

CHAPTER 5

“INTERACTING” GENDER: GENDERED EMOTIONS AND METAPHORS IN SELF-MANAGING TEAMS

5.1. Introduction: Interaction as a Gendering Process

Gendered relations of domination, subordination, and resistance are enacted daily in organizational practice (Acker, 1990; J. Martin, 1992). All work, including teamwork, involves interaction through which gender relations become produced and reproduced, consented and contested. The main task of this chapter is to examine, using the theoretical framework of gendered processes, the various interaction processes in which members of self-managing teams engaged when working. After exploring the production and reproduction of gender divisions in Chapter 4, this chapter extends the analysis of gender in self-managing teams to the interactive processes that maintain gendered power relations. These gendering processes include the ways in which team members constructed the meaning of emotion displays, used metaphors to describe team interaction and relations, and how they consciously shaped their personas to fit the demands of teamwork.

With these foci, my presentation of findings loosely follows Acker’s (1992a) framework of the four gendering processes introduced in Chapter 1. Here I will address especially the last three of the four processes: “interactions between individuals,” “the creation of symbols and metaphors,” and “the internal mental work of individuals as they construct their understanding of the organization’s gendered structure of work and opportunity and the demands for gender-appropriate behavior” (Acker, 1992a: 253).⁴³

Social relations are an important mechanism through which gender inequality is reproduced in organizations (P. Martin, 1992 and 1996; Baron and Pfeffer, 1994; Wharton and Bird, 1996). Team members reproduce organizational gender inequality through interactional accounts, such as displays of gender appropriate behavior and talk (or discourse) (P. Martin, 1992). As the team members interacted with each other throughout the workday, they not only reproduced the norms of appropriate team behavior but, also, appropriate gender behavior. By using metaphors such as “family” and “football team” to describe teamwork they evoked images that entail assumptions of gendered interaction and tasks. In fact, I found that several team members--both men and women--talked about trying to ‘fit’ into the demands of gender-appropriate, as well as race-appropriate, behaviors and attitudes of the team. This suggests that their gender identities shaped, and were shaped by, their team membership.

Some interactional processes were visible while others were hidden to the team members. For

43 Although I organize the analysis on the basis of Acker’s four gendering processes, the lived experiences of team members did not fall into the theoretical framework so neatly. For example, the ‘internal mental work of individuals’ remains an elusive construct and is difficult to extract from the respondents’ accounts of daily practices. The following analysis therefore is based on the investigator’s (theoretically informed) interpretation of the respondents’ ‘internal’ processes, which may not always coincide with the respondent’s own understanding. In such cases, I make a point of discussing the difference.

example, some members were conscious of the demand of gender-appropriate team behavior; at the same time, others used the term ‘ideal team player’ without fully recognizing the gendered implications of trying to fit this model. The majority of team members were determined to dissociate themselves from any implication of gender. They often commented that being a woman or a man had nothing to do with the way they interacted in the team.⁴⁴

Interaction in teams was not a unidirectional gendering process. I found that team interaction could simultaneously challenge traditional forms of organizational masculinity and help weaken women’s ability to gain equal standing among their teammates. The dialectic nature of this process was apparent, for example, in the higher-level teams that empowered women on the basis of their (masculine) work role but marginalized them as (feminine) women.

Throughout this chapter, I use the three gendering processes (interactions, symbols, and identities) as an analytical framework to examine gender dynamics within self-managing teams. At times, I employ different combinations of them to understand and explain how gendered power relations were maintained in teams that, in general, were presumed to be egalitarian. Also, in examining women’s aggressive behavior or lack thereof, I go beyond Acker’s theory to better understand how some interactions that appear to subordinate women in fact entail an opportunity--and may even disguise a deliberate strategy--to resist gendering in teams. My intention, however, is not to pit Acker’s framework against another theoretical approach but simply to complement the former with a viewpoint that helps make visible both organizational oppression and resistance.

5.1.1. Gendered Textual Practices

Before I proceed to analyze team interactions, it is important to bring attention to the various textual practices through which organizations convey behavioral norms and expectations to their members. The implementation of self-managing teams is generally guided by managerial textual practices, such as team theories and models about efficient teamwork that set parameters for normative behavior, thereby also directing interaction in teams. For example, with regard to decision-making, guidebooks lay out models for an ideal process and contain advice for conflict resolution (Katzenbach and Smith, 1993a). Team theories thus propose what is acceptable and desirable conduct in teamwork and which behaviors members should avoid (e.g., Scholtes, 1988).

Managers use textual practices in ‘team-building’, that is, when they teach employees how to work as a (successful) team. As team members internalize (to varying degrees) the desired team behaviors, textual practices are integrated into normative team behavior and, thus, guide the members’ interaction. For example, by using gender-neutral and asexual discourse (Acker, 1990: 140), textual practices convey teams as gender-neutral units, thereby masking many assumptions about gender and gender relations that lie under the (textual) surface.

A discussion of textual practices is particularly important for the first part of this chapter--the analysis of emotions in teams. Therefore, I begin the analysis of emotions in teamwork by examining some key textual practices that, according to team guides, govern emotions in teams. I

⁴⁴ In fact, I suggest that gendered team relations were reproduced by the very process of team members avoiding a recognition that gender shaped their interactions. I return to the phenomenon of denying or discrediting gender as an organizing principle in the concluding chapter, Chapter 6.

then explore how members of the case-study teams constructed meanings of emotional expression and thereby either conserved or challenged traditional, gendered power relations (and sometimes did both). Throughout the analysis, I reflect upon the textual practices to illustrate how organizational masculinity and femininity are constructed both textually and interactionally. The remainder of the chapter explores the use of gendered metaphors (e.g., family and male sports teams) and the construction of gendered and racialized identities through maintaining an appropriate 'team persona'. I conclude the chapter by reflecting upon the egalitarian possibilities provided by interaction in teams.

5.2. Gender and Emotions in Bureaucratic versus Team-Based Organizations

Emotions and concerns of private life have been traditionally excluded from bureaucratic organizations as disruptions to objectivity and productivity (e.g., Putnam and Mumby, 1993). Assumptions of rationality and impartiality are codified into formal rules of bureaucracy that convey organizations as unbiased and gender-neutral. Hence, the exclusion of emotions from organizational life reflects the development of the modern bureaucratic organization to resemble men's lives and assumptions about masculinity (Halford, Savage, and Witz, 1997: 15).

Women's exclusion from organizational power is manifested not only by 'glass ceilings' or 'sticky floors,' sexual harassment, occupational sex-segregation, and the wage-gap, but also by the persistent separation of work and personal life, the "public" and the "private," within contemporary organizations (Reskin and Padavic, 1994; Parkin, 1993; Mills, 1993; Acker, 1990). Emotional displays constitute a mechanism through which women's presence in work organizations continues to be associated with the private and, as in the broader society, devalued (Acker, 1998). In organizations, women represent the "private"--that is, emotions and bodily functions (e.g., menstruation and pregnancy)--which threatens organizational (masculine) rationality and objectivity (Acker, 1992a).

In fact, the fundamental opposition between rationality and emotions/bodily functions can also be seen at a broader level, in the logic of the capitalist system. Acker (1998) argues that masculinity (e.g., the exclusion of emotions and bodily functions from organizations) is intertwined with the ways in which modern society privileges capitalist organizations. As a result, organizations are able to continue their "non-responsibility for human survival and reproduction:"

Non-responsibility consigns caring needs to areas outside organization's interests, and, thus, helps to maintain the image of ideal, even adequate, employee as someone without such obligations (Acker, 1998: 200).

Thus, masculinity and capitalism can be seen as a united force that excludes organizational responsibility for human, embodied lives, thereby strengthening the image of a natural fit between (non-emotional) men and organizations.

5.2.1. Textual Practices and Emotions in Teams

Contrasted with bureaucratic organizations, self-managing teams have introduced a 'new' approach to emotions in organizations. Self-managing teams encourage emotional expression and, thus, appear to represent a deviation from the more conventional, bureaucratic feeling rules (e.g.,

Hochschild, 1983) that discourage public emotion displays in the workplace. In this section, I describe three textual practices that guide teamwork: (I) the importance of emotions in teamwork, (II) “balanced participation,” and (III) the four-stage theory of team development. Various team texts document these norms of interaction (e.g., “balanced participation,” consensual decision-making), managers and consultants introduce them to organizations, and team members learn them in workshops. While team members may not have first-hand knowledge of these behavioral standards, I noticed during the interviews that most of respondents had at least an elementary understanding of how a successful team works and behaves (e.g., how the expression of opinion should be organized and how decisions should be made consensually). In general, most team members in this study were familiar with the basic tenets of teamwork, which shows that the textual practices that guide team behavior (including emotion display) had trickled down from consultants and upper-level managers to the team members’ collective consciousness. The following descriptions of each practice illustrate how emotions are viewed by management experts who write team guides.

5.2.1.1. “Emotions are important for teamwork”

Team guides commonly acknowledge the importance of emotions and recommend incorporating them into teamwork in order to facilitate decision-making, enhance cohesiveness, and increase productivity. For example, one guide on “how to cash in on the collaborative brain power of a group” (Kayser, 1995) encourages an open approach to emotions:

Don’t duck emotions in group sessions. I’ve learned that emotions are not something managers, team leaders, or team members are comfortable facilitating. ... Still, it must be done to preserve teamwork and collaboration. While you are never asked to agree with the emotions being expressed, you must never deny people the feelings they are expressing (Kayser, 1995: 12, author’s emphasis).

This piece of advice acknowledges both the difficulty and the importance of dealing with emotions. It encourages team leaders to be considerate and open about emotional expression among team members and, more importantly, refrain from evaluating them. In general, the “team movement” has brought to organizations various non-rational elements that, at this juncture, include managerial buzz-words, such as “emotional intelligence” (“EQ”) and “practical intuition.” For example, one popular guide on emotional intelligence claims that “a leader with a high EQ knows that two of the most persistent barriers to effective teamwork are interpersonal *reactivity*, on the one extreme, and emotional *indifference* on the other,” and that the key is to “see with the heart, not just the head” (Cooper and Sawaf, 1997:56).

5.2.1.2. “Everyone has a Chance to Express Themselves”

The second central idea in teamwork is to provide all members equal input in making decisions about their work (Scholtes, 1988). In team interaction, members should be able to freely express their opinions (even if the final outcome of the interaction seldom incorporates everybody’s ideas). What is significant, however, is that *all* members feel their views are respected. This is thought to intensify their commitment to their work as well as to their team (Meyer and Allen, 1997; Yeatts and Hyten, 1998). One team consultant describes this process as “balanced participation,” in which every team member “should participate in discussions and decisions, share commitment to

the project's success, and contribute their talents" (Scholtes, 1988: 6—18). Scholtes (1988: 6—18) also indicates that potential trouble can result if all team members cannot participate equally; for example, if some members have "too much influence [and] others, too little."

