
Manila Women's Forum

A Network of Women Professionals

March 2004

Realities of the Water World

By Lisa Bierbaumer

Can you imagine spending 8 to 10 hours a day, every day, hauling 40 kilos of water...on your head?! Well, a quarter of rural populations still lack access to safe water supply, spending upwards to 40 billion hours a year hauling water, the vast majority of it carried by women. These sobering statistics come from Jennifer Francis, the guest speaker at our February 16 meeting, graciously hosted by Natasha Davis in Urdaneta Village.

Malaysian-born Jennifer graduated with a Bachelors degree in social work from the Philippine Women's University. She went on to receive her Masters degree in sociology in the Netherlands with her research in Africa, where the collection of water is so much a part of daily life they say



"water is life," and where she obtained hands-on experience working with Pygmy women, which launched her career as a gender expert.

Jennifer pioneered the Gender and Water Alliance, a successful NGO, and is now a gender expert with the Asian Development Bank. She shared with us how water and women are linked to economic development. The realities of the water world are that women are traditionally the carriers and caretakers of water and men are the managers. When women have ready access to water, they have time to commit to income-generating activities, which makes water provision a critical development consideration.

The UN declared 1980-1990 as the International Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation Decade and much work was done to bring water to the poor. But in spite of the funds and attention, by 1998, nearly 40% of the infrastructure built to bring water to rural populations didn't function.

A UN agency, Jennifer recounted, wasted millions of dollars by building pit latrines that were 8-meter-deep holes with no cover and located far from villages. Women and children, the main users of the facilities, were frightened to use them because the latrines were so far from their homes. Children were especially afraid because the open holes were so deep. If they'd simply asked the women in advance, they could have added a simple cement slab with a smaller opening and built the toilets closer to the homes for safety.

Another large project that failed was hundreds of foot-powered wells. So much exertion had to be used that

*Jennifer Francis: Gender expert,
Asian Development Bank*

pregnant women were reported to have lost their babies from using them. Hand pumps replace them, which were easier to use, but the water point was often built in front of the village chief's home. Since washing and gathering water was a means of communication for women, they resented the control the positioning of the pump presented as they didn't feel comfortable chatting in front of the chief's home. In addition, the chief treated the pump as his personal property and would sometimes put a lock on it and dictate when it could be used. Again, this wasted money might have been avoided if the women of the community had been properly consulted.

Water rights have traditionally been tied to land rights. Usually women do
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Next MWF Meeting

When: Monday, March 15, 2004, 6:30 p.m.

What: Susan Nishihira, an Asian textile expert, will present "Painting With Thread" a look at the art of embroidery from India and other Asian countries, from past to present.

Where: Susan Nishihira's home, 2427 Bougainvillea Place, Dasmariñas Village, Makati City

Bring: A contribution to the potluck dinner.

April meeting: Monday April 19, 2004.



Voice of the Chair

By Lisa Kircher Lumbao

10 Rules of the Work World

By Lorraine Dusky

Once there was a young woman who was fast-tracking up the corporate ladder at a major publishing house in New York City. She had been handpicked by the company's president to work with him on special projects, putting her in regular direct contact with the chairman of the board. She had everything going for her.

One day, she and the president were making a presentation to the chairman and other high-level staff members. The chairman didn't immediately grasp the point of the presentation and asked them to go over it again. After the second time around, he still didn't get it. In the length of time it took the young woman to roll her eyes -- which is what she did -- she skidded off the fast track into a ditch.

After the meeting, the chairman requested that she not work on any projects he would be directly connected with -- and the woman was transferred to another department to live out her days in obscurity.

She didn't understand Rule No. 1 of the 10 rules of the work world:

1. Rank has its privileges. "There is no way you can leapfrog, bypass, overrule, ignore, challenge, disobey, or criticize your boss and not get penalized in the game," writes Betty Lehan Harragan, author of "Games Mother Never Taught You". You may disagree with your boss privately, correct some misconception, or even fill her in on some technical detail in your area of expertise. But not in public. No matter if the boss says something that's not accurate or even outright wrong. For your purposes, she is right. Absolutely, finally, and positively.

