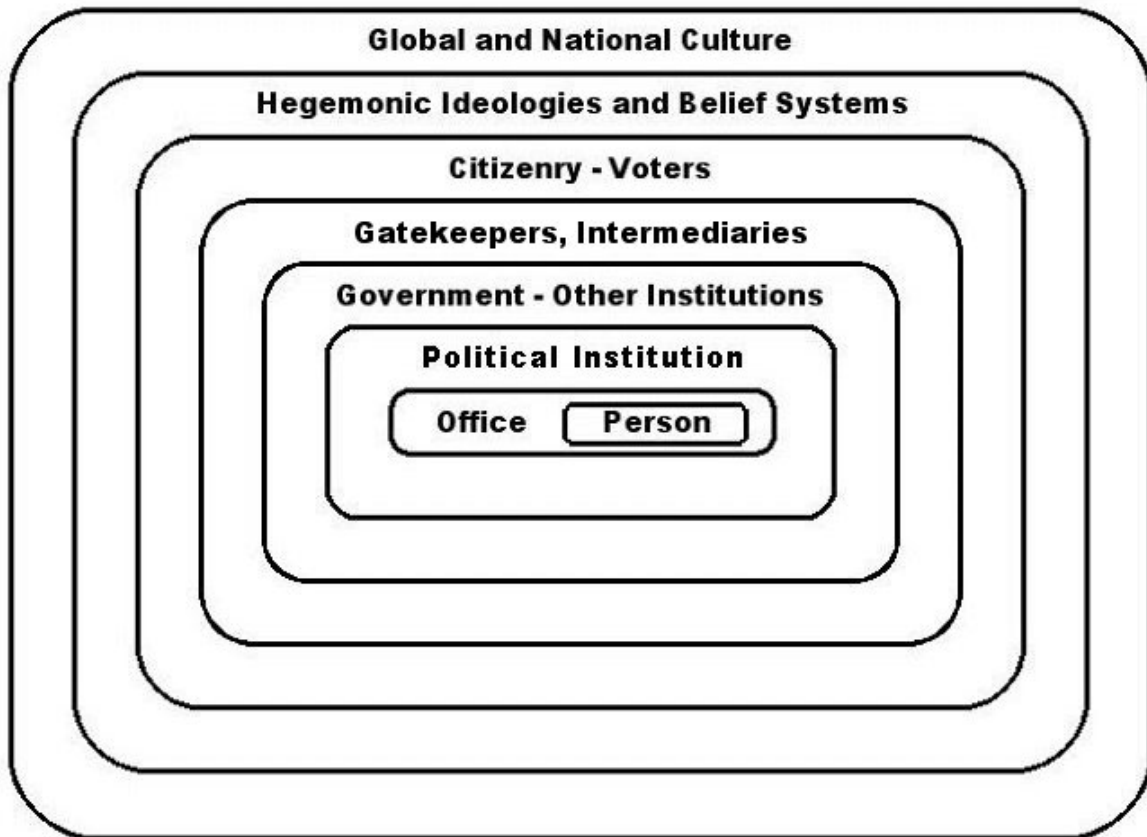
“They knew, in short, that any separation of the study of power from the study of the state made little sense, for political power is exercised and defined in contests about sovereignty, normative legitimation, and the contours of key institutions...The most bracing work from this period also consider power as integral to the analysis of inequality and stratification, and as an indispensable tool for understanding and evaluating contemporary democracy“ (Katznelson 2007, 7).

Katznelson further observed the need for political science to serve as guardians who might ‘emancipate U.S. liberalism from naiveté, [and] stress the interrelatedness of experience and social background as a basis for unity (7). He also laments that subsequent studies have severed large-scale structures and institutions from analyses of power, and praises theories and analysis of Lukes, Gramsci, and Foucault who emphasize hegemony, the pervasiveness of power, and power’s capacity to determine human identity and subjectivity (8). Like Hancock (2007) and Junn (2007), Katznelson calls attention to studies that naively assume all individuals

have equal political agency and ignore experience and social background as differential basis for legitimate but dissimilar understandings of politics and how political institutions and the system work for people like them. Most of all, as with intersectionality scholars, he speaks to alternative subjectivities rooted in power that determine identity. By implication, he suggests that political science should better embrace scholarship on political identity, including its willingness to unmask power relationships that operate.