Finally, while team theories do not explicitly talk about equal opportunity for emotional expression, they do consider emotions to be critical for team success--emotions can make or break an effective team (Kayser, 1995; Parker, 1990). Thus, in an ideal team, all team members should feel free to express their emotions and are encouraged to do so to enhance efficiency.

5.2.1.3. "Emotions are an inherent part of becoming a team"

The third practice that describes emotions in ideal teamwork involves the notion that a free flow of emotions will eventually enhance team efficiency and, thus, belongs to the 'natural' development of a team. In other words, it proposes that, once team members have dealt with emotions and interpersonal conflict, they proceed to do 'real work'. This idea is best articulated in the theory of four developmental stages through which teams evolve toward maturity and increased productivity, the theory of "forming, storming, norming, and performing" (Tuckman, 1965). The four-stage theory proposes a universal sequence of development that describes, first, how a team comes together (forming). Then, by dealing with interpersonal conflict among members (storming) and, subsequently, coming to agree upon in-group behavioral norms (norming), a team finally becomes cohesive units and a "functional instrument for dealing with the task" (performing) (Tuckman, 1965: 396).

These four stages of team development originate from small group studies in the 1950s and 1960s (Bales, 1950; Tuckman, 1965), and the theory has since become a part of the canon of team management. One finds it in many contemporary team guides (e.g., Scholtes, 1988; Parker, 1990), and managers continue to use it in team-building activities. For example, the members of the Omni City County team were familiar with it and referred to it when describing the development of their team. The integration of these four stages into teamwork in contemporary organizations means that teams are encouraged--and even expected--to deal with the messiness of emotions and emotional expression in the "storming" stage. However, inherent in the sequence is also the eventual discarding of all (disruptive) emotions in order to reach the productive stage. For example, Scholtes (1988: 6—6) describes this as a process in which "emotional conflict is reduced as previously competitive relationships become more cooperative."⁴⁵

I suggest that these three practices reflect an ideal-typical team process which guides teams in dealing with emotions. As I examine the gendering of emotions, I propose that these textual practices constitute a gendered organizational "frame" (P. Martin, 1996 and 1997) that guides a

⁴⁵ Interestingly, the purpose of this process differs very little from the bureaucratic rules about emotions. Instead of offering a new way to deal with emotions in an organizational setting, teams allow members to freely express their emotions *in order to* cleanse themselves of emotions that could interfere with team efficiency. Furthermore, while team theories may not oppose emotions in the more conventional, bureaucratic way, they still view emotions as separate from productive work and as something less real (see e.g., Parkin, 1993: 175). In this respect, teams and team-based organizations are not that different from the bureaucratic organizations they are thought to challenge (e.g., Heckscher and Applegate, 1994).

team's interpretation of emotion displays in ways that often marginalize women. According to Patricia Martin (1996: 200), "an *organizational frame* directs members' attention and offers a set of rules and routine practices that members use as guides for appropriate action."

The process by which a textual practice becomes an organizational frame that guides team interaction and emotion construction can be, for example, the following. Team members learn that an ideal team process involves emotions as "storming," which, as I will show, highlights aggressive, masculine emotions. When team members interpret this originally textual practice as a behavior model, they construct a frame that is not only gendered in its emphasis on aggression (as culturally masculine emotion), but also is gendered in how it steers their responses to women's aggression. One result of this process may be that teams condone men's aggressive behavior as 'natural', while women's aggression is viewed as a gender-*in*appropriate emotion. While I do not claim that teams religiously follow the behavioral norms of team texts, textual practices do constitute one frame that teams use in constructing emotions.

5.2.2. Emotions as Gendered Processes

"Construction of emotions" describes the process by which team members interpret and bestow meaning upon each others' emotion displays. Self-managing teams may be distinctive in their ability to form (at least informally) their own interaction norms. The process of establishing norms concerning emotional expression occurs through team members' daily interaction: the meaning of specific emotions are communicated and adopted as team members do their routine work. By examining the construction of emotions, I show how a gender hierarchy developed in daily interactions even when everyone's emotions were theoretically equally important for getting the work done.

The textual team practices I have outlined above may appear, at first glance, gender-neutral. However, I propose that, as team members negotiate which emotional expressions are appropriate and which are not, gender is present the interpretation process. For example, when team members label masculine emotions as appropriate and feminine emotions as inappropriate for the team (Putnam and Mumby, 1993), that constitutes a gendering process which valorizes the appropriate emotions and those who express them (Acker, 1990; P. Martin, 1996). On the other hand, those who express--or are thought to express--an improper (or feminine) emotion are often disempowered and marginalized.

Many women and men may have learned to either appear non-emotional or tailor their emotional displays to fit the socially accepted expression norms at work (Thoits, 1990). Nonetheless, emotions continue to symbolize men's dominance and women's exclusion from power (Acker 1992b; Parkin, 1993), for example, through the social construction of some emotions as feminine and others as masculine. As I will show, in the team context, when women's emotion displays are labeled as irrational or disruptive, their work experience and organizational contributions become devalued and marginalized (Putnam and Mumby, 1993; Fineman, 1993a). Other gender-typed uses of emotions at work include, for example, when managers' assumptions that women are naturally better than men in handling others' emotions or that women display certain types of emotions (e.g., care, acquiescence) more than men. This kind of gendering of emotions reproduces women's organizational disadvantage as, for example, when women continue to be relegated to low-wage, interactive service jobs because of their presumed innate "people skills"

(e.g., Leidner, 1993; Pierce, 1995).

5.2.3. Emergent Emotions in Team Interviews

The following analysis of the role of emotions in gendering teamwork calls for methodological explication. Because Acker's initial (Acker, 1990: 146) outline of the gendered processes only briefly touches upon the issue of emotions,⁴⁶ I neither focused on emotions nor posed specific questions about them in my interviews. Regardless, the role of emotions in teamwork emerged in many respondents' narratives. Throughout the interviews, I became increasingly aware that emotions were being used by some team members to maintain gendered relations of dominance and subordination. Furthermore, the following analysis of emotions in teamwork is based solely on the respondents' (thus, second-hand) accounts of how emotions were dealt with in their team and not on my own observations.

It is, however, likely that the lack of emotion displays in the meetings I attended was simply due to team members managing their emotions while being observed.⁴⁷ Nevertheless, through their interview accounts I was able to learn about interaction, including emotions, in more routine team situations. Because I discovered emotions serendipitously, the data I present here describe the experiences of those individuals who brought up emotions as an issue. However, the fact that emotions emerged, unsolicited, from the interview data lends support to my claim that emotions constitute a gendering process in teams.

5.2.4. Organizational Status and Interaction

Although interaction in the case-study teams reflects the cultures in each site organization (J. Martin, 1992), analyzing organizational cultures exceeds the scope of this study. I will, however, contextualize interaction in each team by briefly describing their interaction and emotional climate.

5.2.4.1. Omni City County team

I found that the interaction patterns among team members was influenced by the organizational position of the team and the status of the individual members. For example, interaction among the members of the Omni City County team was influenced by the fact that most of them were

46 Although Acker (1990: 146; and again in 1992a: 251) does mention emotions in defining the concept of "gendered organization," it is not until later (Acker, 1998) that she emphasizes emotions as central in the gendering of organizations.

47 For example, this became evident in discussing the team meeting of one of the more emotionally open teams, the Omni City County team. One team member humorously suggested that they should "rent me to attend their meetings" because my presence had a calming effect on the interaction:

Because you were at the meeting, we didn't see a lot of it, but normally there is a lot more shouting going on in the meetings.

M.O.:YOU THINK MY BEING THERE...?

We were very professional. We got more work done without screaming at each other (Margaret, white woman, 54).

managers. In the interviews, most team members talked extensively about each individual in the team, which I interpreted to mean that they not only recognized the uniqueness of others, but also saw their own contributions to the team as distinctive. Regardless of their individual orientation, all members emphasized their mutual accountability to the team's influential client.

The City County members described their meetings as open and emotional with everyone passionately involved. Many described themselves as "strong personalities" who were assertive and liked to voice their opinion even if unsolicited. Discussions in meetings were heated, conflict-ridden, and at times hurtful. Nevertheless, after working together for a year and a half, the core members were convinced that they knew each other well enough not to mistake work-related disputes for personal attacks although their later comments sometimes contradicted that assertion. Nevertheless, the 'off-site' team meetings facilitated friendships among team members as they worked and socialized together for two to three days.

5.2.4.2. Motorcol Customer Support Network

Interaction among the members of the Motorcol Customer Support Network was less conflict-ridden than in the City County team, although many admitted that disagreements flared up at times. Because the team as a whole seldom dealt with the same client at the same time, team members formed temporary, cross-functional problem-solving groups based on a specific issue, in which they sometimes interacted quite heatedly. Opportunities for informal interaction during the work day included gathering around the office "middle table" to have lunch. Those who had their lunch together said it enhanced their work relations and brought informality and humor to their work day. Aside from some engineers who kept to themselves, most members said they were friends and some of them described their relations as "family-like" (two members were actually related).

The team's self-managing status gave the members a sense that they were entitled to voice their opinions. Those who had worked under traditional management practices praised their current ability to state their opinions and influence the way work was done. For example, the information group members had used their collective voice by successfully lobbying to fire a member who failed to "pull her weight." Overall, the team's functional divisions (information, engineering, and field service) also shaped the team's interaction. Compared to the City County team members' individual orientation, however, CSN members often referred to each other by the sub-group--for example, "the information ladies," "the engineers" or "the field service guys"--thereby revealing that this fragmentation also persisted in interaction.

5.2.4.3. Eastern Alliance Special Projects team

Because the Special Projects team members lacked a common team goal, their interaction was limited to casual conversations. Since each member was involved in his or her own separate project, team meetings were mostly informational and seldom led to serious disagreement. In spite of their solitary tasks, the members had developed friendships beyond the workplace and met frequently outside the office for drinks in a local restaurant. Furthermore, the close seating arrangement allowed informal discussion throughout the day. For example, Victoria and Mel had discovered what they called their "mutual love of music" and both of them talked about the positive influence of their friendship on their work relations. One day during my visit, the whole

team gathered together for a piece of cake baked by Mike, a team member. Many of them claimed that informal discussions around the coffee pot were also instrumental: they helped team members keep abreast of each others' work projects.

5.2.4.4. Eastern Alliance Employee Credit team

That the Employee Credit team members kept their comments to a minimum during team meetings was, among other things, a reflection of their top-down decision-making practice. While the team leader, Dianne, routinely solicited the members' views on matters at hand, it was clear that she and her supervisors made the final decisions concerning the team. Accordingly, team meetings were mostly informational and thus peaceful as the team members' role was mostly to ask questions and receive information. While the 7:30 a.m. meeting time may also have discouraged strong emotion displays, the quiet interaction was probably a result of the fact that the Employee Credit team had a clearly defined internal hierarchy with a team leader-manager who controlled interaction in the meetings. As one team member described:

I don't think I have ever been to a meeting where [we've] got into a shouting match...Dianne has never let it get like that (Chuck, white man, 25).