2. Hard work is not enough. Success isn't that simple anymore. Attitude, image, initiative, confidence

-- a handful of intangibles -- plus how well you do your job are what give one person the winning edge over another.

3. You were hired not just to do the job but to make your boss look good. Suppose you're the manager of the information-systems department and you devise a way to do an audit better, faster, easier. Your method will save time and money. Now, do you tout your fantastic solution, making sure everyone knows that your boss had nothing to do with it? Or do you bring your boss on board, ask for any suggestions to improve the program, and together sell the solution to the higher-ups? Assuming your boss isn't a thief who wants to take credit for others' ideas and work, sharing the glory usually increases your own.

4. You have to be a team player. One day, you've got the ball; another day, someone else is running with it. If you can't or won't help others achieve their objectives, your colleagues won't be there for you either. It's not just higher-ups who can sabotage you: Your peers can make or break your projects.

5. Thick skins protect soft souls. You can expect that every driving, successful boss will have times when his patience is thin. So let the fast and furious comments roll off your back. Remind yourself that everybody is working together to get the best possible job done. Don't be a doormat, but don't get crazy when somebody snaps.

6. Information is crucial. To do your job well, you need to know who gets along with whom, who once got along with whom but doesn't now, and why. Learning the history of relationships in your office can save you considerable embarrassment.

7. A positive attitude brings positive feedback. Unless you're enthusiastic, you are going to have a hard time getting ahead. Low morale can kill a career as fast as you can say, "I hate this assignment." The right attitude may differ from place to place, but if you don't have a positive outlook, it will reflect in your work and things will only go downhill. If you really hate a place, do yourself a favor and get out.

8. Total honesty is for your shrink. "Although candor and emotional honesty can be valuable assets in personal relations, letting it all hang out in a work setting can be unwise, inappropriate, and often damaging,"

Janice LaRouche writes in "Strategies for Women at Work". You especially do not want to involve your superiors in your personal life -- nor do they want to be involved (no matter how understanding they seem when you recite your tales of woe).

9. Work friendships are usually transitory. People come and go in an office. They get promoted over you or you might get promoted over them, or they go to work for somebody you have declared an enemy, or what's worse, someone you have declared an enemy may become your boss. So think of your friendships at work as alliances related to a specific task, which is what they are, no matter how genuine they seem to be during the job. Don't expect the alliances to be permanent.

10. Sometimes, you have to ignore the rules. Sometimes, you will make a lifelong friend at the office and the relationship will be hassle-free. Sometimes, you will marry the boss's son. Sometimes, it could cost your company millions because the boss is making an egregious error at a meeting with a vendor or a client and you're the only one with enough guts to speak up and correct him.

Sometimes, you have to go over your boss's head, your boss's boss is impressed, the boss gets fired, and you get the job. The point is, these

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The Manila Women's Forum

The Manila Women's Forum (MWF) is a cross-cultural network for women. It provides opportunities to build friendships, to talk to women of various cultures, and to share information about resources. Our meetings are intended to provide intellectual stimulation and lead to personal and professional development. All women are welcome to join. The current officers are **Lisa Lumbao**, Chair, Programs, Treasurer, and Newsletter. **Penny Poole**, Programs, Newsletter. **Susan Nishihira**, Programs. **Heather Davenport**, Database. **Beulah P. Taguiwalo**, Newsletter, Website.

Cost of membership is P300 per year. Members receive a copy of the current mailing list in addition to the newsletter, which is also sent to non-members. A contribution is collected at each monthly meeting: P20 for members, and P40 for non-members. Please contact Lisa Lumbao at Tel. 818-2887 or 813-0168, or at lumbao@mozcom.com for more information about MWF.

Visit our website -- a work in progress
www.geocities.com/manilawomensforum

Realities... (From page 1)

not own land so they have no say about how the land and water can be used to their benefit. If there are water management committees, women hold only the secretarial positions.