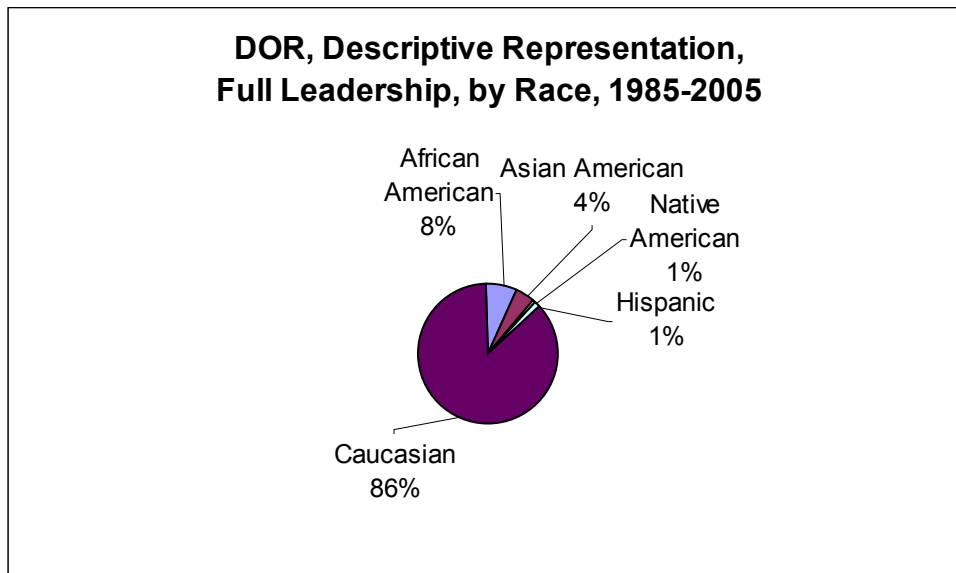
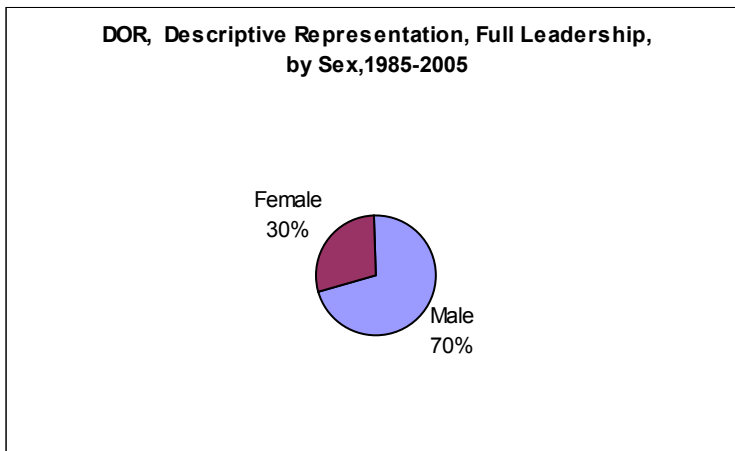
Finally, Katznelson highlighted C. Wright Mill's analytical approach that "wished to better understand how constraint and agency intertwined in each of its aspects by treating power as a tiered variable" (8). He ultimately calls for efforts to bring together "hard-headed studies" of states and their institutions with "the full range of scholarship on power, all the while being motivated to probe how institutions and policies within the ambit of liberal tradition might help us find our way to a more decent politics and society" (12). The intersectionality paradigm calls for an explicit purpose of generating knowledge that helps ameliorate inequality, and by doing so it also strives to construct a more decent politics and society. Leadership in the public sector is necessary for finding our way there. Diversity in this leadership will prove indispensable. It is hard to imagine how the polity could achieve these ends without more diverse public sector leadership. If the discipline commits to such a purpose, then it will only succeed if it embraces and incorporates the paradigmatic shift called for by intersectionality scholars. Let the study of diversity public sector leadership show the way.