In general, the relations among the Employee Credit members appeared congenial as many of the women had worked together for years prior to joining the team. They often talked about their common occupational background and their age as a unifying factor among them. Many of them told me they were relieved that they worked with "mature adults" who were able to work in harmony and without resorting to personal attacks in stressful times.

To conclude, the interviews with the four teams suggest that a team's interaction was shaped by several features of the team: for example, the degree of self-management, tasks, the degree of accountability for successful performance, a common objective, and the members' professional and organizational status. These features often overlapped in the case study teams: the higher a team's organizational level and professional status, the greater its degree of self-management and accountability, and the more comfortable its members felt with confrontation and disagreement. With respect to emotions, the management-level City County team frequently experienced emotional outbursts in the true meaning of 'storming', while the lower-level team, the Employee Credit team, met quietly.

I have explained why emotions are important in team-based management and, especially, how emotions feature in self-managing teams. Members who work closely together and conduct their own meetings also face the challenge of dealing with various emotions. The next section explores how the case-study teams handled emotion displays and how organizational masculinity and femininity were constructed through expressions of aggression and tears.

5.3. Gendering through Emotions: Self-Management as Emotion Management

The case-study teams' responses to emotion displays did not follow the ideal-typical team process, but instead, teams appeared to be guided by traditional display norms that view emotions and productivity as being mutually exclusive. Although many team members recognized that they were allowed to show emotions in order to better reach their team objectives, the reality of the

intersecting 'old' and 'new' ideologies was confusing to many of them. On the one hand, open emotion displays were acceptable and an integral part of team interaction; on the other hand, emotions were not to interfere with productivity.

Bringing emotions to the public realm of the organization also confused some conventions about gender-appropriate emotion display. For example, one team encouraged women to be direct in their interaction, while another team attempted to control a woman's forcefulness. Also, some women were chastised for showing vulnerability, while others were called, often by other women, "cold" for not doing so. Yet others took advantage of the gendered emotion display norms in order to resist gendering and to achieve their own goals. Instead of showing vulnerability, many men continued to uphold the "unemotional" organizational conduct embedded in the bureaucratic feeling rules (e.g., Hearn, 1993). As I will show, the real life teamwork seldom resembled the team advocates' ideal team process. Emotions rarely enabled team members to overcome gender divisions and to develop the kind of team interaction the guides outline. Instead of empowering the members to proceed to 'real work', emotional situations reinforced traditional gendered power relations.

5.3.1. Gendering Aggression and Confrontation

A conflict situation is a gendered situation as women and men are culturally encouraged to resolve conflict in different ways. For example, a cultural ideal of femininity encourages women to withdraw rather than confront others. However, team guides often encourage open confrontation ("storming") and, thus, they implicitly support masculine behavior in disagreement situations and assume a masculine, and not a gender-neutral, protagonist. For example, when a team guide claims that "disagreements are to be encouraged and accepted as a *natural* consequence of dynamic, active organization," and that constructive conflict "serves as a release for pent-up emotion, anxiety, and stress" (Parker, 1990: 40-41, emphasis mine), it conveys a hegemonic masculine way of dealing with aggression. The release of emotions through conflict and disagreement concurs with masculine expression norms that permeate organizations. These masculinized organizational display rules discourage expression of fear, sadness, and joy while encouraging displays of anger and aggression (Hearn, 1993: 143). Similarly, Kayser's (1995: 15) advice for teams, that "any member present must feel free to confront the disrupter," presumes a disembodied worker who is comfortable with confrontation and, therefore, is most likely a man.

Team members across the case-study teams both complied with and challenged gender-appropriate emotion displays. Although the team setting was more permissive of open disagreement than many members had experienced before, opening the floor to disagreement sometimes led to inflamed situations and hurt feelings. More importantly, though, conflict situations invited members to 'do gender' (West and Zimmerman, 1987) through responding to them in gender-appropriate ways. For example, in team meetings, some women chose to withdraw rather than confront others. Sandra, a member of the Employee Credit team, described that:

I usually keep quiet about something I disagree with ... I tend to avoid arguing, and I think most anybody in that group would ... That's just my personality. I don't like controversy, really, and I don't like to argue... If it gets that extreme, then I would just kick back and say nothing if something's going on that I really didn't

like (Sandra, white woman, 42).

Sandra's discomfort with confrontation follows the cultural ideal of (white) feminine behavior. On the contrary, Paul, a member of the Motorcol CSN team offered an example of masculine conflict behavior from his previous experience with an all-male team:

I have worked in teams in the past... [Where] people resolved conflict primarily through dominance. I mean, if you could yell the loudest, your idea got across. In those situations, it was strictly a male environment. And you didn't have to be right to have your way; you just had to scream the loudest (Paul, white man, 37).

These norms, however, became exceedingly visible when gender-appropriate behavior was reversed, for example, by women engaging in confrontation.

5.3.1.1. Women and Aggression

The expectation of open disagreement was particularly confusing for women as they attempted to do gender--that is, behave as (feminine) women--and simultaneously meet the norms of organizational masculinity. As a result, women who described being direct and confrontational during team meetings were still concerned about appearing too forceful and possibly hurting the others' feelings. For example, Cynthia, a member of the Omni City County team, described her interaction as follows:

I'm an open book, and yet when I do display it [being candid], I walk out of there and I feel kind of badly because I've probably hurt some people's feelings. So you have to balance, "are we going to be candid or are we gonna not hurt people's feelings?" (Cynthia, white woman 48).

Cynthia's comments manifested a cognitive dissonance about being direct while trying not to hurt people's feelings:

I am very open, I am very candid, I am very vocal, and yet, there is not a meeting that I don't go to and say, "I'm going to shut up this meeting, I'm going to!" It's not me, it goes against my grain. But I do or attempt it just to see if it's, maybe it's me. [But it] just doesn't work because I have to speak up when something to me is so blatantly wrong or questionable or challengeable, I have to speak up... I see it manifested in the team that females are usually more compassionate. (Cynthia, white woman, 48).

Although Cynthia expressed herself "vocally" and "candidly," she had reservations about insulting others. Her hesitation concerning what constituted appropriate team interaction exemplifies a gendering process that Acker (1992a: 253) calls "the internal mental work of individuals" (see Chapter 1). This process takes place when people "consciously construct their understandings of the organization's gendered structure of work and opportunity and the demands for gender-appropriate behavior" (Acker, 1992a: 253). Although as a manager, Cynthia saw herself as legitimately vocal--and even unable to "shut up"--in disagreement situations (possibly because of her manager position), she doubted whether that behavior was acceptable for a woman.

Despite her organizational position, Cynthia was concerned that, on the one hand, it was *unfeminine* to express anger and, on the other hand, perhaps *too feminine* to express empathy and concern about others' feelings. The emotionally intense context of teamwork thus required her to carefully tailor her actions to fit what she believed was gender-appropriate behavior. In other words, she had to balance her public credibility with her private concern for others' feelings (see also Putnam and Mumby, 1993: 50). As Sherryl Kleinman (1996: 88) comments, "since 'woman' is already associated with the feminine, a woman who engages in emotion-talk gets a double dose of femininity and thus further delegitimizes herself."

Much like Cynthia's efforts to create an appropriate gendered persona, Shelley, a member of the Employee Credit team at Eastern Alliance had been working on a less aggressive interaction style at the request of her team superiors:

... I used to be one of the people when I was younger, who sat back and didn't say anything whether I agreed or not. ... I am so outspoken now. I've had to work because in some of my reviews, some of the comments made to me as an individual, by past supervisors has been that sometimes I come across, when I believe in my way of doing things, so forceful that sometimes it is a little overwhelming. ... Because of my supervisors' reviews, I know that I have to stop and think how I word some things (Shelley, white woman, 44).

Shelley's outspokenness had also drawn the attention of other team members.⁴⁸ One of them described it as follows:

I'd say Shelley, she draws everybody's attention, you know. You can tell just by the tone of [her] voice when she gets aggravated or something. Me too, me too; I am the same way. You can tell when I am not joking when I really do have a problem. ... You can usually tell if somebody gets aggravated. I mean Shelley's face gets red, Richard's face gets red; you can tell the way his voice goes up... Usually I can tell I'm upset when I hit the... [hits the table, laughs] (Chuck, white man, 25).

Shelley and Chuck both expressed their disagreement aggressively. However, it was Shelley who felt empowered to have a voice in the team, yet consciously attempted to control her "forceful" behavior (and had been asked to do so by her supervisors).

That the Employee Credit team's display rules guided women toward agreement and acquiescence rather than forcefulness and aggression also was evident in how another team member, Brenda, experienced the interaction in team meetings:

Sometimes it is stressful. Sometimes, you know, you just have to be very cautious about how you ask a question. You have to not let how you actually feel about a certain thing show through. Just find a way to ask the question, without letting

⁴⁸ In response to the question, "who talks the most in team meetings?," most Employee Credit team members named Shelley as someone who talks more than others.

anyone know that you disagree with the way something is being done or that you're just not in agreement with the way something's done.

SO THAT'S SOMETHING YOU SORT OF HAVE TO HIDE?

Yeah, I guess that's putting it bluntly. You do have to hide because you don't want to be perceived as being a trouble maker. Because you're not pleased with something, doesn't necessarily mean you're a trouble maker. But that's the perception that we had or experienced, I should say (Brenda, black woman, 42).

I contend that the gendered emotion display rules in the Employee Credit team reflect its status in the bank's hierarchy. Interaction in the female-dominated, clerical service team was tightly controlled by the team leader, which made deviation from traditional display rules difficult. As a result, both Shelley and Brenda attempted to avoid confrontation for fear of appearing as a "trouble maker" and were discouraged (directly or indirectly) from showing aggression and disagreement. On the other hand, Chuck's temper display, such as hitting the table, was more in line with hegemonic masculine behavior; it was considered acceptable and even "natural" (e.g., Donaldson, 1993), thus allowing Chuck to joke about it. This suggests a gendered process through which men's aggression was condoned by the team leader or, at least, it was not suppressed to the extent women's aggressiveness was. Furthermore, women were compelled to pay close attention to how to fit into the team's gendered display rules; in other words, how to disagree without appearing too forceful and to avoid getting labeled as a "trouble-maker."

Interestingly, contrary to Shelley's and Brenda's experiences in the Employee Credit team, the Motorcol CSN team encouraged its women members to be assertive. Those who were not outspoken enough were urged by the team coordinator to work on becoming more aggressive in meetings. Jean, a CSN team member, talked about how she had learned to be more outspoken with the help of the team:

Once I came up here, [in] my first review, one of the notes there was [for me] to become more outspoken and more aggressive. And Karen, on the next review, she said that I think you've got those two checked off. So I think that the team helps too, they won't pull you into a 100% at first if they know that you are kind of, you know, quiet and you gotta learn the processes before you can talk about it. So they give you, they give you time to learn that, but they expect you to learn it. Because after they feel like enough time has evolved and it's time for you to be able to speak out if you feel something needs to be said in a meeting. If not, then Karen might say something, not in front of everybody, but kind of take you up to the side or might mention it during your review (Jean, white woman, 24).