But all is not dark in the water world, said Jennifer. Women are getting organized. They are developing alternative techniques to manage their water. Rainwater harvesting structures help them continue to grow and produce their vegetable gardens. Training programs prepare them to be local pump repairers. And the best result of these is time saved to allow girls to go to school and learn other skills, and for women to be more productive with livelihood activities such as handicrafts and salt production.

Poverty has to be addressed and equality between the sexes needs to be attained, specifically:

- Equal access and control of information,
- Equal distribution of work,
- Equal access to training and management,
- Equal access to benefits, and
- Equal access to and control of decision making.

The burdens and benefits of water management must be shared. There should be no fighting between the sexes, because we all need water. Working within legal frameworks and getting policies to change are steps in the right direction. Jennifer left us with this thought, "Remember gender, it makes a difference!" ■

Celia Hawe invites you to a Yoga Workshop using her unique Clear Mind Open Heart Yoga Card System. • This will be on Saturday March 13, 2004. 9am registration, 9.30 prompt start, up to 11.30am. At Somerset Olympia Suites Studio opposite the Swiss Restaurant, Makati Avenue, Makati. • Fee is P500 if booked at least 2 weeks before, otherwise P850. • All attendees will have the opportunity to purchase Celia's unique and beautifully produced cards at half price. • Other options: Celia's best selling book *Yoga for Slimmers* is also available now. Celia also offers one-to-one Yoga with Life Coaching, and exclusive yoga sessions for 3-6 persons which can be organised at your home. • Celia has been a Yoga Educator for 25 years who has taught worldwide and holds the prestigious British Wheel of Yoga Teaching Diploma. • Contact Celia at Tel 818-3219 or Mobile 0916-612-7767. Email: Celia@yogaforslimmers.com

KaWoMeNaN

**Selected and Edited
by Beulah P. Taguiwalo**

All about water

"For millions of women... the struggle for survival and environmental protection are inseparable. Women are amongst the first to suffer when land is degraded, when trees disappear, and water supplies are polluted. As the main suppliers of food, fuel and water for their families, women are acutely aware of the need to protect their surroundings and to manage natural resources."

From a special event of the Winter School of Ecofeminism. More of this at <http://66.102.7.104/search?q=cache:q1iWOTMcPAEJ:www.findhorn.org/events/>

Water and gender

Speaking of water and gender, here are two publications you might want to check out.

AusAID guidelines on water and gender - Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID).

A paper outlining AusAID's guidelines and strategies to address the different priorities of men and women in water supply and sanitation activities and improve the quality and sustainability of water supply and sanitation projects.

A pdf file is available at http://www.ausaid.gov.au/publications/pdf/gender_guidelines_water.pdf

Gender issues in water and sanitation - The World Bank

The toolkit comprises ready-to-use material designed expressly for World Bank task managers working in the water and sanitation sector. It presents a range of tools for gender analysis and practical "how-to" strategies collected from program and project experience around the world. It is designed to assist task managers in improving project performance by incorporating gender into their work.

A pdf file is available at <http://www.worldbank.org/gender/resources/wstlkt4.pdf>

"We never know the worth of water till the well is dry." ~Thomas Fuller, *Gnomologia*, 1732

"A pool is, for many of us in the West, a symbol not of affluence but of order, of control over the uncontrollable. A pool is water, made available and useful, and is, as such, infinitely soothing to the western eye." ~Joan Didion

"In the world there is nothing more submissive and weak than water. Yet for attacking that which is hard and strong nothing can surpass it." ~Lao-Tzu

"So let man consider of what he was created; he was created of gushing water issuing between the loins and the breast-bones." ~Qur'an

"The society which scorns excellence in plumbing because plumbing is a humble activity, and tolerates shoddiness in philosophy because philosophy is an exalted activity, will have neither good plumbing nor good philosophy. Neither its pipes nor its theories will hold water." ~John W. Gardner