Figure 1. Nested Forces for Public Sector Leadership



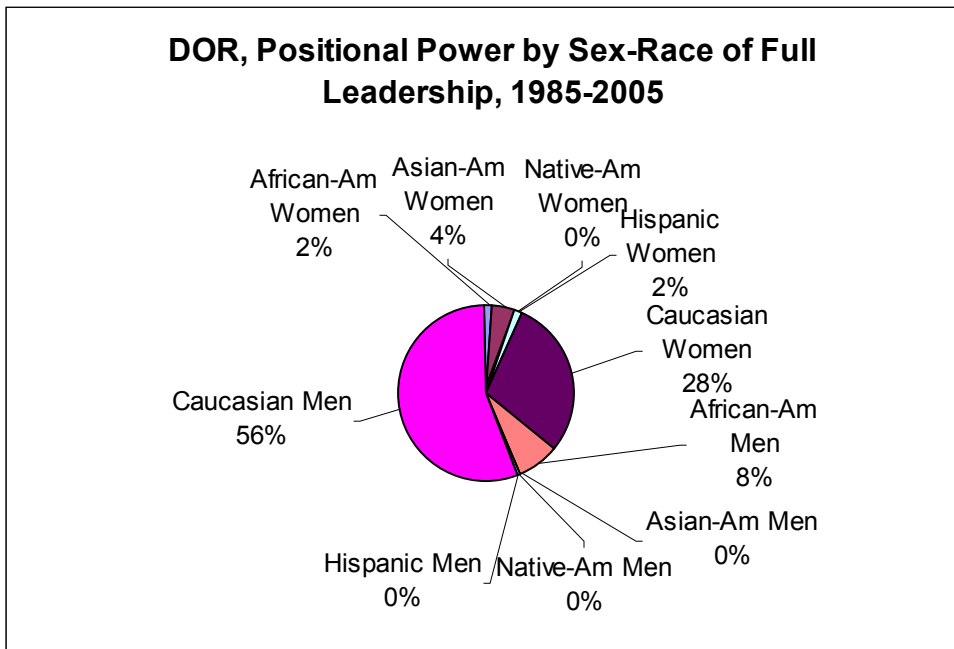
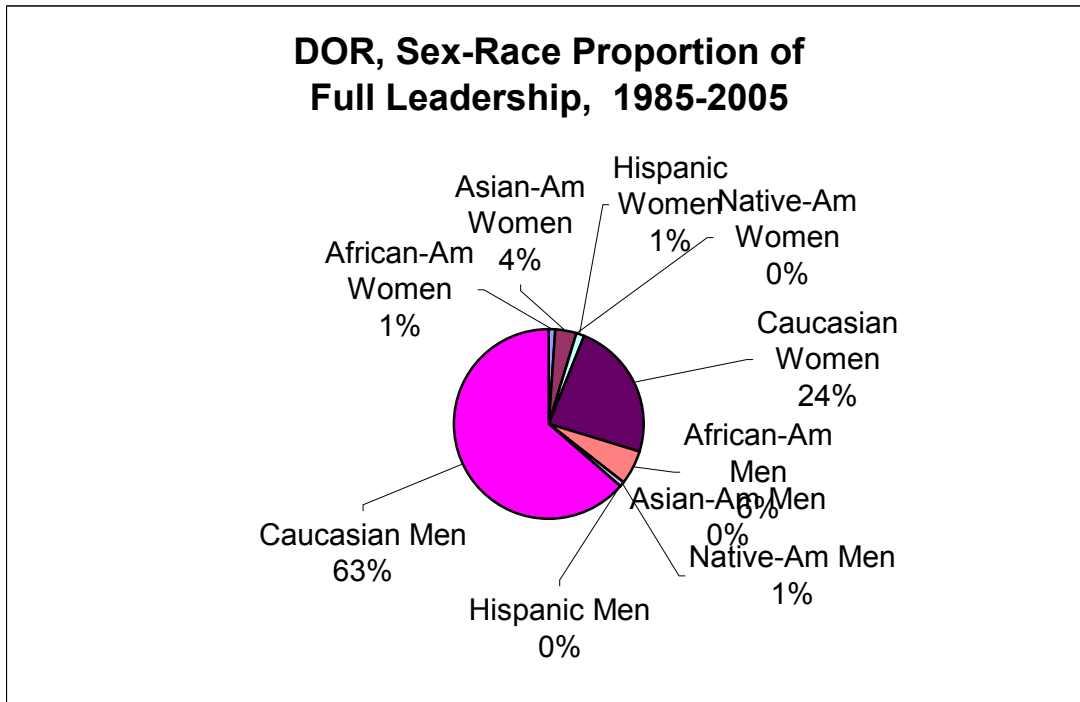
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Figure 2. Single category proportion of cumulative descriptive representation from 1985 to 2005



Descriptive representation was calculated from 11 editions of the biennial and comprehensive state sourcebook, *The Wisconsin Bluebook*. Positions for full leadership include the top-three singular political appointees—the cabinet secretary, deputy secretary, executive assistant—as well as the lowest patronage posts—division administrators—and senior executives from the classified civil service positions, including only deputy or assistant division administrators and bureau directors. Unless vacant, each position was counted once in every *Bluebook*, with the sex and race of the incumbent noted. The same person could be counted several times. Sex-race categories determined by “known” identities of each person rather than official data and categories.