Jean's pursuit of greater assertiveness also shows how a team can concertively enforce its interaction norms. Even though Jean was notably satisfied with her new, aggressive team persona, her comments suggest that a failure to change might have negatively affected her job evaluation. The requirement of (masculine) assertiveness is embedded in self-managing teamwork as most team interaction relies on everyone being aggressive and outspoken, that is, willing and able to state their opinion. Examined from the perspective of job evaluation (Acker, 1989), this requirement presumes a team member who fits all these characteristics. The 'job' of a

team member may therefore be more accessible to a person who has internalized masculine emotion display norms. Although many women will fit the description, men are more likely to feel completely aligned with such a demand.

The experiences of the three women, Cynthia, Shelley, and Jean, illustrate that the context of the team shaped the way in which emotions were gendered. The teams' organizational level and occupational status shaped their gender dynamics and made possible a situation where one team encouraged women to tone down their outspokenness, while another team pressed women to be more aggressive. In Cynthia's case, her outspokenness was mitigated by a concern of hurting others, thereby revealing a conflict between the job-appropriate (in this case, masculine) and gender-appropriate (feminine) expression norms. These experiences also show that, although crafting a gender-appropriate team persona may even be empowering (as Jean's suggested), it nonetheless requires an effort to adjust one's behavior to a model imposed by--and serving--the management's interests.

It is, however, possible that the decision to either exhibit forcefulness or to refrain from it can be, especially for women, a conscious effort not only to adjust to the model of an aggressive team member, but also a deliberate strategy to get one's voice heard. The next section discusses an alternative (though parallel) way in which women's emotional responses, or lack thereof, could be reinterpreted as a challenge to the gender-appropriate interaction norms.

5.3.2. Aggression as Resistance

Another way to interpret women's expression of aggressiveness--or lack of aggressiveness--is to see it as a conscious adjustment of emotions to challenge gender-appropriate emotion norms and to draw attention by breaking them. This approach emerged as a resistance strategy as some women consciously used it in team meetings. For example, Ellen, a member of the Motorcol Customer Support Network, recognized that because norms about gender-appropriate interaction governed the meetings, deviating from these norms was an effective strategy to get her voice heard:

Clearly there are a lot of differences, and I think women are generally perceived as not as aggressive, which can some times be good. Because if you are in a situation where you need to be aggressive, you can lots of times take people by surprise and they'll really listen to you, whereas they may have just, you know if a man is just being his normal aggressive self, they tend to write that off and say, well, you know, that's just the 'Joe' or whatever (Ellen, white woman, 29).

In order to analyze Ellen's as well as other women's use of aggression (or, sometimes, their lack of aggression) in more depth I will use Joyce Fletcher's (1998) concept of "relational practices" that highlights the relational strategies women often use in workplace interaction. In a study of women engineers, Fletcher draws attention to the various relational practices in which women engage as part of their job but which "get disappeared" (i.e., they are invisible and therefore

unrewarded) because these practices do not fit the traditional definition of work.⁴⁹ She claims that relational practices are not only “overlooked in organizations, [but] they are systematically disappeared through a process in which they are coded as private sphere (i.e., feminine) activities that stand outside the definition of work and competence” (Fletcher, 1998: 181). By identifying four major categories of relational practice (each entailing several sub-categories and types), she documents organizational interaction that both enables and maintains organizational effectiveness. The four main types are:

Preserving : Relational activities associated with tasks, such as preserving the life of the project.

Mutual empowering : Relational activities associated with an other, such as empowering others to achieve.

Achieving : Activities associated with the self, such as empowering one’s self to achieve goals.

Creating team : Activities associated with building a collective, such as creating an environment conducive to team work (Fletcher, 1998: 169).

Relational practices is a useful construct to examine gender dynamics in team interaction and to make visible the relational, interactive practices women typically engage in teams. I employ “relational practices” here to highlight resistance in team interaction. In my view, Fletcher’s approach complements Acker’s broader framework by helping interpret the various microdynamics of gender and resistance. Viewed as a relational practice, women’s interaction emerges as actual work and not merely as a manifestation of feminine nature. Finally, because relational practices are not officially recognized--they are seen by organizations as individual characteristics or feminine ‘nature’--naming these practices challenges mainstream organizational studies. It also enables us to redefine women’s aggression (or non-aggression) as a deliberate strategy rather than a reaction, thereby giving them agency in the team narrative.

Reviewing Ellen’s comments above, she clearly engaged in the relational practice of “achieving” as she recognized the “emotional overlay” (Fletcher, 1998) of the situation and adjusted her interaction to it. Similar to Ellen, Fletcher found that women engineers in her study used rudeness in order to be heard in meetings:

I came to a realization that I was being rude in meetings...a lot...and I didn’t like it because it didn’t feel good. And I was pondering, why am I doing that? Because it doesn’t feel good, but I am still doing it. So there’s something else rewarding me. ... And it was the getting noticed. It was the easiest, fastest, simplest way to get noticed. And once you are noticed you get heard. But since it doesn’t feel good, I really want to find a way that is still effective (Fletcher, 1998: 172).

Another woman engineer noted that:

⁴⁹ The concept of “relational practices” overlaps with the notion of “emotional labor” (Hochschild, 1983). It describes the invisible and unremunerated emotional and relational tasks performed often by women because of their presumed ‘natural’ skill. Fletcher’s (1998) four relational practices emerged from--and also name--the processes of routine, on-the-job interaction among women and among men, and between women and men.

I think, sometimes, if you're in a meeting, and somebody states an idea. If I stand up and I say, "That's just plain stupid, this is what we should do" or if I stand up and say, "Well, that's a really good idea but another way of looking at it is this," the person who stood up and was abusive about it is the person that people are going to remember as having come up with that idea later, when it's time to evaluate the people. ... Because even though it's a bad impression, you've made an impression (Fletcher, 1998: 178).

The relational practice of "achieving" addresses (or, perhaps is a more concrete version of) two of Acker's (1992a: 253) gendering processes, "interactions between individuals" and "the internal mental work of individuals [to adjust to] the demands for gender-appropriate behavior." For example, that Ellen recognized the gendered emotion norms of the team and adjusted her behavior accordingly resembles Acker's concept of internal mental work to adjust one's interaction. However, Ellen did not attempt to conform her interaction to fit the team, but used it as a strategy to resist organizational gendering and to achieve her goal of being heard.

In Fletcher's study, the women engineers often consciously chose to avoid confrontation because it either made them uncomfortable or they believed that they could achieve their goal without resorting to aggressive behavior. In this context, Cynthia's comments above can also be revisited: Cynthia's confusion about being forceful but simultaneously feeling uneasy about hurting anyone's feelings could be understood as a conscious attempt to adjust her interaction style for the greatest effect in the team. This tactic was also used by Martha, another member of the City County team. She explained that she had consciously toned down her aggressive approach to attain her own goals and to increase the effectiveness of the team. She did not do that because she felt uncomfortable but because she saw that she could best achieve her goals through this adjustment:

In my opinion, it's a group of highly vocal individuals... I probably put the damper on my normal persona somewhat to be more effective on the team, you have to be more careful about playing out my role, accomplishing my objectives, which are their objectives plus (Martha, white woman, 36).

In fact, Martha admitted that she had had to change her interactional style from confrontation and aggression toward greater compliance for the sake of the team process:

I've figured out how to, not be as vocal as normally I would, which is something I work on anyway 'cause I always have an opinion, I process very quickly so I've had to manage that. And the team, for my personal development, it's been very good participating in a team because it's allowed me to practice what I know I need to work on, and to see an improvement... I have to, I really do have to monitor how I, it's better if my ideas come through someone else. See, and I'll tell you this, my objective is to accomplish my objectives through their objectives, and that's truly how I participate.

DOES THAT INFLUENCE THE WAY YOU WOULD EXPRESS YOUR OPINIONS?

Yes. And how that influences is very conscious on my part. That is, instead of being additive, further commenting on a point that's already made, I won't do that. And that's something I have always done, you know, just my little twist of something. Well, my question in the team is, what value does my statement that I'm getting ready to make add, not embellish or whatever. I consciously do that and I do that in all of the work groups.

HOW DOES IT FEEL TO YOU?

Oh, man, it's hard as hell. Hard as hell, but I know that to be successful--and I've been working on that probably for many years, but more so in the marketing organization. You know the City County team probably would be the easiest for me to focus at, you know, if I had to think where I practice that the most, it would be there (Martha, white woman, 36).

Martha was doing relational work by monitoring her aggressive expressions for the sake of the team and thus engaged in the relational work of "creating team" (Fletcher, 1998: 173). However, her (and others') relational efforts often "got disappeared" because they did not fit into the traditional definition of work (Fletcher, 1998). Similarly, Martha's teammate, Margaret, avoided responding to a sexist remark by her teammate in order to ensure team peace and, thus, was also "creating team:"

It's more of the old boys camaraderie. I mean, if this man says give me one more time, "Hello, lovely" I'm gonna kick him where it's gonna do him most good (laughs). But on the other hand, I also recognize that I have to be careful because I don't want to destroy the momentum of the team (Margaret, white woman, 54).

5.3.2.1. *Disappearing resistance*

Men in the City County team varied in their interpretation of the women's avoidance of confrontation. Some viewed it as typically feminine behavior rather than as a conscious effort to ensure an effective work environment. For example, Brad, the informal team leader, described Cynthia with a reference to feminine behavior:

...The critique of Cynthia was that she needed to assume a little bit more confidence in terms of her decision making. ... I think women sometimes, or few of the women [are], sometimes a little afraid to challenge, but it depends on who you are talking to (Brad, white male, 36).

Although Brad noticed that not all women were afraid to challenge, the fact that he did not consider Cynthia's style as a conscious effort supports Fletcher's claim of 'disappeared' relational work. It is also possible that for someone holding a position that both embodies and is completely aligned with the dominant organizational culture--such as, Brad, a white man and a team leader--the relational work of consciously avoiding confrontation disappears when it is interpreted as a feminine trait. Interestingly, however, someone in a more marginalized position may interpret a woman's non-aggressive approach differently; for example, as a conscious effort to foster

teamwork. For instance, Anthony, a black man who, despite his official role as the new team leader, considered himself an outsider in the team, described the way in which one woman (a new, ad hoc team member⁵⁰) steered the meeting toward her preferred outcome:

It was interesting the way she was able to move an issue 180 degrees from where we started, the issue on where the next meeting should be. The way she very tactfully addressed it, very eloquently spoke on the topic and the whole team decided to move, you know... She wasn't antagonistic but she laid the facts out... (Anthony, black man, 39).

