

Call for abstracts for the symposium

“Making it like a man”: men, masculinities and the modern ‘career’.

25- 26 October

University of Helsinki, Finland

Recent critical representations of the workplace seem to leave little doubt about its gendered norms and conventions. Glass ceilings, the gender pay gap, leaky pipelines, old boys’ networks, calls for women to lean in (not to mention recurring reports of gendered harassment) all point to an assumption of male homosociability as an enduring norm in 21st century ‘work’.

Based on an ‘industrial’ separation of spheres relegating women to the hearth while leaving men the freedom to move between the domestic and public (Tosh, 1999) and gendered narratives of entrepreneurship and social climbing mired in aggression (Kelly, 2003; Tjeder, 2002), understandings of the workplace as culturally, discursively and indeed legally coded masculine as well as an implicit masculine embodiment of ‘work’ (McGinley, 2016; Acker 1990) are now questioned and criticized by media-discourse, critical research, and by daily practice.

Noting that the workplace remains largely implicitly masculine, though politically pertinent, does little to elucidate how masculinity and careers are connected, how workers *do* masculinity and how masculinity does cultural work for the reproduction and/or contestation of (post)industrialism, capitalism and neo-liberalism. It also fails to take into account the range of masculinities ‘at work’ and the diversity of social, cultural and professional contexts in which they take shape.

In this conference, we aim to focus on the multiple and diverse masculinities ‘at work’ in the processes of professionalization and career management that typify modern working life. Spanning both historical approaches to the rise of ‘profession’ as a marker of masculinity, and critical approaches to the current structures of management, employment and workplace hierarchy, we set out to question what role masculinity plays in cultural understandings, affective experiences and mediatized representations of a professional ‘career’.

We welcome contributions from all disciplines in the social sciences and humanities on subjects such as:

- Men and masculinities as markers of a career in specific professional fields (e.g. political, artistic, academic, legal, etc. careers)
- Men and masculinities in the historical development of the notion of ‘career’
- The hierarchical nature of careers and career management and its links/tensions with modern masculinities
- Men and masculinities and the gendered nature of careers in the capitalist or neo-liberal workplace
- Daily practices of career-management and its intersection with practices of gender, particularly with doing masculinity
- Men, masculinities and intersectionality in relation to careers in a global context and globalized world: international mobilities and intercultural exchange
- Men, masculinities and precarity in relation to professional careers
- Intersectional approaches to men and masculinities, taking stock of geographical and cultural understandings of careers and their gendered effects

- The changing notion of 'career' in modern times and ways in which new conceptualizations of 'career' are shaping masculinities and are in turn shaped by changing masculinities (for example, online careers divorced from workplaces as physical sites etc.)
- Rethinking and/or mobilizing men and masculinities in critical approaches to move towards gender equality in career building and management
- New approaches to work and careers which have the potential to challenge traditional ways of doing masculinity and/or rethink careers in terms of masculinities.

Abstracts of no more than **250 words** should be uploaded at <https://elomake.helsinki.fi/lomakkeet/89548/lomake.html> by **June 30, 2018**.

There is no participation fee

For more information, please contact: Josephine.hoegaerts@helsinki.fi , kadri.aavik@helsinki.fi, or janne.t.salminen@helsinki.fi