Figure 3. Proportion of full leadership occupied by persons of each sex-race category contrasted with the proportion of positional power each sex-race type person occupied



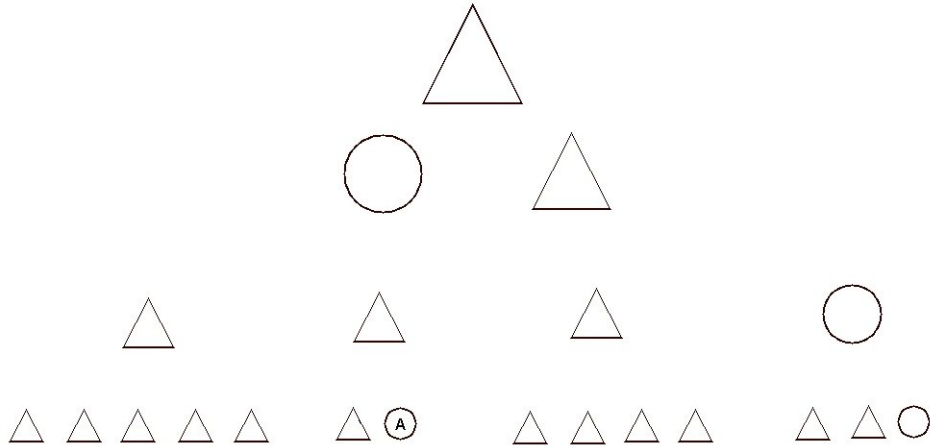
Descriptive representation was calculated from 11 editions of the biennial and comprehensive state sourcebook, *The Wisconsin Bluebook*. Positions for full leadership include the top-three singular political appointees, the cabinet secretary, deputy secretary, executive assistant, as well as the lowest patronage posts, the division administrators, and the senior executive from the classified civil service positions, the deputy or assistant division administrators and bureau directors. Unless vacant, each position was counted once in every *Bluebook*, with the sex and race of the incumbent noted. The same person could be counted several times.. Sex-race categories determined by “known” identities of each person rather than official data and categories.

Table 1. DOR Sex-Race Years v. Positional Power, 1985-2005

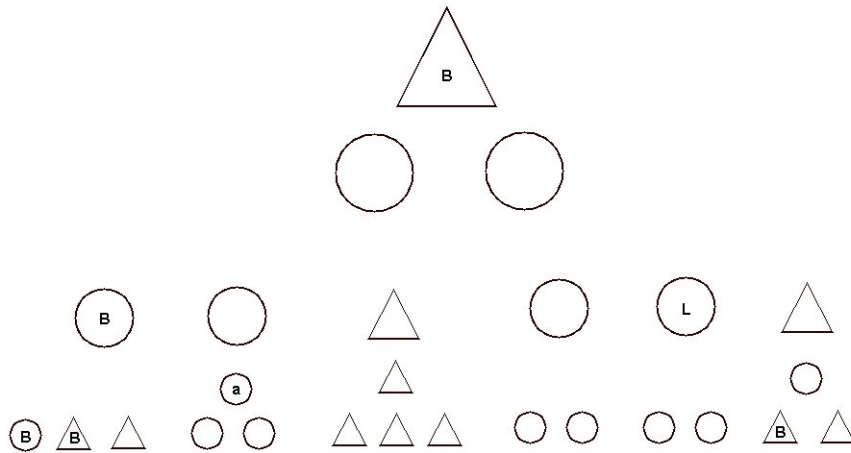
Sex-Race Category	# of position years	Power Score	% of Power	% position years	dif
African-Am Women	3	8	2	1	1
Asian-Am Women	9	21	4	4	0
Native-Am Women	0	0	0	0	0
Hispanic Women	3	8	2	1	1
Caucasian Women	59	144	28	24	4
African-Am Men	15	39	8	6	2
Asian-Am Men	0	0	0	0	0
Native-Am Men	2	2	0	1	-1
Hispanic Men	0	0	0	0	0
Caucasian Men	159	285	56	63	-7

Figure 4. Imaging Agency Diversity Leadership by Space and Time. Hierarchical representation of sex and race categories, cabinet secretary through bureau director, 1985 and 2005

Department of Revenue, Near-Homogeneous Condition, 1985



Department of Revenue, More-Heterogeneous Condition, 2005



A = Asian American, **a** = half-Asian American, **B** = Black or African American, **L** = Latino/a or Hispanic