Contrasted with Brad's comments, Anthony appears more insightful about the intricate interplay of power and interaction during team meetings (although he, too, sees emotions and facts as oppositional; I discuss this division further in the next section). It is possible that as a black man in a predominantly white male organization (at least at the managerial level), Anthony was familiar with alternative strategies of influence and, therefore, recognized the woman's subtle attempt to influence the course of the meeting. For example, in describing why he thought women often had to work harder than men, Anthony empathized with women as members of a minority group:

In effect, that comes from women as a minority, I can speak for this, [much like] a woman, I many times have to work twice as hard to have the recognition. Where if the project fell apart and it is not successful, women or minorities will be scrutinized a lot closer than if it were males that didn't succeed. I mean, I can ...and I know as a minority, and a minority, I think, in race or minority in gender that people are just [treated] differently (Anthony, black man, 39).

Teamwork may sometimes accommodate a broader range of women's emotion displays than traditional management practices. Although this encouraged some women, such as Ellen, to test the limits of gender-appropriate aggressive behavior, extending women's ability to express aggression did not necessarily foster egalitarian gender relations in a team. Using the concept of relational practices, I was able to go a step beyond Acker's 'internal mental work' and to provide a space for analyzing resistance to gendered emotions in teams. Having outlined women's ability to express gender-atypical forcefulness, I now turn to examine how teams dealt with men's emotional displays of gender-atypical vulnerability.

5.3.3. Masculinity, Vulnerability, and Tears

Team members often treated expressions of vulnerability as stereotypically feminine regardless of the sex of the person who expressed them. To be called "emotional" in a team signified that one was vulnerable and weak and, thus, associated with the feminine. Sociologist Jeff Hearn (1993: 149) claims that all human interaction entails "the potential for calling something 'emotion'."

⁵⁰ In chapter 3, I discussed the fact that the City County team had a number of what the core team called "ad hoc members." These members were not considered full members but were still welcomed in the meetings. The woman in Anthony's narrative represented the medical establishment in the team and also was a manager in the company. I did not, however, have a chance to interview her because she was somewhat hesitant to speak with me. I requested an interview at least twice but, referring to her busy schedule, she postponed an interview indefinitely. Finally, I did not push my request further.

Emotion can therefore be at the same time absent (that is, when something is not called ‘emotion’) and present (when something is called ‘emotion’). This social constructivist approach helps understand the gender politics of vulnerability displays in the case-study teams; in other words, why aggression was not labeled “emotional” behavior, but vulnerability and tears were.

Avoiding expressions of vulnerability caused confusion for both women and men who occasionally in team meetings found themselves in livid arguments that stirred in them not only anger but also tears. For example, Cynthia explained that although many women in the City County team engaged in fierce arguments, they also had to find a private place to recover from them:

We have strong personalities but I still see it manifested in the team that females are usually more compassionate, more [likely to] meet in the ladies room afterwards: “Are you OK?” (Cynthia, white woman, 48).

Because an open team confrontation excluded any expression of vulnerability, as Cynthia described, some women checked upon each other in what they considered a safe place for expressing vulnerability, the ladies room. The exclusion of vulnerability also revealed a masculine logic of the team meeting: the members were to endure adversity without a formal process in place to deal with their emotions; for example, a procedure that would help mend hurt feelings and bring the team emotionally together.

It is possible that men of the City County team also engaged in emotion repair; however, none of them talked about it in detail. A more likely way for some team members to deal with hurt feelings was to exit the conflict situation. Many of them talked about this kind of ‘problem-solving’ behavior. For example, several of them described a typical conflict situation:

There are some, you know, heated moments. People feel stepped on on occasion, react to that emotionally. There certainly are moments when there is confrontation existing. There are moments where people withdraw, I mean, all the normal human behaviors associated with any relationship are displayed (Bob, white man, 50s).

There's several tense moments, several tense moments. We have had people stomp off, we have had people quit, we have had very frank one-on-one ... (Brad, white man, 36).

We throw things at those meetings... People have left and stormed out. We've had instant breaks (Margaret, white woman, 54).

“Storming out” of the team meeting suggests that the City County team members were unable to handle the aftermath of the “storm,” for example, to deal with expressions of hurt and vulnerability. Gender was present and shaped this interaction: not only did women and men deal with feelings of vulnerability in different ways and in different spaces, but everyone was expected to exclude those emotions from the team meeting. This supports the claim that some emotions themselves are gendered feminine and thus fundamentally unfitting to the world of work teams. An example from the Motorcol Customer Support Network further explicates this point.

Similar to the City County team, the CSN members also deemed vulnerability and tears as inappropriate for team meetings. For example, one team member, Paul, noted that, although team meetings often resulted in a confrontation, it was inappropriate to express hurt feelings, anger, and frustration through tears in front of the team members. Instead of tears, a more appropriate way to express anger was to be forceful. Paul talked about how he and his colleague, Ellen, behaved in emotional team situations:

We [the team] have flat out arguments and that's where sometimes I get over that edge because I am used to dealing with things in that kind of way.

WHAT HAPPENS THEN?

Usually they [the team members] just sit there with their mouths open and look at me. But if I get really passionate about an issue, I might end up literally pounding on the table. . . Sometimes those arguments can get very emotional. Ellen tends to be very emotional in expressing herself. Once she gets to a boiling level, then she gets so emotionally distraught that she will end up shedding tears. She has a hard time when she gets to that point because what she really needs to do is go and get her composure and come back. I know, myself, there have been times when I have had discussions like that, where I get so emotionally distraught that I would get up and leave, walk around the building so that my eyes would dry up when I got back to the building. I had just enough self-control to get out of the building before it starts. And I have found my self in that position too, so I know how it feels.

WHAT COULD BE AN ISSUE THAT GENERATED THAT KIND OF EMOTIONAL...?

With mine, it's usually pure conflict. With me, it's when I get to an emotional state where I am shaking and I have tears welling up, that's ... that's a point at which I have become so frustrated or so upset about the futility of what I am trying to do (Paul, White man, 37).

Paul's comments reveal that aggression and forcefulness, such as pounding on the table was acceptable (an expression of "passion") while tears were to be hidden. Much like the women of the City County team, Paul also took his display of vulnerability away from the meeting which in his case meant walking out of the building.⁵¹ Furthermore, Paul's emphasis on self-control reveals a dominant bureaucratic imperative of rationality that rules out emotionality--as well as sexuality--as irrational and 'out of control' (e.g., Jackal, 1988: 48-49). That it was inappropriate for both women and men members to cry in front of the team suggests that tears are strongly associated with the "irrational," in other words, the feminine and the "private." As symbols of

⁵¹ Paul's behavior suggests that he did not consider any place in the Motorcol building private enough for displaying tears and, therefore, had to step out. Referring to the discussion on gendered spaces in Chapter 4, it also illustrates the construction of the physical workplace as a masculinized, emotionless public world that excludes, especially for men but also for women, behavior associated with the private life (e.g., Parkin, 1993).

irrationality, tears had to be excluded from rational, masculinized organizational conduct.⁵²

5.3.3.1. Masculinity, rationality, and efficiency

The dualism of “emotional” (i.e., irrational) versus “rational” also shaped team interaction and influenced the ways in which teams constructed and maintained norms of gender-appropriate behavior. Many team members interpreted emotion displays as either instrumental or disruptive to their work objectives. This polarization had an especially gendered meaning (Putnam and Mumby, 1993: 40) when team members interpreted women’s emotion displays as signs of irrationality, while labeling men’s emotions not only rational and legitimate, but also instrumental for the task.

Despite the team guides’ claim that emotions can facilitate the work process, the case-study teams aspired to rationality as the dominant mode of interaction. This approach privileged hegemonic masculine behavior and it was exemplified by team members condoning aggression as rational while excluding vulnerability as irrational behavior and a sign of weakness. The juxtaposition of rational versus irrational was most pronounced, again, in the one team that experienced the greatest emotional turmoil, the Omni City County team. In at least two instances, those who held powerful positions based on race-ethnicity and gender (white male members) were able to impose an interpretation of others’ emotions in a way that advantaged them. In the first example, Anthony, the black *de jure* team leader, described how the crafting of an appropriate team persona involved a careful maintenance of an image of strength and rationality:

People make these one liner strikes, strikes that you gotta be prepared for to make your one liner strike back, otherwise I feel you are gonna come across looking weak. I knew there was something in the meeting I said the other day, [to which others responded:] “Don’t be defensive!” Well, I am not, you know, I am not, you know, I am not. You’ve got to make a response back otherwise you feel like you’re going to fall. I am not that defensive; this is fact. (laughs) So, you know you always got to be prepared,... otherwise they feel that, you know, you won’t be able to be an equal; you’re gonna be, you know, you gonna be a, you know, a “wuss,” you know (laugh). Excuse me, [that’s] maybe not a proper word, but you gotta be prepared for that kind of dialogue in that meeting. Those are the kind of personalities that you deal with (Anthony, black man, 39).

Interestingly, Anthony saw the ability to “strike back” and not to appear weak as a way to achieve an equal status in the team of “strong personalities.” However, he also felt that some members of

⁵² Interestingly, however, Sheryl Kleinman (1996) shows that men also can utilize gender-atypical emotions, such as vulnerability, to their advantage. Her study of an alternative health organization illustrates how the male practitioners at the clinic were able to reinforce their authority by engaging in non-traditional self-disclosure and emotion display during staff retreats. Kleinman (1996: 83) argues that by displaying vulnerability the men were able to “humanize” themselves, thereby drawing attention, empathy, and respect while women were expected to be naturally emotional and engage in emotion-talk. When women were doing hegemonic masculinity by withholding their feelings, they were criticized as “engaging in power plays” (p. 87). In the context of the alternative clinic, deviating from the gender display norms benefitted the men and disadvantaged the women. As Kleinman (p. 88) argues, “the value...placed on traditionally feminine behaviors strengthened the authority of the men but not the women.”

the team had attempted to belittle his efforts to guard himself by calling him “defensive,” a label he strongly denied. By naming Anthony’s response as “defensive,” those team members were able to cast his behavior as irrational and not instrumental to the team process.

Not allowing team members to define their own emotions was a powerful way to dismiss and marginalize them. On occasion, a member’s narrative would reveal his or her team acting as an anonymous force that labeled specific behaviors as ‘emotional’ or irrational (or as in Anthony’s case, ‘defensive’), thereby marginalizing, if not denying, the individual’s contribution to the discussion or task. The second example comes from Cynthia who recounted how her efforts to serve the team’s client drew resistance from her male colleagues who labeled her behavior as “emotional.”

DO YOU THINK YOUR BEING A WOMAN HAS ANY IMPACT ON HOW YOU INTERACT WITH THE TEAM MEMBERS?