"The finest workers in stone are not copper or steel tools, but the gentle touches of air and water working at their leisure with a liberal allowance of time." ~Henry David Thoreau

"All ... religions show the same disparity between belief and practice, and each is safe till it tries to exclude the rest. Test each sect by its best or its worst as you will, by its high-water mark of virtue or its low-water mark of vice. But falsehood begins when you measure the ebb of any other religion against the flood-tide of your own. There is a noble and a base side to every history." ~Thomas Wentworth Higginson

A children's book

Three monks live in the mountains. Each believes that he is not responsible for hauling water up the steep slope, so they go without. But when a fire breaks out and they all yell "Water!", an essential lesson in cooperation is learned. ~ From *Three Monks No Water*, a Buddhist children's book about water. Written by Ting-xing Ye, color illustrations by Harvey Chan. (New York: Annick Press, 1997 ISBN 1550374435).

10 Rules... (From page 2)
rules are general guidelines, not absolutes. But before you break any of them, consider your company's culture, your boss, your own job -- and have a good reason.

Knowing the rules won't guarantee that you'll rise to the top, but at least you won't set up roadblocks for yourself along the way. Corporate politics is a game, first and foremost. Failure to play by the rules will almost always result in your being sidelined, no matter how good you are at your work. ■

(Ed. Note: Lorraine Dusky is a co-author of "The Best Companies for Women". The above essay is one of thousands of articles about leadership, management, and business success that are available on "the Instant Consultant" CD from Executive Excellence Publishing. If you're interested in learning more about it, click on http://eep.com/Merchant//newsite/iclp_agr.htm.)

"Tempted by Colours"

An exhibition of the art work of Claudia Brueggen, MWF member. Exhibit will run from March 1 to 31, 2004. Opening is on March 4 from 5 to 7 p.m. at Le Souffle Bistro, 2/F Wynsum Corporate Plaza, Ruby Road, Ortigas Center, Pasig City, Tel. 636-1613 or 14. Everyone is invited.

Men, Women and Money (Continued from the last issue, Feb. 2004)

Better Training, Greater Transparency

The answer that the authors give to the question of "what is to be done about this disparity" is essentially two-fold. First, as others have before them, in a variety of contexts, they advocate better and more thorough economic education for girls and women, particularly around the crucial importance of negotiation. Second, they argue for enhancing what might be seen as a subset of what economists and politicians often refer to as transparency: what people are paid should be less of a secret; pay should be based more on merit and performance, rather than negotiation; managers and executives should make a greater effort to ensure equity between their employees, based on clear and objective standards.

In a sense, this dual-track approach covers the authors from both sides of an interesting fence. They are arguing both that girls and women should be taught to negotiate more and more effectively, but also that the necessity for this sort of negotiation should be decreased.

How one views the potential success or failure of the first prong of this approach brings us back to the Nature vs. Nurture argument. Egalitarian men and equity feminists would argue that we should raise children to be whoever they want to be, unconstrained by the gender

stereotypes that have traditionally limited the vision and the actions of both men and women. Conservative men and difference feminists might argue that there are in-born gender differences that will limit the effectiveness of such attempts at change, and, in addition, that there are benefits in differential approaches which should not be eradicated.

The second prong of their approach – the issue of transparency – raises fundamental questions about what we value, as a matter of culture and as a matter of economics, and what we want to put first in this equation.

To what degree do we see limiting the centrality of negotiation as a matter of leveling the economic playing field? To what degree do we see it as a limiting of competition, over all?

Wherever one comes down on these issues, the book raises important questions and sheds new light on a problem with which we will likely continue to grapple, in economies throughout the globe, for some time. ■

"Culture and History"

A book of essays designed and illustrated by Beulah Pedregosa Taguiwalo, MWF member. Written by Nick Joaquin, National Artist for Literature. Book launching at the Cultural Center of the Philippines, 6 p.m. Wednesday, March 10, 2004. Everyone is invited.

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