Figure 5. Categorical Representations of DOR Top Leadership

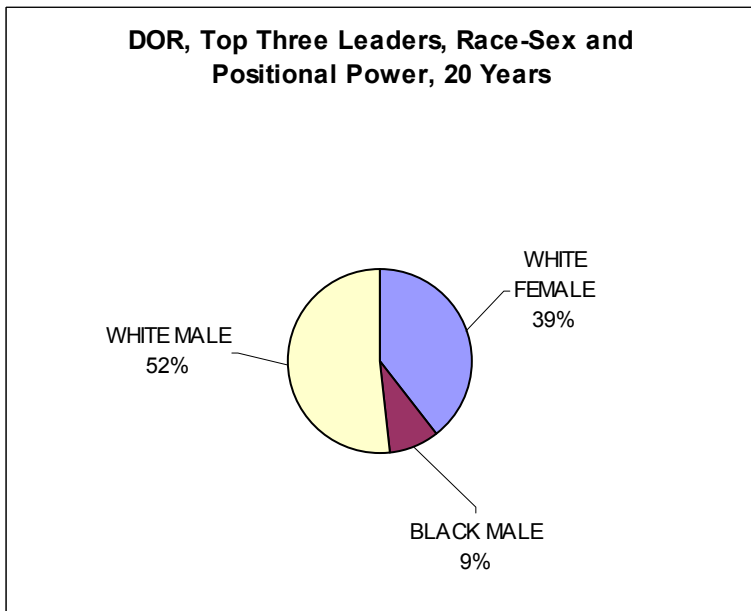
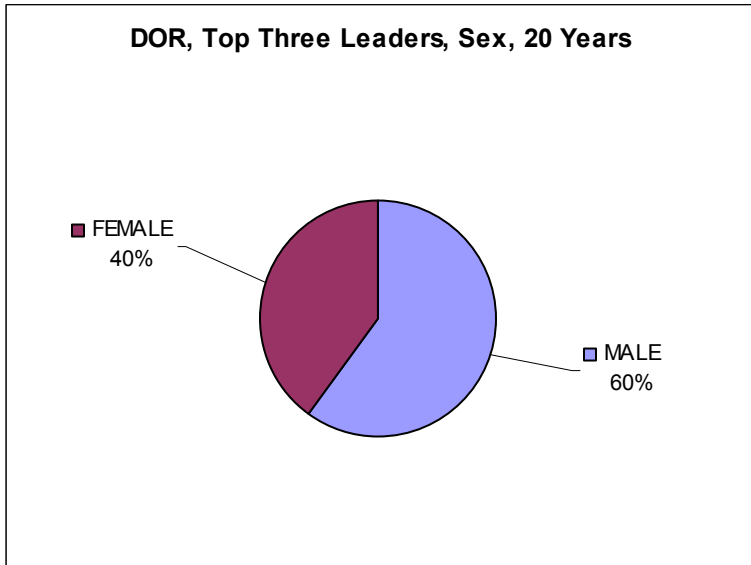
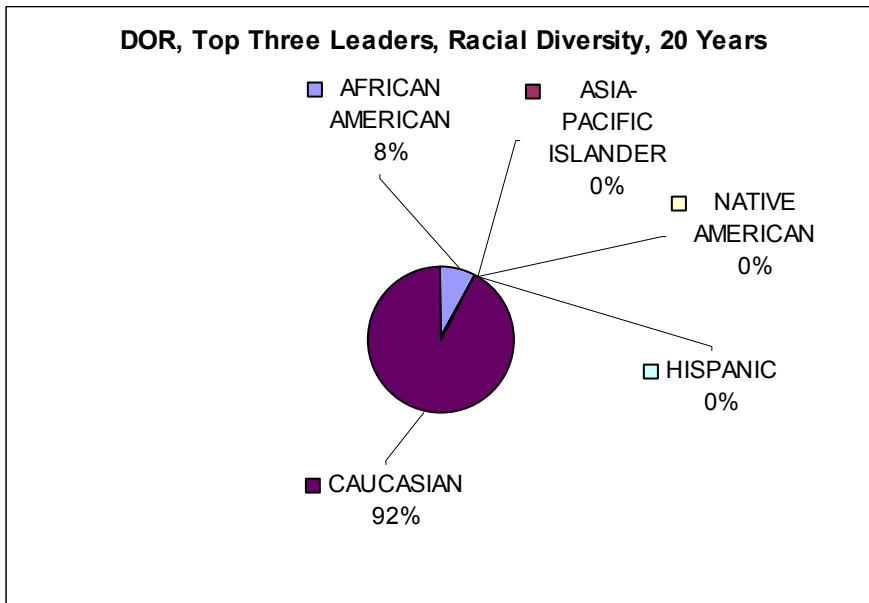
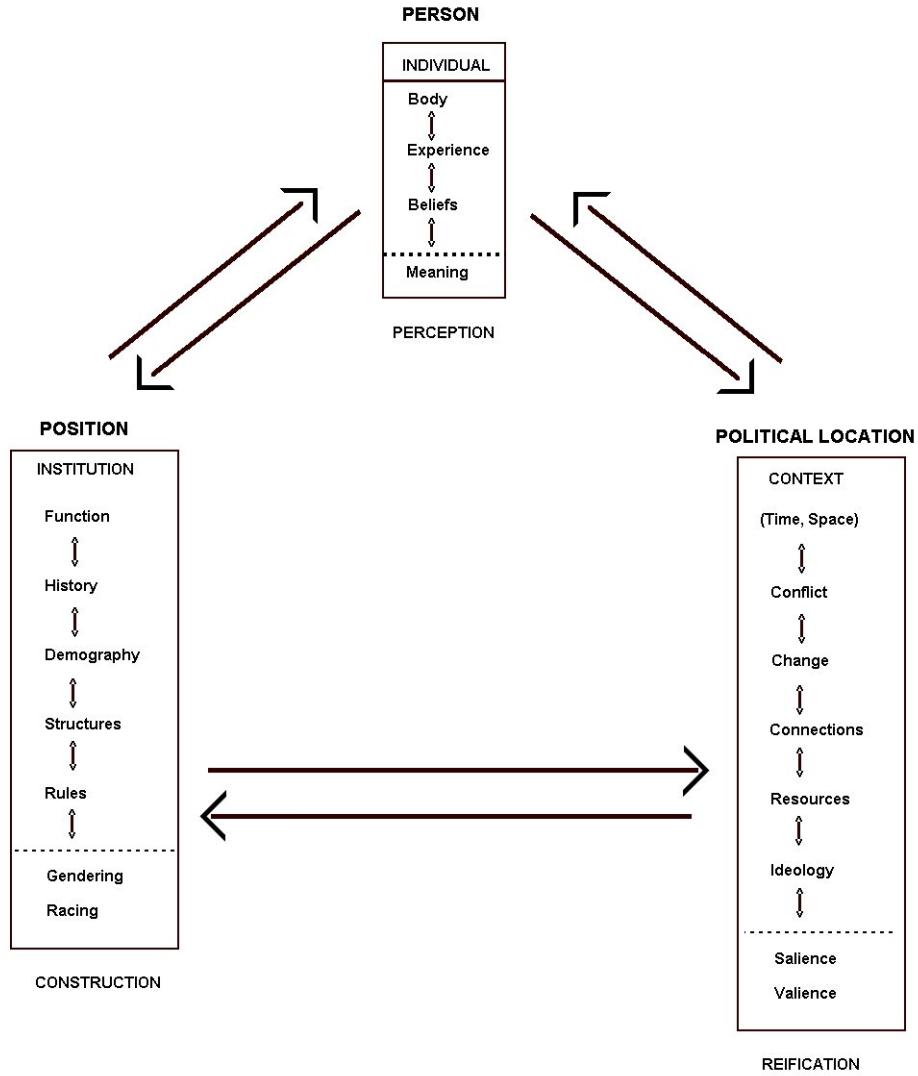


Figure 5 continued.



Proportions calculated from Department of Revenue Human Resources data according to the number of months a person with officially recorded sex and race/ethnicity characteristics held the position of Secretary, Deputy Secretary or executive assistant from January 1985 through April 1987.

Figure 6. Intersectionality Paradigm: Mutually Constitutive Public Sector Leadership Environment



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ⁱ Like Rodney Hero (2006), I use race and ethnicity interchangeably throughout. I realize the complicated constructions of these terms and do not wish to denigrate important differences in concepts.

ⁱⁱ Pippa Norris (July 11, 2006) and Kenneth Meier (April 13, 2007) in separate personal conversations claim to avoid the topic of leadership because they are not sure what it is given numerous divergent definitions. Meier also claims that leadership is "too fuzzy" for adequate measurement.

ⁱⁱⁱ I do little here to think about leadership itself because I too largely use office holding as a surrogate for leadership.