Yes... The role of the woman is changing a great deal, thank goodness. It used to be I think that they were very sensitive, they cried at the drop of a hat. Emotional decisions were made. I think where we’ve come, and I think I display it myself is, I’m not gonna make an emotional decision, I’m truly not going to. If I don’t have the facts, you know they say, “you’re over sensitive, you over-react because it’s City County.” No, but I just think that the woman’s place has changed dramatically and I think we need to keep sending that message across. So do I make a difference? I would hope so. Not because I’m a female, but don’t peg me as making decisions based on emotion.

HAS SOMEONE DONE THAT, MADE THAT COMMENT?

By them saying that I overreact, to mean that... indirectly that’s saying to me that you’re making an emotional decisions. You know, I don’t think so because I jump through hoops for this account, but it’s my only priority. If I don’t jump through hoops for them, who am I going to jump through hoops for? I mean that’s what they’re paying us to do. They [City County] had a very adversarial relationship with their last vendor for fifteen years, we [now] have an opportunity to shine in their eyes. ... There’s no reason why everybody shouldn’t know the benefits inside and out, the dos and don’ts and all. By people saying you’re over reacting, that to me is saying, “you’ve been emotional” and I’m not. Indirectly to me, that’s what they’re saying.

ARE THESE PEOPLE PREDOMINANTLY MEN WHO TELL YOU?

Exactly. And I’m trying to change that image by saying “call me what you want but these are the facts” and doing it in my own knowledge and expertise (Cynthia, White woman, 48).

Calling Cynthia “oversensitive” and “emotional” even though she claimed she was merely

expressing her commitment⁵³ to the client enabled her male colleagues to devalue and disregard her concerns. The men's ability to define her commitment to the team as "oversensitivity" reveals that the label could also be used as a tool for controlling which emotions were legitimate to express and which were not. Furthermore, branded with the label "emotional," Cynthia became engaged in challenging that definition by providing "facts, knowledge, and expertise" and asserting that she did not make "emotional decisions" (all of which also consumed valuable energy, not to mention time). Hence, the construction of emotions through labeling someone emotional or irrational constituted a process that reproduced not only the gendered display norms but also the team's internal gendered power hierarchy.

Another way to understand this process is to examine its intertwining gender, racial-ethnic, and heterosexual underpinnings. By labeling Cynthia as 'emotional'--that is, by reminding her she is a woman--the men were able to marginalize her as 'feminine'. By the same token, because Cynthia is a woman, the men were able to use 'emotionality', a culturally feminine characteristic, as a way to marginalize her. However, labeling Anthony 'emotional' might have been even a greater violation of the norms of hegemonic, heterosexual masculinity. Thus, the label 'defensive' conveyed roughly the same meaning for Anthony and compelled him to protest it in his interview. If the label did not directly 'feminize' him, it served as a reminder of the racial-ethnic power relations in the team and depreciated his effort to contribute to the team discussion. While these processes may not have been conscious, they demonstrate how, in the masculinized, white, heterosexual team context, those in power (most often whites and/or men) were able to give emotions a gendered and/or racialized meaning by associating "emotionality" with irrationality and, by dissociating emotions from instrumentality and productivity, reproducing their dominance.

Finally, my claim that masculine 'emotions' (which in reality were seen as 'non-emotions', such as aggression) were legitimated through team processes was corroborated by the women themselves adamantly denouncing emotions as superfluous, irrational, and fleeting. I understood that their determination to deny their emotionality signified their efforts to divorce themselves from the stereotypical femininity and the connotations it evoked. For example, when Cynthia claimed above that "don't peg me as making decisions based on emotions," she was intent to dissociate herself from the feminine image and to reassure her fit with the prerequisite of masculine rationality. The comments of Karen in the Motorcol CSN also echoed this division:

We will listen to emotion, but will react to data. So if you've got a problem and it's real, [you'll] be able to substantiate it. If it's emotion, it'll go away. But if it's real, the best way, at least I feel like, to get your voice heard is just be able to prove that there is truly a problem (Karen, White woman, 40, Motorcol CSN).

Cynthia's and Karen's comments reveal that teams are governed by a "myth of rationality," a set of values embedded in the Western culture that privileges rationality at the expense of emotions (Putnam and Mumby, 1993: 40). The myth of rationality permeates all aspects of organizational life and therefore dualisms, such as emotion/data, appear logical and even natural. Ironically, however, the team members' efforts to maintain a rational and non-emotional work process only

53 "Commitment" is another key tenet in the team management texts and entails an affective component which is manifested in the team member's "emotional attachment to, identification with, and involvement" in the team as well as the organization (Meyer and Allen, 1997: 11).

brought them closer to the bureaucratic tradition from which many team advocates try to dissociate themselves (e.g., Katzenbach and Smith, 1993). As Putnam and Mumby argue:

Bureaucracy perpetuates the belief that rationality and the control of emotions are not only inseparable but also necessary for effective organizational life. Bureaucratic rationality also constructs a particular gender relationship, one that favors patriarchal forms and reproduces organizational power along gender lines (Putnam and Mumby, 1993: 41).

The construction of emotions in teamwork reveals that the myth of rationality privileges masculine forms of interaction not only in bureaucratic organizations, but also in team-based settings. Although team theories emphasize the creative potential of emotions and claim to support non-bureaucratic values, in reality, the bureaucratic feeling rules are resurrected through the gendering of teams. In other words, by labeling only women's displays of, for example, commitment and concern as 'emotional', the teams brought alive and reproduced the very bureaucratic underpinnings that they were thought to challenge (e.g., Heckscher and Donellon, 1994; Lawler, 1990).

In conclusion, I have argued that rationality, the focus on aggressive emotions ("storming") as a team-developmental stage, and the ideal of balanced participation constitute organizational frames (P. Martin, 1997) that reproduce and legitimate masculine emotions and devalue feminine emotions or women's gender-atypical emotion displays (e.g., anger, aggression). If teams value aggression while devaluing vulnerability, women as well as those who express feminine emotions can be marginalized. However, I also have proposed that women can resist gendered processes by deliberately breaking the gender-appropriate display norms. I therefore conclude that although, theoretically, gendering processes may appear unidirectionally oppressive, in real life, opportunities for resistance, at least at the level of interaction and emotions, can and do exist. The next section continues to discuss gendered interaction in self-managing teams by focusing on the gendered symbolism embedded in the language and metaphors of teamwork.

5.4. Families and Football Teams: Gendering Teams through Metaphors

Metaphors are powerful organizers of social practice. Organizational metaphors, symbols, stories, and rituals both represent and impose meaning on organizational life and events. They appeal to the imagination and established associations to conjure desired images, thereby shaping organizational practices (Alvesson and Billing, 1997: 113). Because of the assumption that metaphors are imbued with values and norms of organizational culture, managers often use them to deliberately guide organizational action, for example, to maintain group cohesion, encourage commitment, maintain control of employees, and improve efficiency (e.g., Kunda, 1992; Gherardi, 1995; Gagliardi, 1992).⁵⁴ As members use symbols and metaphors in their interaction,

⁵⁴ Peters and Waterman (1982: 75), the popular advocates of the creation of 'corporate culture' for enhancing productivity, proclaim that a successful use of the corporate culture replaces many conventional behavioral guides, such as policy manuals, charts, and rules. Also, concerned about the image of management, they propose replacing military metaphors with new ones, for example, sailing, space stations, and marketplaces (p. 101). By controlling the symbols and metaphors used in organizations, managers can elicit from employees "commitment, strong identification with company goals, [and] intrinsic satisfaction from

they simultaneously produce and reproduce organizational culture, values, and hierarchies (Jones, 1996: 7).

The use of metaphors is one mechanism through which gendered power relations are reproduced in organizations. Acker's (1992a: 253) claim that gendering "involves the creation of symbols, images, and forms of consciousness that explicate, justify, and, more rarely, oppose gender divisions" is supported by empirical accounts of the ways in which metaphors both reflect and reproduce gendered power relations in organizations. One such example is Joanne Martin's (1990; 1992) well-known deconstruction of "the Caesarian story." It is a true story told by a corporate CEO, claiming that his company 'helps' its women employees. As an example, he tells how the company helped a young woman schedule her Caesarian section to accommodate the launch of a new product. Behind this story, Joanne Martin argues, is the fundamental gender conflict embedded in organizations: that is, the conflict between the public and the private, the productive and reproductive lives of women workers that poses an obstacle for women's advancement in organizations (see also, Gherardi, 1995: 38-39). Furthermore, Robert Jackal's (1998: 53) study of corporate managers illustrates how their use of masculine metaphors of sports and war to describe teamwork made it difficult for women managers to fit in the mold of an ideal "team player."

Although the images of a football game and family life, in reality, have little in common, they both are frequently used by team members as well as managers to describe teamwork, team relations, and team interaction. The gender bias of these metaphors appear, at first glance, self-evident: a team lingo of "players" and "coaches" (e.g., Parker, 1990; Wageman, 1997) symbolizes masculinity and competition against outsiders, while "mothering" (e.g., Pierce, 1995), "fathering," and "family" metaphors evoke visions of cooperation and commitment. Also, the ideologies behind these two gendered metaphors appear to be in disagreement as the former emphasizes strategy, efficiency, and aggression, while the latter encourages relationships, interaction, emotions, and home-like social relations. I now turn to explore how the experiences of team members and the ways in which they used the metaphors of family and sports teams conveyed a set of processes that helped reproduce traditional gender relations in teams.

5.4.1. Team as a "Work Family"

Although the metaphor of a family appears to have a somewhat unified meaning in a Western capitalist culture (such as, privacy, commitment, legitimate sexuality, clear boundaries, division of tasks, and an economic unit, etc.), the ways in which team members used "family" was shaped by the team context. It is particularly important to consider the context of interaction when one explores a metaphor as embedded with diverse meanings as 'family' in order to avoid simplifying gender relations and denying a possibility for reinterpreting traditionally oppressive meanings (Alvesson and Billing, 1997: 113). Therefore, I discuss the metaphoric meanings of 'family' in the teams with the interest to develop a more contextual understanding of gendered interaction in them.

When the case-study team members described their team interaction to resemble a family, they conjured up a set of images with specific gendered and racialized assumptions: (1) The family

work" (Kunda, 1992: 11).

metaphor, in conjunction with parental or sibling-like relations, was used to describe intimacy and familiarity among the team members. (2) Some saw 'family' as a symbol of racial-ethnic exclusion, while (3) others associated it with intimate relations or even 'marriage', the latter of which conveys an image of heterosexuality. (4) The juxtaposition of 'family' and 'sports team' also symbolized the gender division of labor within a team (i.e., women's reproductive, expressive, and private tasks and men's productive, instrumental, and public tasks). In the next section, I provide examples of each of these four of interpretations.

5.4.1.1. 'Family' as parental relations

The close-knit-family-relations interpretation of team interaction was particularly evident in the ways in which the members of the Eastern Alliance Employee Credit team described their team relations. For many of them, the team was like a family that involved parental relations. While this interpretation did not directly challenge the gendered power relations, taking a parental role empowered some women to see themselves as mentors with valuable knowledge about the work tasks. Furthermore, the parental roles removed any sexual connotations in a mixed-sex team. For example, some women described their relations with the younger men in terms of "mothering":

DO YOU THINK THAT YOUR BEING A WOMAN HAS ANY IMPACT ON HOW YOU INTERACT WITH THE TEAM MEMBERS?

