



## **Call for contributions to a new anthology on gender and humanistic management**

**Provisional title: Gendering experiences of work and management through a humanistic management lens**

**Editors: Christina Schwabenland and Dawn Robins**

### **Time for a fresh approach to gender and managing?**

Why do we need a new anthology on gender and management? Surely the field is saturated with over 50 years of theorising on the gendered nature of work? Is there anything new to say? We think there is<sup>1</sup>, and that is why we are calling for contributions to a new anthology within the Humanism in Business series (Palgrave Macmillan (part of Springer Nature) in association with the Humanistic Management Network.

### **Structural issues**

Firstly, we face those intractable problems that persist despite decades of research, policy and practice interventions. These include the gender pay gap, the overrepresentation of women in lower paid occupations and the under-representation of women in senior positions. What makes these problems so difficult to resolve? How can we rediscover some hope and optimism that positive, and long-term change for the better is possible? And alongside these structural facets of organising is the invisible presence of artificial intelligence; its potential impacts - for better or worse - almost impossible to conceptualise.

### **Changing societal issues**

There are many issues that are having profound consequences on women, men and gender diverse people at work. Some examples include the impact of Covid, which has been written about quite a lot, in the early stages of the pandemic but the longer-term consequences are still emerging. Changing patterns of working, parenting responsibilities for children whose education was, and still is disrupted, the increase in domestic violence – all these are leading to profound changes. And the increasing importance of artificial intelligence (AI) – how will that affect women, men and gender diverse people in the workplace – what challenges does this most unhuman of technologies, pose to the more ‘human’ dimensions of work?

### **More open questions**

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<sup>1</sup> E.g. <https://share.stanford.edu/education-and-outreach/learn-topics/gender-discrimination>, accessed 12/4/24

Thirdly, there are many new issues that are now being discussed much more openly, in particular, the relevance of embodied experiences in work such as menstruation, the menopause which, along with the challenges of early pregnancy endings, gendered experiences of identity, space and time are also emerging as important areas of research. New understandings of masculinities and the pressures on young boys, many being left behind in education and employment. Visceral hatred and violence is more visible and increasingly normalised in public discourse (as evidenced by attacks and murders of women in both domestic and highly public spaces).

And finally, there are the contested meanings of gender itself, which are becoming, in many countries, weaponised for political gain. The famous observation of Simone de Beauvoir, that 'one is not born a woman but becomes one' inspired a generation of important, and liberatory theorising, but is now a divisive weapon of contention, dividing feminist researchers and activists and serving to obscure shared experiences of oppression and marginalisation. What are the opportunities for allies and allyship?

How might an exploration of these gendered experiences using a humanistic lens bring new insights? Humanistic management is underpinned by three core precepts: unconditional respect for all living things, the necessity of ethical consideration in decision making and stakeholder engagement. Each of these tenets seems uncontroversial but presents complex challenges. We invite proposals for chapters that take up these challenges in any (and more) of the topics suggested above. We envisage developing the anthology through two workshops; one to help the editors to build and consolidate the proposal, and its underlying architecture, through a workshop-based consideration of the abstracts received, and a further themed workshops/ group discussions/co-inquiry between editors and potential authors. Each author will also undertake to offer peer reviewing within a community of writing practice.

Please note that we are seeking contributions from people in all walks of life – academia, practice, domestic. We imagine that full chapters will be between 5,000-8,000 words. Proposals should be between 300-500 words. We will run two writing workshops, one in the autumn to identify themes emerging from the abstracts and shape the proposal, and another in the following spring, on chapter writing. Participation in these would be voluntary and probably based in London, although consideration would be given to a hybrid format.

Please feel free to contact Christina or Dawn if you'd like to have a conversation before sending in a draft proposal

Proposed timeline:

Chapter proposals/ abstracts: deadline 1 September, 2024

Workshop 1: Autumn 2024

Proposal submitted; November 2024

Workshop 2: Spring 2025

Deadline for completed chapters: December 2025

Contacts: [christina.schwabenland@beds.ac.uk](mailto:christina.schwabenland@beds.ac.uk) or [d.robins@chi.ac.uk](mailto:d.robins@chi.ac.uk)