Yes, because I mother them.

TELL ME MORE ABOUT THAT, HOW?

Well, I have sons that are Chuck's and Pete's age. I mean I look at them like my own children type thing, you know. I have a lot of respect for everyone in the department, and Richard, I've known Richard for years and I respect his ability and his credit making decisions but I look at Richard--we're close to same age--but I look at him just as a coworker that I've known for years and respect. Chuck and Pete, I enjoy being around them because of their youth, spontaneity, but I also like to look at them as similar to my sons' age (Jane-Ann, white woman, 51).

I think it is more like a motherly thing with [the team leader] and [the young men], she's like a mother, guarding them (Patricia, black woman, 33).

Another team member, Brenda, acknowledged the mothering but saw it in a different light; she interpreted it as advancing the men:

I think even though we have the team concept that the men are more looked after.

WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?

They're sort of pampered and babied along the way, you know, to accomplish things. They're not up to par in a certain area, more attention is given them to helping them to reach that goal than so for a female.

MORE ATTENTION BY WHOM? YOUR SUPERVISOR?

Mmmm [affirming]. I like the team concept but it's just not where it should be, not to say that it won't be some day, but it's just not where I should be (Brenda, black woman, 42).

Also, Richard, the coach and the only middle-aged man in the team, perceived the interaction among the women and men in parental terms:

In our general situation, we have two young guys out there and the women are more mature, and that's mentally and physically, by age I mean, and I think that helps the men do their job better because they have that guidance from the older females out there ... this sounds like Discovery Channel with the lions and tigers out there, but... that in my mind might be a real factor, the maturity in their compassion and what have you. That might have a bearing on a male who, especially a young male who I think maybe wouldn't take it as seriously as a woman would, as far as trying to help somebody. That could be the mother instinct or whatever. A guy, especially young single guys, they don't know what it's all about yet (laughter) (Richard, white man, 52).

In Richard's view, the women were 'naturally' inclined to assume the role of a mother and to mentor the younger men in their work. He also saw himself in a parental role in respect to the younger men:

The three of us get along real well, they're younger and they're fun and I'm sure they think of me as their father working, and who maybe has a little more fun than a real father does (laughs) (Richard, white man, 52).

The young men themselves acknowledged that this gender dynamic shaped the team interaction. Chuck, for example, describe his position as follows:

I mean if anything, I enjoy being a man in our group. Because there is no, there is no flirtation or no, you know, not any like sexual things at all. It's just, it's fun because, you know, being an, you know, having three guys and what, ten, ten ladies. It, I mean, they do, they spoil you, it's fun. You get used to it after awhile. But yeah, I think they do look at, like when I say something, they look at it as me saying from a man's, or as they may say, a boy's point of view (laughs) (Chuck, white man, 25).

By using the metaphor of family relations and parenting, the women were able to draw on their age, enabling them to gain influence in relation to the two younger men. Age and experience thus became the source of power for the women and, quite possibly, the only available way (in this team) to express it was through the role of a mother. As "mothers," the women could instruct and influence the young men without challenging the gender-order. However, the men also benefitted from the mothering, as Brenda pointed out. By being constantly cared for, the men drew attention and help in reaching their goal, a practice which did not concur, as Brenda noted, with the idea of

team parity. Sociologist Sherryl Kleinman (1996) cautions women against allowing themselves to be put into any family role. She argues that when women are treated as:

big sisters, mothers, or daughters in ‘the family’, [these] roles ... deflect from rather than buttress others’ belief in their competence. In contrast, men who become ‘big daddy’ or ‘big brother’ win others’ approval for showing they care. And the ‘son’ refers to the man boss or mentor is grooming for a higher position (Kleinman, 1996: 136).

Interestingly, however, in the Employee Credit team, the women themselves both took a mother role and encouraged the men to see them that way. The reason for doing so could be, as I suggested earlier, that the role of a mother was the only way for them to express their expertise to the younger men without challenging the team’s gender-order.

While other teams referred to family relations, the metaphors of mothering or parenting were only used by members of the Employee Credit team, possibly because of the team’s gender and age structure. Furthermore, as benign as the women’s “mothering” may appear, the notion of mothering also involved some hidden racial-ethnic connotations, to which I turn next.

5.4.1.2. ‘Family’ as racial-ethnic exclusion

The Employee Credit team’s congenial relations were described by many team members in terms of a happy family that conducted its work cooperatively. Regardless of the seemingly unifying use of the family metaphor, team members’ references to ‘family’ relations also reproduced a racial-ethnic division in the team. In addition to treating the younger men as ‘sons’, many women in the team referred to their team leader, Dianne, as “mother,” possibly helping them navigate the internal power relations in the team. However, naming the leader as “mom” highlighted the racial-ethnic division in the team. I found the racial dynamics embedded in the family metaphor from Brenda, as she talked about her feelings of exclusion:

Some of our team members still do that with our leader, call her our mom and I think that’s very unprofessional. I don’t do it because I don’t ever want our positions to be, you know, taken out of context. I don’t ever want to feel like she’s taken the place of my mother because that’s not her position. And she’s noticed I never call her “mom” and I won’t ever do that because I don’t want her to lose sight of, you know, what she really is supposed to be.

WHY DO YOU THINK THEY CALL HER THAT?

I’ve thought... a lot of, particularly with females, that they just get really personal with each other. I don’t know, if there’s ever a problem or if they ever make a mistake, you know, the other person is gonna bail them out because they’re like “buddy buddies,” you know. I feel it should be that way just because she’s our team leader she should be standing for us, I don’t think I have to be very personal with her in order to do that (Brenda, black woman, 42).

Brenda’s experience highlights that hidden racial-ethnic divisions exist along with gender divisions

and that they can divide women who otherwise would be in a comparable position, sharing a similar organizational and professional status. In this case, the informal, familial relations among the white female team leader and the white women in the team excluded a black woman. By calling their white team leader “mom,” the white women were able to mobilize their racial-ethnic position, whether or not it was purposeful. To counter the metaphor of the “white family,” Brenda was determined to maintain a separation between a familial and an official, work-oriented relationship with her supervisor. Much like the women who worked hard to dissociate themselves from the feminine in order to be taken seriously by the men in a highly masculinized context, Brenda also had to emphasize her public, work-oriented persona in order to gain legitimacy as a black woman in a predominantly white team. Moreover, in Brenda’s case, this separation was more than conceptual; after all, the white leader did not physically *look* like her mother. Hence, the whiteness that seemed to encourage white women to foster familial relations, hindered a black woman’s ability to feel included in the team.

Although Brenda’s comments were the only comments that described the team ‘family’ as an exclusionary practice, I found it a useful example to describe the ways in which race-ethnicity reproduces inequality in teams. With respect to other sources of inequality, I will next discuss how the family metaphor invoked images of (heterosexual) marital relations.

5.4.1.3. *‘Family’ as intimacy and marriage*

Sometimes, team members used the family metaphor to describe the intimate atmosphere of a team. When members used ‘family’ in this way, they often conjured positive images of a well-functioning team and interaction patterns that resembled family relations. Members across the case-study teams used ‘family’ as a metaphor of intimate and trusting team interaction. For example, Brenda--interestingly, despite her feelings of exclusion--cast the Employee Credit team’s general interaction as a friendly and supportive family exchange:

Sometimes it’s just fun, we just interact more like a family at times, you know, kid each other and, like the guy that sits across from me, we act like brothers and sisters sometimes, when it’s stressful, we try to alleviate some of the stress in the air. And a lot of times they’re [team members] really attentive to personal things going on at home, you know, and maybe you’re just not up to par today, they’re pretty understanding about things like that (Brenda, black woman, 42).

Interestingly, Brenda herself “took” the role of a sister when she described her interaction with a younger male colleague. Compared to the mothering role taken by other women, siblinghood may have had a more egalitarian meaning. Also Bob in the City County team described the team’s interaction as a sibling interaction:

the personal interaction, that’s like any family. You have good days, you have bad days. You know, your sibling one day could be just totally antagonistic and the sibling the next day could just be your best friend in the world (Bob, white man, 50s, Omni City County team).

Others found the familial closeness team members developed through interacting throughout the day was pleasurable and supportive:

Everybody is cordial, everybody's got their own personalities. It's like a family, but a work family. So you know, you learn everybody's idiosyncracies and everybody's, the way everybody else does things (Mike, white man, 46, Eastern Alliance Special Projects team).

WHAT KIND OF RELATIONSHIPS ARE THERE AMONG PEOPLE IN THE CSN TEAM?

Some of it is almost like a family relationship. As far as you don't agree on everything, but yet you can discuss almost anything. And we have different personalities. Uh, Bryan to Jean, Ellen, Karen. You know, everybody's got their own little quirks in their personality that you pick up on, and it's just fun to be around and listen to discussions and stuff. There have never been any serious disagreements. So, it's fun just to listen to them (Frank, white man, 35, Motorcol CSN team).

Everybody here is like a family, even not just in the CSN but you noticed in the meeting this morning, everybody's just, you know, we're are with each other more than we are with our family in waking hours, you just learn to, you know, how to take someone that maybe they don't mean what they say, they just say in a rough way, you just, you know exactly not to take that offensively and you just move on (Jean, white woman, 24).

Especially evident in these comments is the team members intimate knowledge of each other's personalities. Thus, viewed from the "work family" perspective, these teams appear to have accomplished, at least for some members, what the Human Relations school found decades earlier: intimate social relations among employees reduce alienation and increase employee satisfaction.

However, the family metaphor involves patriarchal power relations, especially when used to convey an image of a heterosexual marriage (Hearn and Parkin, 1995; Gherardi, 1995). For example, Lee, a coordinator of the Motorcol CSN engineering group, described teamwork with the opposite sex in marital terms:

I think it's difficult if you've been basically working in an all-male department or an all-female department to bring the two together, it's almost like a marriage, you've got to learn the moods and the skill levels of each person. Actually, when it's working properly, they complement each other, they do not go against each other 'cause, you know, I'd be the first to admit my female associates are better at some things than I am. And I think they would say that I am better at some things than they are. And actually, when we come together as a team, it complements the whole team as we bring our specialties and skills together. ... Sure, there's always disagreement in a marriage, always disagreement and tension in a marriage and that's kind of the way this is. We have disagreements, we don't always agree but I think it's handled really well. There are always moments because this is a

business, a lot of competition out there, we're trying to be the first on the market with things, we're trying to get answers to customers very quickly, before the competitors get answers to them and that was the reason for formulating this team because we had all that dead time. (Lee, white man, 44).

Perhaps more than family relations, Lee describes the relationship between the team's men and women and, whether implicitly or explicitly, he also presumes an organizational norm of heterosexuality, which reveals yet another exclusionary organizational practice (Hearn and Parkin, 1995). More importantly for this study, however, Lee outlines the relationship between team relations and the necessity to compete in the market. Thus, his use of the family metaphor places the team within the broader context of the (patriarchal) capitalist imperative of profit-making. By cultivating family-like team relations organizations are able to obtain from their employees commitment and trust that allow companies to extract not only work but compliancy from them (e.g., Katzenbach and Smith, 1993a: 60 argued for the importance of commitment and trust in efficient teamwork). Therefore, in the context of profit-making, the intimate, harmonious, and family-like team relations appear as facilitators of efficiency and productivity.

5.4.1.4. 'Family' as a division of expressive and instrumental tasks

Returning once more to Lee's description of 'marriage', I draw attention to the implications of what Lee calls "complementary skills." When teamwork is described as a (heterosexual) marriage, it is likely to conjure various culturally constructed images of a family, one characteristic of which is the gender division of expressive and instrumental tasks (Parsons and Bales, 1955). I have discussed the gendered task division in the Motorcol CSN team in Chapter 4; however, some members' metaphoric use of the 'family' revealed some interaction processes that help maintain the team's gender division of informational (expressive) and engineering (instrumental) tasks. For example, Neil, coordinator of field service, described how working with women had changed the nature of team interaction:

I think, men are more considerate of women being there. They watch what they say a little more. And that's kind of something that you would expect for them to do. And I think that because of the background noise, what do you call it, sexual harassment, they basically, they don't act the same. In a group of men, they act a little different than they do with a group of women. And I think a lot of times that may be good, because it gives you pause for thought. And I've seen a lot of situations where a group of men get together and kind of get on a roll so to speak and sometimes they may say something they really didn't mean. Whereas if there's ladies around, it gives them pause for thought. It's a little more controlled, and it's probably better that way.

BETTER FOR...?

Well, it's better for the team, because a lot of times like I said, guys, a lot of guys get together and they get on a roll and they talk about something or somebody at work or somebody they don't think was doing a good job, maybe some customer that gave them a hard time, they may say a little too much and it becomes a problem with the team later. And part of that, getting into a little bit deeper, is once

you make statements about a customer, there's really no telling who may get back to the customer indirectly or directly, and if your name's attached to it, you'll have a stigma with that customer forever no matter what job you do for them. A lot of cases, if there's a lady present or a female present, a lot of things that might be said, aren't said. I think it's actually good. ... I think having women in a group is good control, because a lot of times we men get emotional and are ready to say more than they really should say and use cuss words and if a woman is there, usually they won't use those, unless you're really 'out to lunch' (Neil, white man, 47).

Neil's description of the women's function in the team reflects the gender roles of a traditional family and uncovers an underlying cultural assumption about the nature of male sexuality; that is, the notion that men's "natural" impulses have to be controlled by women whose task it is to preserve purity and moral conduct in the family. Neil implied that women in the CSN team performed this role; their presence in the team made men more civil.

In the traditional family, the woman is expected to take on the "expressive" task of maintaining relationships among family members. This role was also manifested in the CSN, as some men described the women's task of remembering and reminding the men of the members' special days of celebration. According to Lee, much like in a traditional heterosexual marriage, the women's expressive role took the responsibility off him and other men:

The young ladies of the team make sure that we don't forget birthdays and anniversaries and things like that happen that for some reason the male side forgets all the time.

EACH OTHER'S BIRTHDAYS?

What we [the engineering group] try to do 'cause I'm so bad, I buy one big cake a year and celebrate the guys' birthdays but Karen is much much better at it, she tries to remember everybody's birthdays and anniversaries and things like that and of course we've couple of babies born so we always try to remember those but as far as relationships go, we have a very good relationship (Lee, white man, 44, Motorcol CSN team).

I also found evidence of women's expressive tasks in the Employee Credit team, where one man claimed that the women's presence had a calming effect on the men. According to Chuck, having women around also ensured team productivity:

I don't think you can have an all-male team. God, if you did, I don't think you'd get anything done... I think you always need a good break up [of sexes] there because; Gosh! I know like, me and Pete, we sit next to each other and clown around. I think guys tend to, I know some guys take stuff more serious than others, but I know that the guys in our group tend to take things a little bit lightly. I don't think, you know, some of the girls we got there just work their butts off. We work hard, I mean, we work hard, but we play around some too. I don't think we'd get as much production done if we [didn't have] the ladies in there (Chuck, white man, 25).

It may be that the women initiated these tasks and saw no disadvantage in performing them. However, although expressive tasks may not directly handicap women in any team, the fact that the men talked about women in this respect makes visible an interaction process that directs women toward accepting expressive roles away from task-oriented roles.

Thus far, I have discussed the ways in which the family metaphor can reveal and maintain gendered processes in teams. For example, team members described their teams as ‘families’ in praising the intimacy that had developed among them. However, the ‘family’ metaphor also conveyed a more exclusionary message: white women called their team leader “mom,” which made a black woman feel excluded from the “team-family.” I also suggested that in one team where members worked in low-paid, low-skilled jobs, women sought their personal sense of power from activity they called “mothering” their younger male teammates. Finally, I showed how some men’s use of ‘family’ revealed that women in their teams were responsible for maintaining the team’s internal relations and also, for controlling the men’s non-work-related impulses, thereby fostering a productive team environment.

I suggest that the way some men used the family metaphor revealed their attitudes toward women, which helps men maintain traditional gendered power relations in teams. But although these meanings of the family metaphor may reveal men’s attitudes toward women, it is not clear how exactly they shaped long-term team interaction and divisions. Neither can I argue that resistance to these male-centered attitudes did not exist in the case-study teams. Nonetheless, when the family metaphor is examined against the metaphor of “football team,” some of its gendered implications do become more pronounced.

5.4.2. Sports Teams and Task Division

Both the ‘family’ and the ‘football team’ (or a baseball team) metaphors conjure images of loyalty and commitment; however, they also invoke other, quite different associations. ‘Family’ connotes the private world (the feminine sphere) and directs attention inward, to the internal relations in a team. ‘Football team’ is imbued with masculine symbolism of competition, external-orientation, and, especially, strategic division of tasks and achievement of goals. The football metaphor is a popular metaphor in team guides possibly because of its association with competition and performance, the underlying motivator for companies to adopt team-based management. In advocating high-performing teams, many writers view concerns for team relations as subordinate to performance. As Katzenbach and Smith (1993a: 61) argue in their team guide, “focusing on performance--not chemistry or togetherness or good communications or good feelings--shapes teams more than anything else.”

Interestingly, the team members with whom I spoke did not use the football team metaphor in their narratives as often as they used the ‘family’. However, because team sports is such a popular metaphor in the literature on teams and team performance, the few references to sports teams further illuminate the different, and gendered, meanings between football and families. One of the differences is the task-orientation embedded in the sport team analogy. For example, one CSN team member brought up the ‘baseball team’ when describing the divisions between the team’s subgroups:

We're more like a baseball team, I guess that would be the appropriate comparison, because we don't have a lot of interaction, as far as the job. I have my job that I do, and then other people have their jobs that they do. And, it's very seldom in a month's time, I may have one or two times that Jean or Ellen will give me information or send a call to me. Usually I'm working with my group of people and they're working with their group of people, and it's hard to relate that to a team (Frank, white man, 35).

In addition to describing the separation of team functions, team sports was used to explain cross-functional task division in a team. Angelo in the City County team used 'football team' to describe the team's cross-functional tasks and the members' mutual accountability and commitment to the team (as well as his enthusiasm about being a team member):

WHAT IS TO YOU PERSONALLY THE MOST ENJOYABLE ASPECT OF WORKING AS A TEAM?

Common goals and objectives. I mean, just everyone in there is focused on achieving those results, we all agree. I mean, it's like playing for the Super Bowl. You're a football team and everyone has got an assignment. Offense does one thing, defense does another. That's their specialty. But at a certain point of time, there is fumble. It don't matter who you are. If you are the quarterback, a star quarterback of the team, you are playing for the Super Bowl. You are going to try and recover that ball. You are not just going to sit back and say that if I dive in there is somebody going to break my leg or break my arm. And I think, for the most part, that's the most rewarding is that you've got people focused on this common purpose, and then to a certain degree, there's joint accountability for results. It's the commitment and then the actions ... And they [team members] all know that their goal is satisfaction, financial, and growth of that account. And that's when I think you got that all the members, or the different football teams are competing. That's the satisfaction (Angelo, Hispanic man, 38).

It is clear that Angelo's description of teamwork emanates both cultural masculinity and capitalist values of profit-making and performance, characteristics that are not part of family-like teamwork. It would be too simplistic to argue that the use of a masculine metaphor alone will disadvantage women; after all, many women follow football and play other team sports. However, when achievement and performance by a team is associated with football, it may be difficult for women to claim their part of it, that is, to be seen as "players."

While the football team metaphor may not directly bias against women, its juxtaposition with the family metaphor reflects and reproduces gendered expectations of relational and task behavior in groups (explained in Chapter 1). Thus, more than the apparent femininity and masculinity of the metaphors themselves, it is the way they are used to describe the different aspects of team work--team relations and task performance--that reinforces the stereotyping of women as relationship-builders and men as performers. Within this context also the men's use of "family as a division of expressive and instrumental labor" makes sense: to see women as managers of men's rowdy impulses or as organizers of office celebrations deflects attention away from them as *performers*.

The family and football metaphors thus constitute organizational frames (P. Martin, 1996, 1997) that team members use to make sense of teamwork and to give meaning to their daily interactions. Imbued with gendered meanings, and particularly when used together, these metaphors help reproduce the gender division of private and public labor.

5.5. Conclusion: Emotions, Metaphors, and Gender Equality

Interaction processes that emerged in the interviews revealed that emotions associated with men's lives and activities were acceptable and valid, while those associated with women's lives--or stereotypically feminine, such as tears--were inappropriate. This gendering was also reproduced through the metaphors of teamwork. A 'football team' symbolizes a masculine competitive environment of team sports which, when juxtaposed with the 'team as a family' metaphor, highlights--and possibly reproduces--a gender division of labor in teams. Interestingly, teamwork has been referred to as a "feminine" management method that will advantage women specifically because it stresses interpersonal skills, emotions, and cooperation (Peters, 1990, cited in Calás and Smircich, 1993). However, were that the case, we might see more team images associated with women's lives and activities (other than 'the family').

Based on the team members' experiences, I have illustrated ways in which interaction and emotions can constitute a gendering process despite the ideals of espoused emotions and egalitarianism associated with self-managing teams. Although teams may help both men and women to get their voices heard better than in a conventional organization, when it comes to emotions and interaction, teams have yet to bring substantial changes to the traditional norms that excluded emotions in the workplace. Based on the team members' experiences, if any changes in organizational feeling rules have occurred, they tend to privilege men more than women.